The Ashmadai are well connected. In the past few decades—before and after the cataclysm—its members burrowed deep into every organization in Neverwinter. Now no one really knows who is a loyal friend and who is a devil-worshiping enemy.

Ashmadai cultists come from all walks of life—poor or wealthy, male or female, any race or creed. Ashmadai’s extensive network. Even if the heroes defeat two sects should be difficult for the heroes throughout the campaign and can be used in multiple ways, including as raging zealots, insidious spies, or seductive would-be allies. If the characters can infiltrate a branch of the organization, perhaps posing as potential members, they might learn about the Ashmadai’s operations. They probably won’t learn a lot, given the cult’s layered organization, but certain knowledge of the Ashmadai’s bases, operations, or procedures could help dismantle the cult or blackmail its members into working for the adventurers’ benefit.

Either of the two sects should be difficult for characters to eliminate, especially given the Ashmadai’s vast network. Even if the heroes defeat Mordai and Favria, agents of Ashmadai could keep popping up throughout the campaign.

The Ashmadai still pays lip service to Thay, but it advances plots of its own through Mordai Vell’s subter branch of the cult. Members of the other Ashmadai cult are little more than thugs, loyal only to Mordai and his chosen representative, Favria.

By Hook or by Crook

As befits servants of Ashmadai, the supreme master of the Nine Hells, Ashmadai cultists seek to control Neverwinter, either through intimidation and blackmail. Lacking the numbers and individual power to loot Lord Neverember’s thugs, the cult cannot yet operate openly in the city. Therefore, Mordai Vell uses a pod system to manage his sect and shroud it from prying eyes. The highest-ranking members report separately to Mordai and do not know one another’s identities. Some has his or her own pod whose cultists report separately to that individual—and so on down through the ranks. Each higher-ranking member regularly assigns tasks to inferior cultists without disclosing the larger scheme. Many of these tasks involve recruiting young nobles and merchant scions who are easily swayed by promises of power, wealth, or influence.

Recently, Mordai has become more aggressive, instructing his followers to mark shellacked buildings and corpses with the sign of Ashmodeus. By intimidating the community in this way, Mordai intends to counteract those who question the way of genuine rulin. Favria disapproves of this strategy but can’t ignore its success. The townfolk are increas-ingly fearful of what the symbol represents, and they more readily cooperate with cultists’ demands.

Theme Tie-In

The heroes might be approached through subtle channels for recruitment into the cult, particularly if a devil’s pawn, a Neverwinter noble, or some other well-born individual is among their ranks. An induc- tion involves dark rituals and, of course, the telltale branding of Ashmodeus.

Resist the Aboleths

The Ashmadai are in a turf war for Neverwinter, and Mordai is determined to make sure the city falls to him and not the aboleths. Specifically, the Ashmadai seeks to manipulate Chas in southeast Neverwinter. If possible, Mordai wants to seal it shut. Until then, cultists actively hamper the Abolethic Sovereignty’s efforts to turn citizens into mind slaves (only Ashmadai should be people’s masters), and they make a special priority to drive out or kill known aboleth agents in the city. When the heroes come to the Ashmadai’s notice, enlisting their aid in these tasks—either through manip- ulation or open negotiations—becomes a high priority.

Outmaneuver Thay

Ashmadai cultists are adept at applying pressure to gain what they want. In particular, they want to turn the tables on Szass Tam by recruiting the scepter (which they believe Valindra has). They also covet Valindra’s phylactery because they’d like to pay back her abuses in kind. With either item in their possession—preferably both—the Ashmadai leaders are confident they’ll finally be able to throw off Thay for good and establish the cult as the dominant force in Neverwinter. Little do they know that Szass Tam again has the scepter. Valindra’s phylactery is discussed on page 108.

Kidnap Mortal Souls

Few Ashmadai devil worshippers have much power individually. But when they ritually combine their strength, they summon a demon. Thus, cultists assign imps, burning devils, legion devils, and others to bring chaos, devastation, and despair to their foes and people they just don’t like. Rituals to summon these fiends involve massive bloodletting.

