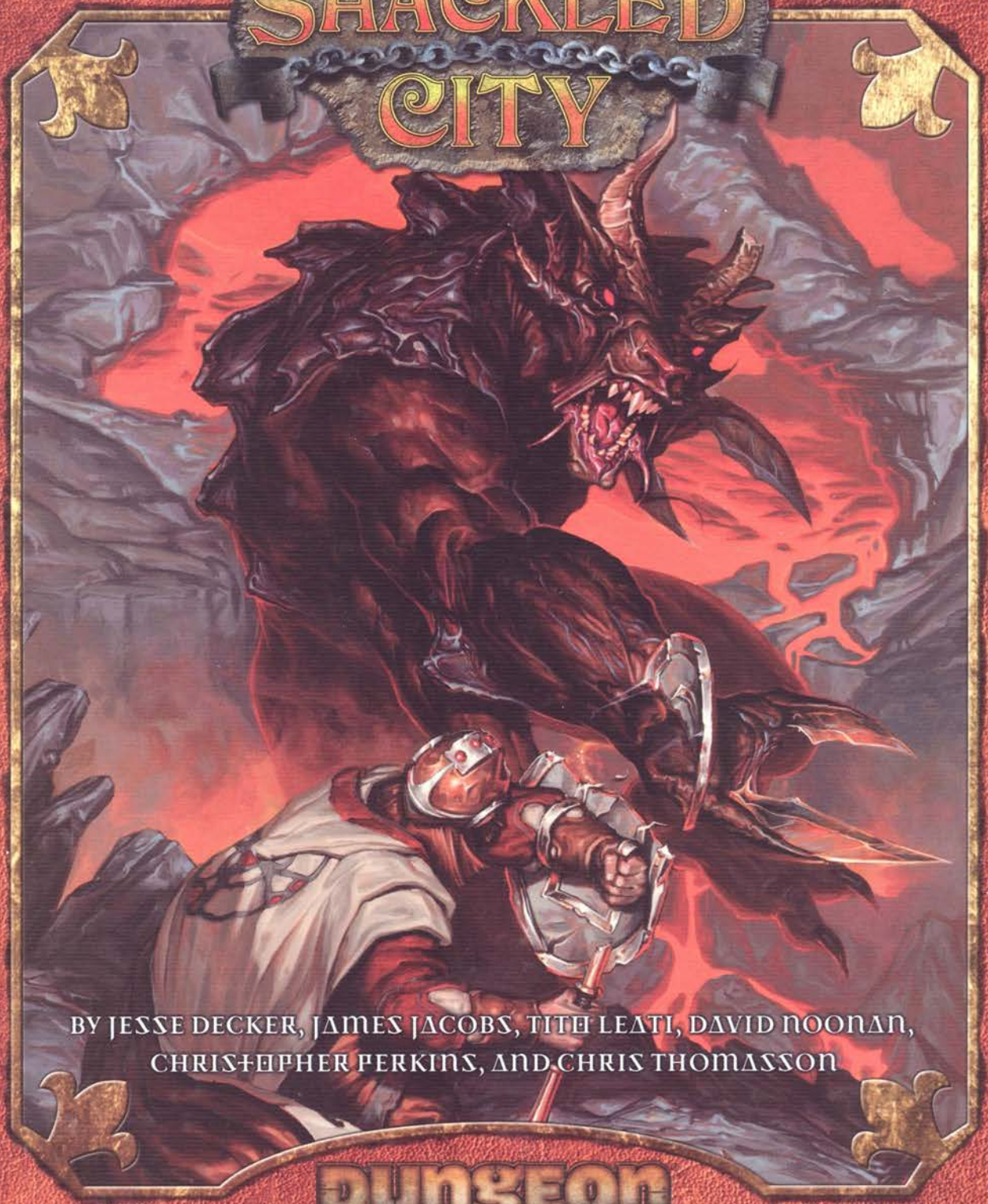
Dungeons & Dragons

The Shackled City



By Jesse Decker, James Jacobs, Tito Leati, David Noonan, Christopher Perkins, and Chris Thomasson

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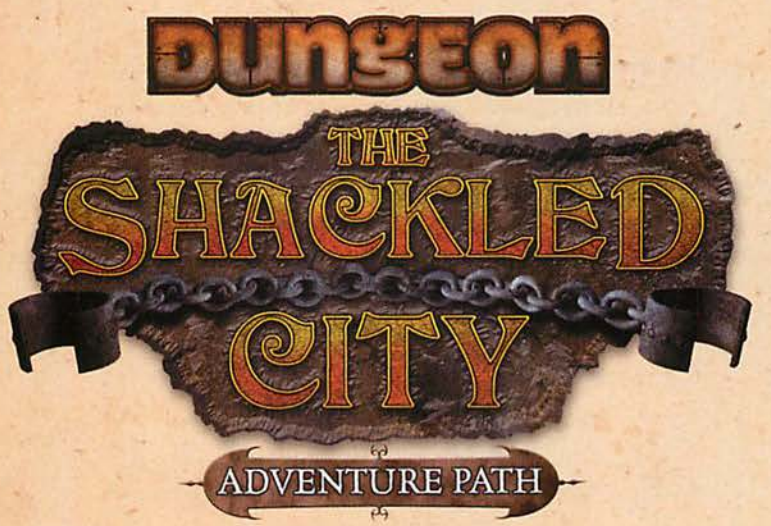
DUNGEON
THE
SHACKLED
CITY
ADVENTURE PATH

by Jesse Decker, James Jacobs, Tito Leati, David Noonan, Christopher Perkins, and Chris Thomasson

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THE SHACKLED CITY

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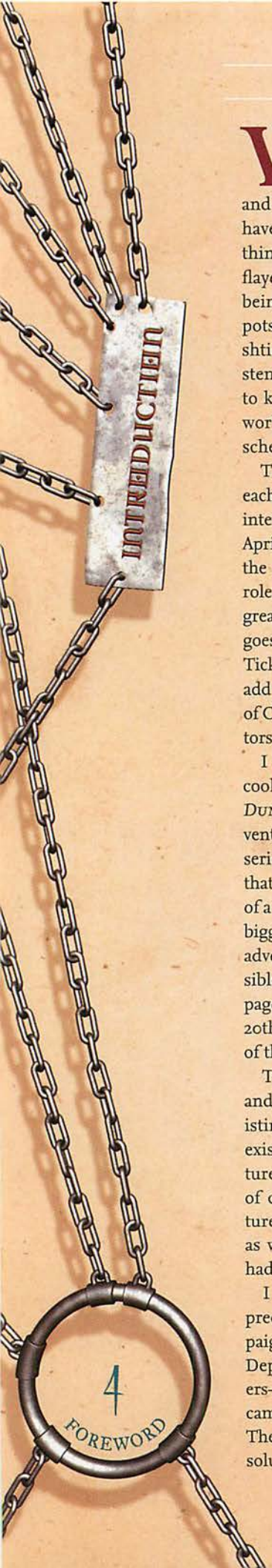


Who really runs the world? When I was working on *Dungeon*, the other magazine staffers and I spent hours on this and other nonsensical topics when we probably should have been working on the magazines. Some editors think the yuan-ti run the show. But me—I think mind flayers have the edge. Just as impressive mentally, their being lawful makes them perfect secret world despots. Mind flayers also have the mental domination shtick on their side. All ideas, new or recycled, must stem from their tentacled clutches. It was reassuring to know that I wouldn't have to think for myself in a world run by mind flayers. They come up with all the schemes and ideas—we would just be their pawns.

These sorts of conversations contributed to making each day working on *Dungeon* an adventure, no pun intended. But when I became editor of *Dungeon* in April, 2001, things changed. No matter what anyone says, the power goes to your head. When you step into that role, you want to leave an imprint, a legacy—something greater than the sum of the blood, sweat, and tears that goes into every issue. But as my favorite super-hero, the Tick, says, "Absolute power is a sticky wicket." When you add the extra complication of following in the footsteps of Chris Perkins, one of *Dungeon's* most illustrious editors and contributors, you're facing a tall order.

I immediately felt pressure to produce something cool that would blow the readers away. I'd seen letters to *Dungeon* for some time requesting more serialized adventures following the successful "Mere of Dead Men" series, which wrapped in issue #72. I always believed that the magazine was at its best when it did as much of a DM's work as possible. I've also always believed that bigger is better. What could I do, I thought, with a huge adventure series that made a DM's life as easy as possible? The answer: an entire campaign, all within the pages of *Dungeon*. It would take characters from 1st to 20th level, and each adventure would be written by one of the best adventure designers in the business.

The adventures would have to stand on their own, and they would have to be unconnected with an existing campaign setting, both to better mesh with the existing campaigns of our readers and so the adventures wouldn't be cluttered with the weight of dozens of campaign setting sourcebooks. A series of adventures from Wizards of the Coast had just wrapped up as well, making the timing perfect. And of course, it hadn't been done in *Dungeon* before.

I spent a long lunch one afternoon speaking with my predecessor, Chris Perkins, hashing out a global campaign arc based on my original concepts: the Tarterian Depths of Carceri, demodands, a cult of their worshipers—all intent on turning the world into one big prison camp. The more we talked, the more excited we became. The magnitude of the project was intimidating, but absolutely exhilarating at the same time. Think of it this way: How often do you get to brainstorm a campaign outline, then hire people to actually write if for you?

I quickly coerced Chris into writing the first adventure. With his intimate familiarity with the core ideas, I wanted him to lay the groundwork for the authors to come. What followed is one of my favorite *Dungeon* adventures of all time: "Life's Bazaar."

Each adventure that followed carefully built up the plans of our sinister villains, a group dubbed the Cagewrights. They were to be utterly vile, and the adventures would take groups across the Multiverse. I wanted each adventure to be something the author would be excited about, so I worked up a campaign packet that detailed all the recurring NPCs and plots at work and sent it out to authors as they were assigned individual adventures. I also kept rigorous control over which prominent characters could be killed (and when), where the Adventure Path would take the PCs, and when key plot elements could be revealed to PCs playing through the adventures.

We also drew on the best artists available to us in an industry full of great artists. We wanted the adventures to be as much about a visual immersion in the campaign as they were about great story and fantastic adventure. Folks like Chuck Lukacs, Tom Baxa, and Jeff Carlisle consistently delivered inspiring art that pushed the boundaries of anything the magazine had printed before.

One of the guys who really made the city of Cauldron come to life for me, though, was Christopher West. I'd wanted Chris, one of the industry's nicest and most talented guys, to draw every map for the entire campaign, and I never regretted that decision. With each adventure, he continued to blow us away with amazing map after amazing map.

Experiences like these made this project one of the best I've ever worked on. Professionally, I don't think I've ever felt more proud of a finished piece of work than I do of this one. Although I wasn't able to stick around and see it through as *Dungeon's* editor, being able to contribute to the story toward the end and seeing my terrible Cagewrights wreak their twisted havoc on the printed page was just as great a thrill. I hope you put this campaign up on your shelf right next to other classic D&D adventures. That's the second best place for it, right after your gaming table, of course—at least in my mind.

Or maybe that's just the mind flayers.

Chris Thomasson
Editor Emeritus, *Dungeon* magazine

INTRODUCTION

ADVENTURE PATH

The Shackled City Adventure Path is an entire campaign for the DUNGEONS & DRAGONS game, designed to bring new, 1st-level characters all the way up to 20th-level over the course of its run. This campaign originally appeared as 11 seperate adventures in *DUNGEON* magazine, starting with "Life's Bazaar" in issue #97 and ending with "Asylum" in issue #116. For this book, we've reorganized and updated the original eleven adventures in the campaign so they'll work together better as a unified whole.

Those who are already familiar with The Shackled City's earlier incarnation will find much of this book familiar, yet you will also find much that is new. The constraints of publishing an adventure in a serialized format meant that we often had to cut out portions of these adventures in order to make them fit in the magazine. We have re-integrated this "lost" material into the adventures in this book—each of the adventures thus has something new lurking within its pages (some more than others), even for those readers who followed the entire arc in *DUNGEON*. In addition, we've added an entirely new adventure into the campaign—Chapter Two's "Drakthar's Way," designed to smooth the transition between "Life's Bazaar" and "Flood Season."

PREPARATION

You'll need a copy of the *Player's Handbook*, *DUNGEON MASTER'S Guide*, and *Monster Manual* to use this adventure. The Shackled City Adventure Path also features many creatures, magic items, spells, feats, and other rules that have appeared in other DUNGEONS & DRAGONS supplements, but in these cases we've provided enough information for you in this book that you won't necessarily need these additional books to play. Nevertheless, access to *Monster Manual II*, *Monster Manual III*, *Fiend Folio*, *Draconomicon*, and *Libris Mortis* should be of use when you're running this campaign.

The Shackled City Adventure Path is not set in any particular campaign world. It uses deities from the core D&D pantheon, and some proper names from the GREYHAWK campaign setting, but the campaign itself has been specifically designed for easy integration into any DUNGEONS & DRAGONS campaign.

CAMPAIGN BACKGROUND

The city of Cauldron is aptly named. Nestled in the throat of a dormant volcano, this frontier city has thrived in a hostile environment. Unfortunately, things are about to grow even more hostile for the citizens of this remote city, as two ancient forces converge upon the region in a dreadful confluence of cruelty and madness. One of these is an imprisoned demon prince of madness by the name of Adimarchus, and the other is an ancient organization of demodand-venerating cultists called the Cagewrights.

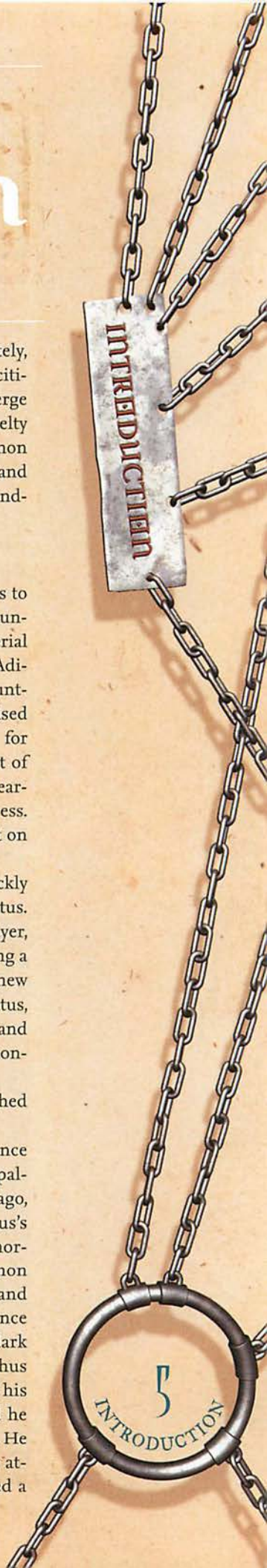
Adimarchus

To understand the source of the doom that comes to Cauldron, one must cast back in time several hundred years, to a realm far removed from the Material Plane and a time when a fallen celestial named Adimarchus led a demonic invasion of the Seven Mounting Heavens of Celestia. The heavenly host repulsed Adimarchus's demonic army, but at great cost, for the angels of Celestia were forced to cast the part of Celestia occupied by the demons into the Abyss, tearing apart the fabric of their own plane in the process. This massive chunk of planar matter came to rest on a layer of the Abyss called Occipitus.

Adimarchus survived this event, and acted quickly to incorporate the wreckage of Celestia into Occipitus. In doing so, he became the ruler of the Abyssal layer, gaining almost limitless power there and becoming a demon prince in the process. Even in defeat, he knew success. For many years, Adimarchus ruled Occipitus, crafting from the ruins a great demonic empire and often leading wars against his most powerful demonic rival, the demon prince Graz'zt.

And then, only fifty years ago, Adimarchus vanished from his realm.

The truth behind Adimarchus's disappearance centers on his love for Athux, a resolute aasimar paladin with six fingers on each hand. Five decades ago, Athux embarked on a quest to redeem Adimarchus's soul. The aasimar cut a swath across the tumorous plains of Occipitus and confronted the demon prince in his own throne room. Adimarchus and Athux fought until, exhausted, the demon prince sundered the aasimar's sword with his own dark blade. Clutching Athux by the throat, Adimarchus saw something in the aasimar's eyes that sparked his compassion. He could not kill Athux, nor could he subject the paladin to the torments of Occipitus. He tried to lure Athux over to the side of evil, but his attempts were half-hearted at best. Athux remained a



prisoner on Occipitus and stood by Adimarchus's side as the demon prince plotted against Graz'zt, all the while fuelling Adimarchus's rage against demonkind. A strange friendship bloomed, puzzling Adimarchus's minions and spurring some to betray him. Graz'zt learned of the planned assault against him and the alliance of Adimarchus and Athux and, in true demonic fashion, he conspired with Adimarchus's treacherous minions to overthrow his rival.

