

WARHAMMER
AGE OF SIGMAR
ROLEPLAY

SOULBOUND™

AQUA NURGLIS



RACE AGAINST TIME TO STOP A DEADLY PLAGUE IN THE FIFTH
ADVENTURE FOR THE SHADOWS IN THE MIST CAMPAIGN.

CREDITS

Writing: KC Shi

Editing: Christopher Walz

Producer: Emmet Byrne

Cover Art: Rafael Teruel

Illustration: Runesael Flynn, Dániel Kovács, Sam Manley, JG O'Donohue, Rafael Teruel

Graphic Design and Layout: Rory McCormack

Proofreading: Lynne M. Meyer

Cubicle 7 Business Support: Anthony Burke, Elaine Connolly, Donna King, Eileen Murphy, and Kieran Murph

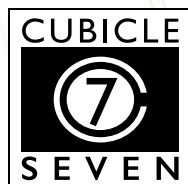
Cubicle 7 Creative Team: Dave Allen, Emmet Byrne, Dave Chapman, Walt Ciechanowski, Zak Dale-Clutterbuck, Cat Evans, Runesael Flynn, Dániel Kovács, Elaine Lithgow, TS Luikart, Rachael Macken, Rory McCormack, Dominic McDowall, Sam Manley, Pádraig Murphy, Ceíre O'Donoghue, JG O'Donoghue, Síne Quinn, and Christopher Walz

Publisher: Dominic McDowall

Warhammer Age of Sigmar: Soulbound Designed by Emmet Byrne and Dominic McDowall

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INTRODUCTION

Aqua Nurglis sees a party of Soulbound heroes race to uncover the source of a vile sickness spreading through Anvilgard. This is the fifth adventure in the *Shadows in the Mist* campaign, a sprawling six-part adventure that will see the party explore the city of Anvilgard and the surrounding lands. In *Shadows in the Mist*, the party are tasked by Lord-Castellant Ephrem Vanhelm of the Anvils of the Heldenhammer with rooting out corruption in the city and exposing the mysterious Blackscale Coil — an organisation made up of members of the Darkling Covens, Scourge Privateers, and other Aelven outcasts.

Readers who are familiar with the **Warhammer Age of Sigmar** battlegame will know that the Blackscale Coil, led by the High Oracle of Khaine Morathi, have already made

their move on Anvilgard. The events of this attack are detailed in the **Warhammer Age of Sigmar** book *Broken Realms: Morathi*. We will not spoil the story here, but it is safe to say that Morathi's attack on Anvilgard will forever change the city.

The *Shadows in the Mist* campaign takes place before Morathi's attack, and gives players and GMs a chance to explore the City of Scales and meet some key figures who will be important in upcoming events. For players and GMs who want insight into what happens to Anvilgard after the events of *Broken Realms Morathi*, the complete *Shadows in the Mist* campaign book will have a section dedicated to the events and ramifications of that story.



A cult of Nurgle calling themselves the Last Breath has infiltrated the Grand Conclave and stolen the Crucible of Life, a powerful magical artefact that refills with Aqua Ghyranis each day. Through vile ritual magic, they corrupted the life-giving water of the cup with the Plaguefather's touch and spread this 'Aqua Nurglis' — otherwise indistinguishable from the real thing, even using a Divination Plate — throughout the city in the form of currency. Once it entered the water supply of the healing houses, the sick treated with the tainted water only became sicker.

Now, as the people of Anvilgard clamour before the overcrowded infirmaries, **Morgan Kassin** tasks the party with unraveling what she suspects are two entwined mysteries. The first mission, finding the source of the plague, comes from Morgan herself, for the disease has spread with such speed and severity that she suspects foul play. The second, investigating the break-in at the Conclave, comes from Morgan's superior **Tibor Hallowgate**, who swears that agents of the Blackscale Coil are behind the theft of the Crucible.

The party follow the trail to a gambling den run by the Blackscale Coil — but the Coil's hands are clean of both the pandemic and the robbery. In truth, they have lost unacceptable amounts of business to this plague, and are just as eager to put an end to it. Together with Captain **Theriel Kaltis**, the party find the true culprit: a Nurgle cultist who tainted a large amount of the Coil's wealth, and is even now targeting their other bars, taverns, and establishments.

As the party draw closer to the source, the cult's scheme also accelerates. They launch the final stage of their plan, collapsing a major reserve of Aqua Ghyranis and spilling corrupted water across the district. Daemons of Nurgle burst from the soil and the corpses of the infected, spreading their foulness as they caper and kill, and the party must save who they can before the Stormcast Eternals of Anvilgard resort to less discriminating curative measures.

GETTING STARTED

This adventure follows previous chapters in *Shadows in the Mist*, particularly *Crucible of Life*, though you can play it standalone as well. **Aqua Nurglis** is a mystery at its core, though it does not lack for combat, and GMs can adjust the frequency and clarity of clues for parties who prefer a different level of sleuthing.

To begin, make the stakes personal: friends or family to the party have fallen ill and will perish unless they find a cure soon.

Rumour: A new disease in the slums of Anvilgard resists all attempts to treat it. Conclave councillors shake their heads at the toll in lives lost, but assure the public that the sickness is no threat to anyone but vagrants and indigents.

Fear: The disease, thought contained, explodes across the city. Folk high and low fall ill, and the best healers in Anvilgard have no idea how to treat them.

PART 1: A VISIT TO LADY VESPRIL'S

A person close to the party has contracted Anvilgard's newest disease, and is receiving treatment at the Lady Vespril Caligerus House of Healing, called Lady Vespril's for short. Feel free to pull a character from a party member's background for this role. If there are none handy — perhaps all of the party are new to Anvilgard, and have no friends or family here — then use a close ally from a previous adventure, like a friendly explorer who returned with them after *Crucible of Life*. By default, Morgan Kassan herself has fallen ill, though she insists she has work to do and she feels fine.

Lady Vespril's has been admitting visitors on a strict rotation, and today is the party's turn. The mob is thick and sullen when they arrive at the infirmary. A few pound at the doors, while others shout for explanations or medicine. The crowd would make a strange sight from above: densely clustered, but prone to scattering in bubbles as soon as someone coughs or sneezes. They part easily if any of the party are armed, though on the off chance they are not, the party must shove their way through to the front gate of the compound.

A GRAND DISPLAY

Lady Luthea Caligerus, daughter of the late founders, finances the infirmary, though her attention of late has increasingly turned toward profit rather than medicine. Rumour has it that she has fallen in with the Blackscale Coil, though in this town, who hasn't? Luthea constructed the tank, centrepiece of the gardens, after she inherited responsibility for the infirmary from her parents. It is a bold statement of wealth and power, daring anyone to challenge her or her backers, though she also invested heavily in both magical wards and traditional security. However, unbeknownst to anyone here, the tank has a vulnerability from below...

Inside Lady Vespril's, the atmosphere is quieter, though no less tense. The infirmary, which serves auxiliary functions as a bank and moneylender, is one of the largest in Anvilgard. It has multiple buildings — some for treating the sick, some for training apprentice medics, and some for loaning medically-relevant quantities of Aqua Ghyranis to the sickly — surrounding an expansive garden where patients who can afford the admittance fee might convalesce. The gardens are famous for their vibrant orchids, bred to resist the background levels of toxic fog, and the ornate crystal tank of Aqua Ghyranis sitting resplendent in the center of the compound. The delicate rainbows reflecting off the tank's crystal facets stand in stark contrast against the patrols of black-clad, stony-faced guards who protect it.

While the infirmary mandates that visitors proceed directly to their appointments, few staff are bold enough to stop the party if they explore the complex or ask questions. The guards (a mix of **Freeguild Guards** and **Blackscale Enforcers**, though nothing obvious marks the latter's affiliation with the syndicate) intervene only if the party start harassing patients or if they poke their noses too close to the crystal tank. If combat breaks out, stats for the Blackscale Enforcers are on page 28, and the stats for Freeguild Guards can be found 303 of *Soulbound*.

BEDSIDE MANNERS

The party have a chance to talk with their friends or family at the infirmary. The personal dynamics of course depend on the characters present, but the context — a visit to a loved one bedridden with a deadly disease — remains the same. How do the party react to an enemy they cannot stab, crush, intimidate, or deceive? Do they pray, lash out in anger, fall into morose silence? How does a Stormcast Eternal even begin to approach comforting someone dying of sickness? Ideally, this encounter provides space to ask and answer questions like these. Consider using consent tools to ensure your players are comfortable roleplaying this type of situation.

The party will have opportunities to visit Lady Vespril's again, and there is no need to force a prolonged interaction if the players don't want to have one. Once the encounter reaches a good stopping point, Morgan approaches with a request.

MORGAN'S MISSION

Morgan Kassan has been staying at Lady Vespril's for the last three days, during which time the nurses have wrestled her back to bed on at least half a dozen occasions. Though she insists it's just a cough, her forehead is shiny with sweat, and a raw, red lump sits just above her left collarbone. If the party check in on her, she opens up about her personal fears for a few brief minutes before clearing her throat and getting down to business. If they don't, she approaches the party as they leave the room of whomever they were visiting.

Always sniffing out Anvilgard's next crisis, Morgan asks the party to help her interview patients, as she knows from their experiences in the jungle that they have greater resilience to disease than the average person. She confides in them that the Conclave's current plan to deal with the plague (there is none) will result in disaster, but before she can make a better one, she needs to get an idea of how the plague spreads and where it came from. The ultimate goal is to find a cure, but anything the party can do to mitigate the damage will help.

THE NATURE OF THE PLAGUE

The healers throw around words like 'cursed blood' and 'mottleskin' when discussing the plague, but its vulgar name is the Burstings. Many just say 'the disease' or 'the sickness,' as the current state of affairs makes it abundantly clear what they are talking about. Despite refusing anyone who cannot pay their fees, Lady Vespril's has already reached capacity, and no official tally exists for how many more are suffering at home or in the streets.

The connection between the plague and the corrupted Aqua Ghyranis is not yet apparent. All the healers know is that the medicinal waters can only address the symptoms, and even then only half the time, before the disease resurges with a vengeance.

Characters with Training in Medicine can make a **DN 4:1 Mind (Medicine)** Test to study the disease, learning one of the following pieces of information with each success:

- * The beginning symptoms of the plague are fever and weakness, followed by the aggressive formation of pus-filled tumours, particularly around scars or old wounds.
- * The swelling growths kill the victim by suffocating them or crushing their vital organs. This can take anywhere from a month to just a couple days.

- * One patient seems like she's on the path to recovery, after a Devoted of Sigmar excised her tumours and cauterised the incisions with the searing light of his god. The treatment is far from practical, for few warrior-priests have the skill or training to wield Sigmar's light with such precision, but gentler Miracles have so far failed to cleanse the corruption.

- * With a total of 4 successes or more, a character realises these symptoms are the result of the normal healing properties of Aqua Ghyranis somehow becoming overstimulated, and that while the elixir might cause the symptoms to temporarily recede, long-term treatment with the waters is doing more harm than good.

Party members who do not specialise in medicine can still help. By speaking with patients about their personal lives — their jobs, the places they frequent, or their health in the weeks prior — they learn more about how the disease spreads. Characters who focus on these details should make a **DN 4:1 Mind (Guile)** Test to get the patients talking, though alternative Skills may apply depending on their approach. They learn one of the following pieces of information with each success:

- * Many patients come from poorer neighbourhoods in the outer ring. They can only afford Lady Vespril's high fees because they have taken punishing loans from the Blackscale Coil.

- * Those with families express relief that their households haven't fallen ill too. While the Burstings are localised to a degree, infecting many residents of a tenement or street at once, what's strange is that those with direct contact with the infected don't seem to have any higher or lower chance of contracting the plague than those who just happen to live in the same building.

- * With a total of 3 successes or more, a character notices a pattern. More than half the patients had injuries, like deep cuts and broken bones, before the disease struck. Among those that didn't, a majority had another sickness, like a cough or the sniffles, that then morphed into the Burstings.



THE STAFF AND PATIENTS

The party might encounter any of the following characters as they explore the infirmary:

Lady Luthea Caligerus, the hawk-nosed Azyrite who is the ultimate authority here. She can be found doing paperwork at her desk in her private office. A glass wall behind her overlooks her pride and joy, the gardens. While she normally does not suffer interruptions, the party have enough clout that she welcomes them into her office at once if they wish to speak. She can answer questions about

the large-scale operations of the infirmary, but she has yet to actually see any of the patients herself and knows next to nothing about the Burstings' symptoms.

Thou-Art-Saved-By-Sigmar's-Grace Elmheart, the only survivor of an Orruk ambush in the Brutos Hills, has been assisting at Lady Vespril's while he waits for his superiors to assign him to a new holy mission. In a fugue, he does not quite remember, the warpriest (he goes by Grace) treated his sick cousin Prudence by cutting away the pustules on her skin and then cauterising the wounds with the *Light of Sigmar* (*Soulbound*, page 98). The medics dismiss his actions as desperate and uninformed, but characters who succeed on the aforementioned Medicine Test realise that Prudence is one of the few patients whose condition is stabilising rather than worsening. Grace is hesitant to repeat the process, though, for fear of accidentally immolating someone.

