

DEVIL'S ADVOCATE

ABSORB THE POWERS OF HELL TO LAY WASTE TO YOUR FOES



PLOT HOOK

The party is one of the most famous groups in the world. It is up to them whether that is for their good deeds or their immense brutality. One thing's for sure, society is well-aware of them, spreading their names across the lands, even across planes of existence. It is no surprise that the strongest devils of hell also know of them. So, when a particularly powerful inmate from within the deepest circle of hell escapes by nefarious means, the party is seen as a means of making things right.

CHAPTER 1. A F(R)IENDLY CHAT

In which the party is dragged to the underworld.

Chapter 1.1. Hell's Gate

Read this:

'It is not often that the ground trembles beneath your feet. This feeling is often reserved for those days in which you fight the most beastly and fearsome of horrors, the largest of dragons. Now, however, you are merely enjoying a meal together. But a second ago, all of you were clinging your mugs together to celebrate another victory. Then, faster than you could ever imagine, the ground ripped in half, and you felt a force stronger than any other pulling you into a rift of sorts, almost like you've been summoned somewhere. You gaze at each other only to find you are in the middle of a blazing tunnel, flames rushing past you. Aside from fire, the only things you can see are each other. What are your expressions at this moment?'

If you are playing this adventure as a one-shot or if this is the first time the party has met, this is the perfect time for them to introduce themselves. Have each party member describe their appearance, abilities, and relationships with each other. It is assumed that by now, they've been working together for a long time. Once they've said all they wish to say, you may proceed.

GM NOTE: Alternatively, you can start this adventure with a prologue, in which all party members work communally on building a backstory for their group, how they came to power, and what deeds might have brought them renown across the lands.

After a few more seconds through the fiery tunnel, a fore thrusts the party into the air, then begins to levitate. Around them, they'll hear cheers and laughs. They now find themselves on map 1. All party members may make a **DC 17 Intelligence (Religion) check**. On a success, they quickly identify they are in

hell, perhaps one of the deepest, most dangerous circles. A figure at area 1 will greet them theatrically. This is Mercurias, the Multifaceted, the Devil that brought them here.

Mercurias the Multifaceted

Information: Once but a human serving the Lords of Hell, they turned him into a devil after a long life of service. Now, he is one of the most beloved and trusted fixers. He's a skilled magician and a charismatic talker, which is handy, especially when dealing with adventurers.

Mercurias will be delighted that his spell has worked and explain to the party that they find themselves in hell. He will then assure them that they are not prisoners but rather "tools". Any party member can make a **DC 17 Wisdom (Insight) check** to see if he is telling the truth. He is, but partially.

While in this area, the party can levitate freely at a 20 feet speed. A **DC 18 Intelligence (Arcana) check** made by any party members on the effect will reveal that Mercurias maintains it.

Mercurias will explain to the party that they have been brought here as a last resort, a means of fixing a problem the devils cannot themselves handle. He will explain to the party that there once was a dwarven king so corrupt and vile that even the devils agreed they could not wait for him to die until hell took him, so they took him early. His name was Orran Bloodriver because of the rivers of blood that would always flow from his beard. Unfortunately, due to some trickery by demons, he escaped hell. Now, the party must retrieve him and bring him back. During this explanation, all party members may make a **DC 20 Intelligence (History) check** and a **DC 17 Wisdom (Insight) check**. Success on the **Intelligence (History) check** will reveal to the party that the story matches other legends they've heard. Success on the **Wisdom (Insight) check** will indicate that Mercurias is not telling the entire truth. If pressed about this, he will acknowledge that being a devil, he must keep some things to his kind and his kind only.

Mercurias will explain that if the devils send fiends to earth to look for Orran, the gods will know they failed to keep him locked away and might enact vengeance upon them. They are running out of time before the Bloodriver makes his presence known, so they opted for an external force - the party.

In return, the Lords of Hell all swear to sign the following agreement: no matter what sins the party is guilty of, they are to be spared from hell. Nothing they have committed will ever bring them here. They get a clean slate. What they do from now on, however, still matters. Thus, the party can get full amnesty, the only condition being that they capture Bloodriver.