During the epic battle between Adimarchus's army and Graz'zt's hordes, demons swayed by Graz'zt captured Athux with surprising ease, imprisoning him on Carceri in an asylum called Skullrot. Adimarchus could not bear the loss of Athux, and the treachery of fiends rekindled the fallen angel's burning hatred. Adimarchus abandoned his hordes, his realm, and his evil ways and fled to Carceri to rescue Athux and find redemption. Alas, the tale of Adimarchus and Athux would not end well.

As Graz'zt's army crushed Adimarchus's abandoned demon horde, Adimarchus arrived at Skullrot to find Athux overcome with dementia, the prisoner of one of Graz'zt's most powerful allies—a powerful undead priest named Dark Myrakul. Unable to wrest the aasimar from Dark Myrakul's clutches, Adimarchus traded his own freedom for the paladin's restored mind and safe return to Celestia. Dark Myrakul readily agreed. The imprisoned Adimarchus watched as Athux shook off his "lunacy," only to transform into a black-skinned fiend with six fingers on each hand. Athux had misled Adimarchus from the start. He was, in fact, Graz'zt's devoted son. At that moment, Adimarchus realized his foolishness. Graz'zt had found a weakness in his rival—a long-buried desire for redemption that Adimarchus assumed he'd lost long ago—and used that weakness to dethrone his enemy. The very thought drove Adimarchus to madness, a madness powerful enough to leak out of Skullrot, across Carceri, and eventually into other planes.

Adimarchus's madness touched countless minds over those years, yet they were not powerful enough to cause much more than momentary lapses of sanity in those they found. Only when these insane thoughts came across ancient altars, statues, or sites once sacred to his cult could they linger. One such item was an ancient statue of the demon prince, carved from Abyssal stone mined from Occipitus by Adimarchus himself and, of late, in the private collection of a particularly cruel man by the name of Fetor Abradius. Over the next several years, Adimarchus's mad dreams worked their ways on Fetor, sharpening his cruelty to a razor's edge and driving him to seek out terrible secrets wherever they might be hidden. Fetor did not know that these dreams were, in fact, guiding him to a way to release the demon prince from his Carcerian prison.

The Cagewrights

This secret society of cruel-minded arcanists, priests, and scholars was founded over 300 years ago by a massive and deformed shator demodand named Dyr'ryd. His goal: to foster a group of like-

minded spellcasters and scholars dedicated to discovering a way to create a permanent portal between the prison plane of Carceri and the Material Plane that would allow the demodands to harvest inmates and slaves for the massive prisons and asylums of that realm. Dyr'ryd's not-so-secret desires to use such an accomplishment to ascend to new levels of power remained unspoken. Development of such a powerful portal would be the Cagewright's primary goal. They took to calling this event the planar junction.

Carcerian Sign

Dyr'ryd had already developed several theories on how such a portal could be constructed. Most of his theories were based on the belief that by merging the bloodlines of the natives of these two planes, one could create a spiritual bridge between Carceri and the Material Plane that could then be used as a focus for greater works. Thus, as he began to recruit promising individuals into his secret society, Dyr'ryd also called upon his most fecund demodand minions and unleashed them upon the Material Plane. For a month, these thirteen demodands ravaged anything they could find in the world. Eventually, they were all slain, but they left in their wake a horrifying number of unnatural pregnancies.

The resulting spawn were mostly stillborn, but a few twisted unfortunates survived. As the generations passed, the fiendish corruption grew ever more diluted. Eventually, all visual traces of demodand ancestry faded entirely. But the taint in the blood and soul remained, just as Dyr'ryd had envisioned. Every few generations, an indication of this taint surfaces in the form of an invisible birthmark in the shape of an unholy sigil known as the Carcerian Sign. These are the Shackleborn.

The Cagewrights know about the Shackleborn, and they believe that their sacrifice during the ritual of planar junction could serve as the necessary bridge between the two planes to force the portal open. The problem, though, was how to tap an energy source powerful enough to not only tear this portal open in the first place, but to fortify it once created so it would become permanent. As the years

rolled on, the Cagewrights began to fear that progress on the ritual of planar junction was too slow. With each passing year, the Shackleborn grew fewer in number, and some of the Cagewrights began to fear that they would die off completely before they had perfected the ritual.

The Soul Pillars

Although few of the Cagewrights realize it, Fetor Abradius's recruitment into their ranks gave them the key they so desperately needed. Fetor first came to the attention of the Cagewrights when one of the organization's leaders, a vile man named Nulin "Fish" Wiejeron, was hired to assassinate him. During several days of following Fetor, Nulin came to realize that the wizard seemed to have an almost supernatural knowledge of things relating to magic and the planes. He knew then that Fetor would make an excellent recruit, and offered him a choice. If Fetor would join the Cagewrights, Nulin would reverse the terms of his assassination and kill the jealous sorcerer who had put the contract out on his life. If Fetor refused, Nulin would finish the job and collect his pay. Fetor knew a good offer when he heard it and joined the Cagewrights without a moment's hesitation.

Soulcage

It took less than a year for Fetor Abradius to prove his worth, by making a terrific discovery in an ancient ruined complex near Cauldron. There, via several ancient repositories of magical lore known as the Soul Pillars, he learned of a ritual that would allow the harnessing of an erupting volcano's vast power, a ritual that was strangely similar to the ritual of planar junction.

Fetor reported to his masters, and several of the Cagewright leaders came to investigate. Not only were they able to confirm Fetor's discovery, but they also discovered that Cauldron counted a fortuitous number of Shackleborn among its citizenry. The convergence of these two elements were all the Cagewrights needed to be convinced that Cauldron would be the site of their ritual. They relocated their base of operations into the region, choosing the nearby ruins of an ancient yuan-ti city called Shatterhorn as their new lair. Over the next three decades, the Cagewrights worked feverishly at refining the ritual of planar junction and constructing a more permanent lair deep under Cauldron, near the slumbering volcano's core.

Trees and Cages

The site for the ritual of planar junction chosen, the Cagewrights were finally able to begin the arduous task of preparation for the great event. In order to open the portal, the Cagewrights needed a matrix in which to arrange the Shackleborn and to focus their life forces in precisely the right way. They also needed a way to trigger the volcano's eruption.

Dyr'ryd and his Cagewrights focused their energies upon creating an artifact to serve just these purposes—the *Tree of Shackled Souls*. Construction of this potent artifact would take the Cagewrights nearly thirty years, and even then, they would need to build thirteen *soulcages* to house the Shackleborn on the Tree's branches. Construction of these thirteen cages would take, by Dyr'ryd's estimate, another thirty years. To speed along the process, Dyr'ryd convinced another cult, the Ebon Triad, to build these thirteen artifacts for them. He also found Cauldron's leadership to be decadent, foolish, or greedy, and quickly established a comfortable arrangement between his organization and the town's governors ensuring that no one would disrupt their activities.

The only troubling elements were Cauldron's churches. The citizens were unusually devout in their faith, but the Cagewrights were only minimally concerned. If all went according to plan, these temples would never become suspicious enough to notice the Cagewrights and their machinations, especially once they were able to gain the support of the city's most powerful church—the Cathedral of Wee Jas.

All that remains now is the collection of thirteen Shackleborn and final construction of the last few *soulcages*. The Cagewrights are poised to begin the ritual of planar junction in the shadows deep below

Cauldron within the next year, and only the intervention of the PCs can stop them.

CAST OF CHARACTERS

The following significant characters are found in this adventure. This list is organized alphabetically by first name to help you reference a particular character quickly.

Adimarchus: A fallen angel and demon prince of madness now imprisoned on Carceri.

Adrick Garthûn: Talented counterfeiter who works for the Last Laugh thieves' guild.

Alek Tercival: A noble-born paladin who serves the church of St. Cuthbert.

Alurad Sorizan: One of the Thirteen, leaders of the Cagewrights.

Annah Taskerhill: A noble-born adventuring bard, leader of the Stormblades.

Ardeth Webb: One of the Thirteen, Ardeth's been a member of the Cagewrights from nearly the start.

Artus Shemwick: Nondescript man who sells information, member of the Last Laugh.

Asfelkir Hranleurt: High Priest of the temple of Kord.

Aszithef: Haraknin member of the Flamewarders, one of Vhalantru's contacts.

Byakala: A marilith demon who once served Adimarchus as a general; she now dwells in Harrowfell on Carceri.

Celeste: A mysterious woman who comes to Cauldron to investigate rumors that a sinister cult has established a foothold in the region.

Cora Lathenmire: Self-assured local duelist, member of the Stormblades.

Crazy Jared: Crazy hermit who lives in a hut north of Cauldron.

Dark Myrakul: Undead warden of Skullrot and high-priest of Graz'zt.

Dhorlot the Dragon-Father: Black dragon who lives in Bhal-Hamatugn and has many half-dragon scions.

Dugobras: Fire giant who helped create the *soulcages*, member of the Ebon Triad.

Dyr'ryd: A massive shator demodand with a conjoined twin, Dyr'ryd is the leader and founder of the Cagewrights.

Ekaym Smallcask: Human bard and member of the Chisel.

Embril Aloustinai: The high-priestess of the Cathedral of Wee Jas in Cauldron, one of the Thirteen.

Fario Ellegoth: Member of the Striders of Fharlanghn.

Fellian Shard: Member of the Striders of Fharlanghn.

Freija Doorgan: One of the Thirteen, Freija is the Cagewrights' most talented magic item creator.

Gaflon: Denizen of the dimension of mirrors and ally of the hags of Vaprak's Voice.

Gau Kleeoch: Minotaur barbarian who oversees the Cagewright defenses, one of the Thirteen.

Gortio: Doppelganger who serves Vhalantru.

Gotrrod: Eldest offspring of the notorious dragon Hookface.

Grehlia Cairnis: Once leader of local Ebon Triad cell, now apprenticed to Nulin Wiejeron; oversaw creation of *soulcages*.

Gretchyn Tashykk: Headmistress of the Lantern Street Orphanage.

Hookface: The most notorious red dragon to live in the region.

Ike Iverson: Second-in-command cleric of the Cathedral of Wee Jas in Cauldron.

Jenya Urikas: Cleric of St. Cuthbert and primary patron for the PCs.

Jil: Talented thug and assassin, member of the Last Laugh thieves' guild.

Kaurophon: Mysterious half-demodand who wants to become ruler of Occipitus.

Kazmojen: Half-troll slaver from the Underdark.

Keygan Ghelve: Gnomish owner of Ghelve's Locks.

Khyron Bonesworn: Leader of evil adventuring party known as the Necrocants.

Kristof Jurgensen: Keeper of the shrine of Pelor.

Kyan Winterstrike: One of the Thirteen, Kyan serves the Cagewrights as a sniper, killer, and explorer.

Maavu Arlintal: A prominent local merchant, wizard, and member of the Chisel.

Meerthan Eliothlorn: Elf disguised as a dwarf, leader of the Striders of Fharlanghn in this region.

Mikimax: Innkeeper of the Redhead Miner's Inn in Redgorge, member of the Chisel.

Nabthatoron: Glabrezu ruler of the Demonskar, exiled to life on the Material Plane.

Nidrama: An enigmatic angel tasked with the behind-the-scenes protection of the Cauldron region.

Nulin "Fish" Wiejeron: One of the Thirteen, Nulin is the primary assassin for the Cagewrights.

Oliron Masht: Also known as "The Foreman," the current leader of the Chisel.

Olomasta: Tribata and Sminelpa's sister, one of the hags of Vaprak's Voice.

Ruphus Laro: Second in command of the church of St. Cuthbert in Cauldron, after Jenya.

Saureya: A fallen angel lost in the Abyss who knows much of Occipitus' history.

Severen Navalant: The lord mayor of Cauldron.

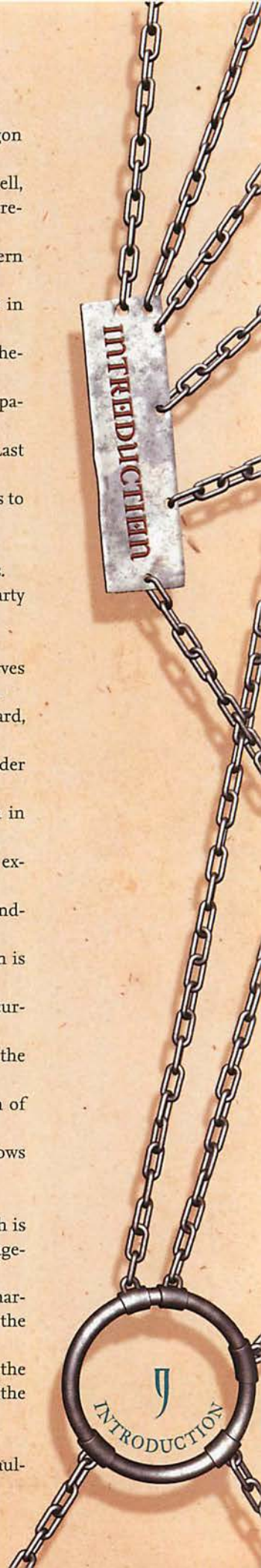
Shebeleth Regidin: One of the Thirteen, Shebeleth is the primary priest and religious leader of the Cagewrights.

Shensen Tesseril: Member of the Striders of Fharlanghn, caretaker of the shrine of Fharlanghn at the Lucky Monkey.

Skaven Umbermead: Halfling who helped with the initial enchantment of the *soulcages*, member of the Ebon Triad.

Skie Aldersun: Owner of Skie's Treasury.

Skylar Krewis: Up-and-coming member of the Cauldron town guard.



Sminelpa: Tribata and Olomasta's sister, one of the hags of Vaprak's Voice.

Ssythar Nahazir: A half-blood yuan-ti, Ssythar is the newest leader of the Cagewrights; he serves as the primary caretaker of their headquarters in Shatterhorn.

Tarkilar: Undead gnoll who aided Skaven in the initial enchantment of the *soulcages*, member of the Ebon Triad.

Terrem Kharatys: Shackleborn child kidnapped by Kazmojen.

Terseon Skellerang: Captain of the Cauldron town guard.

Thearynn Louvel: One of the Thirteen, Thearynn is the Cagewright's specialist on conjuration and planar magic.

Thifirane: One of Cauldron's nobles, Thifirane serves as the public face for the Cagewrights and is Vhalantru's primary point of contact with the group.

Ti'irok Coalfire: Fire giant leader of the Flamewarders.

Todd Vanderboren: Shifty local rake and member of the Stormblades.

Tongueater: Triel Eldurast's cohort, a half-orc werebaboon and member of the Ebon Triad.

Tribata: Sminelpa and Olomasta's sister, one of the hags of Vaprak's Voice.

Triel Eldurast: Disgraced town guard now a cleric of Hextor, helped build a *soulcage* and member of the Ebon Triad.

Velior Thazo: Guildmaster of the Last Laugh.

Vervil Ashmantle: Owner of Kingfisher Sendings, peddler of slaves on the black market.

Vhalantru: Beholder masquerading as human noble, pulls the strings on Cauldron's leadership.

Viirdran Daraqor: One of the Thirteen, Viirdran serves the Cagewrights as a tactician, thug, and alchemist.

Xokek: One of the Thirteen, this shadar-kai is the Cagewrights' primary espionage specialist and scout.

Zachary Aslaxin II: Adventuring cleric of Kord, member of the Stormblades.

Zarn Kyass: The "Blue Duke," ogre mage who provides half-orc thugs and mercenaries to those in need.

Zenith Splintershield: Shackleborn dwarf held prisoner in Bhal-Hamatugn.

RESEARCHING THE VILLAINS

At some point during this campaign, the PCs learn that a group called the Cagewrights have dire plans for Cauldron. This discovery probably occurs in Chapter Six as the PCs speak with Kaurophon, a half-fiend who was once allied with the Cagewrights.

The Cagewrights have been quite good about maintaining their secrecy, and there's little the PCs can do to really learn more about them until they recover the journals and notes of one of their members, such as Fetor Abradius or Thifirane (in Chapters Seven and Eight) or of one of their allies like Vhalantru (at the end of Chapter Eight). Once the PCs have these key bits of information, they'll be able to use them as guides in researching the organization further by making Knowledge (arcana, local, or religion) or bardic knowledge checks. Listed below are several sample bits of knowledge the PCs can learn about the Cagewrights. Note that some of the DCs required to learn the information via research are quite high; the PCs can mitigate these high DCs by using well-stocked libraries to aid their checks, and remember that the journals and notes they capture grant additional bonuses to the checks.

Finally, spells like *legend lore* and *vision* can impart this same information once the PCs have captured some intelligence, as you see fit.

DC 25: The Cagewrights are a mysterious cult associated with the prison plane of Carceri. They are said to worship demodands, and may even be led by these foul fiends.

DC 30: The Cagewrights were founded by demodands several centuries ago and charged with discovering a way to link the Material Plane with Carceri, providing the demodands with a near-endless source of prisoners and slaves for their needs.

DC 33: The Cagewrights maintain their secrecy by using lesser cults to do much of their work for them. The Ebon Triad is one such cult, and rumor holds that they often have ties with more established religious orders, especially those associated with magic or oppression.

