Scene A: Ticket to Ride

Objective

The adventurers need to hire a gondola to take them into the business districts of Abriymoch.

Let's Make a Deal

The **barbed** and **bearded devils** who work as gondoliers attempt to sweep their new passengers into their gondolas before setting a rate; being lawful creatures, once they agree to a rate, they honor it, but being evil creatures, they'll try to extort anyone they can.

The rate for gondola service is intentionally absurdly high; the gondoliers taunt and tease the characters for being clearly "new in town." All the gondoliers present at the docks are in on this scheme, so the adventurers cannot play the gondoliers against each other in a bidding war. The typical rate for the locals is between 5 and 10 silver, but the gondoliers begin their negotiations at 100 gold. In the end, the characters should not pay more than 1 gold each.

If the adventurers do not negotiate the rate before they board, the gondoliers idle in the middle of a lava lake on the way to their destination and attempt to hustle the passengers for a higher-than-average fare.

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What a Racket

The devils who work as gondoliers all know that they provide a vital service to anyone who wants to get around the lava-filled city quickly and take advantage of this fact by attempting to charge their passengers absurd prices. Longtime residents know that the devils settle for a rate of 5 to 10 silver per trip; new customers are asked to pay 100 gold each. Allow the players to try and talk down the rate; characters who succeed on DC 16 Charisma (Intimidation) or Charisma (Persuasion) checks are able to talk their gondolier into lower rates. A DC 15 Wisdom (Insight) check alerts the characters that the gondolier is taking advantage of them.

I'm on a Boat

If the party refuses to negotiate while in the middle of the lake, the devil dives off the gondola and swims through the magma to a rocky shore. If the part initiates combat with the devil instead of negotiating, the devil dives off the gondola on his second turn in initiative. In either case, the party must then complete a short series of skill checks to steer and propel the gondola using the long oar.

Suggested skills the party can utilize include Strength (Athletics) to propel the boat or Wisdom (Survival) and Intelligence (Nature) to spot troublesome lava bursts and alert the party to avoid them. Characters proficient in Water Vehicles make the Strength (Athletics) checks with advantage. Any character that fails a DC 17 check takes 3 (1d6) fire damage from the lava bubbling around the gondola; successful checks mean that the party avoids the most treacherous parts of the lake and heads directly for the city's shore.

I Fought the Law

Whether the characters pass or fail their skill checks, they are soon interrupted in their attempts to navigate the lake by members of the Abriymoch City Watch, who row up alongside their gondola to ask for their Passenger Conveyance Permits. Much more corrupt than their counterparts in cities like Waterdeep, these watchmen can also be bribed or negotiated with.

Playing with Fire

If the party sets a rate before boarding at the docks, or comes to an agreement while on the lake, their devil gondolier exchanges pleasantries with them while steering them across the lake to the city. As the party continues their trip, the lava around the boat begins to bubble a little more than usual and from the magma emerges a lavasnake (use **young remorhaz** statistics). The gondola cannot proceed or return to its point of origin until the beast is defeated or driven off.

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Adjusting the Scene

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this scene:

- **Very Weak:** The **lavasnake** has 53 hit points and does 13 (2d10 + 2) piercing damage plus 3 (1d6) fire damage.
- **Weak:** The **lavasnake** has 73 hit points and does 15 (2d10 + 4) piercing damage plus 7 (2d6) fire damage.
- **Strong:** Use a **remorhaz's** statistics for the **lavasnake**.
- **Very Strong:** Use a **remorhaz's** statistics for the **lavasnake**.

Sample file

Creatures/NPCs

A variety of devils (**bearded devils**, and **barbed devils**) work as gondoliers in Abriymoch – even though the locals are immune to the effects of fire, they don't pop swim in the lava to get around town.

Area Information

The area has the following features:

Dimensions & Terrain. As far as the eye can see, molten lava bubbles around obsidian stone and red-hot rocks, making most travel by foot or by mount impossible. Heat shimmers from the ground as fire erupts from fissures in the stones and magma flows around rock structures. The city of Abriymoch rises in front of the adventurers to the north, and in the distance, no matter where they look, they can see the twisted stone spires of the palace of Lady Fierna and Belial, rulers of Phlegethos.

Lighting. There is no day or night in Phlegethos, only an oppressive bright orange haze that is accented by bursts of bright fire from rifts in the stone.

Playing the Pillars

Combat: If the party initiates combat with the devil gondolier instead of negotiating, the devil dives off the gondola on his second turn in initiative. If they encounter the lavasnake, they must fend it off.

Exploration: If the party finds themselves without a gondolier, they must complete a series of short skill checks to steer and propel the gondola using the long oar.

