

Negotiations at the Temple of Blood

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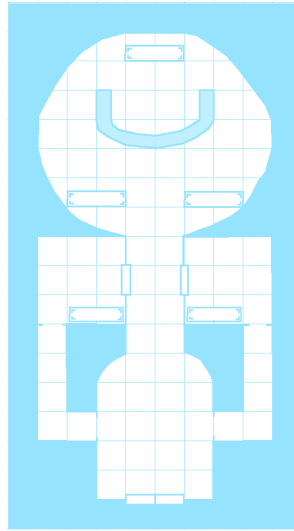
Encounter Level 22 (20750 XP)

In an abandoned village, off a road rarely traveled, rests a temple forgotten by all but a select few. The temple was once a place dedicated to the gods of good and protection, and in such a small community, it served as center of daily life.

These days it only sees activity two nights a month. That is when the vampire lord Andragen conducts business. Here he meets with any powerful creature who wishes to do so, waiting for a few hours, the first night of every other week. Andragen's network and resources are vast. He has become known, in rumor and legend, as a creature able to gather any item, who knows any information worth knowing. Those who tell quiet tales of these clandestine meetings have come to call this place the Temple of Blood.

As Andragen's power grew so did his lust for more. In turn, he has become bored with his deals. Being inspired by his own legends, he sought out a ritual that would allow him to extend his power over new sires. He has taken a shallow area of the temple, once used agricultural rites and filled it with the blood of his victims, before tainting the pool with dark magic. A drop of his own blood was the final ingredient. Anyone who drinks from the pool will become completely subservient if turned within 12 hours.

Setup



appearance and welcomes them in with a simple, "Enter and tell me what I can do for you."

Perception 18: Once you enter the altar room, the pool before this man is obviously filled with blood.

Perception 30: Even from the anteroom the smell of tainted blood is clear.

Religion 22: While many of the original engravings are not clear, this was once a temple of good gods. A foul air now taints it.

Religion 32: This man shows the signs of one who is no longer among the living.

Skill Challenge

Andragen tries his best to lure the PCs into some kind of deal. He offers them information, and access to powerful magic items. Even though there are clear signs of evil doings, Andragen is nothing but polite and charming. If

The players may have sought out Andragen in order to secure his services, or they may just be seeking shelter for the night. Either way, when they enter the temple, they find a well dressed man leaning against the altar, a rapier at his side. He does not seem at all surprised at their

the players choose to deal with him diplomatically they enter a skill challenge.

The primary skills for the challenge are Bluff and Diplomacy (DC 32). Knowledge skills may also be appropriate if the players are looking to give information as payment or are attempting to judge the worth of Andragen's information. Any skill that seems more creative than reasonable should be assigned a DC 41, or not be allowed. The players need 10 successes before 3 failures.

[Optional Rule] Variable Difficulty: Andragen makes his own Bluff or Diplomacy check at the start or each round of negotiations. A success adds +2 to the DC the PCs need for a success. Failure lowers the DC by -2.

Success means Andragen agrees to the exchange and welcome's them back in two weeks time so that he may deliver completely. He will attempt to get a player to sip from a cup of blood to seal the deal. If the players accept he will follow them, in Mist Form, and attack within the next ten hours, hoping to turn whomever drank. If the players decline, he will finish the deal as promised, knowing they will likely be back and may prove valuable in other ways.

Failure means Andragen has grown bored, frustrated or has determined that words will simply not get him what he wants. He attacks the party, using the first couple of rounds to determine who is the most valuable. He will leave two party members conscious once defeated to turn into vampires later. The rest are expendable.

Features

The room is not lit. Andragen sees perfectly well in the dark and knows some of his clients prefer as little attention as possible. Anyone needing to see will likely bring their own light.

The two side vestibules have been cleared out of furniture and debris, leaving only one bench in each, in case a party needs to discuss things privately while making a deal.

The southern side of the altar room contains two more benches and to the north is an altar. The altar and benches are difficult terrain but grant +1 to hit rolls against any target not on a raised level.

In the center is a u-shaped trough filled with blood. Each square the trough occupies counts as difficult terrain.

All doors are unlocked. The ceiling is 30 ft high in the altar room. In all other rooms the ceiling is 10 ft high.

Tactics

Andragen is far more powerful than most vampires but not nearly as arrogant as many. He is a skilled fighter and knows it, but can rarely be goaded into under thinking a situation.

He will split his focus on two opponents at a time. If marked, he accepts the challenge and will focus on that target solely. If he has difficulty hitting a target consistently he will make that target the focus of his dominating gaze. Once dominated, he can move on to other targets.

As a more advanced vampire, he can use his bite often, and does so in order to supplement his regeneration. It's hardly an excuse for being

too forward so often will give a simple "Thank you", "Excuse me" or "You are too kind" after feeding.

If his total hit points drops below 200 he will use Mist Form and attempt to flee.

[Optional Rule] The Fury of Mike Shea: If at the start of his turn, Andragen is under any status effects he can choose to lose 100 hp and make a save against any one effect as free action.

Andragen, Vampire Lord		Level 22 Solo Skirmisher
Medium natural humanoid (undead)		XP 20750
HP 1040; Bloodied 520		Initiative +20
AC 38; Fortitude 35, Reflex 34, Will 36		Perception +18
Speed 8, climb 6 (spider climb)		Darkvision
Immune disease, poison; Resist 20 necrotic; Vulnerable 10 radiant		
Action Points 2; Saving Throws +5		
Traits		
Burned by Sunlight (radiant)		
Whenever Andragen starts its turn in direct sunlight, it takes 20 radiant damage.		
Regeneration		
Andragen regains 20 hit points whenever it starts its turn and has at least 1 hit point. When Andragen takes radiant damage, its regeneration does not function on its next turn.		
Standard Actions		
✓ Rapier (weapon) • At-Will		
Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +29 vs. AC		
Hit: 2d8+14 damage.		
Special: Crits on a roll of 18-20.		
✓ Bite (healing) • At-Will		
Attack: Melee 1 (one dazed, dominated, stunned, or unconscious creature); +29 vs. AC		
Hit: 4d8+25 damage, and Andragen regains 35 hit points.		
✓ Staggering Flurry (weapon) • At-Will		
Effect: Andragen makes three rapier attacks. If each of these attacks hit, then the last target is dazed till the end of its next turn. Andragen may make a bite attack against this target as a free action.		
Minor Actions		
↗ Dominating Gaze (charm) • Recharge 5		
Attack: Ranged 5 (one creature); +27 vs. Will		
Hit: The target is dominated (save ends).		
Mist Form (polymorph) • Recharge 5		
Effect: Andragen becomes insubstantial and gains fly 12. Andragen cannot attack. This effect lasts for 1 hour or until the Andragen ends it as a minor action.		
Triggered Actions		
⊗ Is that best you got? • Immediate Interrupt		
Trigger: Andragen is hit by an attack		
Effect: Andragen gets +2 to his defense against the attack. If Andragen is no longer hit, he may shift 2 squares and make the following attack.		
Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +27 vs Fortitude		
Hit: 2d10+12 damage and the target is dazed till the end of its next turn.		
Skills Arcana +21, Diplomacy +23, Insight +23, Religion +21		
Str 30 (+21)	Dex 25 (+18)	Wis 24 (+18)
Con 26 (+19)	Int 20 (+16)	Cha 25 (+18)
Alignment Evil	Languages Common, Elven, Giant, Primordial	