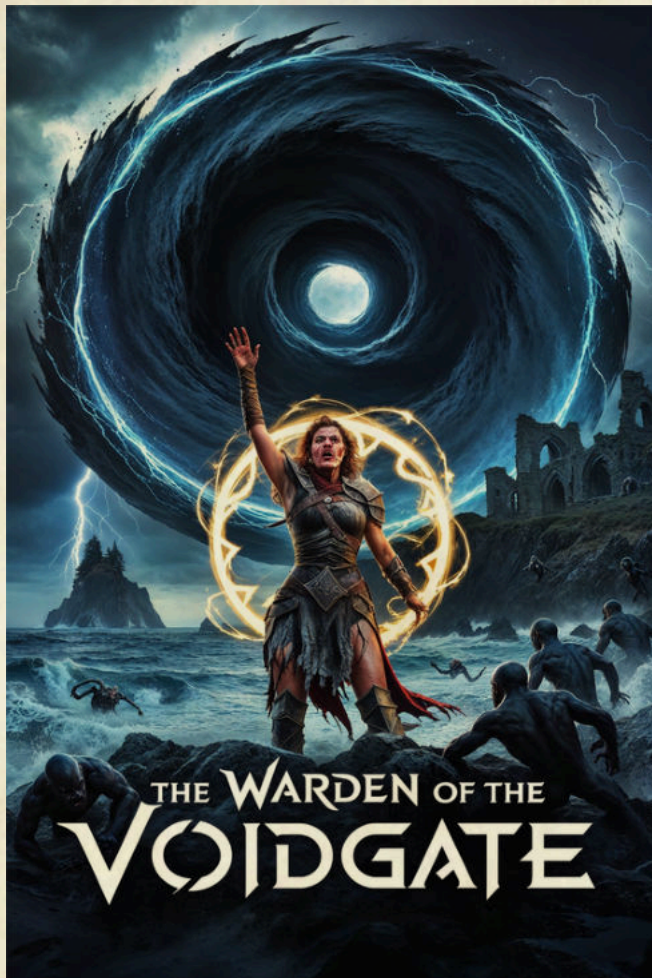


THE WARDEN OF THE VOIDGATE



CAMPAIGN OVERVIEW

Title: The Warden of the Voidgate

Theme/Genre: Dark Fantasy, Mystery, Cosmic Horror

Tone: Foreboding and suspenseful, with glimpses of heroism

Target Level for Players: Level 5

Expected Duration: 2 hours

Player Focus Preferences:

- Combat: High
- Roleplay: Medium
- Exploration: Medium

BACKSTORY AND SETTING

WORLD OVERVIEW

At the edge of known reality lies a great rift known as the **Voidgate**—a massive, swirling portal of inky blackness edged with starlight. Steeped in enigma, the Voidgate has been sealed by the **Rune Wardens** for centuries, a secretive order devoted to imprisoning the horrors that lie beyond. Recently, the nearby region of **Aetherhold** has been plagued by unrelenting storms, distorted constellations, and alien whispers, making the people fear that the Voidgate is weakening.

LOCAL AREA: AETHERHOLD

The adventure begins in **Vetheris Keep**, an ancient, half-ruined castle perched on a jagged, storm-lashed coastline. It stands in the shadow of the Voidgate, its twisting corridors whispering with secrets of the long-lost Rune Wardens.

- Surrounding the keep are sparse farmlands, mostly abandoned due to deteriorating conditions.
- Strange lights have been observed near the Voidgate on stormy nights.
- The **Voidgate** is accessible via the **Ebon Crawl**, a series of dangerous coastal caverns.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

The Rune Wardens used an artifact, the **Seal of the Seven Stars**, to bind the Voidgate shut. This seal required constant vigilance, but its custodians vanished centuries ago, and the keep passed into the hands of oblivious local lords. Recently, a defector from the Rune Wardens, **Kalvatrix Deyne**, now known as **The Warden**, emerged. She believes opening the Voidgate is essential for the world's salvation. Kalvatrix has been siphoning energy from the seal, weakening it, and summoning ancient horrors.

IMPORTANT NPCs

1. **Garric Halveth:** A rugged outlander and monster hunter, experienced in dealing with the strange creatures now emerging. He is wary but becomes a stalwart ally if shown respect.
 - **Motivation:** Protect the region from supernatural threats.
2. **Lady Elira Talvayne:** Ruler of Vetheris Keep and Aetherhold, she is resourceful yet terrified of the Voidgate's power.
 - **Motivation:** To safeguard her people and maintain control.
3. **Kalvatrix Deyne (The Warden):** A defected Rune Warden, she believes the Voidgate's power should be unleashed, hoping to transcend humanity.
 - **Motivation:** Open the Voidgate, whatever the cost.

PLOT HOOK

OPENING SCENE

The party is summoned to **Vetheris Keep** by Lady Elira Talvayne. The keep is dim, flickering with violet candlelight. As they approach her, she paces anxiously. Her voice is tinged with fear as she explains the ominous whispers in the wind and the appearance of monstrosities from the nearby caves. Suddenly, a bloodied scout stumbles in, gasping news of Kalvatrix's followers performing a ritual to open the Voidgate.