Social: If the party sets a rate before boarding at the docks, their devil gondolier exchanges pleasantries with them while steering them across the lake to the city.

Scene B: I Still Haven't Found What I'm Looking For

Objective

The party has reached Abriymoch and they must find the sommelier that Pipyap has told them about. It won't be easy in the hustle and the bustle of the city, especially for tourists, but maybe they can convince some of the friendlier devils to help.

Where Do We Go from Here?

The characters need to ask directions for navigating the streets of the city. Any devils they manage to stop, point them to the artisans' district. The lane is full of confusing buildings with brightly colored awnings, and none of the shops have signs designating the name or trade of the establishments.

The party can continue to ask the passersby on the street for information: being lawful creatures, the devils provide truthful clues, but being evil, they'll only provide circular answers. It is up to the adventurers to put the clues together to determine which building to enter.

The devils in the Artisan's District offer the following clues when asked how to find Shirvasa the sommelier:

- The jeweler works next to the building with the white awning.
- The fiend in the building with the yellow awning drinks ale.
- The fiend with a pet skeletal mouse works next to the fiend with a crag cat.
- The cordwainer works in the first building on the left.
- The fiend in the building with the white awning drinks whiskey.
- The translator works in a building with a blue awning.
- The building with the yellow awning is to the right of the building with the white awning.
- The sommelier has a pet death dog.
- The fiend who works in the building with the red awning keeps a crag cat.
- The fiend in the middle building drinks tea.
- The scholar drinks seltzer water.
- The cordwainer works next to the building with the green awning.
- The fiend with a nightmare drinks tea.

The answers to the puzzle are provided in **Chapter 6: Handout A: Solutions from the Helpful Devils**. The characters can find the sommelier in Building 4, with the white awning.

ADVENTURERS LEAGUE

Clue Me In

As the DM, provide one clue at a time for the first several devils that the players question, and then give the players the handout in **Chapter 6** that contains all thirteen clues.

This is a version of Einstein's Riddle. All information that the players need to solve the puzzle is contained in those clues – they just might need some time to work through them. If the players are stumped, provide them with two additional clues:

- The fiend with the death dog lives next to the building with the blue awning.
- The cordwainer drinks wine.

Sample file

Episode 2: A Bottle of Red, A Bottle of White

Estimated Duration: 60 minutes.

Having successfully determined which building to enter, the adventurers meet Shirvasa the sommelier, a rakshasa, and request a bottle (or two!) of Pipyap's favorite wine.

Area Information

The area has the following features:

Dimensions & Terrain. The shop is larger than it appears from the outside, comprised of a 20-foot by 60-foot tasting area and a smaller office in the back.

Furnishings. Finely made shelves and cabinets house wines, forming an incredibly varied collection. Finer glasses and dining ware are neatly organized on shelves eight feet off the ground, out of reach of the clumsy **lemures** but easily accessible to the flying **imp** or the **rakshasa's** *mage hand*.



Lighting. Light from magical globes brightly illuminate the entire shop.

Today's Samples. The party is offered three samples as they interact with Shirvasa, who offers insight into what makes each unique. There are no consequences to the characters when they drink the wine. Feel free to embellish and channel your best wine snob impersonation:

- "Fire wines from the City of Brass - caution: highly flammable."
- "A dry red made from grapes aged on the plane of Arcadia. This isn't a big seller here, for *obvious* reasons." (Arcadia is a lawful neutral/lawful good plane).
- "Gorgondy wine. Pairs well with gnome."

Creatures/NPCs

Upon entering, the adventurers are greeted by the imp, Adara, who flaps over and welcomes them to Unearthly Delights. She is overworked and cranky, but as "polite" as the job requires. She gives them **Handout 2: Etiquette Rules for Unearthly Delights**, which explains the etiquette requested by the master sommelier while they are in the shop. She pleads that the characters study and obey the rules "for everyone's sake."

Fumbling around the shop are five lemures, doing their best to clean and organize the storefront.

Shirvasa, a **rakshasa** in natural human/tiger form, is farther back in the shop. This gives the characters the opportunity to read the handout before they are called back to speak to him.

Objectives/Goals. Shirvasa deals not only in exotic vintages, but – like most fiendish residents – also in information. Nothing is ever free in the Nine Hells, so after he learns the characters need something from him, he exchanges a bottle of Pipyap's wine for a small favor.

Anger Issues

Shirvasa is the epitome of smug, high class snobbery. His manners are impeccable, until an instance of a breach of etiquette on **Handout 2: Etiquette Rules for Unearthly Delights,** which causes him to be momentarily enraged. He channels his rage by systematically taking out his anger on one of the lemures scuttling

Sample file

around the shop, killing it instantly. This happens until all five of the **lemures** have been destroyed and he is forced to control his temper.