RISK OF INFECTION

While the Soulbound and Stormcast Eternals have certain protections from disease, they are not invulnerable, and this vile concoction comes from the cauldron of Papa Nurgle himself. Take note of any characters who have recently exchanged Aqua Ghyranis in Anvilgard, such as by receiving payment for services rendered or taking the Shopping or a similar Endeavour before this adventure. If they use any of their Aqua Ghyranis to heal, then after their next Rest they must make a **DN 5:2 Body (Fortitude)** Test. On a failure, they wake with a high fever, pustules splitting open the scars of their most recent wounds.

A diseased character's maximum Toughness is reduced by 1 for as long as they are sick, and every morning thereafter they must make a **DN 4:2 Body (Fortitude)** Test or have their maximum Toughness decrease by 1 again. If a sick character drinks Aqua Ghyranis, the Difficulty of their next Test increases to 5, regardless of where the water came from. Because of the protection of the Binding (or in the case of a Stormcast Eternal, Sigmar's divine protection), a party member's Toughness cannot fall below 1 this way, though that is a small consolation for any character who can hardly walk because they are so ill.

Miracles like *Revitalise* cannot cure the corruption on their own. Instead, recovering from the taint of Aqua Nurglis is a lengthy process that requires taking the *Recuperate* Endeavour (*Soulbound*, page 158) after the adventure is over.

Nadarys Breakhand, called 'The Scarlet Typhoon' in the pits, was a rising star in Anvilgard's gladiatorial arenas until the plague sidetracked her career. Lying abed in a crowded wing, Nadarys has been raising spirits with jokes, games, and gossip (and forming quite a fanbase while she's at it). She has told everyone her story and heard everyone else's in turn, but she grows reticent in the party's presence, as the gladiator fights often for the Blackscale Coil and does not trust agents of the Conclave to have her best interests in mind. Lower the Difficulty of any Test to speak with her by 1 if a character uses **Soul (Entertain)**, as she has a weakness for melodrama.

URGENT NEWS

As the party report their findings to Morgan, a runner arrives with an urgent message. Councillor Kassan's eyes widen as she reads the letter, then she pulls the party aside to whisper the news: there has been a break-in at the Conclave and the Crucible of Life has been stolen. She doesn't want to talk about the theft here, where it might cause a panic, but that is just as well, for Tibor Hallowgate wants them at the vaults with haste.

Morgan insists on coming along. The party are fearsome enough by reputation that it takes little more than a barked order for the healers to discharge her, though if the characters decide Morgan should stay at the infirmary, it takes an Opposed Test of **Guile (Mind)** against her **Determination (Soul)** to get her to stop fighting the nurses. The character speaking with Morgan has Advantage if they impress upon her that she can serve her city better if she rests first.

PART 2: THE SIGN OF THE COIL

Tibor Hallowgate awaits the party outside the Meeting Hall of the Grand Conclave, hands folded inside his sleeves to hide his nervously wringing palms. The characters can ask questions as he leads them through severe corridors and then down torch-lit flights of steps, but Tibor only gives vague, oblique answers until they bypass the guard — one of the Anvils of the Heldenhammer, lightning eyes at a dull, smoldering crackle — and enter the tunnels of the vaults proper. Occasionally, without breaking stride, he mutters an incantation or thrusts a talisman forward from his sleeve, and the fizzle of a deactivating ward follows.

What is this place? These are the Conclave vaults, which contain the treasures won by the forces of Order further afield, as well as goods confiscated from smugglers who didn't bribe the port authorities enough to look the other way. The tunnels predate the city of Anvilgard, but Ironweld engineers excavated and reinforced the numerous chambers that line them. Each vault is self-contained, with artefacts of power scattered among them to confuse thieves and minimise losses in the event of a breach.

What happened? A patrol found four guards dead outside the Vault of Maegrek, with the vault door hanging open, all of its security spells unbound. Tibor didn't spend the time to do a full inventory before sending for the party, but one thing is definitely missing: the Crucible of Life.

What next? Tibor wants the party to investigate the break-in and retrieve the Crucible. Suspicious characters can tell that he's hiding something with a **DN 4:1 Mind (Intuition)** Test. If pressed, Tibor says he wants to resolve this without the other members of the Conclave knowing, as the Crucible of Life was his responsibility and he will face repercussions if word of the theft gets out. He also says that the Blackscale Coil has spies everywhere, and he doesn't know which members of the Conclave he can trust.



ALTERNATE POSSIBILITIES

In *Crucible of Life*, the party retrieved the eponymous artefact from a lost Stormvault and turned it over to Tibor Hallowgate, not knowing where the Councillor's true loyalties lied. If your group did not play through *Crucible of Life*, have Tibor explain how the artefact refills with Aqua Ghyranis each day and how an expedition of treasure hunters unearthed it when he first joined the Conclave. He always wished the other Councillors would let him put it to good use rather than let it gather dust down here, but, alas, now it might be too late.

If your party played *Crucible of Life* but the ending resolved another way, such as if the party gave the Crucible to another faction or kept it for themselves, you may need to make more thorough changes to this adventure. Tibor had his spies follow the Crucible wherever it went, and with both the authority of the Conclave and the shapeshifting Slipskin on his side, very little could stop him from acquiring it. The message at the infirmary tells the party to meet him wherever the Crucible was taken, and while he prefers to let the party come to their own conclusions, Tibor does his best to deflect blame onto the Blackscale Coil. Nothing but ill shall come from the artefact remaining in the Blackscale Coil's hands (or so he says), and Tibor tasks the characters with retrieving the Crucible if only to keep the Blackscale Coil from having it



THE SCENE OF THE CRIME

The vault door is two feet thick of tempered steel, with the stone above it decorated with a raised engraving of a stern Duardin. (Tibor mentions offhand that the engraving's eyes are supposed to shoot beams of fire at intruders, but obviously it's not working right now or else those damned thieves wouldn't have gotten away with it.) Four bodies lie splayed in front of the door, wearing Freeguild uniforms, riddled with stab wounds, and already starting to bloat.

The inside of the vault sparkles with heaps of gold bars, though the gold is actually the least valuable thing here, kept on hand only in case the Conclave must deal with the Fyreslayers (a character with the *Sense Ur-Gold* Talent knows that only about two pounds of all the gold is ur-gold). Instead, the real treasures — insulated chests of emberstone, bundles of seadrake hide, blades dripping iridescent poison, and ancient smoke-stained censers — lie inside the brass cubby shelves, which rise up to the ceiling. A clever series of winches and levers allows someone at ground level to manipulate the cubbies, making them slide and shift until the object of desire reaches a more convenient position. Treasures too large to fit on the shelves, like the chained skeleton of a Bastiladon, stand on plinths on the floor of the vault.

Tibor gives the characters free reign to explore the vault, making only the occasional comment cursing the Blackscale Coil or answering questions if asked. If Morgan accompanies them, he pulls her aside and has a hushed conversation with her about not burning the candle at both ends, radiating grandfatherly concern.

THE TRUTH

Tibor Hallowgate is actually the leader of the Last Breath Nurgle cult, who are determined to unleash the Plaguefather's 'gifts' upon sterile Anvilgard. Tibor and his fellow cultists within the Grand Conclave have sabotaged all of the city's efforts to answer the plague with bureaucracy and over-deliberation, and eagerly await the day when the city flourishes with as much ebullient life as the jungle surrounding it. Technically, Tibor never stole the Crucible of Life from the vaults because he never deposited it there in the first place. As soon as he was given the artefact, he passed it on to his lieutenant, an arguably Human shapeshifter known only as Slipskin. For more on Slipskin, see page 32.

About a week ago, other members of the Grand Conclave petitioned to withdraw the Crucible of Life from the vaults so that the medics could use it to combat the plague. Tibor knew the trail would lead back to him once the Conclave discovered that the Crucible was missing, so he devised a plan to kill two Drillbills with one stone, framing the Blackscale Coil for the robbery and aiming the party at a rival faction in the process. He instructed Slipskin to kill a captain of the guard, assume his identity, and lay a trail insinuating the captain had debts to the Blackscale Coil.

Then, after thoroughly besmirching the captain's reputation, Slipskin struck. Yesterday during the overnight shift, it killed the other guards on 'his' patrol, carved the symbol of the Blackscale Coil onto their corpses, and left the vault hanging open using a combination Tibor had given it. It was trivial for the shapeshifter to escape, as it hadn't actually stolen anything, and then all Tibor had to do was wait.

THE COVERUP

While Tibor and the cultists excel at infiltrating and ‘infecting’ other organisations, their plans, once they have settled into position, tend to be more opportunistic than well-planned. Schemes and plots are after all the domain of the Plague God’s rival Tzeentch, not Nurgle’s forte. As the party investigate, they have an opportunity to see past the false evidence and discover the truth underneath.

Investigating the vault is a **DN 3:1 Mind (Awareness)** Group Test. Each character can make one Test during this Group Test. (See page 297 of *Soulbound* for more on Group Tests.) The success threshold is so low because the ‘evidence’ that the cultists planted is patently obvious, but with additional successes characters can uncover evidence that Tibor did not intend for them to find. Alternative

skills like **Soul (Intuition)**, if the characters speak with other guards for more information, or **Mind (Crafting)**, if an engineering-minded character inspects the vault’s security mechanisms, may apply. The party can make six total attempts on this Test before the stirring of Nurgle’s daemons interrupts their investigation.

Upon achieving 1 success, the characters discover that each body bears a crude spiral carved into the side of the neck, slashed through with a ‘V’. Anyone at all familiar with Anvilgard’s underworld knows this is a symbol of the Blackscale Coil, drawn wherever a slight against them has been answered. Tibor guesses that the party wounded the Coil’s pride when they beat the syndicate to the Stormvault, and that this theft is their way of striking back.

The party uncover more clues as they achieve additional successes. The following list provides clues and suggested thresholds to find them, but feel free to reorder this information or present alternative clues to better fit the Skills the characters use to investigate.

TAKES A THIEF TO CATCH A THIEF

Some of the party, especially ones who normally would not have access to the Conclave vaults, might start planning a theft or two of their own once they see what the vaults contain. Here are some items that might catch their eye:

A bundle of 5 Aqshian Coals (*Soulbound*, page 106).

A Sea-Dragon Cloak (*Soulbound*, page 109).

A Venomfang Blade, a melee weapon with the following traits: 1 + S Damage, *Slashing*. A creature damaged by this weapon must make a DN 4:3 Body (Fortitude) Test or be *Poisoned* until the end of their next turn.

An Absolution Censer, a melee weapon that belches incense to choke Sigmar’s foes even as it crushes them under its heavy silver weight. It has the following traits: 2 + S Damage, *Crushing*, *Two-handed*. Whenever this weapon deals Damage, every other enemy in Close Range of the target takes half Damage, which ignores Armour.

Stealing any of these artefacts without alerting the guards requires a DN 6:2 Body (Stealth) Test. Taking more than one of the items increases the Complexity by 2 for each additional item, as the pilfered treasures rattle on the thief’s person.

- ✧ With 5 successes or more, a character notices there are four bodies outside the vault, but all the Freeguild guards in these tunnels patrol in groups of five. Interviewing Tibor or another guard reveals that the missing person is Captain Jaime el Nirá, a middle-aged Human with distinctive patches of vitiligo along his cheek and nose. His current whereabouts are unknown, but the bookkeepers upstairs can give his address.
- ✧ With 10 successes or more, a character inspecting the vault door finds no sign of forced entry. Neither have any of the cubbies been touched, except for the one now empty of the Crucible of Life. Whoever took the Crucible knew exactly how to operate both these mechanisms.
- ✧ With 15 successes or more, a character finds shards of broken glass next to one of the bodies. One of the guards must have tried to drink a phial of Aqua Ghyranis to heal their wounds, but their attacker knocked the phial out of their hand before they could use it. The floor is dry now, the Aqua Ghyranis having dribbled away into the cracks in the stone, though the irony is that the corpses probably soaked in the healing water for hours before it drained away.

- * With 20 successes or more, a character realises the bodies have decayed far more than the timeline allows. The guards died last night, but their corpses look like they have been rotting for days. The difference in appearance since the party arrived is already noticeable.
- * With 25 successes or more, a character finds, inside the vault, near invisible amid the dust and dirt, a shred of rotted skin. It is a little less than an inch long, moist to the touch and green with decay. Unbeknownst to the party, this scrap fell from Slipskin as it transformed from the guard captain to the form it used to escape.

Morgan, if she came along, provides some insights of her own. She notes that the thieves must have had insider information, for it beggars belief to think that they found the exact vault and cubby which held the Crucible of Life by coincidence. While the thieves would have needed half a dozen wagons and a team of aurochs to empty the vault, she finds it strange that they didn't take a single other artefact: many of the treasures here are worth fortunes and would have been easy enough to pocket on the way out, if they had gone to all the trouble of breaking in already.

DISTURBING INCUBATION

Grandfather Nurgle is always generous with his gifts — perhaps at times too generous. Slipskin's blighted touch, in combination with the phial of Aqua Nurglis spilled in the fighting, has transformed the vermin feeding on the corpses into nascent Nurglings. Corrupted by Chaos, the maggots beneath the skin swell by the hour, and all this poking and prodding by the party has agitated them.

After the party use all their attempts on the Group Test to investigate, or if they begin to leave early, the skin on the bloated corpses begins to writhe. The party member closest to the dead guards has only a second to realise something is amiss before the bodies swell and burst in a shower of acidic filth, and four **Nurglings** (see page 31) per character spill forth from the corpses.