PRIMARY OBJECTIVE

Stop Kalvatrix Deyne from opening the Voidgate and releasing the horrors beyond.

KEY LOCATIONS

LOCATION 1: VETHERIS KEEP

Atmosphere:

A storm-battered fortress of crumbling stone walls and leaking roofs. The place hums with tension, charged by recent attacks and ancient secrets.

NPCs:

- **Lady Elira:** Provides information about the Voidgate and the attack led by Kalvatrix.
- **Garric:** Offers navigational aid to the Ebon Crawl.

Possible Encounters:

- **Combat:** Kalvatrix's followers ambush the keep, aiming to assassinate Lady Elira. Cult Fanatics and Void-Touched Wolves (Dire Wolves modified with shadowy appearance) storm in.
- **Clue:** After the battle, the party discovers a torn map revealing routes through the Ebon Crawl.

LOCATION 2: THE EBON CRAWL

Atmosphere:

A labyrinth of jagged sea caverns, echoing with the slosh of distant waves. Faintly glowing glyphs suggest the presence of past Rune Wardens.

Puzzle:

A Rune Gate blocks progress. A faded riddle hints at the sequence of glyph activation.

- **Mechanics:** Intelligence (Arcana) or Wisdom (Insight) checks can offer hints. A wrong sequence triggers a trap, summoning Void Elementals. Solving the puzzle opens the Rune Gate to the Voidgate Chamber.

Encounters:

- **Social:** An NPC trapped behind the Rune Gate claims to help but harbors loyalty to Kalvatrix (Insight DC 16 to detect deception).

- **Combat:** Star Spawn Manglers block the exit, requiring cunning and combat prowess to defeat.

LOCATION 3: THE VOIDGATE CHAMBER

Atmosphere:

A cavern vast and windswept, dominated by the Voidgate. Shadows dance as Kalvatrix chants before the crumbling seal.

Encounters:

- **Final Boss Fight:** Confront Kalvatrix (Archmage stat block with Void spells); she summons Star Spawn Hulk and smaller Voidlings.
- **Environmental Hazard:** The cavern's instability causes rocks to fall (Dexterity saves required).

Climax: Defeat Kalvatrix and choose to reseal the Voidgate or let it collapse, each choice with profound consequences.

ENCOUNTERS AND CHALLENGES

1. Combat:

- **Kalvatrix's Followers:** Cult Fanatics and Void-Touched Wolves attack in waves.
- **Ebon Crawl Creatures:** Star Spawn Manglers and summoned Void Elementals pose significant threats.

2. Puzzle/Trap:

- Solve the Rune Gate puzzle by deciphering glyph sequences under pressure, risking summoning dangers.

3. Roleplay Choices:

- Gain allies or insight by winning over Lady Elira and Garric, influencing future events.

CLIMAX AND RESOLUTION

Final Challenge: Defeat Kalvatrix and halt her ritual, but the Voidgate's instability causes unpredictable challenges, demanding both quick thinking and bravery.

Stakes: Failure could unleash apocalyptic horrors, dramatically altering the world's fate.

Narrative Conclusion: If victorious, rewards await, along with gratitude from Lady Elira, offering titles and new opportunities.

REWARDS

LOOT

- **Sealkeeper's Ring (Uncommon Magical Item):** Provides bonuses to Arcana checks and Wisdom saves against cosmic threats.
- **Gold:** 500 gold pieces divided among the party.

STORY REWARDS

- Garner favor with Lady Elira and access future quests.
- Potentially join the Rune Warden society, opening future narrative paths.

SUPPORTING DETAILS

STAT BLOCKS

Kalvatrix Deyne - Adapt the Archmage with Void spell enhancements

Void-themed Enemies - Incorporate Star Spawn Hulk characteristics

MAPS

- **Vetheris Keep:** Strategic points and secrets for tactical play.
- **Ebon Crawl:** Include critical pathways and possible traps.
- **Voidgate Chamber:** Highlight collapsing platforms and enemy positions.

ATMOSPHERE SUGGESTIONS

- **Soundtrack:** Utilize ominous winds and subtle, creepy drones.
- **Player Handouts:** Distribute the Rune Warden map and a handwritten note from Lady Elira.

FLEXIBLE OUTCOMES

- **Allied with Kalvatrix:** Potential double-cross at the climax, offering a complex moral conundrum.
- **Voidgate Collapse:** Leads to a cataclysmic artifact, featuring in future campaigns.

POST-GAME WRAP-UP

- **Discussion Prompts:** Engage players with questions like “How was the battle’s tension?” and “Were you intrigued by the Voidgate mystery?”

This concludes “The Warden of the Voidgate,” a one-shot campaign designed to excite, challenge, and immerse players in a world teetering on the brink of cosmic catastrophe.