The imp, Adara, and the characters are never on the receiving end of his anger, but if the characters try to protect the **lemures** from harm, Adara tells them, "Oh, don't worry, they'll be back to work by this time next tenday." Seeing that the adventurers do not approve of his treatment of his employees, Shirvasa clenches his claws, bares his teeth, and is barely polite as he attempts to hold his temper. He wouldn't want to lose a customer, after all.

A Favor

The arrival of the adventurers is well timed, because Shirvasa just happens to have a bottle of Pipyap's preferred vintage to part with – if the characters can take care of a problem for him first. Shirvasa has gleaned the meeting place of a group of cultists loyal to another archdevil. He doesn't know exactly what they're doing on Phlegethos, but it can't be good for business! Cultists usually manage to stir up some sort of trouble, and if his customers are busy chasing down cultists, they're too busy to enjoy the finer things in life – namely, his wares.

He asks the characters to investigate and either deal with the cultists themselves or gather enough evidence of wrongdoing that the fiendish city watchmen can be trusted to deal with the interlopers. In exchange he parts with a bottle of Pipyap's favorite wine.

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Above Their Pay Grade

Shirvasa might not know their plans, but he does know the cultists are devotees of Levistus, the Lord of Stygia. He does his best (without outright lying to them, though lies of omission are strongly encouraged) to convince the adventurers to act like followers of Geryon (who are fierce rivals of the Levistus cultists) in hopes this escalates the encounter to violence. Manipulating the characters into killing the cultists is a better resolution for Shirvasa, who then claims direct credit for the cultists' destruction versus the credit being diluted through fiendish bureaucracy. He doesn't reveal the cultists' true patron because Shirvasa is concerned the adventurers might not want to knowingly harm the followers of an archduke of Hell.

Playing the Pillars

Combat: Shirvasa is exceptionally more powerful than the party who are likely incapable of harming him in a meaningful way. Combat in this scene is strongly discouraged, but if it takes place, Shirvasa leaves the characters alive in exchange for completing his task. No wine is offered in this scenario.

Exploration: Strange, rare bottles line the shelves here. Each is valuable enough that it is immediately noticed if stolen.

Social: Shirvasa is cordial and talkative until etiquette is broken, but he still offers to trade the wine for taking care of his cultist problem. The lemures merely shuffle about the shop, while Adara does her best to avoid her master's wrath; switching between groveling, hiding, and blaming others as necessary.

Sample file

Episode 3: I'd Kill for a Drink

Estimated Duration: 75 minutes.

The streets of Abriymoch are a dangerous place and the characters will have to fight to get Pipyap's wine.

Scene A: I'll Break Away Tonight

While the adventures are headed to the last known location of the cultists that Shirvasa has directed them to, they encounter a pack of devils who have escaped from their torture at the hands of the Pit of Flame.

Area Information

The area has the following features:

Dimensions & Terrain. The encounter takes place on a quieter city street – more residential than business. Passersby stop and stare but do not intervene. They do, however, cheer on the fight.

Lighting. There is no day or night in Phlegethos, only an oppressive bright orange haze that is accented by bursts of bright fire from rifts in the stone.

Creatures/NPCs

A motley crew made up of **bone devils** and **merregon** approach the adventurers, looking for a fight. They've just escaped from their captors while being transported to the Pit of Flame to serve their time for their transgressions. The devils hope to redeem themselves and reclaim some glory by finishing off these adventurers, who are clearly tourists.

Street Fighters

There is no negotiating with the devils, there is only fending them off. Having just escaped certain torment, the devils are fueled by adrenaline and bloodlust and cannot be talked out of ambushing the characters.

On the second round of combat, a group of chain devils race towards the fight, but as they draw close, they do not join the fray. Instead, they wait for the fight to finish, and approach the party members (if they are successful). The chain devils are employees of the Pit of Flame who thank the characters for assisting with "their little escape problem." They mutter amongst themselves about the paperwork they would have faced if they'd lost the escapees; instead, now they'll be home in time for dinner.

Treasure

One of the chain devils has a *soul coin* that the characters can take if the devils are defeated.

Pipyap on the Pit of Flame

It's a pit! There are flames! What a name, right? Hey, that place is no laughing matter. Phlegethos is so hot at its center that the fire can burn our tough fiendish hides.

Operating the machinery that hoists your fellow devils out over the fire is a terrible job that no sensible, upward-thinking devil wants. We fiends have excellent memories for these sorts of things and plenty of time to work on our revenge.

It's a rare occasion, but sometimes a big tough guy chains himself up and asks to be hoisted out for a stint. It's all macho, tough guy posturing though, because most of them come back moaning and crying like a brand new nupperibo.

