SHOWDOWN AT THE BLACK LANTERNS

Encounter Level 19 (12,400 XP)

Setup

Lord Nill, nightwalker (N)
2 bodak death drinkers (B)
Han, oni storm strider (H)

This encounter springs from the “Dark General” hook associated with the House of Black Lanterns (Campaign Guide, page 78). It also introduces a treacherous oni named Han, one of Lord Nill’s allies. The encounter offers an interesting transition for characters high in the paragon tier who stop at the inn while en route to somewhere else. The colorful group of Black Lanterns patrons and the inn’s location-shifting ability give you a number of options for putting the adventurers on the path to their next quest, rescue mission, or monster-slaying adventure.

After nightfall, Lord Nill comes to collect tribute from Yarol, who owns the House of Black Lanterns. Yarol knows the visit is upcoming, and this time he has enlisted the aid of the characters to provide some resistance against the nightwalker.

Han, an oni storm strider, begins the encounter disguised as a child. Don’t place his figure before the adventurers, or they may mistake him for a child. It remains in place as Lord Nill and his cronies are waiting for a thing in the night.

When the adventurers step outside, read:

A storm has blown in since the Shadowfell’s sun set, and lightning and thunder crack over the land. You’d rather be inside, tucked in beside the hearth amid a motley assortment of patrons. Instead, you’re out in a waterlogged courtyard, awaiting a thing in the night.

Suddenly, lightning splits the sky, and you see your enemy: a dark creature in the vestiges of ceremonial armor, two gray-skinned creatures flanking him. In your minds, you hear, “Defenders of the Black Lanterns, Lord Nill shall punish your insolence!”

Perception Check

DC 33: In the darkness near the overhang of one of the balconies, you can make out a small, quiet form that appears to be a child. It remains in place as Lord Nill and his cronies brace for the upcoming fight.

Lord Nill, Nightwalker (N)

Large shadow humanoid (undead) XP 5,600

AC 32, Fortitude 32, Reflex 30, Will 32

Speed 8

Immune disease, poison; Resist 20 cold, 20 necrotic;
Vulnerable 20 radiant

Saving Throws +2; Action Points 1

Traits

★ Void Chill (cold, necrotic) ★ Aura 5
Any enemy that starts its turn in the aura takes 5 cold and necrotic damage.

Standard Actions

★ Slam (cold, necrotic) ★ At-Will
Attack: Melee 2 (one creature); +25 vs. AC
Hit: 2d12 +13 plus 2d8 cold and necrotic damage.

★ Finger of Death (necrotic) ★ Encounter
Attack: Ranged 5 (one bloodied creature); +21 vs. Fortitude
Hit: The target drops to 0 hit points.
Miss: The target takes necrotic damage equal to its healing surge value.

Minor Actions

★ Void Gaze (necrotic) ★ At-Will (1/round)
Attack: Close blast 5 (enemies in the blast); +23 vs. Will
Hit: 2d8 +7 necrotic damage, and the target is pushed up to 4 squares and takes a –2 penalty to all defenses (save ends).

Skills Stealth +20

Str 24 (+17) DEX 20 (+15) WIS 18 (+14)
Con 22 (+16) INT 17 (+13) CHA 24 (+17)
Alignment evil Languages Common, telepathy 20

2 Bodak Death Drinkers (B)

Medium shadow humanoid (undead) XP 2,000 each

HP 175; Bloodied 87

AC 32, Fortitude 31, Reflex 30, Will 31

Speed 6

Immune disease, poison; Resist 20 necrotic;
Vulnerable 10 radiant

Traits

★ Agonizing Gaze (fear, necrotic) ★ Aura 5
Any enemy that uses a radiant attack power while in the aura takes 10 necrotic damage.

Death Drinker

Whenever a living enemy within 5 squares of the bodak drops to 0 hit points or fewer, the bodak gains 10 temporary hit points.

Standard Actions

★ Death Touch (necrotic) ★ At-Will
Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +23 vs. AC
Hit: 3d8 +13 necrotic damage, and the target is immobilized and weakened (save ends).
First Failed Saving Throw: The target is immobilized and weakened (save ends both).
Miss: The target is slowed until the end of its next turn.

★ Vision of Mortality ★ At-Will
Attack: Ranged 10 (one immobilized and weakened creature); +21 vs. Fortitude
Hit: The target loses a healing surge and is stunned until the end of its next turn. It is no longer immobilized and weakened.

