BG2:EE: Story Tweaks (1.1)

The following is a design document outlining the proposed content for the BG2:EE Story Tweaks mod.

The purpose of this mod is to address oversights in Beamdog's creative contributions to "Baldur's Gate 2", specifically with regards to Dorn il-Khan and Hexxat. The scale of these proposed changes is deliberately small and limited, to interfere as minimally as possible with existing game content; these tweaks are only meant to close plotholes and resolve inconsistencies.

As I have absolutely no technical knowledge when it comes to modding, this document has been written from a purely creative perspective. I would appreciate feedback as to the feasibility of these proposed changes, as anything too complicated can be pared down or simplified for smoother implementation.

Contents

DORN IL-KHAN 2
- The Abduction 3
- The Corrupted Apple 4
- The Epilogues 5

HEXXAT 7
- Cabrina 8
- Korkorran's Deal 9
- The Epilogues 11

DORN IL-KHAN

Dorn is an excellent addition to Team Evil, and his SoA content offers several opportunities for the player to express agency in terms of how you negotiate your relationship with the blackguard: do you rein him in? Do you let him run wild? Do you influence him more towards freedom or power?

The problem is that, while the central choice at Resurrection Gorge *seems* to provide a definitive branching point for Dorn's storyline, there is no variation at all in terms of possible outcomes. Dorn gets the same epilogue whether he's a blackguard or not (which means the player has no reason whatsoever to choose freedom), nor is there any difference between having him serve Ur-Gothoz or Azothet (aside from the bonus item the player receives if you side with Ur-Gothoz).

To address these issues, the Story Tweaks for Dorn consist of three components: **The Abduction, The Corrupted Apple** and **The Epilogues**.

The Abduction

This scenario is only triggered if Dorn is a fallen blackguard **and** romanced.

Without the protection of a patron, there's no reason Bodhi should fail to kidnap Dorn. Mod NPCs such as Kelsey and Nathaniel include abduction scripts, so I'm assuming this is broadly possible from a coding perspective.

The scenario should proceed just as it does with Aerie, Viconia, Jaheira and Anomen: Bodhi teleports Dorn away upon your return to the Graveyard District in chapter 6; upon confronting Bodhi in her lair, a vampire Dorn fights at her side; when the battle is over, placing Dorn's body and Bodhi's heart in the container at the Temple Ruins will resurrect Dorn.

(See **DORN: SCRIPT** for specific dialogue changes/additions.)

The Corrupted Apple

This scenario is only triggered if **Azothet** is Dorn's patron. (If Ur-Gothoz is Dorn's patron, the scenario will play out as it normally does.)

During Dorn's ToB quest in Lunia, Azothet will order him to corrupt the Holy Tree. Doing so will cause a **Corrupted Apple** to appear in Dorn's inventory. This item should resemble the Silver Apples you can normally loot from the Tree, but it should be **unusable and non-consumable**.

The following journal entry will appear:

Journal entry: A dark gift

Corrupting the holy tree has had an interesting effect on its fruit. An obsidian apple has appeared in Dorn's pack, bearing the signature of Azothet. It seems Dorn's infernal master has rewarded him, though it is still unclear how this tainted fruit may be used.

Item description:

Corrupted Apple: A faintly evil aura emanates from this fruit. Its skin is hard and polished as marble, and it seems to swallow any light it catches.

The next time you go to the Pocket Plane, Cespenar will detect the Corrupted Apple and say: "Oooh, stinky apple! Smells like bad eggs! Can make unholy reaver unholier!"

Combining the Corrupted Apple with **Ir'revrykal +5** (the blackguard-only sword looted from the githyanki in Watcher's Keep) and 5,000 GP will upgrade the sword:

Ir'revrykal +6
1d12 +6 ,+6 vs good creatures
Immunity to Charm and Poison
Dispel on Hit
10% chance of level drain on hit

The Epilogues

If Dorn is **romanced** and CHARNAME does **not** ascend:

To this day, tales of Dorn il-Khan and CHARNAME are told, both by parents whose unruly children need some discipline and those vile men and women who admired the malevolent pair's deeds. Their relationship was a tempestuous one, with each vying to control the other at every turn. Though they had successfully evaded the wrath of the gods, Dorn and CHARNAME would find it more difficult to escape mortal justice. Dorn was captured by a Doombringer of Hoar named Mercy Whitedove and was taken to Luskan, where he was tried for the mass slaughter at the village of Barrow. CHARNAME executed Dorn's daring and bloody escape, after which they spent several years avoiding Whitedove and other bounty hunters. Given their temperaments, the end of Dorn and CHARNAME's relationship was perhaps inevitable. After a final escape from the implacable Whitedove, the tension between them exploded into violence. Left with little choice, CHARNAME slew Dorn and disappeared into the shadows of history.