Have I ever taken a swing over the pit? No, of course not; I'm much too clever to get caught doing anything unsavory enough to end up in the hot seat. But I've got plenty of enemies who would like to watch me take a dip into that lava.

Scene B: Saturday Night's Alright for Fighting

Objective

Navigating through the city of Abriymoch to the hideout Shuvasa described, the adventurers must learn what the cultists are up to. Layout of the

sample file

warehouse where the cultists are plotting can be found in **Map 1: The Cultists' Warehouse**.

Area Information

The area has the following features:

Dimensions & Terrain. The abandoned storehouse has one large open room and many smaller side rooms. The ceiling is 20 feet high in the main area, 10 feet in the smaller rooms. The foundation here has begun to buckle and crack, resulting in dangerous lava fissures breaking up the room. Two major fissures glow with bubbling magma and inflict 4 (1d8) fire damage to any creature that begins or ends its turn within 5 feet of the fissures. Four minor rifts are present in the room where the lava has not yet broken through the floor, but they crack open and inflict 4 (1d8) fire damage if a creature attacks with thunder or bludgeoning damage in the immediate vicinity.

Furnishings. The main area is empty save for a stack of crates acting as a table toward the back of the room, while the side rooms have sleeping cots and basic supplies for the cultists.

Lighting. The light from the lava fissures dimly illuminates the room.

Creatures/NPCs

An **assassin**, two **cult fanatics**, two **cultists**, and one **salamander** spend their time here plotting on behalf of Levistus, Lord of Stygia. More **cultists** are on guard inside the front door and treat anyone who approaches with open hostility and suspicion.

Objectives/Goals

The cultists are led by the drow **assassin**, Shyntinidia. The **cultists** are suspicious of any scheme the adventurers come up with to infiltrate the building; they are not expecting "new recruits" since no one is supposed to know why they are here. A character can attempt a DC 17 Charisma (Deception or Persuasion) check to convince the cultists not to attack immediately.

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Adjusting the Encounter

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this scene:

- **Very Weak:** Remove one **cult fanatic** and one **cultist**.
- **Weak:** Remove one **cult fanatic**.
- **Strong:** Add one **salamander** and one **cult fanatics**.
- **Very Strong:** Add one **salamander** and two **cult fanatics**.

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Modification for Shyntinidia

Unlike a normal **assassin**, Shyntinidia is wearing studded leather *armor of resistance (fire)* and so is resistant to fire damage.

Shyntinidia wears around her neck a shard of ice that never melts. If the characters somehow convince her that they are fellow cultists, she shows it to the party and asks them to pledge fealty to Levistus. The **assassin** considers this a priceless artifact and does not part with it under any circumstances; it is a token from Levistus that represents the bargain that she struck with him in exchange for his aid in escaping drow society.

Mentioning Geryon (as Shirvasa suggests) makes the **cultists** appear to let down their guard, but in reality, it causes them to begin plotting the characters' abrupt and painful deaths. A DC 15 Wisdom (Insight) check during future conversations with any **cultists** allows the character to determine something is amiss with their behavior.

What Do They Know?

The **cultists** are scheming and attempting to research whether the heat from the Pit of Flame is hot enough to melt Levistus from his frozen captivity.

The **cultists** can't be convinced to betray the **assassin** because they are aware there is no punishment the adventurers could inflict upon them that is worse than what awaits them for failing Levistus.

Treasure

Once this combat is defeated, the characters find on Shyntinidia studded leather *armor of resistance (fire)*. The leather of the armor is reinforced with rivets made of unmeltable ice, and steams faintly when the wearer is hit with fire attacks.

Playing the Pillars

Combat: Combat against the cult is straightforward, with the **cultists** and their **salamander** attempting to surround one or two adventurers and take them down through cooperation. The **assassin** uses her Sneak Attack every chance she gets.

Exploration: The shard of ice worn by the **assassin** is proof of the **cultists**' loyalty, since any devil can detect the mild aura of Levistus around it.

Sample file

If the characters take this to Shirvasa or any other devil, a task force is assembled, and the **cultists** are rounded up and dealt with.

Social: Although uneasy at first, if the characters pass the initial check to assuage the **cultists** and do not mention Geryon, it is possible the **cultists** could speak with them. The **cultists** are paranoid, and their nascent plan requires an exceptional amount of planning, meaning they are not an immediate threat to Phlegethos.

Wrap-Up: Concluding the Adventure

Mission Accomplished

When the adventurers return to Shirvasa's shop, he lets out a low chuckle with a small, toothy smile as they relate their tale and the information they have acquired.