Any character near the bodies when the Nurglings burst free must make a **DN 5:1 Body (Reflexes)** Test or take 3 Damage from the caustic explosion. The maggot-faced Nurglings hurl themselves recklessly around the battlefield, newborn voices growing stronger as they cackle with the infectious joy of their sire. Whenever they or the characters collide with the shelves or a pile

of treasure, they trigger a cascade that deals 3 Damage to each character in the Zone unless they succeed on a **DN 5:1 Body (Reflexes)** Test. In addition, that Zone thereafter becomes *Difficult Terrain*.

Tibor is genuinely shocked by the appearance of the Nurglings, his awe at his master's pestilent glory tempered by the fact that Nurgle's overenthusiasm might ruin his plans for Anvilgard. He dives for cover as soon as combat begins, and sensing his allegiance the Nurglings do not target him. If Morgan came, she takes one step forward to join the fight before doubling over, hacking and coughing, incapacitated by her sickness.

These Maggotkin are precursors to the ones even now festering in the bodies of the dead and the sickly. The cult of Nurgle use the same techniques later in this adventure to unleash an even greater tide of filth onto the streets of Anvilgard.



ENTWINED MYSTERIES

The Nurglings, with their emergence, destroyed all the useful evidence left to find. For Morgan, however, their mere existence confirms all her suspicions about the plague. She tells the party to keep an eye out for a connection between the theft and the disease, and to prepare for anything as their search continues. She doubts that the Blackscale Coil has fallen so low as to dabble with the forces of Chaos, but admits that the Ruinous Powers are insidious and could have servants anywhere.

Tibor, on the other hand, thinks it best not to jump to conclusions. He cautions that the symbol of the Blackscale Coil is the only concrete evidence they have (or rather, had, now that the bodies are so much goo), and tasks the party with scouring the dens of the syndicate with steel and flame in search of the missing artefact. Whatever probing attacks Nurgle or his children have launched against Anvilgard can be addressed after the party have dealt with the enemy within.

PART 3: ILL AT EASE

In the days following the robbery, the plague's grip on Anvilgard tightens. Tensions increase as the Anvils of the Heldenhammer quarantine larger parts of the city, and on every street it seems one can hear the moans of the dying.

If Doom is 4 or lower, local neighbourhoods band together, pooling their resources to care for the vulnerable in their communities. The threat they face is still dire and the Conclave is still paralysed by Tibor's interference, but the people of Anvilgard stand ready to protect themselves.

KEEPING ON TRACK

Secret cults and faked robberies, false identities and medical mysteries – there's a lot of hidden information in this adventure, especially for characters more accustomed to facing hordes of enemies head-on. If your players seem flummoxed or lost, have an NPC like Morgan remind them that the Crucible of Life is the key to all of this. So long as they find and recover the stolen artefact, then the rest shall follow.

However, if Doom is 5 or higher, hoarders run amuck, while snake oil salesmen sell false remedies to panicked civilians. The party find many doors barred to them as the people of Anvilgard turn away all strangers, and trade slows as news spreads along the Charrwind Coast of the terrible illness ravaging the city. In this state of affairs, everyone is only concerned for themselves.

THROUGH THE ALLEYS AND STREETS

Anvilgard now lies open to the party. If they became familiar with prominent Blackscale Coil locations in previous adventures or developed contacts in the city during their downtime, then they are free to use these resources in search for further leads. Otherwise, you can use any of the following encounters to direct their investigation through the city.

THE CAPTAIN'S QUARTERS

Bookkeepers at the Grand Conclave can give the party the address of Captain Jaime el Nirá, who Tibor's 'evidence' indicates was the Blackscale Coil's catspaw in the theft of the Crucible of Life. He served with a Freeguild called the Red Machetes, and had small but private quarters in the company barracks in **Anchor Point** (*Anvilgard City Guide*, page 12), under the shadow of the city walls.

His fellow Freeguilders greet the party warmly, although a few get nervous if an Aelf walks among them. The reason for their hesitance becomes clear as they talk: Captain Jaime has not been seen since the night of the robbery, and they believe the Darkling Covens have now chained him body, mind, and soul. In the week before his disappearance, he had suddenly started keeping later and later hours, and would return to the barracks with his clothes stinking of smoke and liquor even though he had been a teetotaler for as long as they had known him. The soldiers look at each other and whisper about the fabled sorceresses who can bend a mortal to sin and debauchery with a glance, and shake their heads sadly. They liked Captain Jaime, and they mourn the Freeguilders he betrayed, but such is life in the Mortal Realms.

If asked why they think a sorceress ensnared him, a fresh-faced greenhorn mentions seeing him enter *Crow's Nest* (*Anvilgard City Guide*, page 15), a nearby taphouse, the basement of which hosts pit fights in Khaine's honour every Starsday night. She reddens if they ask her further questions, as her fellow Freeguilders half-tease, half-

admonish her for going to admire the Witch Aelves and their bare, glistening muscles again. The fights have long since moved on from *Crow's Nest*, but direct the party to the next one, which is happening tonight beneath the **Court of Knaves** (see below).

QUARANTINE, EFFECTIVE IMMEDIATELY

As the party move between locations, a dense crowd impedes their progress. The defoliant fog lies thick and stifling today over their street, and in the grey murk the throng of people, mostly Humans and some Duardin, seems endless. Shoving through to the front of the crowd or talking with bystanders soon reveals what's wrong: the Anvils of the Heldenhammer have extended the quarantine to this neighbourhood, effective immediately, and the characters are on the wrong side of the line. A Lord-Castellant named **Zenius of the Dirge** (see page 29) makes the announcement in a hoarse, hissing voice, while a row of **Freeguild Guards** stand at attention in front of them. The Lord-Castellant's watchful **Gryph-hound** pads back and forth, yellow eyes trained on any civilian who steps out of line, but even a beast of Azyr cannot patrol this entire crowd alone. As the Stormcast Eternal repeats the proclamation, the sea of angry faces grows more restless by the second.

Sneaking outside the quarantine requires a **DN 3:3 Body (Stealth)** Test, though **Mind (Stealth)** could apply as well if the leading character has the *Alley Cat* Talent or an in-depth knowledge of the layout of the city.



Convincing Zenius to let them pass, on the other hand, takes an **Opposed Test of Mind (Guile)** against the Lord-Castellant's **Soul (Determination)**, with Advantage if the party includes a character with the *Blessed (Sigmar)* Talent and Greater Advantage if the party includes a fellow Stormcast Eternal. As the party passes, one of the mob hurls a stone at Zenius' Gryph-hound and rushes the Lord-Castellant but is quickly dispatched by the Stormcast. The crowd panics and surges forward.

Every Zone on ground level is *Lightly Obscured* due to fog, and most are *Difficult Terrain* as well because of the sheer density of bystanders. The panicked crowd have no guiding strategy or objective and act out of terror, not targeted violence. Zenius orders the Freeguilders to hold the line without bloodshed, lest a riot take Anvilgard.

Press on the players the gravity of the situation: Zenius and their few guards cannot hold forever and might soon be forced to draw more blood. The characters might continue on their way or seek to pacify the crowd. Whatever they choose, appropriate consequences should follow. For example, if they attack Zenius (Sigmar forbid), they draw the ire of the Anvils of the Heldenhammer. If they intimidate the crowd into submission, the neighbourhood may forever see the party as oppressors, not heroes.. Unnecessary or mass acts of killing increase Doom by 1.

BENEATH THE COURT OF KNAVES

The Daughters of Khaine shift the venues of their pit fights nightly to escape the scrutiny of the Grand Conclave, preferring to avoid the question of their dubious legality rather than answer it. Tonight, the Witch Aelves have chosen to host the (literally) underground tournament beneath Anvilgard's famous **Court of Knaves** (*Anvilgard City Guide*, page 14). Clowns and jesters caper on brightly lit stages above, while gladiators dance below on blood-soaked sand. Both hold their audiences enraptured.

If the party did not acquire directions earlier, then finding the fights requires the *Criminal* Talent, a connection to the Daughters of Khaine, or 150D of Aqua Ghyranis to grease the palms of informants. Upon arriving at the chamber beneath the Court of Knaves, the characters find the arena quieter than usual, for the plague has disproportionately targeted the gladiators who make the ticket due to the wounds they suffer. The fighters that remain are reclusive and withdrawn, each of them wondering whether they will die with a blade in hand or with a pustule crushing their throat.

The gladiators won't say much to strangers, especially ones that look like they might work with the Grand Conclave, but the party can impress them into talking with a **DN 6:2 Body (Ballistics Skill or Weapons Skill) Test**. Failing that, the party can win their trust by joining their ranks: one of their own fell ill and dropped out just this morning, so anyone who can fill her place and go tête-à-tête with a caged **Grunta (Soulbound, page 309)**, fresh captured from the jungle, earns their favour. Speaking with the fighters, the characters can learn some useful information about both the theft and the plague:

- * No one recognises the name Jaime el Nirá, though a few recall an out-of-place Freeguilder coming to the last few fights, barely paying attention to the gladiators and drinking like it was a chore.
- * The fighters often gamble with their earnings at a den called Teeth and Bone. Last time they were there, they overheard an Aelven Corsair bragging about how his latest score made fools of the Grand Conclave. He might be behind this robbery the party are investigating. His name: **Theriel Kaltis**. Groups that have played through the events of *Blood Tide* will immediately recognise the name of the charismatic corsair.
- * At the mention of gambling, some gladiators mutter that winning is actually a curse in disguise. They haven't gone to Teeth and Bone since the plague got serious, for everyone who has good fortune at the tables falls ill soon after.

WHERE IT ALL LEADS

The trail takes the party to a gambling den called **Teeth and Bone (Anvilgard City Guide, page 24)**. The establishment is both a safehouse for the Blackscale Coil, where they might keep a stolen treasure before moving it, and an early epicenter for the plague, from which the disease spread explosively after its first appearance in Anvilgard.

Teeth and Bone is hidden away in the Gullies, far from the prying eyes of the Freeguilds and Grand Conclave. The tall building looks unremarkable and might pass for a towering warehouse among the cramped streets, but inside some of Anvilguard's most wealthy throw away more in a night than a fisher makes in a year. Commoners play dice and bet on Firespitter fights on the ground level, while high-ranking members of the Blackscale Coil wine

IT'S IN THE WATER!

The moment the party crack the case of the corrupted Aqua Ghyranis will vary from group to group. Some might make the connection as soon as they step inside Lady Vespril's, while others might not realise the source of the plague until a Nurgle cultist looks them in the eye and pours blighted water out of a filthy, diseased Crucible of Life.

Acting on this information can take many forms, such as convincing the medics to stop treating patients with Aqua Ghyranis (a formidable task, considering how much the beleaguered healers rely on the substance) or telling Morgan so she can plan accordingly. If the characters take proactive steps to slow the spread of the disease, then they can mitigate the damage of the cult's schemes in the final part of the adventure.

and dine and deal on the upper floors. Belowground, the dungeon walls are thick enough that the screams of both ecstasy and agony never reach street level.

Here, after corrupting the Crucible of Life, Slipskin infiltrated the Blackscale Coil and tainted the syndicate's wealth. The false Aqua Ghyranis trickled out from the gambling den to its customers, as well as other Blackscale Coil establishments that shared its liquid cash. Most of the phials and spheres changed hands many times before someone needed to drink them, spreading far across Anvilgard in the meantime, but the Blackscale Coil employs enough people for rough work that the cluster of infections in the area is still noticeable.

NAVIGATING THE DEN

The party can enter the common level without issue, but soon find their passage into more exclusive sections of the gaming hall barred. **Blackscale Coil Enforcers** (wearing their affiliation openly this time) patrol everywhere, while Aelves in purple silks lounge and watch the party, eyes glittering from the shadows. Any one of them could be a Darkling Sorceress looking to add new toys to their enthralled collection.

A keen-eyed character that succeeds on **DN 5:1 Mind (Awareness) Test** notices the tell-tale scales of a Carnosaur-hide cloak in the crowd, as a distant Theriel

Kaltis climbs the stairs to retire for the night. Teeth and Bone provides luxurious guest suites in secluded rooms overlooking the main hall. The Corsair is spending tonight in his personal suite, decorated with trophies from his best hunts. A collection of curious jade and turquoise statuettes depicting meditative Saurus fill curios throughout the room. He doesn't plan to leave the suite, so if the party want to interrogate Theriel or search his belongings for the Crucible of Life, they must find a way up.

The Stealthy Approach

Sneaking around Teeth and Bone requires a **DN 5:2 Body (Stealth)** or **Soul (Guile)** Test from each character. If a character achieves 5 or more successes, they can turn an ally's failure into a pass by identifying a hidden passage or pulling their friend aside and acting aloof just as guards come walking down the corridor.

If less than half the party pass, they make it to the private lounges before the guards find them. The smell of roast Dappled Efreet, Bataari saffron, and other rare delicacies pervades this level of the establishment, as guests dine in dim corners on beasts the Order Serpentis have procured for them. Swift talking might convince the guards that the characters have business here or that they wandered up by mistake, but even if the party aren't thrown out immediately, the enforcers keep a close eye on them for the rest of the night. The Complexity of further Tests increases by 2, and the guards will not be so lenient should they discover the characters somewhere they don't belong again.