If Dorn is **romanced** and CHARNAME **ascends**:

A new variable should be attached to strings 96836 ("I won't. We shall wield a power supreme") and 96839 ("Hah! That's my man. Don't worry, Dorn: I will share it when the time comes.") Rather than default to the non-romanced ending if CHARNAME becomes a god, this variable will trigger the following epilogue.

For six days after CHARNAME's ascension, Dorn il-Khan raged across southern Tethyr, convinced his lover had betrayed him. But on the seventh dawn, as he awoke surrounded by the carnage of the previous night, the half-orc felt a power burning inside him that he had never known before. The new God of Murder had chosen PRO_HISHER first champion. Dorn wasted no time gathering followers and leading a bloody crusade against the Church of Cyric. With each violent purge, the Cult of CHARNAME increased in power and infamy, as did its Grand Inquisitor. Finally, swollen with pride and divine favor, Dorn was felled by a most unlikely alliance between the desperate Cyricists and the Order of the Radiant Heart. But it is said that since that day, a dark shadow stands vigilant beside the Throne of Blood…

If Dorn is a **blackguard**:

With no one to temper his wrath, it was inevitable that Dorn il-Khan would come to a bad end. Though he had escaped the wrath of the gods, there were others whose retribution could not be avoided. Hunted down and captured by a Doombringer of Hoar, Mercy Whitedove, Dorn was taken back to Luskan to stand trial. He was found guilty of the mass slaughter of every man, woman, and child in the village of Barrow, where his dark path began. Sentenced to death, Dorn broke free of the prison on three occasions before the sentence could be carried out. Twice, he was tracked down by Whitedove and returned. When they met for the third and last time, Dorn's patron commanded him to stand his ground, forcing Whitedove to slay the so-called "Butcher of Barrow". Tales of Dorn il-Khan were told for decades afterwards, both by

parents with unruly children in need of discipline and by those vile men and women who admired the half-orc's deeds.

If Dorn is a **fallen** blackguard:

With no one to temper his wrath, it was inevitable Dorn il-Khan would come to a bad end. Though he had escaped the wrath of the gods, there were others whose retribution could not be avoided. Hunted down and captured by a Doombringer of Hoar, Mercy Whitedove, the former blackguard was taken back to Luskan to stand trial. He was found guilty of the mass slaughter of every man, woman, and child in the village of Barrow, where his dark path began. Sentenced to death, Dorn broke free of the prison on three occasions before the sentence could be carried out. Twice, he was tracked down by Whitedove and returned. Rather than face her a third time, the half-orc fled towards the Spine of the World. He had not seen his homeland in years, but found that he could traverse the icy wasteland far more successfully than Whitedove. Dorn was never seen south of the Spine again, though tales of his exploits would inspire others to try their hand at infernal pacts. It never ended well for them.

HEXXAT

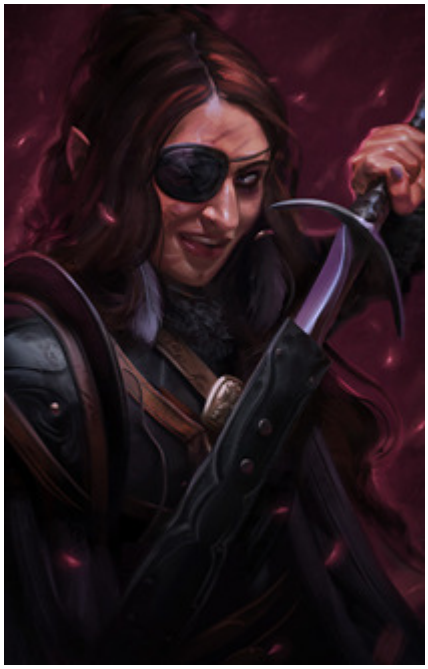
Of the four main Enhanced Edition characters, Hexxat is easily the most disappointing: her storyline begins with a brilliant bit of misdirection, and what follows is a frustrating sequence of contradictions and inconsistencies. Paradoxically, very little would be needed to get her to a far better place, as these proposed tweaks – **Cabrina, Korkorran's Deal** and **The Epilogues** – will hopefully demonstrate.

Cabrina

Let's start with something cosmetic. Cabrina knew Hexxat two hundred years ago, but no explanation is given for how this is possible, especially given L's stated dislike for undead agents.

To resolve this, **Cabrina's race and appearance should be changed to Elf, and String 82040 should be changed to "Watch your tone, elf."**

If possible, Cabrina should also be assigned this portrait, already contained in-game (for reasons that will be explained shortly):



One of the two outcomes for Hexxat's ToB quest will result in her permanent death. While there are story reasons to follow this path, the player has no reason to do so given the lack of any compensation for the loss of a party member.

