

# INTO THE EBON MIRROR

*Once there was a half-orc woman named Charra Lyn who rose above her humble beginnings to become a sorceress of great power and knowledge. But despite her vast power, she could not overcome her greatest enemy — herself. She believed that her soul had been tainted by the touch of her orcish father, and that this stain was preventing her from gaining access to her true mystical potential. And so she buried herself in the study of reality, of transmutation and wishes. She started to experiment with entirely new branches of magic, creating pocket universes — mirrors of the prime world, where she could experiment and twist reality without danger to others. Finally, she attempted to cast the orcish side of her spirit into one of her mirrors.*

*But as so often happens, something went wrong. Perhaps her calculations were off by a fraction, or she was missing a key component. Whatever the fault, it was compounded by the fact that the sorceress was mistaken about her problem to begin with. It was the human side of her soul that was holding her back, consumed as it was by bigotry and hatred; her orcish spirit was the better part of her. As it was, both sides were trapped within a magical mirror, in a universe shaped by her twisted soul.*

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## ADVENTURE OVERVIEW

In *The Ebon Mirror*, the characters are hired by an elven order called the Crucible of Osai that seeks out and destroys cursed artifacts. The party is asked to deliver a shipment of malignant relics to its leader, the Seer Osai-en-La, in an isolated elvish village. On the way the party finds the wreckage of the sorceress Charra Lyn's laboratory, and unbeknownst to the characters, they are drawn into a mirror world. As they continue on their mission, they will find that the rules of reality have changed. The laws of reason and magic have been twisted by the mind of the mad sorceress; old allies are now enemies, and reliable spells

and weapons are dangerously altered. The characters must find a path through the chaos before it destroys them.

It will take between eight to twelve hours to complete the story. The adventure can be easily broken into two sessions by stopping at the end of Chapter Three and saving Chapters Four through Six for a second session.

The intent of the module is to force the Player Characters (PCs) to come up with new solutions to traditional situations, as reliable spells and artifacts will not function in the expected manner within the world of the mirror. The adventure contains a combination of thought puzzles, role-playing challenges, and combat-oriented encounters, including an encounter in which the PCs must fight duplicates of themselves. This adventure could also be used as a resource for additional trips into mirror realities.

## CUSTOMIZATION AND PREPARATION

This scenario is designed to fit into almost any campaign world. The one center of civilization that is mentioned — the hamlet of Shareth-en-La — is an out-of-the-way location, and if no one has ever heard of it before, that's not surprising.

The most interesting part of *The Ebon Mirror* is the way in which it twists the PCs' usually reliable items and abilities, requiring the party to come up with new strategies. However, this requires a considerable amount of preparation on the part of the GM. Before running the first session of the game, do the following things:

- Get a copy of the character sheet for each character. This will make the following tasks easier to accomplish, and will be necessary when the players encounter their mirror duplicates in Chapter Five.
- For each PC, review the magical items that character possesses and determine how these will work in the mirror world. See Appendix



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Two for guidelines on converting magical objects.

- If the character is a sorcerer or bard, repeat this process for the character's spells, again referring to Appendix Two. Such characters have a limited selection of spells, but are better able to experiment and find ones that work effectively behind the mirror. If the character is a wizard, skim down his list of available spells and familiarize yourself with their effects as best you can. You don't know what spells a PC will choose to memorize, and it is best if you can have an effect ready on a moment's notice, instead of having to pause the action while you come up with the result.
- If the character is a cleric, consult Appendix Two to determine what her modified spheres will be in the mirror world. For clerics or paladins, pause to consider the nature of the character's patron god in the mirror world. How will humans or orcs refer to the god? What sort of spells will the god force upon the character? Compared to the unpredictable nature of arcane



## Scaling the Adventure

*The Ebon Mirror* is designed for a group of four to six characters, ranging between 8<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> level. It can be adjusted for groups of higher or lower level if necessary, but it would be unwise to try to run it with characters below 4<sup>th</sup> or above 12<sup>th</sup> level. The two most challenging encounters are self-balancing; the first involves the party fighting their own mirror images, while the second is a thought puzzle. The other major encounters can be adjusted as follows:

### “THE RAIDERS STRIKE!” (page 30)

*4<sup>th</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> Level* — 2 mirror elves, 2 mirror blink dogs

*6<sup>th</sup> to 7<sup>th</sup> Level* — 1 mirror halfling, 2 mirror elves, 2 mirror blink dogs

*11<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> Level* — 2 mirror halflings, 6 mirror elves, 6 mirror blink dogs

### “DEAD MEN DANCING” (page 36)

*4<sup>th</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> Level* — 1 sacred ghoul, 2 sacred skeletons

*6<sup>th</sup> to 7<sup>th</sup> Level* — 2 sacred ghouls, 4 sacred skeletons

*11<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> Level* — 5 sacred ghouls, 12 sacred skeletons, 1 sacred wraith

### “A CHALLENGE AT THE GATES” (page 45)

*4<sup>th</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> Level* — 1 sacred ghoul, 2 sacred skeletons

*6<sup>th</sup> to 7<sup>th</sup> Level* — 1 sacred ghoul, 3 sacred skeletons, 1 sacred wraith

*11<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> Level* — 4 sacred ghouls, 8 sacred skeletons, 2 sacred wraiths

### “THE WARBAND” (page 60)

*4<sup>th</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> Level* — 1 mirror dwarf, 1 mirror elf, 2 mirror blink dogs (no elemental)

*6<sup>th</sup> to 7<sup>th</sup> Level* — 1 mirror dwarf, 1 mirror blink dog, 1 large fire elemental

*11<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> Level* — 1 mirror dwarf, 4 mirror elves, 5 mirror blink dogs, 3 large fire elementals

### “A TRAITOR REVEALED” (page 52)

This encounter may also be too dangerous for a low-level group. You can either remove this encounter (allowing the party to reach the Seer Osai peacefully), lower the spy Jeja’s level, or use the fact that Jeja believes the PCs to be her allies to give them a strong initial advantage.

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The most important thing to consider when choosing to run this adventure for a group of lower- or higher-level characters is magic. One of the greatest challenges in *The Ebon Mirror* is learning the rules of magic within the mirror world. A low-level group may not have enough spells or magic items to fully experience this, and a lack of spell slots will limit casters’ ability to experiment and find spells that work to their advantage. On the other hand, a high-level group will mean more work for you, as they will have access to more magic items and more spells that you will need to convert.

magic, the challenge for a divine spellcaster is the fact that her god may give her spells she is not used to using. Come up with the list of spells the PC will receive as a result of prayer in the mirror world ahead of time; this will allow you to consider how you want to alter the character’s abilities.

- Druids and rangers are like wizards. Since you won’t control the spells they can select, think about the spells that they prefer to use and how these will be altered.
- It will also help to make notes about the characters’ altered combat abilities behind the mirror.

First, make a note of the normal armor class of each character. Then write down each character’s initial armor class behind the mirror, where all enchanted armor or equipment has its magical bonuses reversed. So a character with *bracers of armor* +4, a Dexterity bonus of +2, and a *large steel shield* +2 (which also has a +2 mundane armor bonus) normally gets a total AC of 20; the mirror world would change the enhancement bonus of the bracers to -4, and the shield to a -2 penalty, resulting in a modified AC of 8. Next, note the character’s best possible armor class in the mirror world — the AC he is likely to