GM NOTE: *The party is dealing with fiends so that they might be suspicious at first. Be sure to remind them that devils are lawful and stick to their promises. Also, since this first chapter is almost entirely on the back of roleplay, be sure to think of a fun and interactive personality for Mercurias. Making him persuasive and friendly to the party is the recommended way to approach his character.*

Once the party has agreed to help the Lords of Hell with this mission, Mercurias will smile and say they have something special for the party. You may proceed to the next chapter.

Chapter 1.2. Devilish Blessings

Read this:

'With a smile from the devilish servant, you see all the Lords of Hell gaze down upon you and extend their hand. In each hand rests a single infernal rune, which pulses with power, almost guiding you to it.'

Each party member may now choose a rune from one of the Lords of Hell. These runes heavily influence how they will play for the rest of the session.

GM NOTES

RUNES: *When it comes to the runes, they are all fun ways of diversifying combat and giving the party members a brand-new experience. Some might be stronger than others. Some are overpowered, and some might be busted. I know that. But, as it is a one-shot, I think it's not too big of a deal. Sometimes, boons such as these are a fun way to spice up the game. Also, it is entirely up to you if the party can be made aware of what the runes do before they choose them or not. If you want them to try and min max, tell them! If not, watch them play the odds!*

LORDS: *Alongside the mechanical aspect, this chapter introduces the party to a few Lords of Hell. These are from my pantheon, which I use in my homebrew games. If you'd like to mix it up and use a different array of devils, feel free to do so.*

The party can now explore each area of map 1.

AREAS OF HELL

1 - Mercurias the Multifaceted

Mercurias has no particular rune for the party. He is simply there to be their guide and chaperone.

2 - Crof the Golden

Read this:

'Right next to Mercurias, calmly reading from a large piece of parchment, is a devil dressed in a gilded plate and wearing a golden mask. The rune glows with gold and power, but perhaps it also takes away.' he lifts his head with a smirk, offering up his hand. "Go ahead!" he says in a booming voice. "Take my gift and live a life of golden promise."

Crof is a gambler and a dealmaker. He is known to trick people into bad contracts where their souls are sold for



immense wealth. He'll give the party anything they ask... at a price.

Crof's Boon

If a party member picks up Crof's rune, their armor class becomes 22, and they gain access to the wish spell. They may cast it at will. In addition to the spell's traditional drawbacks, they lose half of their maximum hit points (rounded up) whenever they cast it. This damage cannot be prevented or reduced, and the lost hit points cannot be regenerated for 24 hours.

3 - Draconath, Fury of the Drakemother

Read this:

'Seemingly calm, a draconic figure rests in the back. Though he may look at peace, even nearing it lets you into the unbridled rage, it is holding back on. This is without a shred of doubt Draconath, the dragonborn whose love for the Drakemother led to him following her into the depths of hell, where he too became a devil.'

Draconath used to be a monk, serving at the temple of the Drakemother, the evil progenitor of the chromatic dragons. After seeing her in a dream, he descended for her into hell, where she turned him into her most vigorous champion.

Draconath's Boon

If a party member picks up Draconath's rune, they gain resistance to fire damage and may now breathe fire in a 60-foot cone as a bonus action. Each creature within the cone must make a DC 18 Dexterity saving throw, taking 10d6 fire damage on a failure or half on a success. Due to Draconath's anger, the party member who picked up their boon also automatically fails all saving throws. This ability can only be used 2 times before a long rest.

4 - Garagorna, the First Giant

Read this:

'Towering so tall above everyone else that you cannot even see his face is the devilish figure of Garagorna, the First Giant. You need not see his features clearly to know this can only be him - the prophetic giant driven mad by devils and then dragged to the underworld.'

Garagorna is a brutish devil who fathered the first giants. Though he was once a prophet himself, he has been driven mad. His madness, unfortunately, is passed along to his boon.

Garagorna's Boon

If a party member picks up Garagorna's rune, their Strength score becomes 26, and their Constitution score becomes 26, but their Intelligence, Wisdom, and Charisma scores become 3.