If more than half but not all the party pass, they reach the suites of the uppermost floors before the guards discover them. At this level, no amount of blustering can convince the Enforcers that they're lost and looking for the water closet. The characters are clearly intruders, dangerously close to the private quarters of several high-ranking members of the Blackscale Coil, and the Aelves immediately sound the alarm while the first among them draw blades. The party face heavy opposition if they attempt to escape back down to ground-level.

If all the party pass, they reach the penthouse without issue. The door, a gilded edifice of dark wood from the jungles surrounding Anvilgard, muffles the voices on the other side, but a character who passes a **DN 4:2 Mind (Awareness)** Test can make out some of the conversation on the other side.

'So you're telling me you lost him?' says the unmistakable voice of Theriel Kaltis, as languid — and dangerous — as a Megalofin knifing through the clouds.

'I am no Soulscryer,' answers someone in clipped, whisper-thin tones. Sulémek, his first mate? 'And the surface is too bright and too loud for my tastes besides. I saw the Freeguilder enter the taphouse. I never saw him leave.'

A long silence follows, terminated by a heavy sigh. 'They keep slipping away because we're too few, Sulémek. We cannot cut out the rot alone.'

Sulémek's next words are indistinguishable, except for one: 'Soulbound'.

'Yes, well, I'm considering it,' says Theriel. 'I just hope we can speak like civilised people.'

The door has a simple lock, which can be opened with lockpicks and a **DN 6:1 Body (Dexterity)** Test or broken with a **DN 6:1 Body (Might)** Test. The only other entrance into the apartment is a window on the outside of the building, which a character can climb to with a **DN 4:3 Body (Athletics)** Test.





DRUSA KRAETH

Drusa Kraeth is the most powerful member of the Blackscale Coil in the city, though like most things about her that's a secret. She plays an important role in the final chapter of *Shadows in the Mist*, but now serves as a good opportunity for the party to meet her before they realise who she truly is. Whatever happens tonight, she will be gone by morning, having resumed her position as puppet master in the shadows.

Speaking with Power

If the party prefer a more conversational approach, then they can seek the favour of the powerful. One Aelf in particular seems interested in talking to the characters, watching them from across the room while she plays a variant of Ulgan poker. Her eyes are the only thing the characters can see about her, as her firesilk facial veil and tunic obscure every other feature of her body. If they speak to her, she introduces herself as Ahnika, with no surname or deed name given. In truth, this is **Drusa Kraeth**, the hand that guides the Blackscale Coil. She is rarely seen in the city, preferring to communicate with her agents through a network of magical clouded mirrors.

Drusa's manner is warm, open, and friendly, though she wields words with the subtle mastery of a duelist with a blade. Every jab draws blood, as she teases out the party's desires and vulnerabilities, all while inviting them into

what feels like her exclusive trust. Drusa has a suite in the upper levels of the building, not quite at the top but close enough that following her would bypass a good deal of security. Of course, why Drusa would invite a character (or characters) to her bedroom she leaves unsaid. If anyone speaks for more than a minute with Drusa, they must succeed on a **DN 6:2 Soul (Determination)** Test or become *Charmed* by her for the rest of the night — though Drusa immediately loses interest in anyone too weak-willed to resist her.

If the characters prefer a less dangerous conversational partner, the servers, dealers, and other staff do their best to entertain them so long as they think the party are just ordinary customers. If any of the party insinuate an intent to violate the rules of the establishment, though, the staff invariably clam up and direct them to **Ilmethris**, the Aelf proprietor of Teeth and Bone. Both the perfect host and a consummate survivor, Ilmethris makes a professional point of watching where power is flowing and staying on its good side. A twisted welt crisscrosses the place where her left ear should be, but rather than hide it, she keeps her hair shorn on one side to display the deformity for all to see. The brazen scar, combined with her natural poise, lends her an air of cool, knife-sharp elegance.

The DN of Tests while speaking with Ilmethris depends heavily on the party's approach, their reputation, and the circumstances that spark the conversation: do they spend big at the dice tables, attracting her attention? Or do they draw her over because they got in a shouting match with the guards? Certain Skills appeal to her more than others. For example, clever conversational references to history or classical literature, using **Mind (Lore)**, assure her that the

party are more than just thugs, and earnesty is rare enough in her business that **Soul (Determination)** makes her pay attention. On the other hand, she is generally unfazed by bullish attempts of **Body** or **Soul (Intimidation)**. A **DN 4:1 Mind (Intuition)** Test reveals these inclinations to a watchful character.

Ultimately, the key to getting past Ilmethris is convincing her she will suffer greater consequences from turning the party away than letting them pass. Even if the characters succeed, Ilmethris sends them to Theriel's chambers with a full escort of Blackscale Coil Enforcers, under strict instructions to keep the bloodshed in her establishment to a minimum.

Hammers Up, Swords Out

If open fighting begins, squads of **Blackscale Coil Enforcers** across the gambling den run to subdue the characters. While greater in sheer numbers on the lower floors, in the private suites each squad is led by a vigilant **Black Guard** (see page 28).

The party can leverage the environment to their advantage. On the lower levels, they can weave between the gamblers or unleash the fighting **Firespitters** (see page 31, or simply use a *Deadly Hazard* to represent the Firespitters), while the upper levels have narrow hallways they can use to evade their enemies or funnel them into a chokepoint. Word soon reaches Theriel Kaltis that the characters have arrived armed, but he doesn't run. Their scuffling amuses him, and he elects instead to wait, listening to the shouts and screams while savouring a glass of wine. If the party manages to reach him, Theriel waves off the Blackscale Coil guards chasing after them and invites the party to sit and chat.

THE RETURN OF THERIEL KALTIS

Theriel Kaltis sits overlooking his prized gaming hall, resplendent in his Carnosaur-hide cloak, hair freshly coiffed after a perfumed bath. He stays at Teeth and Bone whenever he must dock for any length in Anvilgard, indulging in the pleasures of the gambling den while the *Blackfin* undergoes repairs or he seeks new crew. The normal discipline with which he conducts business on his ship relaxes here, though he is still a Corsair at heart, salt-hardened and steel to the core. Sulémek, his Idoneth 'first mate', accompanies him, though Sulémek finds Teeth and Bone overstimulating and only leaves Theriel's dim, quiet penthouse for matters of business.

This particular stint on land has lasted longer than usual, prolonged first by Theriel's complex plans for the wreck of the *Bulz Mulnkuremon*, then delayed even further as the Anvils of the Heldenhammer restricted movement through the harbor. Before the party reaches him, Theriel spends his night discussing with Sulémek what to do about the plague. The two recognise the touch of Nurgle in Anvilgard's current events, and furthermore know Chaos cultists have infiltrated the Blackscale Coil. Trust is perennially thin in the syndicate, but now more than ever Theriel does not know who his true allies are.

Thus, he smiles when he sees the party, greeting them like old friends. In them he sees accomplices who he can guarantee do not belong to the Nurgle cult, and who come from far enough outside the Blackscale Coil that the infiltrators won't see them coming.

GETTING TO THE TABLE

The characters might have plans for Theriel Kaltis that don't involve talking. If they attack him on sight, the Corsair parries their blows as best as possible, shouting over the clang of weaponry that they should hear him out if they want what's best for Anvilgard. Sulémek spirits Theriel away on a current of ethersea if Theriel starts to suffer serious injuries, and the two go to ground for the duration of the adventure. In this case, the party must complete the investigation alone.

On the other hand, if the characters never attract the Corsair's attention, Theriel spends the night talking in circles with Sulémek. Provide opportunities for the characters to eavesdrop on a conversation like the one in the read-aloud section earlier, to telegraph that Theriel can help the party and needs their help in turn.

If the party enter Teeth and Bone but never reach Theriel's penthouse, word of their intrusion reaches the Corsair overnight. He seeks out the party the next morning and arranges a meeting on discrete, neutral ground to make his proposal for collaboration.

The Corsair offers his velvet chaise lounge to the party and pours each of them their liquor of choice. As a show of good faith, he'll answer any questions they might have before getting down to business. Sulémek, for his part, stands stern and unblinking in the corner.

Do you regret abandoning us on the Searing Sea?

Theriel laughs, and jokes that he expected to find them soggier after the way he left them. Chuckling into his glass, he admits he sometimes still tells the story of his double-cross at the tables downstairs; it never gets old. Now that he's betrayed them once, Theriel feels utterly at ease playing the part of a conniving bastard, though he'll tone it down if he feels it might stop this alliance from going forward.

What do you know about the robbery? Only that the Blackscale Coil didn't do it. The whole thing is too sloppy for the syndicate, not to mention that the symbols carved into the bodies seem like an obvious deflection. Theriel guesses that the real thieves intended to play the party and the Blackscale against each other, and that it almost worked.

Where's the Crucible of Life? Again, Theriel has no idea. However, even a lack of information tells him more than they might think. No one could have smuggled an artefact of that value out of the city without the Blackscale Coil hearing, so the Crucible of Life is still in Anvilgard. Neither has Theriel heard of any suspicious windfalls of cash, so whoever has the Crucible of Life isn't using it for the wealth. What purpose the Crucible of Life might have beyond that, he leaves to the arcanists to decide.

What do you know about the plague? Followers of Nurgle are involved. Furthermore, they have infiltrated the Blackscale Coil and specifically targeted Coil establishments as bases from which to spread the disease. Theriel and Sulémek have identified several individuals who they suspect are involved with the cult — a Human Freegilder with vitiligo among them.

How do you know they're suspicious? The targets they have marked span a wide range of Species and positions within the Coil. Some are simple guards or servers at the infected establishments, while others are powerful majordomos with long histories in Anvilgard. All of them have exhibited strange behaviour recently, disappearing from their personal lives for lengths of time but appearing without fail for their business with the Coil. Wherever they go, a spate of infections tends to follow.

Why do you need us? Theriel needs eyes and ears to follow these targets, but can't rely on his usual network of informants as they are exactly the kind of people the cult has compromised. He can trust the party, though, because they stand as firm against Chaos as he does — unless the gods have erred grievously in their judgment.

Are you a Nurgle cultist? Theriel blanches. *'Look at me,'* he says, running the back of his hand along his cheek. *'I moisturise. Do I strike you as the kind of aelf who would aspire to join those gangrenous, blubbing buffoons?'*

At the end of the conversation, Theriel looks each of the characters in the eye. His enemy lurks within the Blackscale Coil, so he needs allies from outside it — and they need him if they want access to the Blackscale Coil locations these cultists frequent. Together they can track the cultists to their lair and put an end to them, for the peace and profit of their city.

If the characters refuse, Theriel lets them leave Teeth and Bone unscathed. They know where to find him if they change their minds. Should they interfere with his business again he shall of course kill them all, though he's tempted to give them to Sulémek first so the Idoneth can experiment with reaping souls from a Binding.





PART 4: IN LEAGUE WITH THE COIL

The situation in Anvilgard worsens over the coming days. Hardly anyone walks outside without a charm or talisman to ward off disease, and corpse carts trundle through the fog-shrouded streets by the hour. Even if the party realise the plague spreads via corrupted Aqua Ghyranis, Tibor's sabotage leads to rampant misinformation.

All hope is not lost, though, for the party have several promising leads. They know the Blackscale Coil is innocent (of this at least), and with the aid of Kaltis, they have identified what seem like several members of a hidden cult to Nurgle. If they track the cultists to their lair, the party can strike at their heart and take back the Crucible of Life before the disease spreads further.

FOLLOWING THE MONEY

Theriel provides the characters with a list of names and faces, including:

- * Lucky Laughlin, a bartender at a Coil-controlled tavern.
- * Dorineth Narion, a majordomo of Lady Narathel, the 'Mist Queen' of Anvilgard.

- * Boldag Gurntok, a Dispossessed Duardin who specialises in repairing safes and vaults.
- * Jaime el Nirá, a Freeguild captain with sudden and suspicious debts to the Blackscale Coil.

With many a nautical hunting metaphor, Theriel suggests trailing these targets to find the cult's lair. Attacking them individually or capturing one for questioning will only drive the rest into hiding, but waiting and watching might net a bigger prize: the entire cult at once. He offers to join these stakeouts, though ultimately it is up to the party if they accept his presence or just his information.

In truth, each target Theriel has identified is the same person, **Slipskin** (see page 32). The Plague Lord's gift allows the cultist to peel the pristine face from a victim and wear it for a time, using its new identity to spread Nurgle's gifts. One by one it has replaced people in the Blackscale Coil who have access to the syndicate's stores of wealth, although it cannot be everywhere at once, and the more people whose identities it assumes, the more conspicuous their absences become. While Tibor gives the orders, Slipskin is the one getting its hands dirty, and as its blessings by Nurgle are plain to see, most of the cultists look to it as their leader.

Tracking Slipskin in its various disguises requires a **DN 5:12 Body (Stealth)** or **Mind (Awareness)** Extended Test. Characters can make attempts hourly, as they shadow the individuals Theriel has identified while keeping out of sight. Lower the Difficulty by 1 if the characters know that corrupted Aqua Ghyranis is the source of the plague, as the money trail picks up where the trail of the people falters. On the other hand, raise the Difficulty by 1 if Theriel does not accompany them, as they find themselves barred at many Blackscale Coil locations that only admit known members of the syndicate and their associates.