DC 35: The Cagewrights are searching for individuals called the "Shackleborn." Descended from half-demodands, a Shackleborn's soul is believed to possess a unique link between the Material Plane and Carceri. This link is of particular interest to the Cagewrights, for some reason.

DC 36: The Cagewrights traditionally number at 26 members—13 leaders and 13 apprentices. In practice, the number of apprentices varies wildly, while the number of leaders remains constant. New leaders are selected from apprentices when necessary. Currently, there are 18 members of the cult.

DC 39: The Cagewrights believe that a ritual of planar junction, fueled by a source of primal energy meshed with the souls of the Shackleborn (whose link to Carceri provides a necessary "pathway" for the magic to travel between the two planes), can create a permanent portal between the Material Plane and Carceri.

In addition, a DC 40 check is good enough to uncover the identity of one of the 13 Cagewright leaders (and that Cagewright's apprentice, if any). The identities of the Thirteen are listed below.

Alurad Sorizan: Male human blackguard, primary torturer and interrogator (apprentice: none).

Ardeth Webb: Female tiefling tattooed monk, advisor and historian (apprentice: none).

Dyr'ryd: Male shator demodand, leader of the Thirteen (Embril was his apprentice, and since her promotion he has not taken on a new apprentice).

Embril Aloustinai: Female human cleric of Wee Jas and newest inductee into the group—rumor holds that Dyr'ryd is grooming her to be Thearynn's replacement as the group's expert on the planes (apprentice: Ike Iverson).

Freija Doorgan: Female human conjurer, primary magic item creator (apprentice: Thifirane).

Gau Kleeoch: Female minotaur barbarian, oversees defenses of Cagewright headquarters (apprentice: none).

Kyan Winterstrike: Female elf arcane archer, sniper and explorer for the group (apprentice: none).

Nulin Wiejeron: Male human assassin, primary killer and assassin for the group (apprentice: Grehlia Cairnis).

Shebeleth Regidin: Male human cleric, spiritual leader (apprentice: Decrihni Baiul).

Ssythar Nahazir: Male yuan-ti sorcerer, caretaker of Shatterhorn stronghold (apprentice: none).

Thearynn Louvel: Male human conjurer, expert on the planes and conjuration magic (apprentice: Xarthyx).

Viirdran Daraqor: Male drow eldritch knight, tactician and alchemist (apprentice: none).

Xokek: Male shadar-kai wizard, espionage and scout (apprentice: none).

CAULDRON

Cauldron forms the hub of this campaign; it serves as a home base for the PCs and the majority of their allies. As this campaign progresses, Cauldron's presence remains a constant and stable theme, and the PCs will have opportunities to get to know its many residents, explore its streets and alleys, aid in the city's evacuation when the volcano below comes to life, and possibly even become its new leaders. This section provides a history of this unique city, details on its government and structure, and information on many locations within its walls. You should study this section carefully, since nearly every chapter of this campaign is set at least partially within the city's walls.

The following stat block applies to Cauldron at the start of the Shackled City Adventure Path. As the campaign progresses, expect the details of this stat block to change, especially as citizens begin to leave town in the face of increasing taxes and a growing militant theme to the town's leadership.

♛ **Cauldron (small city):** Conventional; AL NG; Population 7,500 adults; 15,000 gp limit; Assets 5,625,000 gp; Mixed (79% human, 9% halfling, 5% gnome, 3% dwarf, 2% elf, 1% half-elf, 1% half-orc).

Authority Figures: Lord Mayor Severen Navalant, male human aristocrat 10 (elected leader of the town); Terseon Skellerang, male human fighter 8 (captain of the Town Guard); Lord Vhalantru, advanced beholder (the true power behind Cauldron's government).

Typical Guard Patrol: A typical patrol consists of a sergeant (warrior 4) and 1d4+2 privates (warrior 2). Guards typically wear breastplates emblazoned with the town emblem (a watchful eye wreathed in flames) and carry halberds, short swords, and shortbows. By the time Chapter Four begins, Vhalantru's program of introducing half-orc mercenaries into the city guard is in full swing. At this point, typical guard patrols consist of a sergeant (fighter 4) and 1d4+2 privates (fighter 2)—many are half-orcs. The sergeant carries two *potions of cure light wounds* and a *potion of sanctuary*.

As Chapter Five begins and things start to get dicey in Cauldron, Vhalantru introduces "security platoons" that consist of a human aristocrat 6 (one of his trusted advisors), two half-orc sergeants (fighter 4), and 10+2d6 half-orc fighters (fighter 2). This platoon is 75% likely to include a 3rd-level cleric of Wee Jas and a 3rd-level wizard. After Chapter Seven, no Wee Jas clerics are encountered in security platoons.

Once the PCs defeat Vhalantru in Chapter Eight, town patrols revert back to the way they were in Chapter One.

CAULDRON'S HISTORY

Humanity is only the most recent race to settle in the Cauldron region—this area has a long history of in-

habitants. Characters with ranks in Knowledge (history) may know something about the region's history—if they don't, they can use the same skill to research the past at any of Cauldron's libraries (the best public library is located at Bluecrater Academy), or consult an NPC sage on the matter. Bardic knowledge can also reveal some of the details of Cauldron's past.

The following timeline gives brief details on the region, along with the DC required to know the information. Feel free to expand on these entries as you see fit for your campaign. Events with "DC —" listed cannot be discovered with Knowledge (history) or bardic knowledge checks; this information must be learned elsewhere.

Cauldron Timeline

–3,000 Years (DC —): Spell weavers from an unknown plane arrive in the area and settle in the region destined to become the Demonskar. They subjugate local ogre tribes and use them to help in building a great city. At this time, the region to the east of Cauldron is ruled by the yuan-ti of Shatterhorn and the underground rivers and lakes are ruled by the kopru. Frost giants rule the mountain tops.

–2,500 Years (DC 45): Drawn by rumors of powerful magic in the region, the human necromancer Kyuss arrives in the region. He establishes a base of command and erects a massive tower, known now as the Spire of Long Shadows. His cultists begin skirmishing with the yuan-ti to the south.

–2,000 Years (DC 45): A mysterious doom comes upon the Spire of Long Shadows. The cultists perish to a man, and Kyuss vanishes. In their wake, the spawn of Kyuss emerge and their evil slowly spreads throughout the world.

–1,900 Years (DC —): Last of the kopru are driven off by spell weaver explorers.

–1,820 Years (DC 40): When the spell weavers make a critical error in the construction of a massive planar transport device, their city is destroyed in a tremendous explosion that tears a hole in reality. Portals to the Abyss open randomly in the region for the next century, allowing demons to gather and grow strong in the ruins. The massive crater later becomes known as the Demonskar.

–710 Years (DC 30): One of the greatest wizards of the time, Surabar Spellmason, receives a vision from Nidrama, who has grown concerned about the demon infestation in the region. She gifts Surabar with a potent magic weapon named *Alakast*, and charges him with the task of settling the region and driving out the demonic taint in the Demonskar.

–700 Years (DC 25): Surabar leads a small army inland from the newly founded city of Sasserine, on the pretense of founding a new city of his own. He founds Redgorge in the shadow of a great volcano, and raises the Basalt Bastions to protect his men from attack while they begin building.

–697 Years (DC —): After Surabar manages to make great strides in ridding the area of demonic taint, a demon lord who had taken a special interest in the region sends one of his minions to the Demonskar to organize its defense. This demon lord was Yeenoghu, and the minion he chose was a glabrezu named Nabthatoron.

–695 Years (DC 25): Kozomagon Lidu, one of Surabar's friends and competitors, arrives in the region and founds the nearby village of Liduton, intending to horn in on whatever action had enticed her friend into the region.

–690 Years (DC 25): Surabar defeats Nabthatoron in combat and breaks the back of the demon host from the Demonskar. While the place remains dangerous to this day, the demons never fully recover from this sound defeat, and have remained in the crater. Yeenoghu exiles Nabthatoron to the Material Plane in disgust. During the battle against Nabthatoron, Kozomagon tries to draw upon the power of an ancient kopru necropolis she discovered on the nearby lakebed, but loses control over the necromantic energy and destroys the village of Liduton instead. The village becomes known as the Haunted Village, and is shunned from this point on.

–680 Years (DC 20): Discovery of numerous profitable mines in the region attracts hundreds of prospectors and adventurers. Redgorge quickly outgrows its walls. Surabar determines that the nearby volcano is extinct, and that its cauldron would make an excellent natural defense against attack from Nabthatoron's armies. Many of Redgorge's inhabitants relocate to this region—Cauldron is founded. Over the centuries, the discovery of many large underground complexes and caverns below the city draws the attention of dwarves and gnomes from far and wide. Two of these regions become Jzadirune and the Malachite Fortress.

–650 Years (DC 25): Surabar dies of natural causes. He is entombed in an undisclosed location. Over the next several centuries, Cauldron continues to prosper.

–600 Years (DC 25): Kingfisher Hollow and Hollowsky founded. The citizens hold their own against the nearby yuan-ti, and even manage to drive them back from several small encampments on the jungle's edge.

–400 Years (DC 25): Shatterhorn is sundered by Merrshaulk's displeasure with the religious leaders there and their inability to drive back the advance of humanity; the yuan-ti presence in the area dwindles to a shadow of its former glory.

–320 Years (—): Dyr'ryd founds the order of the Cagewrights, and begins seeding mortals with demodand taint to create the Shackleborn.

–200 Years (DC 25): The red dragon Hookface arrives in the region. His attacks on merchants and cities of the region continue intermittently for a century—no heroes are able to defeat the dragon.

–100 Years (DC 20): Hookface retreats to his lair north of Cauldron with his mate, Taliraxia. The two dragons do not emerge from their lair, although periodically one of their spawn emerges to terrorize the area before being slain or moving on to other regions.

–75 Years (DC 25): Jzadirune is hit with the Vanishing after tainted spell weaver artifacts infect the place. The gnomes abandon the stronghold and never return.

–50 Years (DC —): Adimarchus is betrayed by Graz'zt's son Athux and is imprisoned in Skullrot.

–32 Years (DC 10): The rainiest winter in centuries results in massive flood damage to the lower reaches of Cauldron. The Flood Festival is founded the next year, and for the next several years the freakishly wet winters continue before the weather finally returns to normal.

–31 Years (DC —): Fetor Abradius discovers the Soul Pillars. The Cagewrights relocate to the region, settling in ruined Shatterhorn until they can complete construction of the Fiery Sanctum deep under Cauldron.

–30 Years (DC —): The Cagewrights begin construction of the *Tree of Shackled Souls*, and hire the Ebon Triad to aid in the construction of the *soulcages*.

–15 Years (DC 20): Cauldron's newest noble, a generous human named Vhalantru, is welcomed into the city's aristocracy after he donates huge sums of money to fund the rebuilding of the Town Hall and several other ancient structures that were starting to fall apart. In light of his generosity, no one pries into the mysterious noble's background.

–10 Years (DC 25): Zenith Splintershield falls under the influence of Adimarchus's dreams and disappears into the Underdark on a mad crusade to cleanse it of evil.

–9 Years (DC 20): A young guard named Triel murders several of her fellow guards—her motive is never discovered. She eludes capture and becomes one of Cauldron's most wanted criminals, although over the years her capture grows less of a concern as she remains in hiding.

–7 Years (DC 10): A plague of filth fever strikes Cauldron. Several hundred die before the city's clerics can get the plague under control.

–2 Years (DC —): The three highest-ranking clerics of Pelor accidentally discover Embril Aloustinai's involvement with the Cagewrights. Embril murders them before they can report the discovery and disposes of their bodies with a *plane shift* spell.

LIFE IN CAULDRON

Cauldron's buildings, tightly packed and built from volcanic rock and wood, line the inner bowl of a nameless, dormant volcano. Cobblestone roads form concentric circles around a small but deep lake of cold water which fills the volcano's basin. Although the town's sewage seeps into the lake, local clerics routinely purify the water for the citizens in exchange for charitable donations to their temples.

A 50-foot-tall fortified wall of black malachite encircles the city, tracing the outer rim of the volcano. Four roads descend the volcano's slopes, becoming major thoroughfares that lead to other towns and distant realms. The regions nearer the rim of the city tend to be occupied by upper class families and elite merchants. The closer one gets to the center of town (and the closer to the often pungent odors of the central lake), the shoddier the construction and the more dangerous its dark alleys become.

Most people get around Cauldron on foot, although the town has its share of wagons and carriages, most of them owned by merchants and nobles.

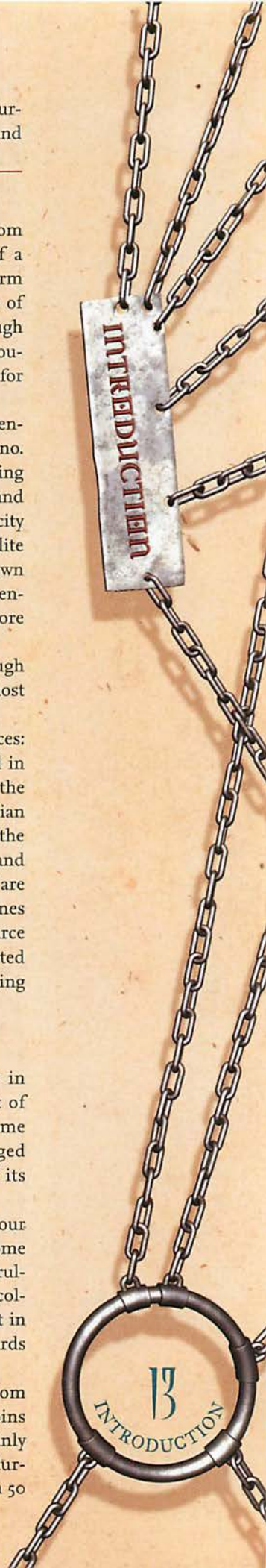
Cauldron's major exports come from two sources: mines and plantations. Both industries are based in the hills surrounding the city, and are managed by the various noble families who live in the area. Obsidian and diamonds are the primary products mined in the region. Plantations usually produce sugarcane and coffee. Most of those who dwell in the city itself are either merchants, scholars, or workers in the mines and plantations in the lowlands. Water is never scarce in town, but most of the city's food must be imported from Sasserine since the local fishing and farming enterprises are meager at best.

TAXES

As the campaign begins, taxes are fairly light in Cauldron. Citizens pay a modest yearly flat tax of 1 gp, while merchants and nobles pay a 5% income tax each year. In addition, a 1 sp gate tax is charged for non-citizens who enter the city by any of its four gates.

These days are coming to a close. As Chapter Four begins, Vhalantru's greed and need for more income to prepare for what he believes is his imminent rulership over the city increase dramatically. Tax collectors (human expert 3) become a common sight in the street, their distinctive high hats and red tabards quickly becoming synonymous with civil unrest.

The PCs should not only hear horror stories from locals who were forced to pay dozens of gold coins in "back taxes" to these collectors, but will certainly have run-ins with them as well. At some point during Chapter Four, a tax collector tries to collect a 50



gp "adventurer's tax" from each of the PCs. If they refuse to pay, the PCs can expect a visit from four 8th-level half-orc fighters and another tax collector, who now tries to extract a 100 gp late fee from each PC in addition to the 50 gp adventurer's tax. A successful DC 25 Diplomacy check allows a character to dodge the tax, but otherwise, anyone who refuses to pay is arrested and ends up spending 1d6 months in jail (area 2).

By the time Chapter Five begins, the excessive taxes culminate in a riot. The riot earns the city a short reprieve from taxes, until Chapter Seven begins. At this point, Vhalantru targets a much smaller (and much richer) portion of Cauldron—adventurers. He imposes a 20% sales tax on all weapons, armor, magic items, and spells cast. If the PCs have established friendly relations with some of Cauldron's merchants and spellcasters, a DC 25 Diplomacy check gets their contact to waive this ridiculous tax, as long as the PC doesn't mention it to anyone else. Talk begins to spread of an equally excessive year-end property tax—hopefully the PCs can put an end to Vhalantru's plots before he can institute the 30% property tax against all of Cauldron's merchants and home-owners.

RUMORS IN CAULDRON

As the campaign progresses, the PCs have ample opportunities to speak with Cauldron's citizens. Indeed, speaking to the townsfolk is an excellent method for the player characters to learn about problems that are facing the town, and also serves the DM as an excellent tool for foreshadowing what is to come in later chapters.

If the PCs seek specific information about a person, place, or thing, you should have them make a Gather Information check to determine the success of their research. For key pieces of plot-related information (such as in Chapter Three when the PCs are searching for the *wands of control water*, or as in Chapter Seven when they need to track down who sent a band of assassins after them), the DCs for these checks are given in the appropriate chapter. For less specific questions, simply assign a DC based on the question's difficulty. A DC 15 check is good enough to learn the location of a specific shop. A DC 20 check is appropriate for more obscure information, like a description of Maavu's standard daily activities. For very obscure information, such as "Who runs the Last Laugh?" feel free to assign a DC 25 or DC 30 to the check.