5 - Dosoro, Oni King

Read this:

'Sitting on his own, away from the rest, is the famed Oni King Dosoro, whose strength and vile nature granted him eternal service under a Lord of Hell, who he eventually defeated in combat and whose spot he took. Now, though hated by some of his brethren, he rules over his circle of hell.'

Dosoro is an oni with unmatched brutality. In a way, he is very similar to Bloodriver. He can break rocks with his pinky and likes nothing more than the sound of torture. Because of this, it was his job to torture Bloodriver endlessly. If the party talks with him, he'll joke about letting Bloodriver go to "prove he's not as brutal" as Dosoro was. A **DC 22 Wisdom (Insight) check** will reveal this is not as much of a joke as he may want to let it seem.

Dosoro's Boon

If a party member picks up Dosoro's rune, they can choose to have any successful weapon attack become a critical hit. If they do, they take half of the damage dealt as force damage, which cannot be prevented or reduced.

6 - Ro, Avatar of Destruction

Read this:

'Hidden in the left corner of the chamber and breathing heavily hides a hound of destruction. When approached, you feel its aura of pure carnage engulf you. "Would you break the world for me?"'

Ro is the most dangerous of all devils present. He is a force of pure violence that feeds on destruction. Taking up his boon is a blessing and a curse all at once.

Ro's Boon

If a party member picks up Ro's rune, they become attuned to carnage. Whenever they deal damage with a spell or weapon, they can add 3d10 force damage to that damage. If the spell hits multiple targets, they can only choose one target to suffer this damage. They also heal for 3d10 force damage when they do so. They can use this feature 5 times before requiring a long rest. In addition, whenever they take damage, they take double damage instead.

7 - Central Rune

Once all party members have chosen a blessing (they can choose to take no blessing if they wish), they can all return to the central rune, wherefrom they can once again speak with Mercurias. Once he sees all of them on the rune, Mercurias will smile and tell them that time has come for them to “test their blessings”. You may proceed to the next chapter.

Chapter 1.3. A Test

Read this:

‘Without another word, Mercurias moves his hand, and from the eternal fires below emerge 2 erinyes. It smirks and eyes you up and down. Mercurias turns to you with a large grin of his own. “Let us see if your blessings are worth anything, shall we? A test of sorts!”

The party must now fight 2 **erinyes** as a test. During this time, a dome closes them in, so that they don’t damage the Lords of Hell in any way.

After they’ve defeated their enemies, the party can choose to change their runes once (**and only once**). They can try to persuade Mercurias to give them another chance with a **DC 20 Charisma (Persuasion) check**.

The party can also have final discussions with the Lords of Hell and Mercurias. If pressed further about Bloodriver, they’ll say they don’t know where he is. Any party member can make a **DC 16 Wisdom (Survival) check** to discern he is most likely within dwarvish territory, specifically in the dwarvish mountains.

Once all party members have selected their final runes and feel ready to leave, Mercurias will teleport them back home. During the teleportation, they gain the benefits of a long rest.

You may proceed to the next chapter.

CHAPTER 2. HELL ON EARTH

In which the party chases the escapee.

Chapter 2.1. Investigation

GM NOTE: *Dosoro’s Boon no longer works from this chapter onwards (t’was a red herring).*

Read this:

‘As you wake up in the real world, it’s almost as if a single second has passed. Your tankards meet with a clink, and then you all look at each other as if just awoken from a collective dream. Did you dream, or was it true? The confusion passes quickly as you all notice a large pair of manacles on the table with a note attached. You lift them to see the note saying, “and please bring him alive in these. Yours truly, Mercurias”. It was not a dream after all. You have a job to do.’

The party must now go out and look for Orran Bloodriver. They can go about this a few different ways, but here are a few starting suggestions:

- Look for information about the presumed-dead king within libraries. This will require a successful **DC 18 Intelligence (Investigation) check**. A success will inform the party as to the whereabouts of the mountains over which he once ruled.
- Cast the *scrying* spell to look for him, then make a successful **DC 18 Wisdom (Perception) check** to identify his surroundings as rubies that can only be found in his old domain.
- Send him a message via the *sending* spell and make a **DC 18 Charisma (Persuasion) or Charisma (Deception) check** to trick him into giving them his location.