The characters can make a total of four attempts for this Test. If they succeed, they realise a pattern to their targets' movements: often, one marked individual enters a building and their trail goes cold, before another leaves that same building minutes later. No two suspects are ever seen in the same place at the same time. If they fail, Slipskin notices the party. It does not have time to go to Tibor for further instructions — it is too busy preparing the final stage of the Aqua Nurglis plan. So, it discreetly arranges an ambush while pretending it has not noticed the characters. For more information on Slipskin's ambush, see **Smoke Over the Bay** below.

Either way, Slipskin's last guise is that of Jaime, a tanned Aqshian man with pink-white patches of discoloured skin along his cheek and nose. His stop is the only one not controlled or owned by the Blackscale Coil, a facility called the Heldenflame Crematorium.



SMOKE OVER THE BAY

The Heldenflame Crematorium stands on the water, all straight lines and blackened brick, belching smoke over the bay. Its workers once ran a business on the sly selling corpses to those who dabbled with death, but it has faced heavy scrutiny since the Necroquake, and the frequent interrogations and arrests have left it understaffed. Even though the furnaces have burned every hour of the day for the last few weeks, the crematorium still can't keep up with the influx of bodies.

A skeleton crew of two works the furnaces when the party arrive, a Human and a Duardin with clips over their noses to keep the smell out. Neither have anything to do with the cult, and frankly both are too sleep-deprived to notice the clandestine activities happening beneath their feet. They both flee at once if fighting begins. The yawning mouths of their unattended furnaces are a *Major Hazard*.

THE CORPSE PILES

The bodies lie tangled, arms and legs forming macabre mosaics on the crematorium floor, and the acrid smoke only does so much to mask the stink of rot. The Heldenflame Crematorium is for those who could not afford better, and the ashes are unceremoniously dumped in the bay.

Characters with a Natural Awareness of 2 or higher notice a subtle wriggling movement under the skin of the corpses, reminiscent of the writhing inside the vault guard's bodies before they exploded with Nurglings. Each party member must make a **DN 5:2 Body (Stealth)** Test to navigate the crematorium without drawing the attention of the Maggotkin inside the corpses. Any character who fails has a brief, frozen moment to watch the closest corpse spasm before a **Beast of Nurgle** (see page 27) and four **Nurglings** burst from the corpse pile.

As in the vaults, any character next to the bodies when they explode must make a **DN 5:2 Body (Reflexes)** Test or take 3 Damage from the caustic explosion. At the end of the first round of combat, the Nurglings' capering wakes their Maggotkin siblings, and more Beasts of Nurgle — equal in number to the characters in the party, including ones who have already spawned a Beast of Nurgle with their clumsiness — crawl out of the piles, along with their Nurgling retainues.

SLIPSKIN'S AMBUSH

If Slipskin detected the characters following it, the cult prepared for the party's arrival. Once all the characters enter the crematorium, every Beast of Nurgle — equal to twice the number of characters — emerges at once,

spraying acidic filth everywhere in their eagerness to reach their newest playmates. Nurglings, four times the number of party members, carpet the floor, and a dozen **Plaguebearers** (*Soulbound*, page 325) shamble into position at the exits, dragging the heavy iron doors shut before raising their rusted swords.

In this case, the two crematorium workers have nowhere to run. They back up against the furnaces, shouting for help, and unless the characters intervene quickly, the Beasts of Nurgle make short work of them. If the workers make it out of the crematorium alive, they promise to warn the Anvils of the Heldenhammer about the danger festering in their city at once.

THE COUNTERFEITING LAB

Once the dust has settled, the characters see the square outline of a trapdoor in the corner of the crematorium floor, revealed by a corpse pile that shifted in the fighting. If they never instigated a fight with the Beasts of Nurgle, then instead it takes a **DN 4:2 Mind (Awareness)** Test to find the trapdoor. If the party do not take care when uncovering it, the Beasts of Nurgle awaken anyway.

A hideous sight awaits them through the trapdoor. Decanters filled with decaying limbs and vermin crowd the tables, while an arcane circle made of dried, yellow-green pus sits in the centre of the room. Half a dozen corpses hang like butchered pigs from hooks attached to the ceiling, most of them split sternum to navel, insides crawling with maggots. One of them, upon closer inspection, is still alive: the real Jaime, his skin pockmarked with sores and lesions. Once the characters approach, he wakes, swinging from side to side as he thrashes helplessly in his bonds. *'Please,'* he croaks, delirious with fever. One of his eyes is bulging and bloodshot, the other necrotising into black jelly in its socket. *'No more gifts... no... I don't want it, I don't, don't make me...'* Jaime is in the advanced stages of **Nurgle's Rot** (see *Crucible of Life*, page 4), which, if it kills him, will transform him into a Plaguebearer. A clean death, however, might save his soul from the damnation of Chaos.

The only clean things in this dank basement are the barrels of crystal-clear Aqua Ghyranis that line the walls of the room, and the spheres of the same that lie scattered in the filth. Several fortunes lie in this room, but looters should beware, for every single drop of water is corrupted with Nurgle's touch.

This is Slipskin's laboratory, where it and its fellow cultists spent weeks praying to their dark god as they attempted to

corrupt the Crucible of Life, until at last the Plaguefather answered. Then, corrupted artefact in hand, they had enough raw Aqua Nurglis to start a plague. The bodies hanging from the ceiling are the people whose faces Slipskin stole. Ever-charitable, it did not kill its victims immediately, but rather brought them here to lavish them with Papa Nurgle's gifts.

A hole in the far wall opens onto a rough-hewn, unlit tunnel. If Theriel accompanied the party, he warns them they have little time to waste. Jaime — or rather, the cultist that looked like Jaime — must have heard the commotion, and if they don't act fast then their quarry will soon wriggle out of reach.

BENEATH ANVILGARD

The tunnels beneath Anvilgard wind and twist like a serpent's coil. Some are partially flooded, and must be waded through or traversed with a skiff. No natural light sources exist down here, making every *Zone Heavily Obscured* by default, but with a torch or illuminating magic, the party can see that the heavy defoliant fog seeps through even down here, a grey-green miasma swirling around their ankles as they walk. These passages mimic the ones in which the Grand Conclave houses its vaults — the lost people who once lived in Anvilgard's bay must have carved both during the Age of Myth.

NAVIGATING THE TUNNELS

The tunnels beneath Anvilgard, like most things around, inside, or above the city, teem with dangers. Slipskin and the cult have cleared a path through the underground for their own use, but if the party stray off the trail then they may find other threats waiting for them. In order to have a sense of who is responsible for what, the players should assign three roles to members of the group.

Point Guard

This character leads the way through the fog-shrouded tunnels, providing a light for the rest of the party to follow and keeping an eye out for danger. This role relies on having good Awareness and Reflexes.

Rear Guard

This character is at the end of the party lineup as they travel the tunnels. They're responsible for making sure that enemies don't sneak up on the group and that the party doesn't accidentally attract attention to itself. This role relies on having good Awareness and Stealth.

Navigator

This character is responsible for following Slipskin's tracks, as well as keeping track of the twists and turns of the tunnels. This role relies on having good Survival.

On the Trail

As the party follow Slipskin, they will move from area to area, using the same rules (for the most part) each time. Once they decide to leave an area, the Navigator will make a **Mind (Survival)** Test. The results from that test tell you where the party ends up next. Then the Rearguard makes a **Body (Stealth)** Test and a **Mind (Awareness)** Test to determine if the group is being followed. Finally, the Point Guard makes a **Mind (Awareness)** Test to scout out the new area. If they fail this Test and the area is trapped, they need to make a **Body (Reflexes)** Test to avoid the trap.

Returning the Way You Came

If the party decides to backtrack, the Navigator must make a **DN 4:2 Mind (Survival)** Test. Otherwise the party has Lost the Way (see below).

AREAS OF INTEREST

The characters move through the following areas as they navigate the tunnels.

Barrel Storage

This area immediately follows Slipskin's laboratory. More barrels of Aqua Ghyranis line the tunnel walls, primed for the cultists to cart them through the tunnels before distributing them aboveground. One has a small leak, and distended mushrooms grow around its base. The largest of these mushrooms has a hole in the cap, lined with calcified spikes that resemble teeth. A **DN 5:1 Mind (Arcana)** Test reveals the touch of Chaos on these bizarre fungi, as the pseudo-teeth and triangle patterns of spots bear an unsettling resemblance to the daemonic tree-portals called Feculent Gnarlmaaws.

The Navigator should make a **DN 4:2 Mind (Survival)** Test. Compare the result to the listing below to determine the party's next destination:

Failure: The party finds that they have **Lost the Way**.

Success: The party reaches the **Ghoul Path**.

Success with 1 or more additional Successes: The party comes across the **Wyrr-maggot Pen**.

The Rear Guard and the Point Guard should both make a **DN 4:2 Mind (Awareness)** Test, but currently neither success nor failure affect them.

Lost the Way

As the party plunge deeper into the tunnels, the Navigator realises they have taken a wrong turn. They must go back the way they came if they want to get back on Slipskin's trail — and the faster they move the better, for a little ways down the path the Point Guard stumbles across the viscous strands of a gargantuan web.

The Navigator should make a **DN 4:2 Mind (Survival)** Test. Compare the result to the listing below to determine the party's next destination:

Failure: The party goes in circles. They have still Lost the Way, but this time the web is not empty. An **Arachnarok Spider (Soulbound)**, page 309) waits for them. The creatures following the party (if there are any) stay out of the Arachnarok's way if the giant spider attacks, but happily pounce on the characters afterwards if the party have exhausted themselves fighting the arachnoid monster.

Success: The party returns to their last location before they **Lost the Way**.

Success with 1 or more additional Successes: The party returns to any location that they have already visited.

The Rear Guard should make a **DN 4:2 Mind (Awareness)** Test. On a success, they detect anything following the party. If this is the first time the group have Lost the Way, the Rear Guard should also make an **Opposed Test** of **Body (Stealth)** against the Arachnarok Spider's **Mind (Awareness)**, evading its attention on a success.

The Point Guard must make a **DN 4:2 Mind (Awareness)** Test. On a success, if they have Lost the Way again, they spot the Arachnarok Spider before it has a chance to ambush them. Otherwise, neither success nor failure affect them.

Ghoul Path

Gnawed bones crack underfoot in this stretch of the tunnel. One wall bears a red-brown streak of dried blood, and the stink of offal hangs thick in the air.

The characters have come across a 'ranger-path' of the Blisterkin Court of the Emberscarred Prince. The Crypt Ghouls that haunt these tunnels believe they are chivalrous scouts, protecting their castle from hideous monsters or

else hunting venison for their king's nightly feasts. While at first they despised the Nurgle cultists that shared their tunnels, they now believe Slipskin and its followers are honoured dignitaries, to be treated with all respect. (The alternative would be feasting on their spoiled meat, which even in their madness they find hard to stomach.) For more on the Emberscarred Prince, see *Scorched Earth, Seared Flesh* in the *Soulbound Gamemaster's Screen*.

The Navigator should make a **DN 4:2 Mind (Survival) Test**. Compare the result to the listing below to determine the party's next destination:

Failure: The party finds that they have **Lost the Way**.

Success: The party reaches the **Rotten Mire**.

The Rear Guard should make a **DN 4:2 Mind (Awareness) Test**. On a success, they see eight **Crypt Ghouls** (*Soulbound*, page 334) slinking behind the party, red tongues slaving. With a **Mind (Guile) Test** Opposed by the Ghouls' **Mind (Intuition)**, a character can make a temporary peace, so long as they craft a lie that fits within the collective delusion of the mordants. The speech of the Crypt Ghouls is almost unintelligible, but the party can glean that 'the dignitaries' use these tunnels often to transport their strange barrels to lairs throughout Anvilgard. If it comes to battle, the Crypt Ghouls fight to the death, driven by their twisted sense of honour. On a failure, the Rear Guard fails to notice the Crypt Ghouls, who follow and wait for an opportunity to attack.

The Point Guard must make a **DN 4:2 Mind (Awareness) Test**. See the entry for the Rotten Mire for the effects of success or failure. If they have **Lost the Way**, neither success nor failure affect them.

Wyrr-maggot Pen

Around the bend, an infantile Wyrr-maggot squirms in its crude pen. Though young, it is already large enough to swallow a Stormcast Eternal whole, its pink-white flesh straining against the manacles that keep it bound. Hook-tipped appendages, like legs if legs could sprout at random from any inch of flesh, flail in useless but constant motion, and its leech-like maw gnashes blindly if it smells any of the characters approach. Its head is visible to the party, but the rest of its length vanishes into the darkness, too far for any light to reach.

Characters that succeed on a **DN 5:1 Mind (Nature) Test** can tell that this creature must have burrowed new tunnels

for the cultists where the ancient, pre-existing ones did not already reach. Meanwhile, characters that succeed on a **DN 5:1 Mind (Arcana) Test** know that the Rotbringers of Nurgle often utilise these creatures to dig their Filth Pits, diseased chasms where the border between the Mortal Realms and the Realm of Chaos wears thin. The fact that the cult is confident enough to bring one into Anvilgard does not bode well for the city.