If, on the other hand, the PCs simply ask the locals for rumors, gossip, and other scuttlebutt, you can have them make a DC 15 Gather Information check. Success uncovers a rumor from the following table. To determine which rumor is uncovered, roll 1d20 and add a modifier to the roll depending on which chapter of the campaign you've reached. This mechanic models the development of information as the campaign progresses; once you reach Chapter Eight, rumors about the assassination attempt on the PCs or the lord mayor's disappearance become more popular than old news like the abductions from Chapter One.

CHAPTER RUMOR MODIFIERS

Chapter	Modifier
One	+0
Two	+1
Three	+3
Four	+6
Five	+13
Six	+13
Seven	+18
Eight	+21
Nine	+21
Ten	+21
Eleven	+21
Twelve	+21

CAULDRON RUMORS

d20 Roll	Rumor
1	One of the children kidnapped from the orphanage is the bastard son of the lord mayor. (False.)
2	A cloaked figure collided with me in the street and knocked me down. She uttered some horrible curse, glared at me with her ghostly face and haunting blue eyes, then strode off. (True; the "woman" was a skulk.)
3	A secret guild of halfling rogues is responsible for the kidnappings and robberies. (False, although dark creepers could be mistaken for halflings at a distance.)
4	Someone in Cauldron trades in strange currency: coins stamped with a jester instead of the sovereign. The authorities are trying to find the source. (True; The Last Laugh guild in town mints its own coins.)
5	A tentacled beast lurks in the cold depths of the lake. (True; a half-fiend morkoth makes its home in the lake's depths.)
6	Coryston Pike, one of the kidnapped victims, feared for her life days before she vanished. (False.)
7	Evil cultists are abducting people and sacrificing them to an evil god who has two heads and tentacles for arms. (False.)
8	A magical disease is causing people in the city to vanish. The same thing nearly wiped out the gnomes of Jzadirune 75 years ago! (False; the disease, though real, is not to blame for the missing townsfolk.)
9	One of the stolen orphans is the offspring of Dwern and Imogen Stormshield, two adventurers who perished a few years back. (Partially

true; Vhalantru the beholder turned Deakon's parents to stone and added them to his statue collection, then had their son placed in the local orphanage.)

10 Keygan Ghelve is one of the finest locksmiths in the world. Only a skilled rogue or spellcaster could bypass one of his locks without the proper key! (True.)

11 Jeneer Everdawn, one of the missing townsfolk, did volunteer work at the local orphanage. Coincidence? I don't think so! (False.)

12 Gryffon Malek and Krylscar Endercott knew each other. They would meet each other after hours at the Tipped Tankard and drink until the wee hours of the morning. Now they're both gone! (True; they were friends who both caught the attention of the skulks.)

13 The Flood Festival is a front, founded years ago by a cult of Hextor to fund a secret army of bloodthirsty mercenaries hidden in caverns below the city. (False.)

14 More giant snakes have been sighted near the village of Hollowsky to the east. I bet the yuan-ti of Shatterhorn are back! (True; the yuan-ti of Shatterhorn never left and are slowly rebuilding their strength.)

15 Something's been riling up wild animals in the area for the last several months; in particular, the lowland baboons seem to have become especially hostile lately. (True; some of the local animals can sense the growing dreams of Adimarchus and are starting to act strangely as a result.)

16 Alek Tercival, a paladin who serves St. Cuthbert, has been out of town for several days; I hear he traveled to the village of Redgorge to take care of a woman who was possessed by a demon! (False; there are no demonic possessions in Redgorge, but Alek Tercival has indeed been in Redgorge lately; he's been conferring with members of the Chisel about what he thinks could be corruption in Cauldron's government.)

17 Hookface the dragon was spotted flying over the hills to the north by some adventurers—hope they don't go rile him up! (False; Hookface has not emerged from his lair to the north in nearly a hundred years. The dragon who's been causing these rumors is in fact Hookface's son Gottrod.)

18 Some sort of evil aquatic druid from the Underdark has taken up residence in the lake, and it's planning to cast a spell to lure people into the water to transform them into its monstrous minions! (False.)

19 Cauldron's not the first city to be built on this site. Adventurers tell stories of a ruined city in the caverns below, a city built by a strange race of monsters. (True; this entire region was once controlled by an empire of spell weavers; in addition, a band of kopru once dwelt in a fortress below Cauldron.)

20 Groups of cloaked figures have been seen jumping from rooftop to rooftop the last few evenings. (True; the Last Laugh guild is training new recruits.)

21 A pesky tribe of kobolds used to infest some of the catacombs below the southern section of the city, but they've been taken care of now. (True; the kobolds were recently wiped out by an adventuring group called "The Stormblades.")

22 A friend saw a mysterious woman down by the lakeshore a few days ago. She had fiery red hair and wore some sort of bulky armor under a black tabard. She was talking to some shady-looking individuals and handing them some money and weapons. (True; This was Triel Eldurast hiring more thugs and Alleybashers to help with her plans.)

23 The churches have lost the *wands of control water*. There's nothing to hold back the flood waters if the rains don't stop! (True; this rumor can only appear once Chapter Three starts and before it ends; otherwise substitute a different rumor for this result.)

24 The umber hulk burrowed its way up into the city from the Underdark because its caverns were flooded this winter. There are hundreds of such creatures down there, and if they discover how much food is available on the surface, they'll destroy Cauldron! (False; this rumor can't appear until Event 11: Umber Hulk Smash, has occurred.)

24 Maavu the caravan-master was keeping the umber hulk has a pet. If you didn't pay the price he offered you, he'd feed you to the monster! (False, although Vhalantru's agents are spreading this rumor. This rumor can't appear until Event 11: Umber Hulk Smash, has occurred.)

25 The Stormblades will be named "Champions of Cauldron" because they recently completed a dangerous mission in the tunnels below town. (False, although they did just complete a mission below the city at Vhalantru's behest.)

26 The giants in the mountains south of the city are getting restless and plan to invade Cauldron this winter. (False.)

27 When Maavu the merchant fled the riot, a group of half-orc thugs chased him on the road to Sasserine. (False, although agents of the Chisel are spreading this rumor. Maavu in fact fled to Redgorge.)

28 Three weeks ago, a gnome peddler named Flismatt met Alek Tercival at the Lucky Monkey. The paladin was helping the carpenters to

repair the building, and helping them indeed. He could split logs with his bare hands and carry an elephant's load on his back! (True, although Alek's performance is a bit exaggerated. His augmented physical power derives from the *Amaranth Elixir*.)

29 Several weeks ago, Alek Tercival met with the Stormblades while they were playing a home version of "snatch the gem" at the Drunken Morkoth Inn. The paladin did not join in the game ("an immoral pursuit"), but amazed everyone by pulverizing a bone die with his bare hand. (True, one of the dreams sent by the hag covey led Alek to find out if the Stormblades had any information about how to contact the Chisel; they were unable to help and insulted Alek in the process.)

30 The City Council raised the taxes to buy a powerful artifact that will permanently protect Cauldron from future floods. (False, although Vhalantru's agents are spreading this rumor.)

31 Lord Vhalantru, one of the lord mayor's most trusted advisors, was recently tasked with protecting Cauldron from future disasters. (True, although the beholder's plans for Cauldron have little to do with protecting it.)

32 A group of duergar have come to the tunnels below Cauldron. They seek revenge against the heroes who disrupted that slave ring late last year. (False, but this rumor might make the PCs worry about their encounters with Kazmojen and Pyllrak Shyraat in Chapter One.)

33 Terseon Skellerang is preparing a special task force to raid Redgorge. He thinks that a group of dangerous conspirators have their base there. (True. Terseon Skellerang fears the Chisel, who have a secret hideout in Redgorge.)

34 Many of the adventurers who used to call Cauldron home have moved on to bigger cities and richer prizes. (False. Over the past 10 years, Vhalantru has carefully manipulated most adventuring groups into taking on challenges too difficult for them, and that work has left Cauldron with a very low number of active adventurers.)

35 The lord mayor has journeyed to the larger city of Sasserine to petition their aid. (False. Vhalantru recently killed the lord mayor and spread many false rumors about the mayor's actual whereabouts.)

36 Lord Vhalantru's leadership is the only thing holding the city together. (True, although he's not the benevolent noble that most think him to be.)

37 Embril Aloustinai, the high priestess of Wee Jas, fled the city in shame. (False. Embril left the city for reasons of her own, unknown to even her second in command, Ike Iverson.)

38 The lord mayor was assassinated by members of the Last Laugh thieves' guild. (False. Vhalantru killed the lord mayor and spread many false rumors about the mayor's actual whereabouts.)

39 The Temple of Wee Jas was recently stormed, its clerics massacred! Embril Aloustinai, the high priestess of the temple, was away when her temple was attacked, although word of the slaughter has already reached Sasserine. (True; the High Temple of Wee Jas in Sasserine has denounced the attack but secretly blames Embril for abandoning her church in its time of need.)

40 A young boy abducted from the Lantern Street Orphanage has gone missing again, only months after his safe return. (True; members of the Last Laugh thieves' guild abducted the boy, one Terrem Kharatys, because he is a Shackleborn. The Cagewrights need Terrem to complete their portal ritual.)

41 A strange affliction is driving some citizens completely mad. The town's small jail is filled to the rafters with howling lunatics, and guard patrols are finding more of them every day. One poor soul was dragged down Obsidian Avenue screaming "I am Adimarchus!" or some damn fool thing. (True; the Cagewrights' preparations for turning Cauldron into a gate-town have yielded some strange side effects, including flashes of temporary insanity among certain members the local populace.)

EXPLORING CAULDRON

This section explores Cauldron in detail. In many cases, buildings and locations mentioned here play a key role later in the campaign; in this case, a reference to the chapter in which this building is detailed in full is given. Locations like the Church of St. Cuthbert and Skie's Treasury that might play prominent roles throughout the entire campaign are covered in depth, while other, minor locations (like the Coy Nixie or Weer's Elixirs) are only given a brief description. You can expand on these minor locations as you see fit for your campaign.

1–4. CITY GATES

Citizens of Cauldron are allowed to pass through the city gates for free; visitors must pay a 1 sp gate tax each time they enter the city. A frequent visitor to Cauldron can purchase a month gate pass for 1 gp after a rigorous interview process (and a DC 15 Diplomacy check). Gate passes are a hot commodity on the black market, and a no-questions-asked pass can be had for a DC 20 Gather Information check and a 2 gp bribe.

5. TOWN HALL

Cauldron's town hall is a single-story building and one of the oldest structures in the city. The building serves as a place for the lord mayor and his advisors to hold meetings with the nobles and other movers and shakers of the city, but they don't actually live there. Records of ownership, historical documents, and similar archives can be found here. Access to these archives is possible with a DC 25 Diplomacy check, and use of them grants a +6 bonus on Knowledge (history) or Knowledge (nobility and royalty) checks.

The town hall is the location at which events 32 and 33 in Chapter Nine take place.

This location is patrolled regularly by a group of six 2nd-level warriors.

6. TOWN GUARD BARRACKS

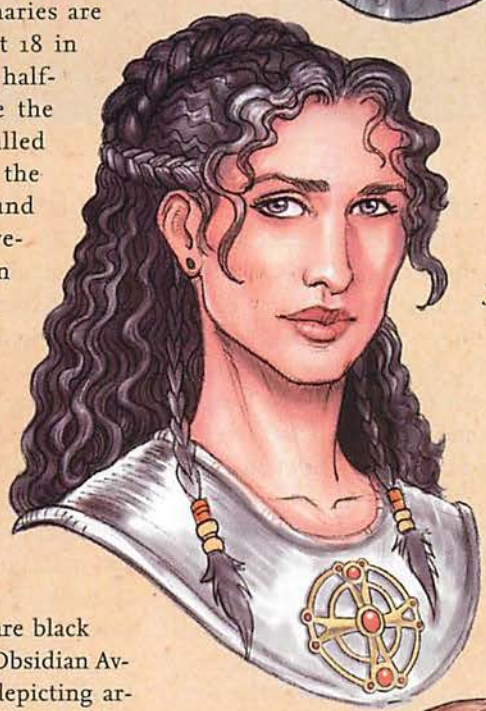
These buildings house the bulk of the town guard, which consists of about 750 warriors, most of whom are 2nd-level. When Vhalantru starts to bring in additional half-orc mercenaries, the beds here quickly fill up. Overflow mercenaries are put up at Minuta's Board until event 18 in Chapter Five, after which point all the half-orcs are moved into a camp outside the city walls. The central area of this walled compound is used for training, and the low single-story keep is the aboveground facade for the Cauldron Prison, a five-level underground facility that can hold hundreds of prisoners. Terseon Skellerang lives in a one-story green-roofed house in the southwestern corner of the compound.

7. CHURCH OF ST. CUTHBERT

The two-story Church of St. Cuthbert, its white marble walls suffused with veins of vivid blue, stands in stark contrast to the buildings of bare black stone that flank it on the north end of Obsidian Avenue. A pair of white marble statues depicting armored warriors stands on either side of the temple's heavy oaken door. Each of the statues raises a great mace to the sky. Above the door's marble architrave are boldly inscribed the following words: "WITHIN LAW LIVES HOPE."

Since the church's high priest, Sarcem Delasharn, is on an extended visit to the port city of Sasserine at the start of this campaign (and is doomed to meet a messy end in Chapter Three), the day-to-day tasks of tending to the church have fallen to a cleric named Jenya Urikas. Her subordinates include two 3rd-level clerics, two 2nd-level clerics, and four 1st-level clerics. All of the clerics are lawful neutral and wear amulets that display the symbol of their deity. A paladin of St. Cuthbert named Alek Tercival guards the temple and

Terseon Skellerang



Jenya Urikas

Alek Tercival

Tygot's Old Things

occasionally patrols the city.

The Church of St. Cuthbert likely becomes one of the strongest allies and supporters of the PCs in this campaign. The PCs may return to the Church of St. Cuthbert for healing as they wish; the clerics in attendance use their magic to mend injured PCs as best they can. In addition to providing healing, the temple can sell equipment, potions, and scrolls to the PCs. The PCs get a 20% discount as long as they remain in the temple's good graces.

The church keeps a ready supply of healing potions and scrolls. If the PCs request a potion or scroll that confers a different effect (such as a *potion of delay poison* or a scroll of *lesser restoration*), the church has a 100% chance –10% per spell level of having the requested item in inventory. If the PCs request more than one of the same available item (such as four *potions of bull's strength*), roll 1d4 to determine how many the church keeps in stock.

In general, the Church of St. Cuthbert replenishes its supply of potions and scrolls every other week.

8. MAAVU WAREHOUSES

Local merchant (and member of the Chisel) Maavu Arlintal keeps several warehouses here. As with most other merchant warehouses, about 50% of the holdings here are various forms of food stores for the city that are kept and sold by the Grocer's Guild. In return for donating half his warehouse space, Maavu enjoys a greatly reduced tax rate (at least, until Chapter Four gets under way).

9. SLIPPERY EEL TAVERN

The Slippery Eel is a favorite tavern for the city's miners, plantation workers, and other working-class citizens. The food and drink is cheap, and the town guard tends to ignore the place, making it a handy site for illicit deals and clandestine meetings. The reason for this is simple: a sizable hidden complex below the tavern serves as the guildhouse for Cauldron's largest guild of thieves—the Last Laugh.

The Last Laugh thieves' guild is led by five masters, of which only one (Velior Thazo) is detailed in this volume. The other four can be detailed as you see fit. If the PCs kill Velior, the Last Laugh declares war on them. Times are strange in Cauldron, though, and it's possible that the Last Laugh bides their time before launching a campaign of revenge against the PCs. In any case, the nature and scope of their guildhall is left to you to detail.

10. CUSP OF SUNRISE

This high-society club is a favorite place for Cauldron's rich and powerful to meet and relax. Owned and operated by Lady Ophellha Knowlern, this location is covered in detail in Chapter Four.

11. MAAVU'S MAIN WAREHOUSE

Maavu devotes most of his smaller warehouses to food storage; this location is where he keeps the majority of his actual business holdings. Maavu's primary imports are foodstuffs, entertainment, alchemical and medical supplies, books, and magic items. He sells most of his

magic item imports through Skie's Treasury. A group of six 3rd-level fighters guards this location.

12. TYGOT'S OLD THINGS

Tygot Mispas (male halfling expert 5), a 120-year-old halfling retired from adventuring for two decades, owns a small but well-stocked antiquity shop on Lava Avenue. "Tygot's Old Things" specializes in nonmagical art objects gathered from across the known world. Tygot himself has excellent commercial contacts in the capital city of Sasserine, and frequently buys old documents and art objects from local adventurers. Tygot's best customers include the lord mayor himself and many nobles in Cauldron (including Lord Vhalantru).