He presents them with two bottles of Pipyap's wine, and each party member further receives a voucher for free travel by gondola when in Abriymoch.

Shirvasa invites the adventurers to use his personal portal in the back room of his shop to return them to the tavern where they met Pipyap.

Let's Get Outta Here

If the adventurers do not return to Shirvasa, they can use the *scroll* of *sending* to contact Pipyap in order to be transported home. However, this method takes the risk that the message does not reach him, and they might be stuck in Phlegethos for longer than they'd planned.

As a token of appreciation, Pipyap begrudgingly parts with a small bottle of fire wine (*potion of fire breath*) for each character from his own collection.

> "I'm so glad you made the trip safely! I was worried!" It may take the characters a few moments to realize that Pipyap is talking to his wine, and not to them.

Rewards

The characters receive rewards based upon their accomplishments. Aside from advancement, these rewards are earned during the session.

Character Rewards

The characters earn the following rewards:

Advancement

Upon **completing** this adventure, each character gains a level. At their discretion, they may choose to decline advancement. Remind those that express an interest in this that they have a limit to how much gold they can earn per level; declining advancement means that they may reach a point where they earn no gold.

Gold

Award each character gold for each hour of the session. Adventures typically features cues for this, but you can add it where you see fit. The maximum gold that you can award a character per hour is determined by their tier, as follows:

Tier	Hourly GP Award	GP Limit per Level
2	30 gp	240 gp

Magic Item(s)

If found during the adventure, the characters can keep the following magic items:

- *Armor of Resistance (Fire):* This studded leather armor is reinforced with rivets made of unmeltable ice, and steams faintly when the wearer is hit with fire attacks.
- *Soul Coin*
- *Potion of Fire Breath* (1 each)
- *Spell Scroll* of *Sending*

Story Awards

During this adventure, the characters may earn the following story award:

Ticket to Ride. You've successfully completed the task that Shirvasa the sommelier has set for you, and in exchange he provides you with a voucher for travel by gondola within the Abriymoch city limits. Present it to any gondolier and not only do you ride for free, but the devilish gondoliers treat you as one of Shirvasa's associates - only with more respect. More information can be found in **Handout 4: Story Award.**

Dungeon Master Rewards

For running this adventure, one of your character gains a level. That character receives gold based on their tier prior to advancement:

Tier	GP Earned
1	80 gp
2	240 gp
3	1,600 gp
4	6,000 gp

You may also complete DM Quests for running this adventure. See the *Adventurers League Dungeon Master's Guide* for more information.

Sample file

Malbolge: The Love Triangle Contract

Estimated Duration: 2-4 hours

"Dishonorable people do not honor their arrangements. A bill of sale only requires payment, a contract only requires completion, and/or a debt merely requires a payment."

- Akutra-Ramses Atenosis Cea, Spidersilk

DAL00-11d The Love Triangle Contract is a tier 2 adventure by Greg Marks, optimized for 8th-level characters that takes place in the Moonsea and Malbolge, the Sixth Layer of Hell.

Background

Previously, the imp **PIPYAP** discovered an artifact dedicated to **LLIIRA**, the goddess of joy, which for the imp, adopted the form of what he most desired: a bag of cookies. Unfortunately, Pipyap lost the bag, again.

Since losing the **COOKIE BAG**, Pipyap was contacted by the disgraced archdevil **MOLOCH**, former Lord of the Sixth. Moloch claims that he has the cookie bag and can trade it for a favor. Since Moloch was (in Pipyap's mind) a rival for the affections of the now deceased **MALAGARD THE HAG COUNTESS**, he's not sure he can trust Moloch. So, Pipyap has arranged a meeting on the sixth layer of Hell **MALBOLGE**, where Moloch is cursed by **ASMODEUS** to assume the form of a lowly imp.

Moloch has heard of the cookie bag and actually hopes to find it, so he can use it to get his heart's desire: a return to his full power in the Nine Hells. He doesn't actually have it, but he has an idea how to get it. One of his greatest trackers **MOGDRIN THE VENATOR**, an orthon devil, has been imprisoned in Malbolge ever since Moloch's fall. He believes that Mogdrin could track down the artifact for Moloch, as well as many of the scattered forces he hasn't been able to find since his fall during the **RECKONING OF HELL** and the later destruction of his former consort Malagard. He has no intention of honoring the deal, however, and has taken steps to ensure loopholes.

The whispers of the cookie bag found their way to Moloch via **NARIAH**, an erinyes minion of **GLASYA**, the daughter of Asmodeus and current Lord of the Sixth. She knows that Moloch is weaker while on Malbolge and is using the rumor of the cookie bag to lure him back. She wishes to capture Moloch in order to end his threat to Glasya's rule.