While the Wyrr-maggot is a large and tenacious beast, it is also all but immobile, and the party can kill it without difficulty. If they free it, it sprays half-digested chunks of rock at them as it vanishes deeper into the tunnel; Wyrr-maggots, as it turns out, are identical at both ends, and tunnel by chewing rock in one direction while excreting it out the other.

The Navigator should make a **DN 4:2 Mind (Survival) Test**. Compare the result to the listing below to determine the party's next destination:

Failure: The party finds that they have **Lost the Way**.

Success: The party reaches the **Rotten Mire**.

The Rear Guard should make a **DN 4:2 Mind (Awareness) Test**. On a success, they detect anything following the party.

The Point Guard must make a **DN 4:2 Mind (Awareness) Test**. See the entry for the Rotten Mire for the effects of success or failure. If they have **Lost the Way**, neither success nor failure affect them.

The Rotten Mire

Slipskin laced this section of the tunnels with corrupted Aqua Ghyranis, turning the ground into overgrown muck. If the Point Guard succeeded on their Awareness Test, they notice the trap just before setting foot in it. On a failure, the Point Guard sinks into the mud, suffering 3 Damage and becoming *Prone* as the Crucible-enhanced fauna belches forth rot-scented clouds of choking pollen. Other characters can cross the mire with a **DN 5:1 Body (Athletics or Dexterity) Test**, suffering the same effects on a failure. If the Crypt Ghouls are following the party, they choose this moment to attack, prioritising dragging characters away for a feast in their underground halls.

No further Tests are necessary from this point. Slipskin's trail is clear from here, and the characters can hear the low echo of voices just ahead.



THE RITUAL SITE

The final leg of the trail takes a sharp bend upward. With a **DN 4:2 Mind (Lore)** Test, a character realises that their winding, underground path has taken them beneath the central garden of Lady Vespril's. Ahead, the party can hear the low drone of a voice speaking, punctuated by gasps and the splat of liquid hitting stone. As they approach, the party sees the outline of a chamber, crudely excavated, with four thick wooden struts exposed in the corners. Plaguebearers stand guard at the mouth of the chamber, cyclopean eyes squinting into the dark, while the shadows of the cultists waver to flickering torchlight behind them.

Here, directly beneath the crystal tank at Lady Vespril's, Slipskin performs a horrific benediction for each of its followers. It scores long, deep cuts into their flesh before pouring Aqua Nurglis into the wounds, all while giving a constant, muttering speech in praise of the Lord of Decay. As their flesh swells, the cultists kneel before the supports of the crystal tank overhead and pray that their sacrifices make them worthy to join Nurgle in his Garden.

In Slipskin's hand sits the Crucible of Life. Dark green veins now web the artefact, pulsing as if to a faltering heartbeat. Fungal growths bulge on the base of the cup, while the rim is caked in dried slime. The water that flows from it, however, still looks as clear and clean as normal Aqua Ghyranis.

When Slipskin notices the party, read or paraphrase the following. Feel free to adjust the description to better match one of your characters.

The skin blooms, then sags, then drips in ragged patches off the creature's skull. The wretched thing reaches up and tugs at a drooping curtain of flesh, pulling the thing it wore as a face off. It falls to the ground with a squelch.

It opens its mouth, revealing blackened gums and teeth cracked with rot. 'Gifts from our father,' it croaks in a triple-layered voice, at once breathy and resonant and hoarse. 'A vision of a better Anvilgard.'

Then the skin sloughs off its fingers, revealing talons dripping ichor, and it pounces.

Slipskin, six **Plaguebearers**, and two **Filth Pit Summoners** attack the party on sight, while the four remaining cultists hug the exposed support struts of the Aqua Ghyranis tank overhead. The cavern has five Zones — the four corners, each with a strut that counts as *Total Cover*, plus a central area where Slipskin and the Filth Pit Summoners stand. The party starts in a sixth Zone, the entrance tunnel, which connects to the cavern's center Zone. The Plaguebearers also start in the entrance tunnel, standing guard.

The objective of Slipskin's group is simple: keep the party from entering the chamber. The cultists by the struts kneel and pray, waiting for the corrupted Aqua Ghyranis to take effect. At the end of the second round of combat, all four cultists — dead or alive, no matter where they are — swell and explode, spraying acidic filth in every direction.

If the characters protect the pillars from the cultists or if Slipskin suffers serious damage, then the shapeshifting servant of Nurgle accepts its glorious fate. It retreats into

the center of the chamber, slashing a cut across its face and pouring all the water left in the Crucible of Life into its wound. Face after face grows, rots, then grows again. As Slipskin swells, it opens its arms in a final, wordless exaltation of the Plaguefather.

Either way, when the explosion hits the supports, it eats through them in seconds. The wooden pillars buckle and splinter, dirt crumbles from the ceiling, and the party hear a great creaking and moaning overhead as the crystal tank topples over and shatters.

STOPPING THE EXPLOSION

The odds are stacked against them, but with quick thinking and good rolls the party might prevent the tank from falling altogether. In that case, skip the next section: the adventure is over! The characters have stopped the cult, recovered the Crucible of Life, and cracked the case of the mysterious plague. However, a huge reserve of infected Aqua Ghyranis remains to be dealt with, and many members of the cult – Tibor Hallowgate among them – continue to operate in Anvilgard. This threat has been defeated, but more lurk in the shadows...

PART 5: SHATTER AND FLOOD

The fall of the tank ripped its foundations free, exposing the chamber beneath to the fog-shrouded Anvilgardian sky. Sheets of Aqua Ghyranis stream over the lip of the hole in the ceiling, but the party should avoid touching these waters at all costs: bloated plants and diseased vermin swell forth wherever the Aqua Ghyranis soaks into the soil, their dewy eyes wide with manic, gibbering mirth. The bulk of the Aqua Ghyranis spills overhead, drenching Lady Vespril's famous gardens.

Seconds later, the screaming begins.

THE MENAGERIE EMERGES

When the central tank of Lady Vespril's shatters, the wealthy patients who could afford the admittance fee are the first to go. Many guards are caught in the torrent as well, but a few manage to reach and bar the doors before the flood of Aqua Ghyranis reaches them. Then, through the glass viewing windows, they watch in horror as Nurgle's menagerie makes the garden a reflection of their own.

The orchids and other jungle flowers swell and twine together, knitting as they grow into a single, corpulent mass. A seam opens in the center of the amalgamate, lined with tooth-like growths, completing the creature's transformation into a **Feculent Gnarlmau** (see page 30). Shrouded in puffs of sickly sweet pollen, streaked pink and floral green, the Gnarlmau roars, and from its mouth spew forth a frolicking mass of Nurglings.

More Nurglings and Beasts of Nurgle emerge from the Aqua Ghyranis-soaked corpses, who have been primed for their Maggotkin hosts by weeks of treatment with the corrupted waters. The ranks of this nascent Tallyband swell as other patients fall, and unless someone stops them soon, Anvilgard will spawn a full-scale daemonic invasion.

IN THE MIDST OF CHAOS

The characters stand in the pit beneath the tank's former foundations, watching all this from below. Other than a few capering Nurglings, too scatter-brained to warn the others, Nurgle's forces do not notice the party until they emerge aboveground. Even then, the Beasts of Nurgle find much less resistant playmates in the unarmed patients, and rather than converge on the party, the daemons scatter further.

The party cannot hope to kill all of the Maggotkin on their own, but they can pursue several other objectives while they wait for reinforcements to arrive:

- ✦ Killing the Feculent Gnarlmau, which cuts off the emergence of Nurglings.
- ✦ Escaping the infirmary, for obvious reasons.
- ✦ Keeping the daemons contained, preventing them from carrying their infections into the city.
- ✦ Saving patients, such as the ally who fell ill at the start of the adventure.

Once the characters complete any of the last three objectives — all of which involve reaching the perimeter of the infirmary — the Anvils of the Heldenhammer arrive. See **The Arrival of the Anvils** on page 26 for what happens next.

SHUTTING THE MAW

The Feculent Gnarlmau sits in the remains of the once-elegant garden, spewing filth and Nurglings, while four **Beasts of Nurgle** (see page 27) frolic with their screaming toys around it. Puddles of corrupted Aqua Ghyranis surround the tree, deceptively clear despite the danger within. The drenched Zones closest to the Gnarlmau are *Difficult Terrain* for all non-Maggotkin, and characters who let the water get into their wounds risk infection.

If the party defeat the Gnarlmau, remove all Nurglings from future encounters at the infirmary. The few that remain see what the characters did to the daemonic tree and collectively decide they can better spread the Plaguefather's gifts elsewhere.

ESCAPING THE INFIRMARY

The healing house descends into chaos as the characters search for a way out. Screams come from every direction, walls shatter without warning as the Beasts of Nurgle barrel through the infirmary wings, and the constant, deranged laughter of the Maggotkin swells without cessation. Often the party must double-back or take another route, as a tide of daemons or infected Aqua Ghyranis cuts off their path.

Each character must pass a **DN 6:2 Body (Athletics or Stealth)** Test to escape Lady Vespril's, as they dash or sneak through the infirmary's once-tranquil corridors. For every failure they attract the attention of a **Beast of Nurgle** (see page 27), who bounds after the party, tongues lolling in delight. At the front gates of the compound, the party encounter one final obstacle in the form of three **Filth Pit Summoners** (see page 29) and a dozen **Nurglings** (see page 31). The former shout and invoke the Plaguefather's name in a futile attempt to rally the daemons for a coordinated invasion of the city, while the latter dance on the walls and mock the foolish mortals beneath them.

Once the party vanquish the Maggotkin blockade and any Beast of Nurgle pursuers, they can retreat to a safe distance. After ten minutes (enough time to Take a Breather, if the party so chooses), the characters hear the lockstep march of Stormcast Eternals, as the Anvils of the Heldenhammer approach.

ENFORCING QUARANTINE

As with escaping the infirmary, each character must pass a **DN 6:2 Body (Athletics or Stealth)** Test to navigate the complex, attracting the attention of a **Beast of Nurgle** on a failure. They encounter the same swarm at the gates — but after, instead of retreating to rest, the characters hold firm against any Maggotkin who attempt to leave Lady Vespril's.

The party must hold the line for five rounds of combat. At the beginning of each round, roll a d6 or pick an entry from the following list to enter the fray.

1. A commotion on an upper floor causes several barrels of Aqua Ghyranis to fall and shatter. A **Feculent Gnarlmau** sprouts where the water soaks into the soil.
2. A patient stumbles through a hole in the wall, begging for help as three **Beasts of Nurgle** jockey with each other for a chance to play.
3. A blast of pestilent arcane energy streaks down from a rooftop, as two **Filth Pit Summoners** dressed like medics attempt to sabotage the party's defence.
4. Ten **Plaguebearers** shamle out of a wing that once housed patients. With a chorus of dolorous moans, they charge the party.
5. A Swarm of 20 **Nurglings** scampers down the path, climbing over each other in their eagerness to reach the city. If the Feculent Gnarlmau in the garden is dead, then instead a lone Nurgling pokes its head over a pile of rubble, snarls an evil grin, and runs in the opposite direction.
6. Nothing approaches. The party have a brief respite.

At the end of the fifth round of combat, the characters hear the clank of armour behind them. Stormcast Eternals from the Anvils of the Heldenhammer stand at the gate, glaives sparking with divine energy. Their commander, recognisable from the plume on their helmet, jerks their head, motioning for the party to get behind them.

SAVING THE PATIENTS

As with escaping the infirmary, each character must pass a **DN 6:2 Body (Athletics or Stealth)** Test to navigate the complex, attracting the attention of a **Beast of Nurgle** on a failure. However, instead of making their way toward an exit, the party delve further into the compound, searching for patients.

If a character wants to find a specific person, such as the ally who fell ill at the beginning of the adventure, they must make a **DN 4:3 Mind (Survival)** Test. On a failure, they stumble onto an altogether different group of patients, who need help just as badly. The party can escort these strangers out of the infirmary and come back for their loved ones — or they can leave the strangers behind for the sake of speed, and continue searching for the people who matter to them. Abandoning patients increases Doom by 1.

The characters can battle their way out of the infirmary if they wish, advancing Zone by Zone while protecting their charges. Most patients start four Zones away from the nearest exit, but rich patients or patients with high standing have quarters closer to the compound's center, six Zones from the nearest exit. The last two Zones are always *Difficult Terrain*. At the start of each round, 1d6 Plaguebearers and 3d6 Nurglings appear in the Zone with the most patients and pursue the party until the heroes successfully escape. (If it ever looks like the party might clear out the threats in the infirmary, have additional Maggotkin demons join the fray.)

WHERE'S THERIEL KALTIS?

In the chaos of battle, it is easy to lose track of people. If Theriel Kaltis came with the party through the tunnels, he chooses the next opportune moment to take the Crucible of Life for himself and flee. After all, he has defeated the infiltrator that so vexed him and the Blackscale Coil, and if he doesn't leave soon then he might lose his chance to keep a priceless artefact, corrupted as it may be. While he hates Chaos with a passion, he'd prefer to fight the Ruinous Powers with a deck beneath his feet and a crew of like-minded Corsairs by his side. The party can handle this, and if they can't, he'll come back with less tenuous allies later.