GM NOTE: *Finding a dwarf should not be hard at this level. In theory, the party has plenty of spells, abilities, and connections for this. It is entirely up to you as a DM as to how much opposition you give them. If you want to speed up this adventure, you can skip this part of the quest altogether. If you’re going to drag things out and enjoy this a little longer, then have him be immune to scrying and have them fight to get into long-lost libraries.*

Once the party has found Bloodriver’s location, they can begin their search for him. As they are a high-level party, chances are they’ll use some sort of teleportation or other means of negating the difficulties of overland travel, so there is no reason to design such a thing.

GM NOTE: Let's face it. When the party is high enough level, the most interesting things become the RP, the relationships, and the combat. In a one-shot, the RP and combat are all they've got, so don't bore them with unnecessary travel. They've become so strong that they can tear any bandit band or beast to pieces in minutes.

However, if you are playing in a particularly dark and grimy world where random encounters are always deadly, you are free to use them to your heart's content.

Read this:

'After a short journey, you find yourself near to where you believe Orran Bloodriver is to be found. The location, one known as the Bloodthrone, is now just a dark and cloudy mountainside referred to by the locals as "The Sootpeaks". Lava frequently erupts from these mountains, making them unsafe, leading to most people leaving the area. The only people left are the half-elemental children that use these grounds as home and a place of prayer. These half-elementals brought you to the halfway mark of the largest peak, where they had seen someone go in the past days but did not approach or disturb said figure. Now, you are where presumably Orran Bloodriver stepped a few days ago. In front of you is a large stone wall, filled from top to bottom with carvings.'

In front of them is a carved drawing of a battle. At the top of the drawing is Orran, flanked by two dwarves and two goats. In front of said goats is a steel shield, which splits them from the rest of the battle. On it are two words in dwarvish: blood right. Below them in the drawing are mounds of corpses, rivers of blood and other such happenings. But there is no gate to speak of.

If the party members make a **DC 20 Intelligence (Arcana) check** or use a *detect magic* spell, they will find the carving is magical, most likely a code of sorts. The magic is a mix of abjuration and necromancy.

The party must examine the drawing to open the gates to Orran's underground hall. A **DC 18 Intelligence (Investigation) check** will reveal a small indent on the shield and the lowest point on the carvings, which portrays a lonely dwarf. Any party member can then make a **DC 17 Intelligence (Religion) check** or **DC 17 Wisdom (Survival) check** to decode the meaning of this.

On a successful **Intelligence (Religion) check**, they'll remember that Bloodriver had a deep connection with blood, which most likely means they require a blood sacrifice to pass.

On a successful **Wisdom (Survival) check**, they'll find blood trails across the stone around here.

GM NOTE: If you want to make the puzzle harder, give the party no chance at checks. Rather have them solve the mystery without them.

The party must find either dwarvish blood or demon blood to smear on the carving. Once this is done, a rock will move, revealing a secret set of stairs, bringing the party within the Labyrinth Hall.

You may proceed to the next chapter.



Chapter 2.2. Labyrinth Hall

Unbeknownst to the party, the Labyrinth Hall is just a structural retelling of the drawing on the stone. Wherever there is a blade, there is a path. Wherever there is a shield, there is a wall. Wherever there was blood spilling, there is a trap. If a party member has a **passive Perception of 19 or higher**, they'll notice this after the first two turns, leading the party to the steel door with only 1 encounter. If not, they must undergo 2 encounters.

To see which encounters the party encounters, roll on the encounter table below.

d4

ENCOUNTER

1

River of Blood. The party comes across a river of boiling blood. They must either succeed on a **DC 18 Strength (Athletics) check** or find a way to get across (climb the walls, teleport, fly). On a failure, they take 10d6 fire damage.

2

Closing Walls. The party comes across a hallway that begins to close in on them. They must rush back to safety. They must make a **DC 17 Dexterity (Acrobatics) or Strength (Athletics) check** to survive unscathed. On a failure, they take 8d8 bludgeoning damage.

3

Horde. The party comes across a slow-moving horde of 30 skeletons.

4

Treasure Hall. The party walks past the treasure hall, where they find 3000 gold and a **belt of dwarvenkind**.