Episodes

The adventure's story is spread over five **story episodes** that take approximately 2 hours to play. These episodes are introduced by a Call to Action Episode. The adventure also includes two 1-hour **bonus episodes** that can be played if time permits, that are introduced anywhere in the adventure.

If you're planning to play the entire adventure at once, you only need to introduce the Call to Action once. However, if you plan to play them over several sessions, you'll want to revisit the Call to Action each time you play.

- ***Episode 1: Favors and Contracts.*** The characters are recruited by Pipyap to see what his old buddy Moloch wants to trade favors over. This is the **Call to Action.** If playing **Bonus Objective A**, Pipyap also asks them to pick up a few things while in Hell. But in order to get to Hell, Pipyap directs them an old friend, Jeny Greenteeth, who is also a font of useful information. Jeny can open a gate for them to pass through using the remains of the Hag Countess that persist in Malbolge. If playing **Bonus Objective B**, Jeny also asks them to look for a missing friend: Elisande. Finally arriving in Hell, the characters broker a deal with Moloch to rescue Mogdrin in exchange for the cookie bag.
- ***Episode 2: Breach of Contract.*** The characters try to break Mogdrin out of the oubliette where he is trapped. This is **Story Objective A**.
- ***Episode 3: Break Down of Contract Negotiations.*** The characters return with Mogdrin, only to find Geilna waiting for them. It's a trap to catch Moloch, Mogdrin, and the PCs. Even if Moloch isn't there, the characters are fine bargaining chips against Moloch's future plans. Mogdrin tries to escape in the melee. Preventing Mogdrin's escape is **Story Objective B**.

Bonus Objectives

This adventure also includes two, 1-hour bonus objectives that the characters can pursue if they have additional time to do so. These bonus objectives are found in this adventure's appendices, as follows:

- ***Bonus Objective A: Shopping Trip.*** This bonus objective adds scenes to episodes 1 and 2 where the party attempts to recover some needed ingredients for Pipyap. This bonus objective is found in **Chapter 6.**

Sample file

- **Bonus Objective B: Lost Girl.** If the characters agree to find Elisande for Jeny Greenteeth, they find her in the same prison as Mogdrin, further complicating episode 2. This bonus objective is found in **Chapter 6**.

Episode Sequence

Depending on your time constraints, play style and environment, this adventure takes approximately two-to-four hours to play.

How Will You Play?

The duration of your session depends on how much of this adventure you utilize. At the very least, your session will last approximately **two hours**. However, if you wish, you can provide a longer experience for your players by utilizing the bonus objectives.

Story Objectives Only. To complete the both adventure story objectives, the characters play in Episodes 1 through 3 in order.

Bonus Objectives. You can extend this adventure by **one- or two- hours** by utilizing the bonus objectives provided in the appendices. These objectives branch off Episode 1 and 2.

Hooks

Work with each player to determine why the character is answering Pipyap's call for aid. Here are a few ideas of how you might involve the characters in Pipyap's schemes:

- ***A Private in Pipyap's Legion:*** Some characters may have the Story Award *A Private in Pipyap's Legion*. Such a character owes service to the plump imp and he has ordered them to attend him.
- ***Old Acquaintance Not Forgot:*** It is likely that some characters have met Pipyap in previous D&D Adventurers League adventures but owe the imp no fealty. In this case, Pipyap calls on their shared history and offers promises of favors to be paid later.
- ***A Chance Meeting:*** Some characters might not know Pipyap at all, or if they do, not be inclined to assist him. Such characters could be traveling the Phlan Path and stopping over at the Crossing. Capricious fate has delivered them right where Pipyap needs them to be.

Pipyap on My Rival Moloch, Former Lord of the Sixth

Yeah, so this guy's eyes were always bigger than his stomach, and you can trust me, I know something about stomachs. So Moloch was a great warrior for Hell and kicked a bunch a' demons out see. So, the big boss Asmodeus promotes him to run the Sixth after beherit the previous lord gets executed for breaking the rules on who gets promoted.

Anyway, Moloch never heart a scheme he doesn't like and tries to run plays on all the other archdevils, making him no friends except the big boss who likes his captains squabbling wit' each other so they don't move against him. But see this total babe Malagard starts whispering in his ear, telling him that he could take the big boss. The thing is, he almost pulls it off. Just before he is about to pull the trigger, he runs off to the prime to grab up some artifact weapon, but while he's there, somehow a group of nosey adventurers, no offense, grab him up. Without him to lead them, his army is crushed and his plan falls apart. Weird thing, Asmodeus promotes Malagard to take over. I wonder who told those adventurers where to find Moloch?