The easier method is to avoid fighting if possible, using a mix of abilities and approaches to get the patients to safety. Escorting patients out of Lady Vespril's is a **DN 6:12 Group Test (Soulbound, page 297)**, for which the characters can make four total attempts. With an appropriate explanation, the characters can use any Skill they wish. Lower the Difficulty by 1 if the party took steps earlier in the adventure to slow the plague, such as convincing the medics to stop using Aqua Ghyranis. Lower the Difficulty by 1 again if Morgan Kassan stayed at Lady Vespril's to rest, as she has spent her time in the infirmary doing what she does best: preparing the people around her for an apocalyptic situation.

On a success, the characters get all the patients to safety. On a failure, half the patients die, falling to Maggotkin or getting left behind in the chaos. You can flip a coin to see if a named NPC dies or you can make the decision based on what feels narratively appropriate. Note that Morgan, if she is at risk, plays a role in the final chapter of *Shadows in the Mist*, and you will need to do some improvising later if she perishes here.

GM ADVICE

If Morgan Kassan dies here, then to start the next adventure, a different person must ask the party to meet them at the walls. Perhaps a Freeguild Captain or an Ironweld engineer noticed some discrepancies with the defoliant pipes, and despite their higher-up's reassurances, they reached out to the party for help investigating. If, on the other hand, that person is Tibor Hallowgate or one of his lackeys, the invitation is actually a trap, and additional Maggotkin may attempt to ambush the party when the invasion begins. Later, when Drusa Kraeth identifies the cult's leaders, she doesn't implicate Morgan — with the councillor dead, there's no need to frame her. Finally, when the party infiltrates the Dauntless Hall, they have only two targets to reach instead of three, although you could substitute the mission to find Morgan with one to locate another critical Conclave member.

THE ARRIVAL OF THE ANVILS

Lord-Castellant Zenius arrives with a full retinue of Stormcast Eternals. They intend to raze Lady Vespril's to the ground, and to slaughter every person inside before the infection spreads any further. The party cannot prevent this, but they can save some of the civilians before the Anvils of the Heldenhammer descend upon them.

With an Opposed Test of **Mind (Guile)** or **Soul (Determination)** against the Lord-Castellant's **Soul (Determination)**, the party can convince Zenius to give them five minutes to extract however many patients they can. The characters have Advantage if they saved the crematorium workers earlier, as those workers warned the Anvils in the first place and the Lord-Castellant begrudgingly admits the party's good intentions, or if they held the line against the Maggotkin forces while waiting for the Stormcast Eternals to arrive. They have Greater Advantage if they did both. If they fail, then the Stormcast Eternals march at once, and the party must stand aside — or rush ahead of them.

Use the rules for **Saving the Patients** in the previous section if the party return to the infirmary. Increase the Complexity of the Group Test by 6 if they failed to delay the Anvils of the Heldenhammer, as now they must avoid the marching Stormcast in addition to the Maggotkin of Nurgle.

The patients at the infirmary are ultimately miniscule cogs in the great machine of Sigmar's empire, and their deaths barely make a blip on the daily toll of lives lost in the Mortal Realms. But each of them mean something to somebody. If the party cared enough to go back for them, the characters' selflessness sends ripples of hope through the slums of Anvilgard. Saving any patients after the Anvils of the Heldenhammer arrive reduces Doom by 1.

AFTERMATH

Morgan Kassan hears the results of the party's investigation as she picks through the rubble of Lady Vespril's. She thanks them in earnest, then bends her formidable energies toward organising a cohesive public health campaign, warning the people of Anvilgard about the danger in their currency.

Tibor is apoplectic if he hears that the party found common ground with the Blackscale Coil, and sputters speechlessly if he learns Theriel Kaltis escaped with the Crucible of Life. When he framed the Blackscale Coil for

the robbery, he never expected them to actually end up with the damn thing! But for the sake of maintaining his cover, he congratulates the characters on saving Anvilgard. He understands if they're leery of Aqua Ghyranis as a reward, so if anything in the vaults caught their eye, he could give them one of those artefacts as a thanks from the city (see page 8 for the artefacts).

The party can remove the taint from the Crucible of Life (if they still have it) by taking the *Cleanse Corruption* Endeavour. A character who became infected with the Burstings can take the *Recuperate* Endeavour to heal, or else must begin their next adventure with their maximum Toughness decreased by 2 for every week of downtime they spent sick.

With the ability to corrupt Aqua Ghyranis taken from the cult, the spread of the plague slows. A cure, however, is never found. Instead, as the remaining Aqua Nurglis circulates throughout the city, judicious testing before drinking becomes a common practice for those who lived through the plague. Those who are already sick begin the long, slow road to recovery, but so long as they rest, heed the medics, and do not treat themselves with Aqua Ghyranis then they have a decent chance of returning to health. Gradually, the Burstings joins the host of mortal dangers the people of Anvilgard must face everyday, and life in the mist-shrouded city goes on.

AWARDING EXPERIENCE

As well as awarding XP for achieving any personal or party Short- or Long-term Goals, award additional XP for the following:

- ✧ For completing the adventure, award 1 XP.
- ✧ If the party discovered the source of the plague and took steps to counteract it before encountering Slipskin, award 1 XP.
- ✧ If the party recovered the Crucible of Life, award 1 XP.
- ✧ If the party saved their friends and allies from Lady Vespril's, award 1 XP.



APPENDIX

ALLIES AND ENEMIES

BEAST OF NURGLE

Large Daemon (Maggotkin of Nurgle), Warrior

♣ Good

⊕ Poor

♠ Average

Armour	Toughness	Wounds	Mettle
0	9	–	–

Speed: Fast

Initiative: 2

Natural Awareness: 1

Skills: Athletics (+1d6, +1), Awareness (+1d6), Fortitude (+2d6), Might (+2d6), Weapon Skill (+1d6)

TRAITS

Acidic Slime Trail: The Beast of Nurgle exudes a corrosive slime as it bounds across the battlefield. Any Zone in which the Beast of Nurgle enters becomes a *Major Hazard* for any non-Maggotkin until the end of combat.

Disgusting Resilience: The Beast of Nurgle is disgustingly resilient. It gains a bonus to its Toughness equal to its Training in Fortitude. This is included above.

Grandfather's Blessing: The Beast of Nurgle is immune to being *Poisoned* and any other effects associated with sickness and disease.

ATTACK

Claws and Tentacles: Melee Attack (Good), 5d6, 1 + S Damage. *Slashing.* A creature damaged by this weapon must make a **DN 4:3 Body (Fortitude)** Test or be *Poisoned* until the end of their next turn.

Slobbering Tongue: Melee Attack (Good), 5d6, + S Damage. *Reach, Restraining.* A creature damaged by this weapon must make a **DN 4:3 Body (Fortitude)** Test or be *Poisoned* until the end of their next turn.

BODY	MIND	SOUL
4	1	2

BEAST OF NURGLE

Combine the worst aspects of a slug, a leech, a rotting corpse, and a walrus, and you might begin to understand the horror that is a Beast of Nurgle. These bounding monstrosities share Nurgle's joy and generosity, leaving acidic splotches in their wake as they range in search of friends. Utterly unaware of their own strength, they pulverise bones when they land on mortals and rip limbs in pieces in their eagerness to wrestle, but they are equally oblivious to their playmate's well-being and don't stop until long after they reduce their new buddy to a slowly dissolving ragdoll.



BLACKSCALE THUG			
<i>Medium Mortal (Aelf or Human), Warrior</i>			
♣ Good		⊕ Average	♠ Good
Armour	Toughness	Wounds	Mettle
1	6	-	-
Speed: Normal Initiative: 5 Natural Awareness: 2 Skills: Awareness (+1d6), Ballistics Skill (+1d6, +1), Reflexes (+2d6), Stealth (+2d6), Weapon Skill (+2d6, +1)			
TRAITS			
Alley Cat: The Blackscale Thug has Advantage on Opposed Tests to hide or find someone within the city. Pierce Armour: For every 6 on an attack, the Blackscale Thug ignores a point of Armour.			
ATTACK			
Dagger: Melee Attack (Good), 5d6, + S Damage. <i>Piercing, Subtle, Thrown (Short).</i> Hand Crossbow: Ranged Attack (Average), 4d6, + S Damage, Medium Range. <i>Close, Piercing.</i>			
BODY	MIND	SOUL	
3	2	1	

BLACKSCALE ENFORCER			
<i>Medium Mortal, Warrior</i>			
♣ Good		⊕ Average	♠ Average (Good with shield)
Armour	Toughness	Wounds	Mettle
2	7	-	-
Speed: Normal Initiative: 2 Natural Awareness: 1 Skills: Awareness (+1d6), Ballistics Skill (+2d6, +1), Fortitude (+1d6), Intimidation (+2d6), Weapon Skill (+2d6, +2)			
TRAITS			
Crushing Blow: The Blackscale Enforcer strikes with ferocious blows that can disorient their foes. If the Blackscale Enforcer rolls a 6 on an attack with a <i>Crushing</i> weapon against a Large or smaller creature, the target is <i>Stunned</i> until the end of their next turn.			
ATTACK			
Warhammer: Melee Attack (Good), 6d6, 1 + S Damage. <i>Crushing.</i> Great Crossbow: Ranged Attack (Average), 4d6, 1 + S Damage, Long Range. <i>Penetrating, Piercing, Reload, Two-handed.</i>			
BODY	MIND	SOUL	
4	1	2	

BLACKSCALE THUGS

The Blackscale Coil's reach is absolute within the city of Anvilgard, from the highest offices of the Grand Conclave, all the way down to the gutters, but by their most numerous pawns are its army of common thugs. Ensnared by incalculably varied circumstances and backgrounds, these thugs serve all manner of mundane uses, from hard handed enforcers or plain clothes guards, to shrewd smugglers and relentless extortionists.

BLACK GUARD

Not all who serve the Darkling Covens are ensnared through sorcery. The Black Guard, the elite bodyguards who protect the Darkling Sorceresses themselves, are groomed from birth to serve their eventual mistresses. From the moment they can hold a spear, they train to both recognise threats and swiftly execute them, and only the best survive the endless drilling and gladiatorial combat. Those who earn the black helm are then given the autonomy to remove dangers their Sorceresses have not even noticed, their loyalty ensured by both years of conditioning and complete access to the Coven's finest luxuries.

BLACK GUARD			
<i>Medium Mortal (Aelf), Champion</i>			
♣ Good		⊕ Poor	♠ Good
Armour	Toughness	Wounds	Mettle
2	6	-	1
Speed: Normal Initiative: 6 Natural Awareness: 2 Skills: Awareness (+2d6, +1), Determination (+1d6), Intimidation (+1d6), Intuition (+1d6), Reflexes (+2d6), Weapon Skill (+2d6, +2)			
TRAITS			
Elite Bodyguard: The Black Guard is raised from birth to protect the leader of its coven. The Black Guard's Melee increases one step when it is in the same Zone as a Sorceress to which it is loyal. Utterly Fearless: The Black Guard is immune to being <i>Frightened</i> .			
ATTACK			
Ebon Halberd: Melee Attack (Good), 6d6, 1 + S Damage. <i>Piercing, Rend, Two-handed.</i>			
BODY	MIND	SOUL	
4	2	2	

ZENIUS THE DIRGE

Lord-Castellant Zenius of the Dirge is tetra, a gender tradition dating back to the Age of Myth. Like many Anvils of the Heldenhammer, their Reforgings have given their face a gaunt, skeletal aspect, and their voice reverberates as if coming from all directions despite never rising above a whisper. The hammers of the Six Smiths have beaten all softness out of them. Now, the only kindness they have left is reserved for their vigilant Gryph-hound, who accompanies them everywhere.

FILTH PIT SUMMONER

When Nurgle's mortal worshippers wish to open a path to his putrid garden, they dig Filth Pits. Laid out to resemble Nurgle's tripartite symbol, excavated by chained Wyrmmaggots who chew earth and spew slime, these pus-lined craters poison the land for miles around. Furthermore, Nurgle's worshippers often sacrifice defiant warriors here, tossing them into the vermin-infested mire to drown among the Grandfather's gifts. Filth Pit Summoners, the humming stewards who oversee these ritual sites, shove down any who attempt to climb out — until they return as diseased daemons, at which point the summoners gleefully help the one-eyed Plaguebearers crawl free.