His shop is a two-story structure with a small flat on the upper floor and a well-organized business area on the lower. Tygot shares the place with Lepook, an elderly and lazy blink dog that agreed to spend his old age with his "civilized" friend. Lepook keeps watch on the shop and on Tygot as well, acting as his "conscience" when the halfling's greed rears up. The main shop itself contains an impressive assortment of less valuable antiquities, mostly vases, statuettes, small furniture, and tapestries. Tygot keeps his most precious wares in the basement, where no fewer than thirty art objects, worth an average of 300 gp each, can be found. The door that leads down to the basement is made of steel and is locked with two masterwork locks (Open Lock DC 30) requiring different keys. Apart from the occasional trip to the Coy Nixie for a frugal meal, Tygot spends his free time writing his memoir and casting diminutive plaster replicas of Cauldron's monuments (the Town Hall, the Cathedral of Wee Jas, the Lakeside Pavilion, etc.). He sells these replicas in his shop for 1 gp each.

13. MAAVU IMPORTS

Although he keeps a home in Redgorge, Maavu spends much of his time here in Cauldron at his office. The modest two-story building has several meeting rooms and a bookshop on the ground floor, and a small apartment on the upper floor. Much of Maavu's energy of late has been spent keeping an eye on his biggest competitor, Adrick Garthûn, whom Maavu suspects of being involved with some form of government conspiracy to raise taxes to pad the pockets of the rich.

14. DRUNKEN MORKOTH INN

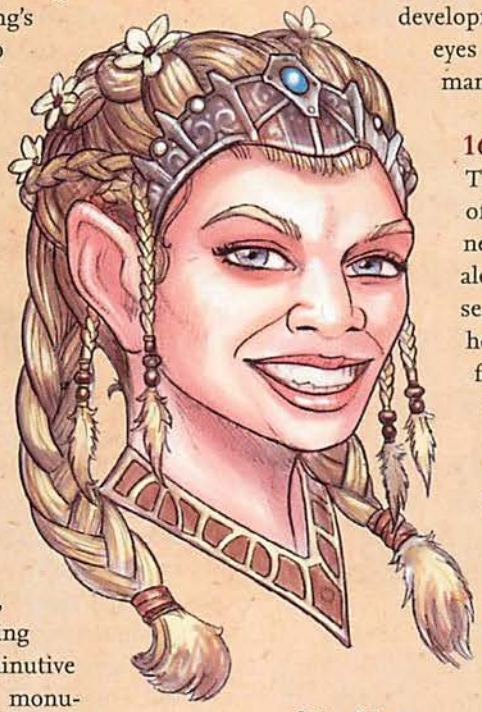
This is perhaps the most popular inn in the city. A regular stop for many merchants and traveling adventurers, the combination of comfortable beds, good food, and reasonable prices make it a favorite among the city's returning visitors. Each of the rooms here is decorated with a humorous painting of Cauldron's legendary lake monster, a large morkoth. The paintings depict the morkoth in any number of embarrassing and ridiculous scenes, always with the morkoth drunk and confused, and often in incongruous locations.

15. TIPPED TANKARD TAVERN

This tavern is generally regarded as the best place in the city for common folk to get a drink (the Coy Nixie and the Cusp of Sunrise both hold better reputations but are generally out of the price range for the working citizen). It's a favorite place for off-duty city guards, and as such, brawls are fairly rare. The Last Laugh keeps an eye on events and developments in this tavern through the eyes and ears of one of its cooks, a man named Artus Shemwick.

16. GARTHÛN IMPORTS

This well-kept building houses the offices of Adrick Garthûn, a prominent merchant whose import of alcohol, tobacco, exotic sweets, and seafood has catapulted him to the height of success. Adrick quickly found that he enjoys this high life, and in order to ensure that he can maintain these standards of living has taken to supplementing his income by forging an alliance with the Last Laugh. He is the primary source for the Last Laugh coins being introduced into the local economy.



Skie Aldersun

17. SKIE'S TREASURY

Numerous stores in Cauldron sell magic items and gear, but only one of them makes its sole business buying and selling magic items to adventurers: Skie's Treasury.

Skie Aldersun (female gnome sorcerer 6) is a retired gnome adventurer who spent much of her youth exploring the catacombs and chambers below Cauldron. She is quite knowledgeable about the creatures, traps, dangers, and general geography of these tunnels and is always eager to share some of her tips and knowledge with paying customers. You can use Skie to give PCs helpful hints or bits of advice as they continue to adventure in the region. She's had enough of the adventuring lifestyle, however, and won't agree to join any new groups for any price.

SKIE'S TREASURY

ITEM	PRICE	DISCOUNT PRICE
+1 banded mail	1,400 gp	1,260 gp
+1 chainmail	1,300 gp	1,170 gp
+1 heavy steel shield	1,170 gp	1,053 gp
+1 kukri	2,308 gp	2,077 gp
+1 light mace	2,305 gp	2,075 gp
+1 longsword	2,315 gp	2,084 gp
+1 scimitar	2,315 gp	2,084 gp
+1 Small dagger	2,302 gp	2,072 gp
+1 Small leather armor	1,160 gp	1,044 gp
+1 spiked chain	2,325 gp	2,093 gp
bag of holding (Type 1)	2,500 gp	2,250 gp
cloak of resistance +1	1,000 gp	900 gp
golembane scarab (flesh)	2,500 gp	2,250 gp
hat of disguise	1,800 gp	1,620 gp
Heward's handy haversack	2,000 gp	1,800 gp
potion of cure light wounds (8 available)	50 gp each	45 gp each
potion of cure moderate wounds (3 available)	300 gp each	270 gp each
potion of haste	750 gp	675 gp
potion of owl's wisdom	300 gp	270 gp
ring of feather falling	2,200 gp	1,980 gp
ring of protection +1	2,000 gp	1,800 gp
rope of climbing	3,000 gp	2,700 gp
scroll of *dispel magic*	375 gp	338 gp
scroll of *flame arrow*	375 gp	338 gp
scroll of *ice storm*	700 gp	630 gp
scroll of *lesser restoration*	150 gp	135 gp
scroll of *levitate*	150 gp	135 gp
scroll of *mirror image*	150 gp	135 gp
scroll of *raise dead*	6,125 gp	5,513 gp
scroll of *silence*	150 gp	135 gp
scroll of *speak with dead*	375 gp	338 gp
sleep arrows (2 available)	132 gp each	119 gp each
wand of cure light wounds (25 charges)	375 gp	338 gp
wand of *cure moderate wounds* (22 charges)	1,980 gp	1782 gp
wand of Melf's acid arrow (10 charges)	900 gp	810 gp

Skie retired from the adventuring life nearly a decade ago when she accidentally awakened a slumbering wyvern while attempting to steal some of its treasure. The enraged wyvern managed to slay the rest of her party (including her familiar, a cat named Newt) before she managed to strike a killing blow. The experience traumatized her, and she swore never to meddle with monsters again. But adventuring was still in her blood. Skie decided to open a store that catered to other adventurers, and since that day has lived vicariously through the tales of her clientele. She still maintains a terrible fear of all dragons and has never summoned a replacement familiar for her beloved Newt.

Skie's Treasury is a modest building crafted from blocks of volcanic stone. The façade of the building bears dozens, if not hundreds, of symbols and sigils that have been carved into the face of the stone with chisels. One door and a pair of tiny windows face the road and overlook the lake below. Above the door, a sign proclaims the establishment to be Skie's Treasury, but more impressive are the numerous items of treasure—rings, coins, wands, necklaces, rods, potions, scrolls, and more—that seem to slowly orbit the sign and shine with soft golden light. Every now and then, two of the items bump against each other, ringing softly like a wind chime.

The treasure orbiting the sign is a *permanent image* that was placed there not long after Skie purchased the building to set up her business. The runes on the façade of her store are in Gnome, and are in fact the names of various adventuring parties that have, throughout the years, patronized Skie's store enough that she offered them a special "Adventurer's Discount" in return for their loyalty. Some of the names include The Greenswords, The Unhumans, The Singers of Ehlonna, and Varmint Patrol. A successful DC 20 Spot check by someone who understands Gnome notices one rune that reads, "The Last Laugh." This is the name of one of Cauldron's thieves' guilds, as a successful DC 20 Knowledge (local) or bardic knowledge check reveals.

Skie doesn't give out the Adventurer's Discount to just any party that comes in off the street; in order to qualify for this discount, an adventuring group must fulfill the following criteria:

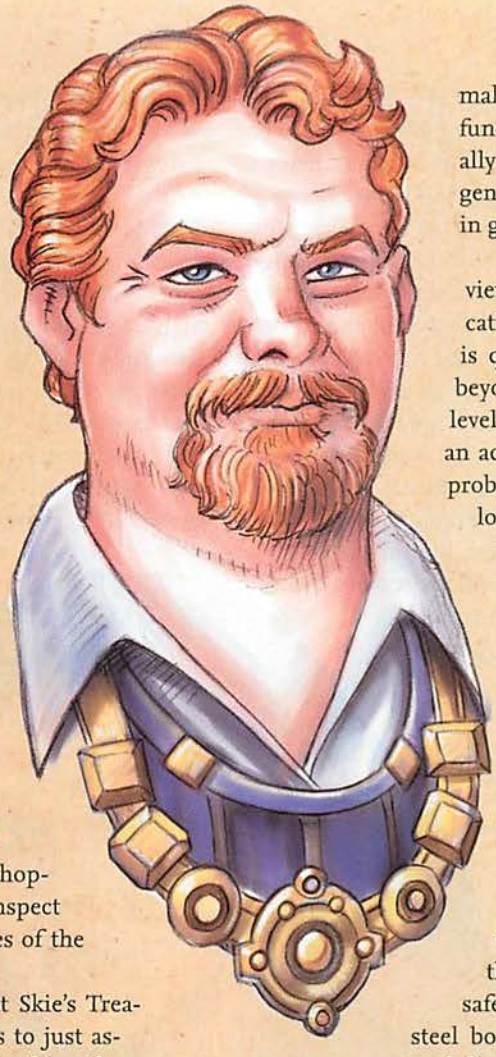
- They must introduce themselves to Skie by name and by adventuring group, and must display strong bonds of friendship.
- They must patronize "Skie's Treasury" at least once a week; transactions on these monthly visits are not required, but they are appreciated.
- On each visit, Skie likes to hear a story of the group's recent accomplishments. She prefers to hear heroic tales and has little taste for mayhem and cruelty. Evil adventuring parties are never given the discount.
- Finally, the group as a whole must sell no less than 5,000 gp worth of magic treasure to Skie. She keeps detailed records of all transactions, and once a group has sold more than this amount in magic treasure to her (over any amount of time), and assuming that up until this point they have followed the first three points above on previous visits, she offers the group the Adventurer's Discount.

The Adventurer's Discount allows the lucky group to sell magic items at 60% market value, rather than 50% market value. Similarly, when they purchase items from Skie, they receive 10% off the market value

of the item in question. Skie appreciates customer loyalty, and has no problem taking a hit to her income to reward those customers she values.

Once a party gains the discount, Skie uses her *wand of stone shape* to rearrange the runes on the front of her store and add the Gnome translation of the new party's name to the façade.

Inside, the store's shelves are fairly sparse, but never empty. Skie sells enough magic to keep herself in comfort, and has no real ambition to make a fortune at the job. Each of the items on her shelves is kept in a glass cabinet under lock and key, displayed on a silk pillow with a small placard that describes the item's history, powers, and what party sold the item to Skie. She doesn't allow shoppers to handle or physically inspect items unless they are beneficiaries of the Adventurer's Discount.



Severen Navalant

You can handle transactions at Skie's Treasury in two ways. The simplest is to just assume that she can afford to buy anything the party might find, and has for sale any magic item worth 3,000 gp or less. For items of up to 15,000 gp in value, assume a flat 5% chance she has the item in stock. If she doesn't, she can get the item through Maavu Imports in 2d6 days.

For an ongoing campaign set primarily in one region, though, where the PCs are likely to return to the same store again and again, this isn't the most realistic choice. The preferred method of handling transactions (although it takes a bit more paperwork) is the method presented below.

At any one time, Skie's Treasury has approximately 50,000 gp worth of magic items for sale. This increases by 10,000 gp with each chapter the PCs complete. A list of items for sale a the start of thsi campaign appears on the previous page.

As the campaign progresses, feel free to alter the list of magic items for sale as you see fit. Remember to keep track of anything that the party sells to Skie as well. As a general rule, each month there is a cumulative 25% chance that an item is sold to an NPC. Once an item is sold, if her total inventory value is below its current max gp, there's a cumulative 20% chance each week that some new item is purchased to replenish stock.

At any one time, Skie tries to keep about 10,000 gp and 1,000 pp in the large safe in the back room to make purchases with. Additional funds over this amount she usually converts to gemstones; she generally keeps another 10,000 gp in gemstones in the safe as well.

Greedy characters might view Skie's Treasury as a ripe location for burglary, but the store is quite well guarded and likely beyond the capability of a low-level party to rob. Skie herself is an accomplished sorcerer and can probably handle a group of four low-level adventurers herself. In addition, she keeps several guards on staff to protect her inventory; two of these guards are always on duty in the Treasury. The glass cases that contain the inventory are all locked with good quality locks (Open Lock DC 30); she wears the only key around her neck on a silver chain. When the store is closed, Skie relocates her entire inventory into the safe in the back room. This safe consists of a lead-lined solid steel box set in a 5-foot-square hole carved directly into the stone floor. The door of the safe is huge, nearly 3 feet across, and is set into the floor of the room like a trap door. A narrow ladder descends into the safe, and a small dumbwaiter used to transport items from the room above is set in one corner of the safe. When the door is closed, it is nearly impenetratable. The safe door is of amazing quality, and cracking it requires 3d6 minutes of focused work and a successful DC 40 Open Lock check.

Finally, if someone does manage to rob the Treasury, they soon find that their problems are only beginning. As inferred by their rune on the façade of the building, the Last Laugh has an interest in Skie's Treasury. Skie has extended the discount to all members of this guild of thieves, and in return, they have promised to leave her store alone. In addition, Skie pays a monthly stipend to this guild; in return they have vowed to track down and return any objects stolen from her store should such an affront be brought to their attention. A character who steals from the Treasury and remains in the region can expect to receive nightly visits from members of the Last Laugh as long as they remain in possession of stolen goods.

Ad-hoc XP Award: If the PCs manage to earn the Adventurer's Discount, give them a CR 3 experience award.

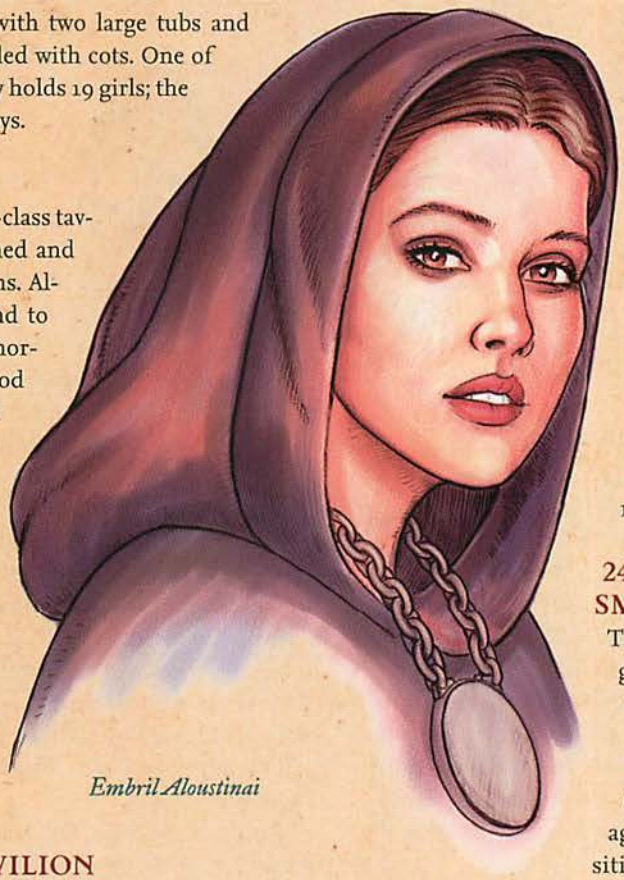
18. LANTERN STREET ORPHANAGE

The orphanage rests on the corner of Lantern Street and Lava Avenue, its charcoal-colored stones held together with mold-encrusted mortar. The windows on both stories are tightly shuttered, but a few slivers of light manage to escape from within. Lanterns hang on either side of the oaken front door, mounted to which is a green copper knocker shaped like a smiling gargoyle's visage, its nostrils pierced by a copper ring.

The ground floor of the orphanage is dimly lit and contains a main hall (with a staircase leading to the second floor), a kitchen with stairs leading down to a cellar pantry, a dining hall, a playroom for the children, a schoolroom, a small bathroom, and staff quarters. The second floor is divided into three rooms: a spacious bathroom with two large tubs and two large bedrooms filled with cots. One of the bedrooms currently holds 19 girls; the other room holds 31 boys.

19. COY NIXIE

The Coy Nixie is a high-class tavern and dancehall owned and operated by the Aslaxins. Although prices here tend to be nearly double the normal asking price, the food and drink are rivaled only by the Cusp of Sunrise. These two locations have a healthy competition—while the Cusp is generally held to have better food, drink, and entertainment, there are no membership fees at the Coy Nixie.