One last note, both me and Moloch had a thing with Malagard, so we're not on the best of terms. He always underestimates the little guy. So it's ironic that Asmodeus cursed him so that if he ever comes back to Hell, he's demoted all the way down to imp.

Sample File

Pipyap on My Ex-Girlfriend Malagard, the Hag Countess

Okay. So I've always been sweet on Malagard. I'm mean, I've never see so many boils on such deep purple skin... and her wild white, brittle hair; like the explosion of a paladin sensing evil in the Hells. Truth be told, I think she was sweet on me too, but of course what with her being made lord of the sixth and being a night hag amongst archdevils, she couldn't reciprocate my love by showing her true feelings. You know, 'cause she didn't want to endanger me by making me a target for archdevils looking to take a shot at her.

It was a sad day when Glasya, the rebellious daughter of Asmodeus, melted my girl and temporarily made her part of the planar stuff that makes up the layer. That's another good lesson, eventually daddy's little girl wins, no matter how strained their relationship.

You can still find a few parts of her mixed with Malbolge, but most of it has rotted away.

Pipyap on Devil Jail (Malbolge)

Okay, so don't tell the adventurers I am sending, but you never want to go to Malbolge. First off, it's a prison so you know it's not going to be all that nice. Then remember it's a prison in Hell and so it's just about as bad as it can be.

Once prisoners are found guilty in the infernal courts, they are sent to Malbolge which is basically an infinitely long mountain side covered constant avalanches. You can get out of the way in a few places: caves, ravines, tunnels, and the devilish fortifications that rise up on adamantine pillars. If you are really unlucky, you'll find a little shelter but not quite enough and you have to pick which limb to leave sticking out exposed to the constant rain of bone-breaking rock. Basically, this place sucks and everyone hates it until they are pummeled flat and no longer hate anything.

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Episode 1: Favors and Contracts (Call to Action)

Estimated Duration: 20 minutes

Scene A. A Favor to Ask

Story Beat: The characters receive the Call to Action from Pipyap, requesting they travel to Malbolge to deal with the devil Moloch and retrieve his cookie bag.

The adventure begins with the characters responding to a summons to meet at the Crossing Inn on the Phlan Path. When they arrive, it is a sunny day in the middle of the month of Eleint. Pipyap sits under a tree in the full blaze of autumn, on a picnic blanket surrounded by piles of food. Romsan Kal watches him nervously from the window of the inn.

Area Information

This area features:

Dimensions & Terrain. The area is wild, with only the Crossing's buildings hinting at civilization.

Lighting. It is sunny with a light breeze rustling the autumn leaves.

Creatures/NPCs

Pipyap the **imp** offers the group a toothy smile and welcomes them to join him for lunch. While his table manners are atrocious, he seems to have no end of food to share.

Objectives/Goals. Pipyap's goal is to convince the characters to take a quick trip to Malbolge and meet with Moloch. He knows it's very dangerous, but he's pretty desperate to find his missing cookie bag and is curious why Moloch would contact him.

What Does He Know? Pipyap knows everything in the "Pipyap on..." sidebars but downplays anything that seems likely to scare off the adventurers from doing what he wants. Between shoving handfuls of food into his gullet, Pipyap lays out his offer:

- Pipyap has received a message from an old friend and sometimes rival: a devil named Moloch. According to the imp, Moloch and Pipyap once both tried to win the heart of a now deceased hag named Malagard. In the name of that shared affection, Moloch has asked that Pipyap meet with him in Malbolge and hear a proposal.
- Pipyap is a little uncomfortable going back to Hell. He's decided that the Prime Material with all its food and other luxuries is more his style, that and he no longer thinks he quite fits in there anyway. So, he is looking for some minion, agents, or friends to go in his stead.
- It interesting that Moloch choose Malbolge to meet. Not only is he a wanted infernal on that layer of Hell, Asmodeus cursed him that if he ever enters Malbolge, he becomes an imp. This means he's not really a threat, so he must want to deal really badly.
- Pipyap wants the characters to travel into the nearby Quivering Forest and find the hag Jeny Greenteeth. Jeny owes Pipyap a favor and should be able to open a portal for them into Malbolge. Once in Hell, meet with Moloch who claims to have a bag of Pipyap's favorite cookies. The characters should strike a deal with Moloch and get that bag! If they do, he rewards them greatly. He remains vague on the specifics of the reward.
- Pipyap gives the party a twisted, fire scarred dinner fork that he claims gets them where they need to be with Jeny's help. (It functions as a planar fork for the *plane shift* spell keyed to Malbolge.)
- ***Bonus Objective A:*** If you are using Bonus Objective A, Pipyap also asks the characters to pick up a few sundries for him while in Malbolge; things he can't get on the Prime now that he doesn't go to Hell anymore. Give the players **Player Handout 6.**

Troubleshooting

Pipyap is an imp and what he's asking might be a tall order for some, so it's possible that things go astray.