ZENIUS THE DIRGE			
<i>Medium Mortal (Stormcast Eternal), Chosen</i>			
☠ Good	⊕ Average	☠ Good	
Armour	Toughness	Wounds	Mettle
3	12	6	3
Speed: Normal Initiative: 5 Natural Awareness: 2 Skills: Awareness (+1d6), Beast Handling (+1d6), Determination (+2d6, +1), Devotion (+2d6), Intimidation (+1d6), Medicine (+1d6), Theology (+1d6), Reflexes (+1d6), Weapon Skill (+2d6)			
TRAITS			
Loyal Companion (Gryph-hound): Lord-Castellants are often accompanied by watchful Gryph-hounds. The Lord-Castellant's Gryph-hound (Soulbound) , page 306) has a bonus to its Toughness equal to the Lord-Castellant's Soul.			
Warding Lantern: The Lord-Castellant wields a beacon imbued with the holy energies of Sigmar. The Lord-Castellant can use the <i>Bolster Faith</i> and the <i>Light of Sigmar</i> Miracles.			
ATTACK			
Castellant's Halberd: Melee Attack (Good), 6d6, 1 + S Damage. <i>Piercing, Rend, Sigmarite, Two-handed.</i>			
BODY	MIND	SOUL	
4	3	5	

FILTH PIT SUMMONER			
<i>Medium Mortal (Corrupted by Chaos), Warrior</i>			
☠ Poor	⊕ Good	☠ Poor	
Armour	Toughness	Wounds	Mettle
0	7	–	–
Speed: Normal Initiative: 6 Natural Awareness: 3 Skills: Arcana (+1d6), Awareness (+1d6), Ballistics Skill (+2d6), Channelling (+2d6, +1), Fortitude (+1d6), Reflexes (+1d6)			
TRAITS			
From Filth Reborn: The Filth Pit Summoner specialises in converting souls to the path of Nurgle. As an Action, the Filth Pit Summoner can summon a Plaguebearer from the corpse of a person within Medium Range who died of disease.			
Grandfather's Blessing: The Filth Pit Summoner is immune to being <i>Poisoned</i> and any other effects associated with sickness and disease.			
Spellcasting: The Filth Pit Summoner is a spellcaster. It knows the <i>Aetheric Armour</i> , <i>Arcane Blast</i> , <i>Arcane Bolt</i> , <i>Mystic Shield</i> , and <i>Stream of Filth</i> spells. Additionally, the Filth Pit Summoner can unbind spells per the <i>Unbind</i> Talent.			
Stream of Filth: DN 5:1. The Filth Pit Summoner unleashes a deluge of infectious ooze. One target within Medium Range suffers 1 Damage, and must succeed on a DN 4:S Body (Fortitude) Test or be <i>Poisoned</i> until the start of the Filth Pit Summoner's next turn. This Damage increases by +1 per additional success.			
ATTACK			
Rusted Dagger: Melee Attack (Poor), 1d6, + S Damage. <i>Piercing, Subtle, Thrown (Short)</i> . A creature damaged by this weapon must make a DN 4:3 Body (Fortitude) Test or be <i>Poisoned</i> until the end of their next turn.			
Vermin's Head: Ranged Attack (Good), 3d6, + S Damage, Medium Range. <i>Spread</i> . A creature damaged by this weapon must make a DN 4:3 Body (Fortitude) Test or be <i>Poisoned</i> until the end of their next turn.			
BODY	MIND	SOUL	
1	4	2	



FECULENT GNARLMAW

When the blessed rot of Grandfather Nurgle reaches saturation and the soil itself succumbs to disease and plague, the seeds of Feculent Gnarlmaaws can bear their blighted fruit. Originating from the Garden of Nurgle itself, these towering carnivorous trees are spore-spewing and Nurgling-birthing gifts that perpetuate their daemonic father's multitudinous blessings. It is whispered that the Gnarlmaaw's worm-like roots slither down through the very fabric of the realms themselves, to writhe among those of their siblings in the Realm of Chaos, and that any mortal consumed by the trees is birthed upon the other side as an accursed Plaguebearer.

FECULENT GNARLMAW			
<i>Enormous Daemon (Maggotkin of Nurgle), Champion</i>			
☠ Good	☹ Poor	☹ Average	
Armour	Toughness	Wounds	Mettle
3	18	–	2
Speed: None Initiative: 1 Natural Awareness: 1 Skills: Might (+2d6), Weapon Skill (+2d6)			
TRAITS			
Garden of Nurgle: The Feculent Gnarlmaaw fills the area with noxious fumes and poisonous spores. Creatures who enter or start their turn in the same Zone as the Feculent Gnarlmaaw must make a DN 4:2 Body (Fortitude) Test or become <i>Poisoned</i> until the end of their next turn.			
Grandfather's Blessing: The Feculent Gnarlmaaw is immune to being <i>Poisoned</i> and any other effects associated with sickness and disease.			
Nigh Unkillable: The Feculent Gnarlmaaw is impossibly resilient. Its Toughness is equal to (Body + Mind + Soul) × 2. This is included above.			
Nurgling Eruption: Nurglings erupt from the boils and growths on the Feculent Gnarlmaaw's body. As an Action, the Feculent Gnarlmaaw disgorges 1d6 Nurglings per Doom.			
Planted: The Feculent Gnarlmaaw is rooted into the ground. It cannot move of its own volition and cannot be forced to move by other effects.			
ATTACK			
Bark Bite: Melee Attack (Good), 6d6, 2 + S Damage. <i>Piercing</i> . A creature damaged by this attack must make a DN 4:2 Body (Fortitude) Test or be <i>Poisoned</i> until the end of their next turn.			
Feculent Roots: Melee Attack (Good), 6d6, 1 + S Damage. <i>Crushing, Reach</i> . A Medium or smaller creature that suffers Damage from this attack is <i>Restrained</i> , as the roots wrap around them. A <i>Restrained</i> creature can use an Action to make a Body (Might or Reflexes) Test opposed by the Feculent Gnarlmaaw's Body (Might) to escape.			
BODY	MIND	SOUL	
4	1	4	



NURGLING

The diminutive children of Nurgle are rotund little daemons, swollen with weeping puss and sputtering gas that leaks through their sore-blighted skin. They giggle and cavort constantly, utterly blissful in their role as playful gift bringers. When they spot any tragic mortals lacking Nurgle's blessings, they rush towards them excitedly, to play nibble upon their flesh with their razor-sharp, filth-smearred teeth and horns. When slain, they pop like ripe boils, projecting their rotting insides with a gaseous burp in one final parting gift, accompanied by a shriek of joy as they further their beloved grandfather's work.

NURGLING			
<i>Tiny Daemon (Maggotkin of Nurgle), Minion</i>			
♣ Poor	⊕ Poor	♠ Average	
Armour	Toughness	Wounds	Mettle
0	1	–	–
Speed: Normal Initiative: 4 Natural Awareness: 1 Skills: Awareness (+1d6), Reflexes (+2d6), Stealth (+2d6), Weapon Skill (+1d6)			
TRAITS			
Disease-ridden Demise: When a Nurgling dies, it erupts in a spray of thick mucus and noxious spores. Each creature in Close Range suffers 1 Damage, which ignores Armour, and must make a DN 4:1 Body (Fortitude) Test or become <i>Poisoned</i> until they complete a Rest.			
Grandfather's Blessing: The Nurgling is immune to being <i>Poisoned</i> and any other effects associated with sickness and disease.			
Swarm: If three or more Nurglings occupy the same Zone they become a Swarm. The Nurgling Swarm acts as one. Add +1d6 to attacks and +1 Toughness per Nurgling in the Swarm. The Swarm suffers double Damage from effects that target a Zone. When a Nurgling Swarm is damaged, each creature in Close Range suffers the effects of its <i>Disease-ridden Demise</i> Trait. However, both the Damage suffered and the Complexity of the Test increase by 1 per Nurgling slain.			
ATTACK			
Tiny Razor-sharp Teeth: Melee Attack (Average), 2d6, 1 + S Damage. <i>Slashing</i> . A creature damaged by this weapon must make a DN 4:1 Body (Fortitude) Test or be <i>Poisoned</i> until the end of their next turn.			
BODY	MIND	SOUL	
1	1	1	

FIRESPIITTER

Firespitters are large reptilian beasts that thrive in and around the countless lava flows or volcanic caverns that dot the Aqhsy wilderness. Their unique scales dissipate even the most intense heat, allowing them to swim through lava as if it were water. Though placid in nature, when threatened, Firespitters spew a sticky stream of magma at attackers, or rip into them with their flaming maws. Despite this, Firespitter herders still make a living from the beasts, draped in layers of harvested Firespitter scales to ward off the infrequent moods of their herd.

FIRESPIITTER			
<i>Large Beast, Warrior</i>			
♣ Average	⊕ Average	♠ Poor	
Armour	Toughness	Wounds	Mettle
1	4	–	–
Speed: Fast, Swim (Fast) Initiative: 4 Natural Awareness: 2 Skills: Awareness (+2d6), Ballistic Skill (+2d6), Fortitude (+1d6), Reflexes (+1d6), Weapon Skill (+1d6)			
TRAITS			
Born of Fire: The Firespitter is immune to Hazards and Damage from intense heat or flames.			
ATTACK			
Burning Jaws: Melee Attack (Average), 3d6, 1 + S Damage. <i>Piercing, Rend</i> .			
Stream of Fire: Ranged Attack (Average), 3d6, 2 + S Damage, Range (Medium). <i>Rend, Spread</i> .			
BODY	MIND	SOUL	
2	1	1	

SLIPSKIN

Medium Mortal (Corrupted by Chaos), Champion

Great Average Good

Armour	Toughness	Wounds	Mettle
2	22	–	2

Speed: Normal
 Initiative: 5
 Natural Awareness: 2
 Skills: Awareness (+1d6), Devotion (+1d6), Fortitude (+2d6), Guile (+3d6, +2), Reflexes (+1d6), Stealth (+2d6), Theology (+1d6), Weapon Skill (+2d6)

TRAITS

Grandfather's Blessing: Slipskin is immune to being *Poisoned* and any other effects associated with sickness and disease.

Infested: When Slipskin dies, it calls to Nurgle and explodes in an eruption of pus and filth. When it dies, each creature in Slipskin's Zone suffers 5 Damage.

Nigh Unkillable: Slipskin is impossibly resilient. Its Toughness is equal to (Body + Mind + Soul) × 2. This is included above.

Rotting Visage: Nurgle gifted Slipskin with a face full of rot, but the cultist can wear another. Slipskin can have one of two forms. Changing between forms takes an Action, assuming it has the face of a victim to use. Slipskin can have any number of false faces.

False Face: Slipskin peels the face from those it kills, donning their flesh over its own and releasing a toxic scent that fogs the mind to aid the illusion. Seeing past the disguise, absent of other clues, is an **Opposed Test of Mind (Intuition)** against **Slipskin's Mind (Guile)**.

True Face: Any non-Maggotkin that starts its turn in Close Range of Slipskin must make a **DN 4:3 Soul (Determination)** Test. On a failure, the target is *Frightened* until the start of their next turn.

The Crucible of Life: Slipskin possesses a powerful artefact filled with corrupted Aqua Ghyranis. At the start of its turn, it may restore 5 Toughness to a Maggotkin within Close Range, including itself. Alternatively, it can douse an enemy within Close Range with corrupted water, forcing them to make a **DN 5:2 Body (Fortitude)** Test. On a failure, the target's maximum Toughness decreases by 1 and they contract the Burstings. (See page 4 for more information on the disease.)

ATTACK

Corrosive Claws: Melee Attack (Great), 7d6, 1 + S Damage. *Rend, Slashing.* A creature damaged by this weapon must make a **DN 4:3 Body (Fortitude)** Test or be *Poisoned* until the end of their next turn. If the creature is already *Poisoned*, it suffers 3 additional Damage instead.

Rusted Dagger: Melee Attack (Great), 7d6, + S Damage. *Piercing, Subtle, Thrown (Short).* A creature damaged by this weapon must make a **DN 4:3 Body (Fortitude)** Test or be *Poisoned* until the end of their next turn.

BODY	MIND	SOUL
5	3	3

SLIPSKIN

When most people picture Nurgle's servants, they imagine shambling horrors covered in weeping sores and naked, grotesque growths. But some diseases are insidious, revealing themselves only after everything beneath the skin has rotted away. The being known as Slipskin carries a hundred strains of these illnesses, all masked by the smooth, healthy faces of other people, but when the disguise inevitably rots away, the teeming, glistening mass of flesh beneath is revealed. Some whisper Slipskin is the only one of its kind, for only the hardest — and the most deluded — could survive the favours Grandfather Nurgle has shown it.

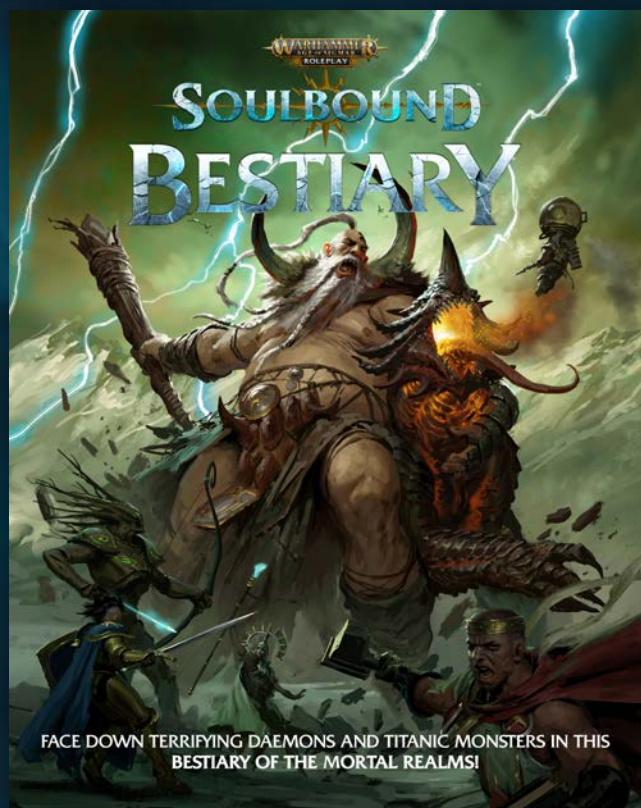


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