Because they’re Ashmodeus’s devotees, the cultists have a unique pact with the Nine Hells. Every time the Ashmadai summons a devil, it must also bind a mortal creature to the essence of a devil. Thus, Ashmadai thugs regularly kidnap victims from across the region and deliver them to the heroes (from pens that let higher-ranking members butchers and necromancers) or do devil-spirit bindings. They might be possible to rescue a possessed individual, but the longer they dwell inside a mortal body, the more the devil’s power becomes their own. Within days, it is fit only for an unclean spirit.

You can run possess individuals, however, if you want. Perhaps their appearances don’t change, but infernal soul overruns their bodies. You could apply a tem- plate or a monster theme, or pair the victims’ bodies with devils’ statistics.

WHAT THE DEVIL . . . ?

Ashmodeus’s plans for Neverwinter are whatever you want them to be. The ruler of the Nine Hells might want to establish dominance in Neverwinter as the cornerstone of a growing mortal empire. Or perhaps plans to build a proper enclave to found a new religious order, starting with the Ashmadai, or raise an army of cumber, (Monster Manual 3). Maybe his designs extend beyond Neverwinter and echo those of the Abolethic Sovereignty—domi- nation primal targeted in Gauntlgrym. Or perhaps Ashmodeus is playing a deeper game and intends to use the thesis’s involvement with Thay to discover a way to usurp Szass Tam.

RELATIONSHIPS

Being a secret society deeply interested in cloak-and-dagger work, the Ashmadai keeps close tabs on other organizations operating in the city. New Neverwinter: The Ashmadai try to corrupt New Neverwinter supporters at every opportunity. Cultists haven’t been able to sway Mayor Sonan Galt, so they’ve begun focusing on the Mintarn mercenaries instead. Mordai Vell has his suspicions about Galt, but the sect leader wants more evidence before he makes the mayor for fate. For now, Mordai is working on General Sabine, whom he regularly invites to his estate. Ultimately, the devil-worshipers...
Mordai Vell, Patriarch of Asmodeus

The Ashmadai's vibrant leader smolders with the sort of confidence only a god's favorite mortal can know. Tall and dark, Mordai has luminous gold eyes even though most tielings boast red or black ones. Charisma practically drips from him, setting all around him off their guard. His obvious wealth doesn't hurt, either. As the last heir of a noble family (one whose holdings remained remarkably intact after the cataclysm), he exerts great influence over Neverwinter's economy and politics.

Mordai is avaricious and cunning. He pursues whatever interests him, regardless of how far he must reach. He trusts in his combination of charm, status, wealth, and service to Asmodeus to gain him what he wants.

Mordai is a smooth operator—charming, rich, and always keen on how he might ally with new acquaintances and use them. The devil worshiper is generous, appealing, slick, and flirtatious when it suits his purposes. He rarely reveals his true loyalties—and only to select initiates and high-ranking cultists.

Mordai leads the Ashmadai sect that is more liberal in its interpretation of Asmodeus's edicts. Its cultists have little loyalty to Thay (or to anyone else, for that matter). Mordai sees even Asmodeus as a means to an end rather than as his master.

The cult leader lies as easily and smoothly as other people breathe. Dissembling amuses him, and he crafts intrigues interwoven with truths so well that even his closest allies cannot tell when he intends treachery.

Recently, this penchant for treachery has manifested in secret meetings with a duergar named Nimor Ironvoice (page 131). The duergar claims to know where to find an exotic metal known as hell-thorn and wants to sell supplies of it to Mordai. The metal is easily imbued with infernal enchantments and would prove valuable to the cult. Mordai has had the duergar followed, but Nimor is careful to prevent the leader from discovering where he gets the metal.