Embril Aloustinai

20. LAKESIDE PAVILION

This open pavilion is one of the oldest structures in Cauldron. Said to have been formed via magic cast by Surabar Spellmason himself, the pavilion is traditionally where the lord mayor issues announcements and decrees. It has also become a favorite place after dark for illicit meetings.

21. VANDERBOREN MANOR

This large manor houses the members and servants of the Vanderboren family, Cauldron's newest nobles. The Vanderborens are the equivalent of real estate tycoons. Less respected by the other nobles because they're self-made, they constantly look for ways to make the other nobles look bad to increase their standing among their new peers. They also own and fund the Lantern Street Orphanage. Both Vanderborens got their start on their feet: Premiach as a runner for a messenger service and Aeberrin as a server at a tavern.

22. MINUTA'S BOARD

This low-cost inn and flophouse caters to anyone who can't afford to stay at Cauldron's better inns. Prices here are 75% normal, but the owners make no guarantee against theft or loss of property. In fact, quite the opposite, as this inn is run by a struggling group of thieves known as the Alleybashers. Pressure from the Last Laugh has forced the Alleybashers to steal from their guests, and the place's reputation has suffered as a result. The details of the Alleybasher guildhouse in the basement below the inn are left to you to design, although they should be a pale shadow of whatever you come up with for the Last Laugh.

23. SURE FOOT LIVERY

Sure Foot Livery is the largest (and only) livestock and livestock accessory business in town. The business is run by a no-nonsense woman named Tippys Surefoot (female halfling expert 5).

24. GURNEZARN'S SMITHY

This smithy is generally regarded as the finest such establishment in the city. Its owner, Phalian Gurnezarn (male human expert 6), has long held his own against the relentless acquisition and domination of his trade by the Lathenmires, and has his own skill and the loyalty of his customers to thank for the fact that he's now the only non-Lathenmire smith in town. As a result, his prices are the highest in town (125% normal cost).

25. TEMPLE OF LORDLY MIGHT

The church of Kord is nearly as powerful and popular in Cauldron as the church of St. Cuthbert, if only because they sponsor numerous sporting events and demonstrations for the people of Cauldron throughout the year. This church is currently headed by a 6th-level male half-orc cleric of Kord named Asfelkir Hranleurt. He is attended by a 5th-level cleric, two 2nd-level clerics, four 1st-level clerics, and a dozen acolytes in training (1st-level commoners).

26. LORD MAYOR'S RESIDENCE

This large walled compound is the oldest structure in the city. The traditional seat of power for the town, the estate's ownership has been held by the Navalant family for the past 200 years. The current lord mayor, Severen Navalant (male human aristocrat 10), is well-liked but those close to him worry that he lacks the spine to be a true leader. His increasing reliance upon Vhalantru's advice worries them all the more.

27. WEER'S ELIXIRS

Owned and operated by Vortimax Weer (male human wizard 10), a retired adventurer, this cramped shop is the go-to place in town for alchemical items and potions. At any one time, 1d6 of any potion listed in the *Dungeon Master's Guide* can be found here, along with any magical dusts, elixirs, and other similar wondrous items. Vortimax himself is a cranky old curmudgeon who has little patience for youngsters, and even less patience for anyone who tries to haggle his high prices (generally 150% normal asking price). Vortimax is one of the highest-level wizards in Cauldron, and spends much of his time teaching alchemy and magical theory classes at Bluecrater Academy.

28. THE BRASS TRUMPET

This abandoned tavern is a Last Laugh safe house—it is detailed in full in Chapter Eight.

29. CATHEDRAL OF WEE JAS

This towering structure is one of the most impressive and beautiful in Cauldron. The church of Wee Jas has always been powerful in Cauldron, but not as well liked as the churches of Kord or St. Cuthbert, since the clerics of this church tend to be standoffish, curt, and even creepy. The clerics of Wee Jas are responsible for dealing with the unclaimed dead of Cauldron, and maintain vast catacombs for anyone who's rich enough to afford the burial but doesn't have a personal crypt. Most of the dead of Cauldron are cremated.

The cathedral is run by Embril Aloustinai, although she rarely sees visitors and leaves the day-to-day operations to a cleric named Ike Iverson. The cathedral is also staffed by a cleric named Calmus Vel, two 5th-level clerics, three 2nd-level clerics, seven 1st-level clerics, and ten acolytes in training (1st-level commoners).

Whereas the Church of St. Cuthbert can be an ally and supporter for the PCs, the Church of Wee Jas should be a recurring foil to their efforts. As the PCs become more powerful, they catch the eye of Ike and eventually that of Embril herself. In public situations where the PCs might be trying to accomplish some social goal, the church of Wee Jas takes up a contrary position to the PCs' goals and desires, more often than not simply to oppose them.

If one of the PCs is a worshiper of Wee Jas, this can make for some entertaining roleplaying. The Wee Jas worshiper might soon find his loyalties divided between the church and his adventuring companions. One thing to note is that Wee Jas herself doesn't

Cathedral of Wee Jas

necessarily approve of Embril's actions, and as she becomes more and more involved with the Cagewrights, it's more likely that splinter faiths of Wee Jas break off from the main church and form underground resistances to the growing corruption in the upper ranks of the religion. Perhaps the PC worshiper can join, or even found, such a group.

This location is detailed fully in Chapter Seven.

30. GHELVE'S LOCKS

Most of the locks in the city of Cauldron were created by the proprietor of this small shop. This location is detailed in full in Chapter One.

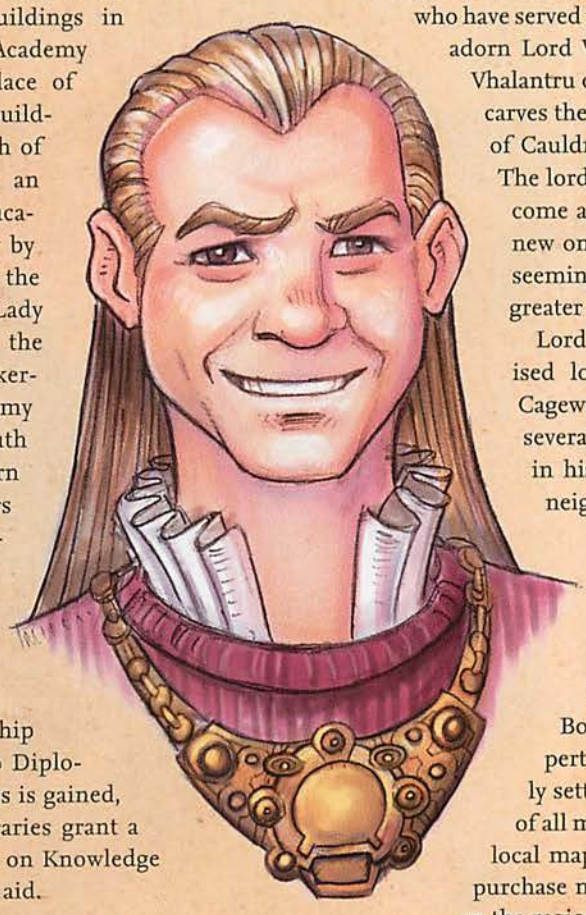
Thifirane Rhiavadi

31. ORAK'S BATHHOUSE

Orak's Bathhouse is a squat, windowless building of dark stone. The baths are open from noon to midnight every day. This location is detailed in full in Chapter Two.

32. BLUECRATER ACADEMY

One of the tallest buildings in Cauldron, Bluecrater Academy is also the primary place of learning here. The building has five stories, each of which is dedicated to an increasing level of education. Financed partially by tuition fees (but also by the support of nobles like Lady Ophellha Knowlern, the Aslaxins, and the Taskerhills) Bluecrater Academy is where the lucky youth of Cauldron go to learn a trade. The upper floors consist of extensive libraries and researchers' offices. Access to these libraries is difficult, requiring either a 2,000 gp bribe or a 500 gp membership fee along with a DC 30 Diplomacy check. Once access is gained, the books in these libraries grant a +6 circumstance bonus on Knowledge checks made with their aid.



Lord Vhalantru

33. CHURCH OF PELOR

This small yellow tower is tended by a single 4th-level male human cleric of Pelor named Kristof Jurgensen. His resources are limited of late. The shrine to Pelor has always been fairly small and minor in Cauldron, especially since Kristof's three superiors recently died under mysterious circumstances (they were murdered by Embril), leaving him in charge of the entire shrine.

34. HOUSE VHALANTRU

Unbeknownst to Cauldron's lord mayor and other townsfolk, Vhalantru the beholder keeps his watchful eyes on local adventuring bands. Once adventurers reach a level where Vhalantru perceives them as a threat to his hold over the city, the beholder invites them to his manor and "cashes them out." Many heroes who have served the lord mayor in the past now adorn Lord Vhalantru's estate as statuary. Vhalantru claims to know a sculptor who carves these wondrous effigies in honor of Cauldron's greatest heroes—not so. The lord mayor has seen many heroes come and go and constantly grooms new ones to replace those who have seemingly departed in search of greater adventures elsewhere.

Lord Vhalantru has been promised lordship of Cauldron by the Cagewrights, as well as support from several newly freed Carcerian fiends in his bid to conquer and enslave neighboring realms.

His estate is detailed in full in Chapter Eight.

35. WESTKEY'S MAP EMPORIUM

This modest shop is run by Bolar Westkey (male gnome expert 4), a cartographer who recently settled in the area. He sells maps of all manner, including regional and local maps. The PCs should be able to purchase maps of most public buildings or the region here, but Westkey makes it a

strict practice to not sell maps of private businesses. He does, however, have a fair collection of treasure maps, some of which are local, and some of which might actually be legitimate. Standard maps generally cost anywhere from 2 to 20 gp, while his treasure maps are sold for 100 gp a shot (with no guarantees as to the map's validity).

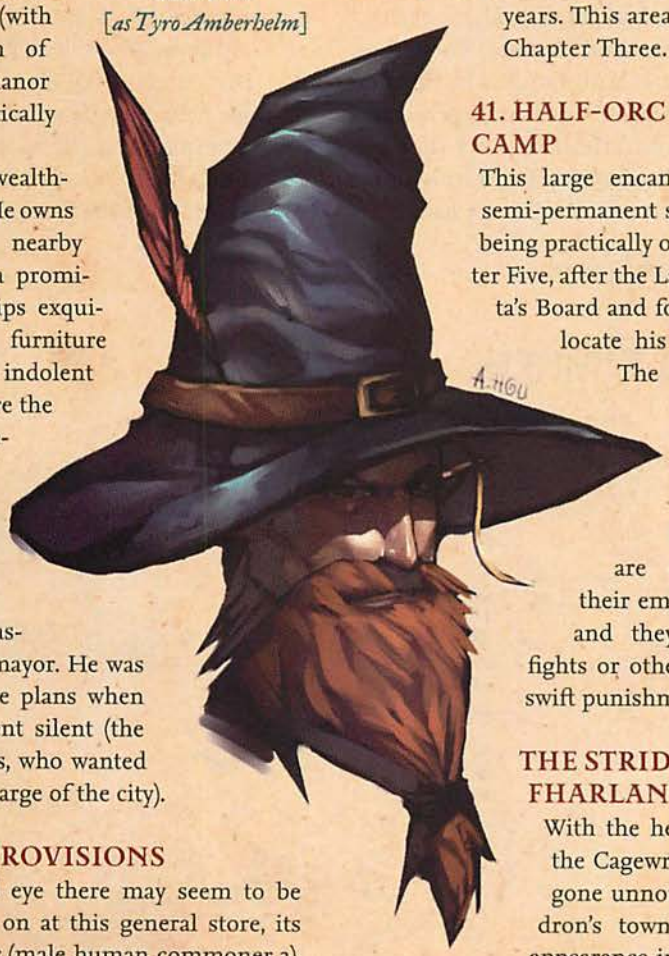
36. HOUSE RHIAVADI

This may well be Cauldron's most conspicuous display of wealth. Lady Rhiavadi has long been one of the city's wealthiest nobles. Common knowledge holds that much of her wealth is inherited, but rumor holds that she has her hands in a large number of illegal enterprises as well. House Rhiavadi is detailed in full in Chapter Eight.

37. TASKERHILL MANOR

This massive manor is four stories in height, and is easily the most ostentatious of Cauldron's noble homes (with the possible exception of House Rhiavadi). The manor is home to the fantastically rich Taskerhill family.

Meerthan [as Tyro Amberhelm]



Lord Taskerhill is the wealthiest noble in Cauldron. He owns several mines in the nearby mountains, as well as a prominent workshop that ships exquisitely crafted obsidian furniture and knick-knacks to the indolent cities of the north. Before the trouble in Cauldron really started (and the PCs appeared on the scene), Lord Taskerhill made contacts in the nearby city of Sasserine to hire an assassin to remove the lord mayor. He was forced to abandon those plans when his contact abruptly went silent (the work of the Cagewrights, who wanted a malleable person in charge of the city).

38. ZANATHOR'S PROVISIONS

While to the untrained eye there may seem to be nothing unusual going on at this general store, its owner, Bjellkir Zanathor (male human commoner 3), has the unique honor of being the only living citizen in Cauldron who has seen the Crater Lake Monster. He's always ready to tell the story of how his small fishing boat was attacked late one night and sunk by the fantastic creature several years ago. The thing bit off his leg and left one of its teeth lodged in his hip. Zanathor's willing to show off his scars, wooden leg, and the tooth, which he's mounted on a wooden display that hangs above his counter. A successful DC 17 Knowledge (dungeoneering) check is enough to identify the tooth as a legitimate morkoth tooth, albeit one of unusual size. A DC 30 Knowledge (the planes) check also reveals that the morkoth the tooth came from was likely a half-fiend of great power.

39. LATHENMIRE MANOR

Given another few years, the Lathenmires could be inducted into Cauldron's nobility. As it stands, the family is as rich as most of the other nobles, having effectively cornered the local arms and armor trade. The Lathenmire manor is a sprawling structure with several training rooms and trophy halls on its ground floor.

40. LAVA TUBE ENTRANCE

Numerous entrances to the caverns below Cauldron exist; this one provides the quickest and most direct route to the Kopru Ruins that have housed the Ebon Triad cultists in the area for the past thirty years. This area is detailed further in Chapter Three.

41. HALF-ORC MERCENARY CAMP

This large encampment of tents and semi-permanent structures springs into being practically overnight during Chapter Five, after the Last Laugh burns Minuta's Board and forces Zarn Kyass to relocate his half-orc mercenaries. The encampment houses approximately 100 4th-level half-orc fighters and 20 8th-level half-orc fighters. The half-orcs are quite well-behaved—their employer pays them well, and they know that causing fights or other problems can bring swift punishment.

THE STRIDERS OF FHARLANGHN

With the help of Lord Vhalantru, the Cagewrights' dark agenda has gone unnoticed by most of Cauldron's townsfolk. However, their appearance in Cauldron has caught the eye of the Striders of Fharlanghn—a loosely run organization of adventurers and explorers who watch the horizons for signs of great evil and strive to preserve the balance of power in the realm. The Striders have tracked the Cagewrights to Cauldron and seek to uncover their plans.

The Striders of Fharlanghn know that the Cagewrights worship powerful extraplanar fiends living

in Carceri. Years ago, with the help of some good-aligned adventurers, the Striders attacked a cabal of Cagewrights in a city far to the north, but not before the Cagewrights called forth one of their vile masters from the prison plane. Several Striders perished in the battle, but the fiend was eventually banished back to Carceri and the surviving Cagewrights were routed.

The Striders of Fharlanghn have sent one of their own, a neutral good half-elf named Meerthan Eliothlorn, to undercover the Cagewrights' machinations in Cauldron. Meerthan, posing as a dwarven merchant named Tyro Amberhelm, has a room at The Drowning Morkoth Inn. He suspects that the Cagewrights are behind the recent string of kidnappings. When the Church of St. Cuthbert hires the heroes to investigate the matter, Meerthan takes interest in their activities and sends his agents to follow them as they make their way underground. If the heroes get in a bind, these agents might come to their rescue at some opportune moment.

At this time, there are three other Striders operating in the area: Fario, Fellian, and Shensen. These three agents come into contact with the PCs in Chapters One and Three. Fario and Fellian share a permanent *Rary's telepathic bond* with Meerthan. After she's rescued from the Lucky Monkey, Shensen finally agrees to have the wizard create a similar link for her.

The Striders may accept some or all of the PCs into their group, if they display the right attitudes. In order to join the Striders, a PC must exhibit a healthy respect for the natural world, and must have made all three of the other Strider agents helpful allies via Diplomacy. A prospective member in the Striders must also have at least 4 ranks in four of the following skills: Gather Information, Hide, Knowledge (local), Knowledge (nature), Listen, Move Silently, Sense Motive, or Spot. Once a character meets these requirements, and once Meerthan feels he knows and trusts a PC, he offers that PC a place in the Striders.