Str 22 (+15) DEX 21 (+14) WIS 16 (+12)
Con 23 (+15) INT 10 (+9) CHA 23 (+15)
Alignment evil Languages Common

Equipment plate armor
Tactics

Furious that mortals would dare interfere with him, Lord Nill blasts the interlopers with void gaze before charging the seemingly toughest opponent. The nightwalker maintains his focus on that character, using void gaze to keep other combatants from interfering. He refuses to use finger of death on a worthy opponent, even when in a dire position, but he thinks nothing of shooting the death blow at a magic user, the whole lot of whom he considers dishonorable.

Meanwhile, the bodaks guard Lord Nill’s back as he fights. Boggled by the nightwalker’s sense of honor, the bodaks actively put down injured and vulnerable foes, lapping up their final flickers of mortality. If Lord Nill dies, the death drinkers lose all sense of tactics, and each attacks the nearest enemy.

Han maintains his child’s guise until the party’s melee combatants are engaged. Then he drops deceptive veil, resumes his normal Large size (place Han’s figure at this point and see the read-aloud text below), and attacks enemies who are using ranged attacks. He especially enjoys grabbing weaklings and teleporting them to inconvenient locations. If Lord Nill dies, Han changes his tactics to total defense and teleports from the battle.

When Han sheds his disguise, read:

With a startling howl, the child’s flesh begins to warp. Within a heartbeat, a massive ogrelike beast gripping a nasty spiked chain uncurls where the waif stood moments before.

Features of the Area

Illumination: Darkness.

Bell Tower: A large bell tower tops the inn’s southeast corner. When Lord Nill is first bloodied, the bell peals, and the bodaks, which fear the sound, are dazed (save ends).

The Courtyard: The cobblestones of the Black Lanterns courtyard provide no impediment to movement. The area is surrounded by 30-foot-high walls on the west, south, and east sides, and a roof overhangs the entire courtyard.

Balconies: The west, north, and east sides of this area have balconies that can be accessed from the stairways on either side of the entrance. The floor of each balcony is 4 squares (20 feet) above the courtyard.

Entrance: The narrow corridor leading off the edge of the map to the north is the entrance to the House of Black Lanterns. The squares immediately south of the inn’s front door are steps that lead down into the courtyard.

Stairways: The steps leading to the entrance and the stairs that provide access to the balconies are difficult terrain, regardless of whether a creature is ascending or descending.

Treasure: When Lord Nill is vanquished, he disappears, leaving behind an uncommon magic item of the party’s level.

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### Han, Oni Storm Strider (H)

**Level 20 Skirmisher**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Large natural humanoid</th>
<th>HP 190; Blooded 95</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AC 34, Fortitude 31, Reflex 33, Will 32</td>
<td>Initiative +20</td>
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<tr>
<td>Speed 6, teleport 6</td>
<td>Perception +20</td>
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**TACTICS**

**Binding Chains (teleportation)**

Whenever Han teleports, he can teleport with him any creature he is grabbing. The teleported creature appears in a square adjacent to the square Han teleported to.

**STANDARD ACTIONS**

1. **Spiked Chain (lightning, thunder, weapon) **
   - **At-Will**
   - **Effect:** Before or after the attack, the oni teleports up to its speed.
   - **Attack:** Melee 3 (one creature); +23 vs. AC
   - **Hit:** 5d8 + 5 lightning and thunder damage, and the oni pushes the target up to 2 squares. If the attack hits a creature the oni has grabbed, the creature also takes 2d10 extra lightning damage, and the grab ends.

2. **Storm Portal (lightning, teleportation, thunder)**
   - **Recharge 11**
   - **Effect:** The oni teleports up to 3 squares.
   - **Trigger:** An enemy hits the oni.
   - **Effect (Immediate Reaction):** The oni teleports up to 3 squares.

**MINOR ACTIONS**

1. **Deceptive Veil (illusion) **
   - **At-Will**
   - **Effect:** The oni disguises itself to appear as a Medium or Large humanoid until it uses deceptive veil again or until it drops to 0 hit points. Other creatures can make a DC 39 Insight check to discern that the form is an illusion.

2. **Skills**
   - **Bluff +22, Stealth +23**
   - **Str 23 (+16), Dex 27 (+18), Wis 20 (+15)**
   - **Con 22 (+16), Int 16 (+13), Cha 24 (+17)**

3. **Alignment**
   - chaotic evil

4. **Languages**
   - Common, Giant

5. **Equipment**
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