ASHMADAI ENCOUNTERS

The Ashmadai are everywhere, employing seemingly innocuous agents (either through bribery or blackmail) and monsters alike. Its actual members—all boasting Asmodeus's hellfire-etched brand—are masters of deceit and treachery, attacking when foes are weak or unsuspecting.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Creature</th>
<th>Level and Role</th>
<th>Source</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fell Court Creep</td>
<td>2 Minion Brute</td>
<td>MVN</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tar Devil Harrier</td>
<td>3 Artillery</td>
<td>MVN</td>
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<tr>
<td>Seared Devil</td>
<td>3 Brute</td>
<td>MVN</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tar Devil Brawler</td>
<td>3 Brute</td>
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<tr>
<td>Imp</td>
<td>3 Lurker</td>
<td>MV</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fell Court Creep</td>
<td>3 Minion Skirmisher</td>
<td>MVN</td>
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<tr>
<td>Infernal Armor Animus</td>
<td>3 Minion Soldier</td>
<td>MM2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fell Court Heilimage</td>
<td>4 Artillery</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hellfire Warlock</td>
<td>4 Artillery</td>
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<tr>
<td>Branded Zealot</td>
<td>4 Brute</td>
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<tr>
<td>Burning Devil</td>
<td>4 Minion Skirmisher</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tar Devil Guard</td>
<td>4 Soldier</td>
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<tr>
<td>Finshreik Devil</td>
<td>5 Controller</td>
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<tr>
<td>Spined Devil</td>
<td>5 Skirmisher</td>
<td>MM</td>
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<tr>
<td>Human Transmuter</td>
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<td>Human Thug</td>
<td>7 Minion Skirmisher</td>
<td>MV</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cambion Hellward</td>
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<td>Human Duellist</td>
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<td>Pain Devil</td>
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<tr>
<td>Succubus</td>
<td>9 Controller</td>
<td>MV</td>
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<tr>
<td>Chained Cambion 10 Controller</td>
<td>MM3</td>
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Favria, Dwarf Assassin

If Mordai is the beautiful face of the Ashmadai, Favria represents its uglier reality—as the whip-scars across her face attest. Born as a slave to a group of Asmodeus-worshiping duergar, she escaped as a young adult after orchestrating a riot. Despite the abuses she suffered under the duergar, she has retained a vestige of her masters' tyrannical faith.

Some years later, Favria made her way to Neverwinter in search of Gauntlgrym. There she found kindred souls in the form of the Ashmadai. Over time, she intimidated many of the group's members into lining up behind her. With the city as a supply base, she continues to search for the lost dwarven city, which she intends to find and claim for her infernal master.

But she has other responsibilities as well. Hers is the face the Ashmadai shows to Valindra Shadowmantle, whom she believes holds the cult's coveted scepter of Asmodeus. Unlike Mordai, Favria knows what their god's relic can do. And playing the obsessive servant doesn't ruffle her feathers; she has plenty of practice. One day soon, she intends to slit some throats and claim her prize.

Mordai's complete opposite, Favria has no patience for the highbrow dance that nobles and politicians frequently engage in. If she sees a problem, she picks...
setup camp in the ruins of thunder tree. From there, staying in the city for long periods. Instead, she has his efforts, which have gained the Ashmadai many brutal and zealous, preferring to solve their problems who abused her could overcome her good sense. Were she to find out, she might seek alliance with Fimbrul devil.

**Fimbrul Devil**

A Fimbrul devil spreads winter wherever it goes, sapping life from warm flesh. It hails from Cania or Nexus, the Hells’ eighth and ninth layers. Foes who survive a battle with a Fimbrul devil suffer persistent chills for years.

**Seared Devil**

Resembling a horribly burned humanoid, a Seared devil crackles as it hurls its charred body at foes. The impact propels a cloud of ash into the air as the fiend’s stink sends bile up enemy throats. Jealousy fuels its actions, and it snarls as it races toward the freshest uncooked bodies.

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**Branded Zealot**

Branded zealots make up the bulk of the initiated Ashmadai. They are unyielding in their drive to serve Amosude, drawing power from the soul-deep brands that mark their nefarious covenants. A typical branded zealot has little patience and a vicious temper, making the cultist easy to goad into a fight.