Membership in the Striders grants a PC the following benefits:

- The character gains a permanent *Rary's telepathic bond* with Meerthan. Strider agents are expected to operate on their own (or with other agents); the bond is generally used only to send Meerthan reports. The bond can also be used to call for aid from Meerthan, although he makes it clear that he never expects one of his members to call for help. Meerthan isn't a big fan of failure, and he explains that if he has to bail a PC out three times, their membership in the Striders is dissolved upon the third rescue.

Player's Map of Cauldron & Environs

- The character gains free room and board at the Drunken Morkoth.
- Meerthan will cast any spell he knows (or any provided to him on a scroll) for a member of the Striders free of charge, although often he needs a day to prepare for the request.
- Once per month, a Strider may requisition up to 1,500 gp in potions and scrolls from the organization. Requisitioned potions and scrolls arrive 1d4 days after the request is made.
- Access to the pathwarden prestige class (providing all other prerequisites are met). This class is fully detailed in Appendix 5.

THE CHISEL

The Chisel is a secret organization of rich merchants and artisans. Based in the Stonemason District of Redgorge, the Chisel was founded ages ago by the same heroes who defeated Nabthatoron's original assault on the region. Descendants of these heroic colonists, most members of the Chisel are quite powerful and skilled individuals.

Although the original intent of the society was to do good for the region, the Chisel has in recent times shifted to a more selfish demeanor. Most of the Chisel's energy is now spent on improving the economic and political interests of its members. Recent events in Cauldron pushed the Chisel to investigate the problems facing the city, more out of a need to protect the monetary interests of the region than out of a desire to do good. The intelligence activity of one of the group's most influential members, a merchant named Maavu, will soon be discovered and punished by Vhalantru (see Chapter Four).

Membership in the Chisel is difficult to secure. In order to become a member, a PC must first be invited to a preliminary meeting with the Chisel leadership. Such a meeting occurs in Chapter Five. If the PCs manage to avert the invasion of Redgorge by Cauldron's city guard in Chapter Five, they may petition the Chisel for a membership. If the PC has at least 5 ranks in any Craft skill and can make a DC 25 Diplomacy check, the Chisel grants him membership. Alternately, a character with 10 ranks in any Craft skill is automatically granted membership (no Diplomacy check required).

Membership in the Chisel grants a PC the following benefits:

- The character gains access to the Hall of Carvings in Redgorge, and all the resources therein.
- Once a month a member of the Chisel may requisition up to 1,000 gp in gold or gems. This requisition can be fulfilled in 2d4 hours.
- The character gains free room and board at the Redhead Miner's in Redgorge.
- Access to the high handcrafter prestige class (providing all other prerequisites are met). This class is fully detailed in Appendix 5.

MOUNTAIN ENCOUNTERS

D%	Encounter	Average EL	Source
01–05	1 roc	9	*Monster Manual* 215
06–10	1 stone giant	8	*Monster Manual* 124
11–20	1 hill giant	7	*Monster Manual* 123
21–30	1d6 dire apes	6	*Monster Manual* 62
31–35	1 half-black-dragon human fighter	6	*Monster Manual* 146
36–45	1d6 giant eagles	6	*Monster Manual* 93
46–65	2d4 hillfolk	6	Appendix 4
66–75	1d6 apes	5	*Monster Manual* 268
76–90	3d6 orcs	5	*Monster Manual* 203
91–100	1d4 ogres	5	*Monster Manual* 199

LOWLAND ENCOUNTERS

D%	Encounter	Average EL	Source
01–05	1d3 hill giants	8	*Monster Manual* 123
06–10	1 tyrannosaurus	8	*Monster Manual* 61
11–20	1 wyverns	6	*Monster Manual* 259
21–35	1d3 dire lions	6	*Monster Manual* 63
36–55	2d4 hillfolk	6	Appendix 4
56–70	1d4 lions	5	*Monster Manual* 274
71–90	1d6 hill baboons	5	Appendix 4
91–100	1 ankheg	3	*Monster Manual* 14

JUNGLE ENCOUNTERS

D%	Encounter	Average EL	Source
01–05	1 vrock	9	*Monster Manual* 48
06–10	1 dire tiger	8	*Monster Manual* 65
11–15	1d4 babau demons	8	*Monster Manual* 40
16–20	1 Grayhaunt marauder	8	Appendix 4
21–25	1d6 spawn of Kyuss	8	Appendix 4
26–35	1d6 yuan-ti halfbloods	8	*Monster Manual* 264
36–40	1d4 megaraptors	8	*Monster Manual* 60
41–55	1d6 gnoll hunters	7	Appendix 4
56–70	1d6 dire boars	7	*Monster Manual* 63
71–85	2d6 gnolls	6	*Monster Manual* 130
86–100	1d6 deinonychuses	6	*Monster Manual* 60

THE CAULDRON REGION

At certain points during this campaign, the action moves beyond Cauldron's town walls and into the surrounding region. Certain locations, like Redgorge, the Lucky Monkey, the Demonskar, Crazy Jared's Hut, and Shatterhorn feature prominently in this campaign. Others, like Hookface's Lair, the Haunted Village, the Keep of Jarl Khurok, Kingfisher Hollow, and Hollowsky don't play a role in the campaign at all. One of these locations (the Spire of Long Shadows) plays a prominent role in the second *Dungeon* Adventure Path campaign—Age of Worms. Nevertheless, your

Dungeon Master's Map of Cauldron & Environs

players might wish to explore one of these regions. Likewise, you can use one of these areas as settings for pick-up adventures the PCs might wish to go on in order to build up experience before tackling the next chapter in the campaign.

Cauldron is located in a sub-tropical climate. The foothills surrounding the taller mountains are rugged and covered with scrub, but are fairly open for several miles before giving way to rolling savannahs. These savannahs then transform into particularly dense sub-tropical jungles a few miles farther out from the mountains. This region is a true frontier land; a few villages sit in the foothills and lowlands (as indicated on the regional map), but aside from these and the roads, the area is still wilderness.

WILDERNESS ENCOUNTERS

The regions surrounding Cauldron can be broken down into three distinct areas: mountains, lowlands, and jungle. The characters venture out into these regions at least four times in this campaign; chances are that they'll head out more than this in your game. When they do, you can spice up their journey using the following encounter tables. Assume there's a 10% chance for an encounter per hour, but never more than one encounter per day. Check once for an encounter during each rest period as well. If characters stick to the local roads, the chance of an encounter drops to 3%.

CRAZY JARED'S HUT

Perched on a remote mountainside meadow, miles from any sign of civilization, lies this lonely hut inhabited by a mad bard named Jared. This location is detailed in full in Chapter Four.

THE DEMONSKAR

This terrible crater in the middle of the trackless jungle was once the site of a spell weaver city. When an attempt to build a structure to allow planar transport on a massive scale failed, the entire city vanished in a terrific explosion of abyssal energies. The place has since come to be known as the Demonskar, if only for the fact that it is infested with demons trapped here when that fateful explosion tore them out of the Abyss and stranded them on the Material Plane.

Several tribes of gnolls have recently appeared in the jungles near the Demonskar. Most were attracted to the region by legends spread by a wandering gnoll adept about "Triple Tail." According to this legend, the son of Yeenoghu emerged from the Abyss in a great fire from the Demonskar, an event that marked the start of a thirteen-century war that would eventually make the gnolls the dominant race in the world. These gnolls are loosely organized brigands, but a few of them are religious fanatics inspired by Triple Tail. These gnolls, adepts and rangers of considerable ability, worship Triple Tail as the son of Yeenoghu.

"Triple Tail" does exist within the Demonskar. Although he cares little for such worshipers, he nevertheless accepts human sacrifices from them. He is, in fact, a glabrezu demon named Nabthatoron who once served Yeenoghu. After failing to secure the region against Surabar Spellmason, Nabthatoron was exiled to the Material Plane until such time as he could raze Redgorge to the ground. For the past several centuries, Nabthatoron has tried many times to organize the fiends of the Demonskar back into an army, but his resources and reputation have failed him so far on every attempt.

Nabthatoron's lair is located somewhere in the depths of the Demonskar, and is inhabited by the survivors of the demon's original fiendish retinue. This location is beyond the scope of this campaign, but the PCs might want to seek and explore it later, especially if Nabthatoron withdraws from his fight with them at the end of Chapter Four. The glabrezu's lair should feature encounters with lesser demons of various kinds, namely Nabthatoron's unruly subordinates from the Battle of Redgorge.

Although most of the spell weaver structures in the vicinity were swept away by the explosion that produced the Demonskar, some remnants of their once proud city survive. The PCs have a chance to explore some of these ruins in Chapters Five and Seven. Other ruins left by the spell weavers are likely to be subterranean places, buried deeply in lava, rubble, and ash.

HAUNTED VILLAGE

The Haunted Village is a ruined settlement set in the craggy foothills south of Cauldron. It was founded by Kozomagon Lidu, one of Surabar's greatest friends and competitors. Originally named Liduton, the Haunted Village thrived for only a very short time before most of its inhabitants perished during the Battle of Redgorge. Kozomagon was a necromancer, and she founded Liduton near an ancient kopru necropolis hidden in a deep, dark lake. Just as Surabar used his great elemental powers to defend his people, Kozomagon drew upon her powers to raise an army to protect Liduton. This foolish attempt to raise an army of undead koprus to support the defenders of Redgorge ended in tragedy as the undead army turned on the citizens. Little is known today of the long-term results of this event, but rumors about powerful undead creatures in the Haunted Village continue to persist.

In fact, the haunted village has become the base of operations for a small band of necromancers and mercenaries called the Necrocants. Led by one Khyron Bonesworn, the exact reason the Necrocants have chosen this location as their base of operations in the region has been left to you to devise.

HOLLOWSKY

The village of Hollowsky is the smallest of the four human settlements in the region. With a population of 460, it barely qualifies as a village. Hollowsky is notable mostly as the hometown of one of the region's more benevolent nobles, Lady Ophellha Knowlern. Lady Knowlern owns a multitude of businesses in the region, the most well-known of which is the Cusp of Sunrise. She has never married, and inherited her money from her parents. She owns a small brewery, the Drunken Morkoth Inn, and two plantations, among many other interests and investments.

JARL KHUROK'S KEEP

The giants are a disorganized force in the region now, but once a fair number of frost giants dwelt upon the snow-capped peaks of the southern mountains. Led by Jarl Khurok, these giants subjugated the local stone giant, hill giant, and ogre tribes, and for many years were quite the problem for Cauldron until a band of adventurers stole into the giant king's keep and assassinated him. What lurks in the abandoned keep these days is unknown.

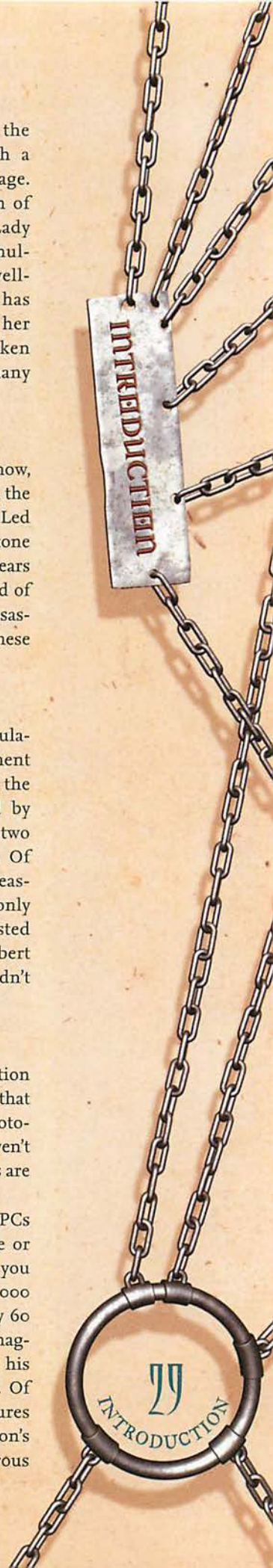
KINGFISHER HOLLOW

The town of Kingfisher Hollow, with its population of 2,100 souls, is the second largest settlement in the area. It's also the primary location for the region's plantations—the town is surrounded by fields of coffee and sugarcane. Traditionally, two noble families jointly lead Kingfisher Hollow. Of late, the Aslaxins have taken up the reigns increasingly as the Taskerhills have declined. Today, only one Taskerhill remains—and he's more interested in seeking redemption in the arms of St. Cuthbert than helping run a town. Zachary Aslaxin couldn't be happier.

LAIR OF HOOKFACE

Hidden in the northern mountains, the exact location of Hookface's lair is known to quite a few. It's just that no one's ever been brave enough to confront the notorious dragon in his den. Since he and his mate haven't bothered to emerge for the past century, the locals are fine with leaving the place alone.

Hookface awakens in Chapter Nine, but the PCs could go looking for his lair at any time before or after this Chapter. Details on his lair are left for you to devise, but keep in mind that Hookface has 20,000 gp worth of coins, goods, and art items, roughly 60 gems (average value of 100 gp), 1d4 medium magic items, and at least one major magic item in his hoard, in addition to the magic items he uses. Of course, all sorts of dangerous traps and creatures guard the extensive caverns, including the dragon's mate Taliraxia, who is, in fact, even more dangerous than Hookface himself.



LUCKY MONKEY

The Lucky Monkey is a large roadhouse and inn about a day's ride from Cauldron. Founded so that travelers to and from Sasserine would have a safe place to stay, the roadhouse is also a favorite of local loggers and explorers. The Lucky Monkey is detailed in Chapter Three.

REDGORGE

This village was the first human settlement in the area. Founded about 700 years ago, Redgorge was at one time a much larger settlement, but it never fully recovered from Nabthatoron's assault so long ago. Redgorge sits in a narrow strip of flat ground between a cliff and an immense quarry of red pebble gravel. West of the village, a prodigious line of fortifications known as the Basalt Bastions protect the land, their massive walls unguarded and draped with vines. These fortifications, as impressive as Cauldron's outer walls, tower over the village itself. They were built ages ago by Surabar Spellmason's powerful spells in a single week, to aid in the defense of Redgorge against the denizens of the Demonskar.

Today, Redgorge is a farming and mining village. The old Stonemason District, where Surabar Spellmason once dwelt, is visibly depopulated and most of its buildings lie empty and in ruin. Over the decades, most of Redgorge's masons left to work in Cauldron.

Redgorge (village): Conventional; AL CG; population 600 adults, 200 gp limit; Assets 6,000 gp; Mixed (79% human, 9% dwarf, 5% gnome, 3% halfling, 2% elf, 1% half-elf, 1% half-orc).

Authority Figures: Mayor Sind Nebern, female human expert 7; Pragat Millak, male human fighter 6 (bailiff).

Important Characters: Oliron Masht, male human fighter 3/wizard 7/high handcrafter 4 (adventurer and architect, a.k.a. the Foreman, high handcrafter of the Chisel); Ekaym Smallcask, male human fighter 3/bard 4/high handcrafter 3 (adventurer and linguist, a.k.a. Honest Minstrel, high handcrafter of the Chisel), Maavu, male human expert 5/wizard 4/high handcrafter 1 (merchant, a.k.a. Camel Driver, high handcrafter of the Chisel), Mikimax, male human commoner 5/expert 2/high handcrafter 1 (innkeeper, a.k.a. Bird Seed, high handcrafter of the Chisel).

The Hall of Carvings

Aside from the private room under the Redhead Miner's Inn, the Chisel has a much more secret and impressive hideout in Redgorge. The Hall of Carvings is the historical base of the Chisel and a periodic meeting place for its most important members. Surabar Spellmason built the hall and created several wards and guardians to protect it. The Hall of Carvings is accessible only to those who have earned the absolute trust of the Foreman and profess an interest in joining the Chisel.

The Hall of Carvings takes its name from the abstract sculptural decoration of its vertical walls, which are made of light gray, beautifully veined marble. The pavements and the domed ceilings, which are 20 feet high, are completely smooth. The doors are made of slabs of stone, but open smoothly and easily at a touch. Crystal lamps containing *continual flames* illuminate the complex. A system of cleverly hidden ducts conveys air from the surface and drinking water from a nearby subterranean stream.

H1. Entrance

The flagstones of an abandoned cellar above hide this long stairway. These slabs are attuned to a secret Terran rhyme. When the rhyme is properly performed in Terran with a DC 15 Perform (song), the slabs vibrate and gradually become insubstantial, eventually rising up into the air and opening the entrance. The slabs return to their original position after a minute. The same song can be sung from below to open the slabs to allow exit from the Halls.

H2. Surabar's Daughters

This atrium is flanked on both sides by two rows of three smooth pillars. These pillars are caryatid columns created by Surabar Spellmason. The caryatids attack anyone who does not address them properly in Terran as they enter the room. The password is: "Stand easy and rest well!" They also fight when so directed by the Foreman of the Chisel.

Caryatid Columns (6): hp 53 each; see Appendix 4.

H3. Warehouse

This room is well supplied with food, wine, spare parts, and firewood for the entire complex. The total value of the supplies here is 2,000 gp.