Once the party has had their necessary encounters, read this:

'You step through the labyrinthine corridors until finally, you come across the massive steel door. It is triangular, almost like a shield. It's odd and massive and seems to have no handles.'

To open the door, the party might want to use blood again. That won't work. Instead, they need to whisper "blood right" in dwarvish with their faces pressed up against the door.

Once they do this, you may proceed to the next chapter.

Chapter 2.3. Devilish Reign

Read this:

'You push open the steel door to reveal a massive hall filled with red ruby crystals. From below, you can hear the bubbles of lava and magma. Straight across, sitting idly and scheming on his old throne, is Orran Bloodriver. At the sight of you, the old dwarvish ruler scoffs. "I knew they'd send someone. The bastards! FINE! I'll take you down just the same. If you can reach me, that is." Before you can say anything, he mutters a few dwarvish incantations, and the rubies on top of the two massive goat statues begin to glow. Soon, a ruby shell engulfs the dwarf, while you come face to face with two massive rams. Then, just as quickly, two beings of fire and magma raise themselves from the sea of fire below. You must first pass through them.'

The party must now face **2 earth elementals** and **2 fire elementals**. After facing them, the ruby shell will break and the party must face **Bloodriver**. As he is in his throne room, **Bloodriver** also has access to lair actions.

LAIR ACTIONS

On initiative count 20 (losing initiative ties), Bloodriver takes a lair action to cause one of the following effects; Bloodriver can't use the same effect two rounds in a row:

- Bloodriver awakens one of the **stone golems** at his side. They share his initiative, but take their turn directly after him. This lair action can only be taken a maximum of 2 times.
- Bloodriver conjures up bursts of lava from below. Each party member must make a **DC 18 Dexterity saving throw**. On a failure, they take 6d6 fire damage. On a success, they take half damage.
- Bloodriver calls forth for the crystals to power himself up. He gains temporary hit points equal to 3 times the number of crystals. Each crystal is marked with a 1, has an AC of 22, 20 hit points and immunity to all damage types but force, piercing, slashing and bludgeoning. If the party members destroy all crystals (marked with 1), this lair action cannot be used.

Once the Orran is defeated and put in the devilish manacles, the party may proceed to the next chapter.

GM NOTE: The party should know they must bring him in alive, but remind them in case they forget.

CHAPTER 3. COURT IS IN SESSION

In which the party witnesses devil's court.

Chapter 3.1. The Defendant

Read this:

'You need not journey far alongside Bloodriver until a portal opens in front of you. Through it, as per expectations, steps out Mercurias, his devilish grin wider than ever before. "Delightful! You got him! Now, let us go to court, shall we?" You step through and find yourself in a large court of devils, filled to the brim with a variety of fiends awaiting the trial of this villain. Poking out through a dark mirror is also a large arm, holding an oddly-colored eye which you know to be the eye of the Hell King - the person in charge of all of this.'

Bring the party to map 3. They will now assist at the trial of Orran Bloodriver. After a few devils give testimonies in regard to how he escaped, Orran finally takes the stand. When he does, he begins to laugh maniacally, before finally turning back towards the party and saying: "I was set free. Merely a distraction, giving way for Mercurias and Dosoro time. I thought I'd have longer, but who cares now? Hell's gonna be turned upside down". Quickly, the court will break down into unrest. Then, Mercurias will come forward with his plan.

He and Dosoro freed Bloodriver so that Dosoro could trick the other Lords into giving part of their power to others. Then, Mercurias will move his hands and unlock the devilish cuffs on Bloodriver's hands. He is free once more.

The court will break down into chaos, with devils fighting each other, now divided into two factions. The party is left as the only loose threads for Mercurias. They must now fight **Bloodriver** once more, but he is in his Mythic Phase.

Also, the party's blessings no longer work, as the Lords of Hell are busy fighting and using their power themselves.

Once he is defeated, proceed to the next chapter.