- More mercenary characters might want to have a clear payment. Pipyap offers to let them keep the planar fork and promises a significant favor when they succeed.
- If Pipyap is attacked or repeatedly threatened, he turns invisible and flees. You can still get the adventure back on track by having either Jeny Greenteeth or Romsan Kal express an interest in what the devils are up to and encouraging them to investigate.

Call to Action

Pipyap's request that the characters meet with Moloch and strike a deal to get back the cookie bag is the **Call to Action**. He suggests they call in a

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favor that Jeny Greenteeth owes him to garner safe passage back and forth to Hell. Proceed to **Scene B: A Favor for a Friend** once the characters are ready to begin.

Scene B. A Favor for a Friend

Story Beat: The characters meet with the hag, Jeny Greenteeth, and barter for safe passage to Malbolge.

The characters travel for several days through the Quivering Forest. If you are looking to expand the playing time of your adventure or your players are especially combat focused this is an excellent place for a wandering encounter. The **Forest Encounters (Levels 5-10)** table in *Xanathar's Guide to Everything* is a good place to start if you need ideas.

Eventually the party locates Jeny's cottage in the northern Quivering Forest. She comes out to greet them as they approach.

Area Information

Jeny's home is in a large, hard to find clearing, with a break in the forest's heavy canopy allowing in some light.

This area features:

Dimensions & Terrain. Her small cottage is made of neatly stacked logs with a roof of tidily arranged shingles, grown over with moss. It is about twenty feet on a side. A large fire with an iron pot simmers in front of the cottage.

Lighting. The clearing is dimly lit with the fading light of dusk at all times of day or night. Even magical light struggles to raise the light level here.

Creatures/NPCs

Jeny Greenteeth, an unusually powerful green hag, uses her *illusory appearance* ability to take on a form more likely to be trusted by the adventurers. She wears a simple floral-print dressing gown over a clear, lacy apron. Her hair is tied back in a neat bun held in place with a bone hair pin.

Objectives/Goals. Jeny helps paragons of good like adventurers because it puts them in her debt, and she enjoys twisting them to her own goals. To better succeed, she pretends to be a kindly grandmother, but makes a casual threat to drive home her point.

What Does She Know? While Jeny owes Pipyap a favor, she does not discuss what put her in the imp's debt beyond saying it was a trade of information. That said, while she uses the fork Pipyap has given the characters to open a portal to Malbolge, if they wish to have her reopen it when it is time to return, they need to pay her. She is takes one of the following:

- A child's favorite puppy.
- One of the characters' fingers; while the 1d4 slashing damage heals, the finger can never be regrown, even by powerful magic.
- A wedding ring.
- A song; any character that sings a song loses all ability to sing that song ever again.
- A happy memory; that character loses their Bond forever.
- If you are using **Bonus Objective B**, Jeny requires one of the above, and a favor while they are in Malbolge. A young girl named Elisande recently acquired a very large Chultan goat (events of *DDAL07-18 Turn Back the Endless Night*) and wandered into Hell. While there, she asks that the characters find and return her to Toril before she causes problems being where she shouldn't be. Characters who have never met Elisande but succeed on a DC 15 Intelligence (History) check have heard of her. She frequently appears at moments of great import, and some say she is one of the Chosen; representatives of the gods in the mortal realm.

If the characters refuse to pay her price, Jeny opens the gate, but the characters need to find their own way home.

Questions. If characters have treated her well, Jeny is happy to share further information if asked.

- She knows the basics about Malbolge from the Pipyap on Devil Jail sidebar, without Pipyap's colorful embellishments.
- Jeny knows well of the Night Hag Malagard who once ruled in Hell. Malagard was older and perhaps even more powerful than Jeny, something she is not embarrassed by. The Hag Countess made the mistake of trusting the King of Hell, Asmodeus. Never bargain with a devil smarter than you. If you are not sure who is smarter, it's not you. Even if you think you have the upper hand, you don't. Indeed, the passage the party takes is only possible because of Malagard.

Through the Gate

When the characters are ready to travel, Jeny brings a collection of jars and herbs from her cottage to a nearby tree. She pours a jar of blood and another of bile upon the bole of the tree, and then rubs purple comfrey blooms into the mixture before stabbing the fork into the bark, causing the tree to split in half and revealing a gore-soaked passage to Hell.

"Careful of the first step little doves, it's a long way down." Characters that pass through the dripping passage find themselves in **Scene C: Contractual Favors.**

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