To address this, allowing Hexxat to die will cause L to temporarily offer Cabrina's services to you, as thanks for bringing Korkorran to heel. Cabrina will stay with the party through to the end of ToB. Her stats are:

Lawful Evil Elf Bounty Hunter
STR: 17
DEX: 18
CON: 16
INT: 9
WIS: 11
CHA: 13

Cabrina will have a banter or two with the player, Imoen and/or Viconia, but she will not be a romance option. See **HEXXAT: SCRIPT** for details.

Korkorran's Deal

This is the most ambitious Story Tweak, and one that I'm sure will require the most work in terms of coding/programming. However, I believe it is the best and most efficient way to salvage Hexxat's character arc without starting from scratch.

The crux of understanding why this story fails lies in the confrontation with Korkorran. There is a false choice embedded in this scenario: if you accept Korkorran's offer, Hexxat instantly dies unless you convince her to reject her chance at mortality. But if you reject Korkorran's offer and accept L's, Hexxat will still instantly die unless you convince her to reject her chance at mortality. It's the same sequence repeated twice, for no reason whatsoever.

This tweak will add a **different outcome** if the player chooses to side with Korkorran. Hexxat is enveloped in a "transformation" effect, and the following changes occur:

1. Hexxat's portrait changes to her original concept art:



2. All color locations on Hexxat's paperdoll are changed to 0x88 (pure black):



3. Hexxat loses all vampire-related special abilities (Blood Drain, Children of the Night and Domination) in exchange for the Shadowdancer HLAs (Shadow Maze, Shadow Twin, Shadow Form).

4**.** To prevent interference with her appearance, the traits associated with Hexxat's amulet will be transferred over to a new item, a set of armor (also colored 0x88) which will be irremovable. The amulet will be destroyed in the transformation.

5. **Hexxat no longer requires the Cloak of Dragomir to travel during the day**. I know this is problematic in terms of lore, and I'm willing to explore other possibilities, but the idea I'm getting at here is similar to Dorn's scenario: Shadow-Hexxat should be more appealing to a powergamer, but that power comes at a significant cost to the character.

The Epilogues

This is meant to reflect the possible endgame states Hexxat may achieve.

If Hexxat **accepted** Korkorran's deal and became a Shadow:

Beyond her acquaintance with the Bhaalspawn CHARNAME, little is known of Hexxat, which is doubtless how she preferred it. Cabrina continued to tell stories about the vampire to new agents of Larloch - but replaced the cautionary tale of her loss in Dragomir's Tomb with the far more frightening story of her second fall, from vampire to shade, the price of betraying Larloch's trust. Decades later, tales would spread throughout Chult of the Faded Woman, a vengeful, demonic entity who targeted clerics of Ubtao and drained their bodies of life. Whether there's any truth to the stories or not, Ubtao worship declined drastically on the Chultan continent, ultimately continuing only in small pockets of immigrant communities in cities such as Waterdeep.

If Hexxat rejects **both** Korkorran and L, and remains a vampire:

With her obligations to Larloch and CHARNAME fulfilled, Hexxat struck out on her own. She had lost her last chance at humanity, but gained a new understanding of what the world had to offer thanks to her time with the Bhaalspawn. She eventually returned to Athkatla, rallying the shattered remnants of Bodhi's organization; like Hexxat, the few remaining vampires there sought a new purpose, and saw in her a leader who would value them as more than just tools. Combining her undead powers with her knowledge of long-forgotten Chultan traditions, Hexxat came to be revered as queen of the city's underworld.

If Hexxat is **romanced**:

Though it's likely Hexxat and CHARNAME had many adventures after the incidents of the Bhaalspawn saga, tales of those adventures are hard to come by, and reliable ones harder still. This is doubtless how Hexxat preferred it. Cabrina continued to tell Hexxat's story to prospective agents of Larloch, replacing her two-hundred-year-old cautionary tale with the inspirational one of her return seemingly from death to complete the mission she was assigned. In less guarded moments, Cabrina could be heard to lament losing Hexxat to "that awful Bhaalspawn." When pressed, she would claim Hexxat and CHARNAME spent some years traveling together before settling in Waterdeep, where they were key players behind the scenes in that city's noble and criminal fraternities.

If **Cabrina** replaced Hexxat:

With the Bhaalspawn Crisis resolved, Cabrina returned to her employer. Her service to Larloch continued to be exemplary, but the elf would sometimes slip into a melancholy mood, claiming to be in mourning for her old "friend" Hexxat. She would sulk in random taverns, loudly bemoaning the vampire's fate and wishing things could have turned out differently between them. Cabrina's retelling of the tragic tale never failed to attract pretty girls and sympathetic shoulders.