**Favilia**

Medium natural humanoid, dwarf

HP 66: Bloodied 33

AC 16, Fortitude 17, Reflex 18, Will 16

Perception +4

Speed 6

**Standard Actions**

- Bladed Hand Crossbow (weapon) + At-Will
  - Effect: Favilia can shift 1 square before or after the attack.
  - Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +10 vs. AC
  - Hit: 2d6 +3 damage, or 1d4 +3 if Favilia has combat advantage against the target.

- Poisoned Bolt (poison, weapon) + At-Will
  - Attack: Ranged 10 (one creature); +10 vs. AC
  - Hit: 2d6 + 3 damage, and ongoing 1 poison damage (save ends).

- Dual Assault + Recharge if neither attack hits
  - Attack: Favilia uses bladed hand crossbow and poisoned bolt.

**Equipment**

- Leather armor, 2 hand crossbows, 20 bolts

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**Hellfire Warlock**

Medium natural humanoid, human

HP 68: Bloodied 24

AC 18, Fortitude 17, Reflex 15, Will 16

Perception +3

Speed 6

**Standard Actions**

- Hellfire Affinity
  - The warlock has a +2 bonus to all defenses against attacks made by creatures taking ongoing fire damage.

- Hellfire Chain (fire) + At-Will
  - Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +9 vs. AC
  - Hit: 2d6 + 4 fire damage, and ongoing 5 fire damage (save ends).

- Hellfire Flail (fire, implement) + At-Will
  - Attack: Ranged 10 (one creature); +9 vs. Reflex
  - Hit: 1d8 + 4 fire damage, and ongoing 5 fire damage (save ends).

- Concussive Inferno (fire, force, implement) + Encounter
  - Attack: Close burst 2 (enemies in the burst); +7 vs. Fortitude
  - Hit: 2d6 + 2 fire and force damage, and the warlock pushes the target up to 2 squares and knocks it prone.

- Miss: Half damage, and the warlock pushes the target up to 2 squares.

**Moves**

- Ride the Fire (teleportation) + Recharge: SC 1E
  - Effect: The warlock teleports, swapping positions with a creature within 10 squares of that it is taking ongoing fire damage.

**Skills**

- Initiative +4
- Fortitude 16, 17, 16, 18
- Will 14, 16, 15, 16
- AC 18, 20, 17, 19
- HP 24, 48; Bloodied 45
- Initiative +3
- Fortitude 17, 16, 18, 19
- Will 17, 18, 19, 20
- AC 18, 20, 17, 19
- HP 24, 48; Bloodied 45

**Alignment**

- Common

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**Fimbrul Devil**

Medium natural humanoid (devil) XP 175

**Seared Devil**

Medium natural humanoid (devil) XP 150

**Ashmadai**

CHAPTER 3 | Factions and Foes

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**Ashmadai**

CHAPTER 3 | Factions and Foes

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**Ride the Fire (teleportation) + Recharge: SC 1E**

**Effect:** The warlock teleports, swapping positions with a creature within 10 squares of that it is taking ongoing fire damage.

**Skills:**
- Initiative +4
- Fortitude 16, 17, 16, 18
- Will 14, 16, 15, 16
- AC 18, 20, 17, 19
- HP 24, 48; Bloodied 45

**Alignment:**
- Common

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**Seared Devil**

Resembling a horribly burned humanoid, a Seared devil crackles as it hurls its charred body at foes. The impact propels a cloud of ash into the air as the fiend’s stink sends bile up enemy throats. Jealousy fuels its actions, and it snarls as it races toward the freshest uncooked bodies.

**Seared Devil**

Medium natural humanoid (devil) XP 150

**Alignment:**
- Common

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**Equipment:**
- Leather armor, 2 hand crossbows, 20 bolts

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Resembling a horribly burned humanoid, a Seared devil crackles as it hurls its charred body at foes. The impact propels a cloud of ash into the air as the fiend’s stink sends bile up enemy throats. Jealousy fuels its actions, and it snarls as it races toward the freshest uncooked bodies.

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