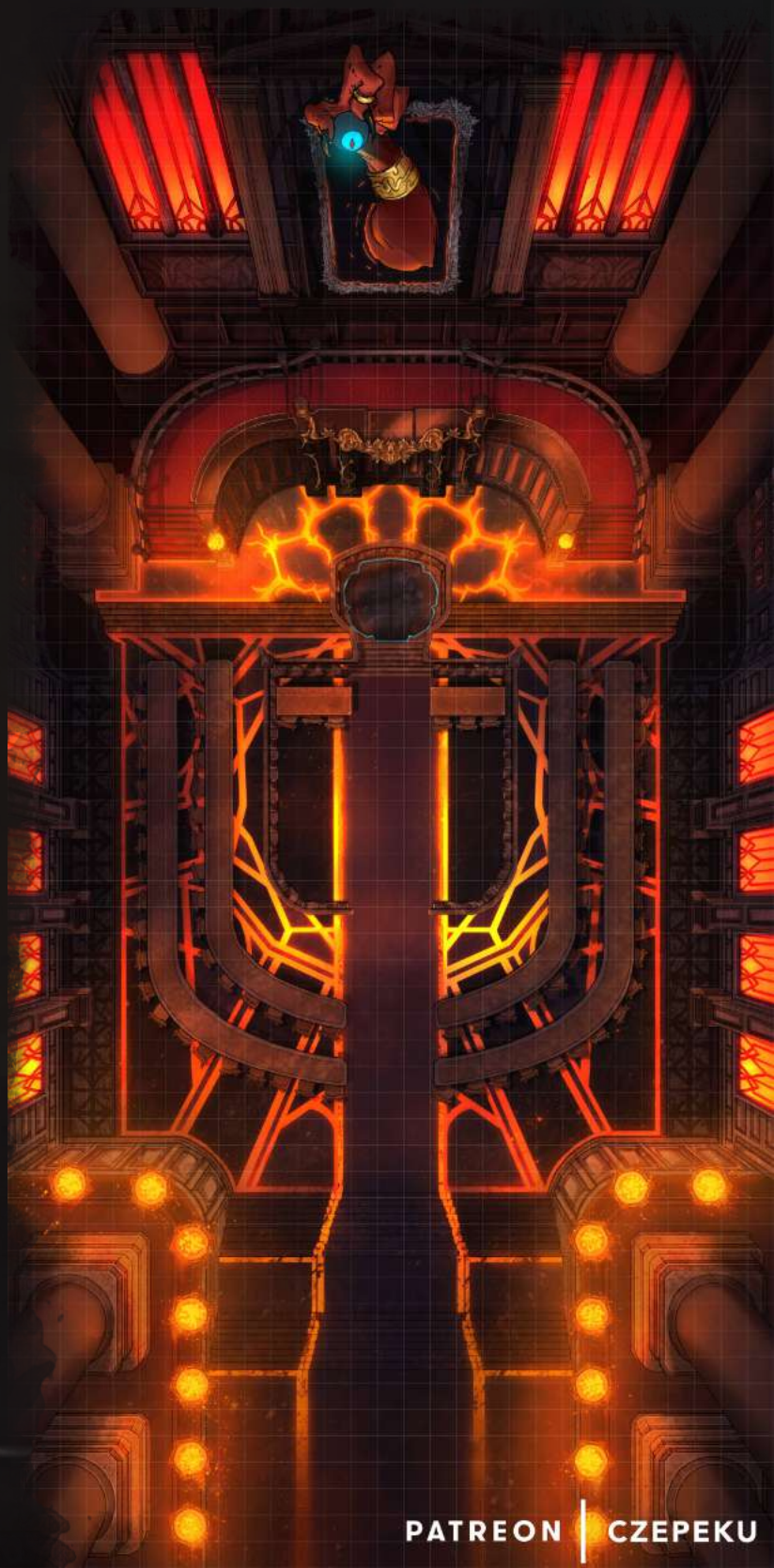
Chapter 3.2. Sentence

With Bloodriver defeated once and for all, the party has finished its job. As for Mercurias and Dosoro, they have

escaped to the mortal realm, now being hunted by devils to be brought to hell, this time as prisoners.

At least for now, the party's job is finished, and they can enjoy the fruits of their labor, that being the knowledge that they are no longer at any risk of being sent to hell.

The End.



Bloodriver

Small humanoid (dwarf), lawful evil

Armor Class 21 (enchanted armor)

Hit Points 178 (17d6 + 119)

Speed 30 ft., fly 60 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
25(+7)	16(+3)	24(+7)	22(+6)	17(+3)	15(+2)

Saving Throws Str +12, Dex +8, Con +12, Wis +8

Skills Athletics +12, Perception +8

Damage Resistances cold, fire; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks

Damage Immunities poison

Condition Immunities poisoned

Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 18

Languages Common, Dwarfish, Infernal, telepathy 120 ft.

Challenge 16 (15,000 XP)

Dramatic Reveal (Recharges after a Short or Long Rest). When Bloodriver is freed from a pair of devilish chains, his current hit point total resets to 178 hit points, and he recharges his Runic Prison. Additionally, Bloodriver can now use the options in the "Mythic Actions" section for 1 hour.

Magic Resistance. Bloodriver has advantage on saving throws against spells and other magical effects.

Magic Weapons. Bloodriver's weapon attacks are magical.

Legendary Resistance (3/Day). If Bloodriver fails a saving throw, he can choose to succeed instead.

Runic Empowerment. At the start of each of his turns, Bloodriver can choose to activate a certain rune on his hammer, which will give him benefits until the start of his next turn:

- **Rune of Stoneheart.** Until the start of his next turn, Bloodriver gains resistance to all damage.

- **Rune of Elemental Retort.** Until the start of his next turn, whenever Bloodriver takes acid, cold, fire, lightning or thunder damage, he can use his reaction to deal half of that damage back to the creature that damaged it as any other damage type.

- **Rune of Siegeblood.** Until the start of his next turn, all of Bloodriver's attacks are made at advantage and score critical hits on rolls of 19 or 20.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. Bloodriver chooses his active rune for the turn, then makes four hammer attacks.

Hammer. Melee Weapon Attack: +14 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 15 (2d6 + 8) bludgeoning damage plus 21 (6d6) force damage.

Runic Prison (Recharge 5-6). Bloodriver chooses a point within 30 feet. A circular prison of runes emerges in a 10-foot radius, 60-foot high cylinder from the chosen point. All creatures except Bloodriver within the area must make a DC 19 Constitution saving throw or take 16 (4d6) force damage. While within the area, a creature's movement speed is halved. In addition, the prison has an additional effect based on the rune Bloodriver is using:

- **Rune of Stoneheart.** All creatures who fail the saving throw are petrified until the prison disappears.

- **Rune of Elemental Retort.** All creatures who fail the saving throw cannot cast spells that deal elemental damage while within the area.

- **Rune of Siegeblood.** All creatures within the area cannot regain hit points. If they attempt to do so, they instead lose hit points equal to the amount they would've restored.

The area remains until the end of Bloodriver's next turn.

LEGENDARY ACTIONS

Bloodriver can take 3 legendary actions, choosing from the options below. Only one legendary action option can be used at a time and only at the end of another creature's turn. Bloodriver regains spent legendary actions at the start of its turn.

Move. Bloodriver moves up to his full movement without triggering attacks of opportunity.

Strike. Bloodriver makes one attack with his hammer.

Bash (Costs 3 Actions). Bloodriver bashes the ground with his hammer. Each creature within 10 feet of him must make a DC 19 Strength saving throw. On a failure, they take 21 (6d6) force damage and are knocked back 5 feet. On a success, they take half damage and are not moved.

Runic Recharge (Costs 2 Actions) - Mythic. Bloodriver recharges his Runic Prison and uses it.

Maddened Bashes (Costs 3 Actions) - Mythic. Bloodriver bashes the ground with his hammer. Each creature within 30 feet of him must make a DC 19 Strength saving throw. On a failure, they take 28 (8d6) force damage and fall prone. On a success, they take half damage and do not fall prone.

THANK YOU!

A BIG THANK YOU TO ALL OF THOSE WHO FOLLOW AND SUPPORT ME, WITHOUT YOU I COULDN'T HAVE BROUGHT THIS PROJECT TO LIFE.

COVER ART BY **WARM TAIL**, USED WITH PERMISSION.

MAPS CREATED BY [CZEPEKU](#) ON PATREON.

TAKE CARE!