H4. Fountain

A beautifully carved fountain sits against the north wall of this room. An underground stream feeds the fountain from below, providing the Hall of Carvings with drinkable water.

H5. Dining Room

A large dining table and twelve chairs sit in the western part of the room. In the eastern part is a small kitchen.

H6. Guest Room

This room is furnished with top quality beds and lockers, and can accommodate up to twelve people.

H7. Chapter House

This 30-foot-high hexagonal room's walls are dotted with a total of forty niches (five per wall, excluding the entrance side). Twenty-nine niches accommodate the bust of a man or half-elf, and the others are empty. The busts represent the previous Foremen

of the Chisel, starting with Surabar Spellmason, whose sculptural portrait can be seen in the first niche set in the southwestern wall. A frieze of bas-reliefs at the base of the domed ceiling represents the same six episodes of Surabar's life depicted in the frescoes of the private tavern in the Redhead Miner's Inn.

A hexagonal stone table with twelve chairs sits in the middle of the room. Every season the top-ranking members of the Chisel hold meetings here.

H8. Guardroom

This room is guarded by two stone golems created by Surabar Spellmason. The golems look like massive and muscular construction workers. Like the caryatid columns in area **H2**, the golems attack whoever fails to give a password in Terran ("Break time, gentlemen!"). The golems also activate under the direction of the Foreman.

Stone Golems (2): hp 77 each, *Monster Manual* 136.

H9. Library

Lined with wooden shelving and furnished with benches and a prominent lectern, this library contains many books about alchemy, sculpture, architecture, and engineering. The formal logs of previous Foremen can be found here, the oldest of which is four centuries old. Most of them are written in Terran. The information in the adventure background concerning the early history of the region can be found here, as can several spellbooks that might contain numerous unique earth spells. Characters who use these books to aid in research gain a +8 circumstance bonus on their Knowledge check. The total value of the books here is 30,000 gp.

H10. Workshop

This is an amazingly well-equipped alchemy lab and artisan workshop that has been in use for nearly eight centuries. Several wooden and clay models of creatures, objects and buildings, a few unfinished statues and many strange mechanical devices in various stages of completion clutter the room. A large alchemist's lab and several masterwork artisan's tool sets are arranged on the room's workbenches. Characters who use this room to craft magic items reduce the cost of raw materials and XP required by 5%. The total value of the objects and devices here is 20,000 gp.

H11. Dormant Earth Pool

The walls of this chamber are decorated with elaborate, beautiful carvings. Part of the cavern's floor is occupied by what looks like a petrified lava pool, with a flat surface that contrasts neatly with the somewhat uneven ground. From time to time, the pool rumbles and narrow cracks form on its surface. Oddly enough, no heat or smoke issue from it when this happens.

The pool was actually the home of an earth weird befriended by Surabar Spellmason eight centuries ago. The earth weird returned to its native plane seven decades ago. The current Foreman does not know how to call the earth weird back, but is researching this matter via the books in the library (area **H9**). If it is recalled, the earth weird's ability to foretell disasters could reveal the ultimate goal of the Cagewrights as the main threat of the campaign.

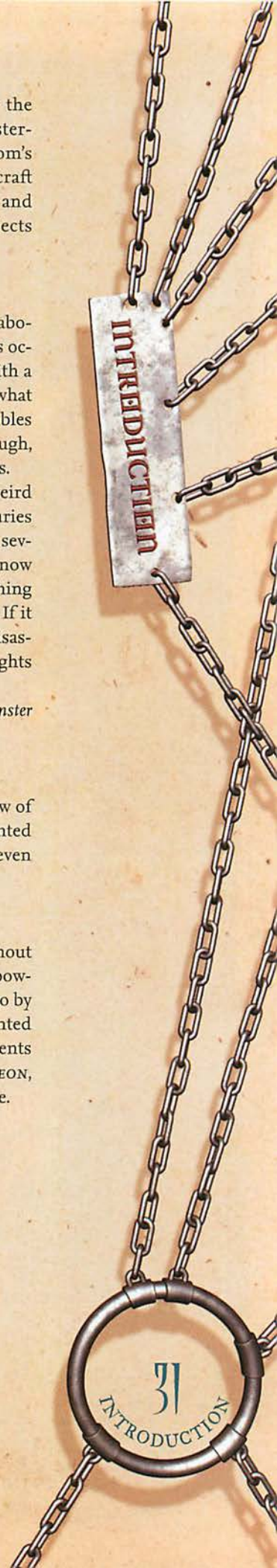
Earth weirds are detailed on page 91 of *Monster Manual II*.

SHATTERHORN

The ruined yuan-ti city of Shatterhorn is a shadow of its former glory. The ruins are extensive, and haunted by all manner of monsters today. See Chapter Eleven for more details on this ancient ruined city.

SPIRE OF LONG SHADOWS

This ancient, ruined tower is difficult to find without powerful magic, as its exact location is warded by powerful abjurations created over a thousand years ago by its legendary creator, Kyuss. This undead-haunted ruin is the focus of one of the upcoming installments of the Age of Worms Adventure Path in DUNGEON, scheduled to appear in issue #130 of the magazine.



CHAPTER EIGHT

CHAPTER ONE

LIFE'S BAZAAR

BY CHRISTOPHER PERKINS

Although nominally ruled by a lord mayor, Cauldron secretly serves as the demesne of a greedy beholder named Vhalantru. Disguised as an influential noble, "Lord Vhalantru" is the secret power behind Cauldron's government. He charms various nobles, merchants, and members of the town guard. He pokes his eyestalks into various legitimate and illegal ventures within Cauldron's walls, and no one—not even the lord mayor or the captain of the town guard—is the wiser.

In general, life in Cauldron is good. The town guard deals with local troublemakers but leaves the bigger problems (like marauding monsters) to the lord mayor or one of the many churches in town. Both the lord mayor and the priests of Cauldron periodically hire adventurers to deal with such problems directly.

Townsfolk are generally pleased with the lord mayor, although a recent string of disappearances and robberies worries them. People have been taken from their homes during the night, and the town guard has been unable to identify the culprits or locate the vanished citizens. Moreover, the victims' homes were stripped of portable valuables. It seems that no place is secure.

Cauldron's beholder overlord knows the secret behind the abductions. Vhalantru has met Kazmojen, the half-dwarf/half-troll slave trader who dwells below the town in an old stronghold called the Malachite Fortress. This unscrupulous slave trader runs a slave bazaar where he sells his latest acquisitions to creatures of the Underdark. Kazmojen is a recent arrival, and is still carving out a business niche for himself. Vhalantru has accommodated him thus far, allowing Kazmojen to continue operating his business in return for regular monthly bribes. Skulks and dark creepers are directly responsible for the abductions: the people they capture are taken to Kazmojen. The kidnappers get to keep whatever they take from the homes of the abductees, plus a percentage of Kazmojen's profits from the sale of the slaves.

The recent disappearance of four children from the Lantern Street Orphanage has outraged many locals and prompted a distraught cleric of St. Cuthbert to use a holy relic in her church to cast a *divination* spell. The spell has revealed several important clues, which the cleric has been unable to piece together. Enter the player characters.

THE KIDNAPPINGS

The abductors have bullied copies of several skeleton keys from local locksmith Keygan Ghelve. They creep out of Ghelve's Locks at night and scour the town for easy marks. At some point, the PCs might question local guards about the abductions and crime scenes, hoping to find clues to the kidnappers' identities. Each successful DC 12 Gather Information check reveals one of the following pieces of information:

- People have been kidnapped from every district in the town. The crimes are not particularly localized.
- Most of the victims are low- to middle-class citizens, but otherwise nothing seems to connect them.
- All of the recent kidnappings have occurred at night. The kidnappers prefer to strike on overcast nights or when the moon is new.
- The town guard has been watching suspected members of the Last Laugh or the Alleybashers, but their vigilance has not yet paid off.
- The perpetrators pick the locks of the victims' dwellings. Once inside, they grab their prey, steal any loot they can gather quickly, and vacate the premises.
- No witnesses have come forward to report screams, loud scuffles, or sinister figures creeping about on the nights of the kidnappings.
- The local constabulary suspects between two and six culprits, based on the number of footprints found at various crime scenes. The footprints suggest that the abductors include both Small and Medium humanoids.

The skulks and dark creepers select victims who might be worth something as slaves. They like to pick a victim in the evening, follow their mark home, and survey the victim's residence until nightfall. Then, in the dead of night, they slip inside, quickly subdue the victim, and loot the place.

The attack on the orphanage is a new twist: One of Kazmojen's recurring clients—a durzagon (half-fiend duergar) named Pyllrak Shyraat—wants younger slaves who are more tractable and less likely to revolt. Thus,

STARTING CHAPTER ONE

The PCs should be brand-new and fresh 1st-level characters when this chapter begins. You may wish to run a few role-playing encounters with some of Cauldron's NPCs before starting with Event 1, or you can simply jump right into the game with the accosted priest.

Kazmojen has given the skulks and dark creepers instructions to gather children from the city above.

RECENT ABDUCTEES

During their investigation into the kidnappings, the players might ask for a list of missing townsfolk. Although investigating these past victims only yields more dead ends, you can use the following list to provide some details of each of the kidnap victims.

Tiervan Wispwort (male gnome, age 91): A local alchemist, Tiervan lived with two cats and ran a marginally successful business. He disappeared 88 nights ago.

Jorl Seerkin (male gnome, age 72): A law clerk who worked for a local gnome barrister named Aeryk Gylbar, he disappeared from his home 83 nights ago.

Azmi Dresker (female human, age 19): A known prostitute who plied her trade at the Slippery Eel Tavern, she disappeared from her residence 81 nights ago. She and a coworker, Shellen Rycah, rented the house from an old woman named Martira Hathaway, who was asleep in the house that night and didn't hear or see anything.

Shellen Rycah (female human, age 20): Another prostitute who frequented the Slippery Eel Tavern and shared a house with coworker Azmi Dresker and their landlord. Shellen vanished 81 nights ago.

Krylscar Endercott (male human, age 24): Kicked out of the local militia for drunk and disorderly conduct, Krylscar vanished from his parents' home 74 nights ago. Neither parent heard or saw anything suspicious, but they believe Krylscar may have robbed them and fled town in disgrace.

Callum Sunnyrush (male halfling, age 37): He groomed horses and ponies for the Lathenmire noble family. He vanished from his room at a cozy local inn 69 nights ago.

Gryffon Malek (male human, age 33): He worked as a barkeep at the Tipped Tankard tavern. He disappeared 66 days ago, three days before his planned wedding to tavern barmaid Imelie Deranti.

Szordra Callagher (female human, age 35): A self-proclaimed sage, she ran her own small bookstore. She was last seen 60 nights ago by her 18-year-old son Leagan, a mason's apprentice.

Tembor Kalavan (male human, age 25): A local minstrel of some repute, he vanished 52 nights ago from his room in the Laughing Horse Inn.

Irruth Mercadi (female human, age 36): A local chandler who disappeared from the apartment above her shop 47 nights ago.

Deven Myrzal (male human, age 18): A lamplighter who vanished 45 nights ago. Guards found the pole Deven used to unhook hanging lanterns in the street a few blocks from his home (which was not robbed).

Jeneer Everdawn (female halfling, age 42): A jeweler's apprentice who did volunteer work at Bluecrater Academy, she disappeared 40 nights ago.

Lorthan Ironfold (male dwarf, age 125): A skilled cartwright. He and his wife, Sondor, vanished from their home 35 nights ago.

Sondor Ironfold (female dwarf, age 127): Wife of Lorthan Ironfold, she and her husband disappeared 35 nights ago.

Rikaldo Veskar (male human, age 34): His ransacked home contained blood droplets and blood-encrusted knives—not surprising, since Rikaldo worked as a skinner. He disappeared 31 nights ago.

Lestor Coldwater (male human, age 22): A trained scribe and struggling poet. He and his girlfriend, Jelluth, vanished from her home 26 nights ago.

Jelluth Sirlana (female half-elf, age 33): A struggling shoemaker who inherited her father's failing business, she vanished (along with her boyfriend, Lestor) 26 nights ago.

Elethor Ashstaff (male half-elf, age 58): A wizard and trickster who occasionally performed minor feats of prestidigitation at birthday parties for upper-class children. A dead rat—possibly Elethor's familiar—was found in his home. He vanished 22 nights ago.

Maple (female halfling, age 32): Last name unknown, Maple was rumored to be associated with the Alleybashers. She disappeared 18 nights ago.

Corystan Pike (female human, age 35): A retired adventurer who was living on stolen loot, she walked with a cane. She disappeared from her modest abode 16 days ago.

Jasper Drundlesput (male gnome, age 74): A reclusive and eccentric mathematician who worked at Bluecrater Academy, he is believed to have vanished nine days ago. Pieces of parchment covered with numbers and symbols littered the floor of his ransacked house.

Deakon Stormshield (male dwarf, age 20): A bright dwarf, Deakon was taken from the Lantern Street Orphanage three nights ago. The orphanage took him in when he was six years old, after his parents failed to return from an adventure.

Evelyn Radavec (female human, age 9): A quiet, sullen girl, she was taken from the Lantern Street Orphanage three nights ago. Her father and mother succumbed to the filth fever plague that struck Cauldron seven years ago.

Lucinda Aldreen (female human, age 8): A gregarious but superstitious child given to the Lantern Street Orphanage at age four by her poverty-stricken mother, Lucinda was abducted from the orphanage three nights ago.

Terrem Kharatys (male human, age 9): This orphan, taken from the Lantern Street Orphanage three nights ago, is a dour and temperamental lad. His parents died shortly after his birth (circumstances unknown).

CAMPAIGN NOTES

At this point in the campaign, the Cagewrights have gathered all of the *soulcages* they need for the ritual of planar junction. All that remains now is the gathering of thirteen Shackleborn for this event. When the campaign begins, eleven of the Shackleborn are already prisoners of the Cagewrights; these prisoners are kept under Shatterhorn until later in the campaign, when they are moved to the Fiery Sanctum itself deep under Cauldron. The Cagewrights have selected a local orphan Shackleborn named Terrem as their 12th vic-

tim, and for the majority of the next few chapters of this campaign the Cagewrights continue to search for an appropriate 13th Shackleborn. If one of the PCs has the Scarred Soul trait and is thus one of the Shackleborn, you should assume that the PCs' identity as one of the Shackleborn has simply escaped the notice of the Cagewrights for now. If the Cagewrights learn that one of the PCs bears the sign of the Carcerian Eye before they capture Zenith Splintershield at the end of Chapter Four (perhaps because that PC has publicly displayed his birthmark or otherwise made a big deal about the strange invisible sigil on his face), the Cagewrights opt not to use this PC as one of their victims and decide to use Zenith instead, simply because they don't want to risk abducting a growing celebrity from Cauldron's streets and triggering an early investigation into their plans from the adventurers' allies.

When Terrem is stolen from the orphanage (along with three other children) by some skulks and dark creepers working for a half-dwarf/half-troll slaver named Kazmojen, the Cagewrights become agitated and turn to Vhalantru to find the boy and return him to safety. They should not make any personal appearances before the PCs in this chapter, with the possible exception of Thifirane at the chapter's end.

THE ADVENTURE BEGINS

The campaign begins with an encounter in the streets of Cauldron. The PCs may or may not know each other, but as fate would have it, all of them are nearby when they hear cries for help from a nearby alleyway. Ask each PC why they are out on the streets this late autumn evening, but try to guide their responses so they're not about something terribly important. You want them to have the time to respond to the following encounter setup, after all!

EVENT 1: THE ACCOSTED PRIEST (EL 3)

A wretched drizzle falls from the ash-gray sky. The crowded, rain-slicked buildings seem especially bleak and frightful this evening, hunched together beneath the gloomy skies. A few lights burn in their windows, but mostly their shutters have been closed for the night. The scent of chimney smoke fills the air, and the din of water trundles from the rooftops, splashing into dark alleys and turning street gutters into rivulets. A sudden, plaintive cry for help from a nearby alley splits the evening air.

At this point, a successful DC 5 Listen check allows a PC to hear the sounds of a scuffle and cursing from the same nearby alleyway. The alley is 10 feet wide and 60 feet long, opening into a street at either end. Like many alleys in Cauldron, it slopes toward the center of town at a fairly steep 15° angle; steps have been carved into the alleyway in many places to ease progress along its length. Two-story buildings loom on both sides.

Creatures: Within, three figures assault a fourth, who lies face down on the wet cobblestones. One of the attackers lifts the victim by the hood of his cloak and thrusts him against a wall as another growls, "Stay away from the orphanage, you got that?"

The three attackers have painted their faces half white and half black with makeup; a successful DC 15 Knowledge (local) or bardic knowledge check reveals that the painted faces indicate the thugs are affiliated with the Last Laugh, Cauldron's most notorious thieves'

guild. Two of the three brutes (named Nilas Varkazi and Hylum Ferant) are accosting a 19-year-old cleric of St. Cuthbert named Ruphus Laro. The third (named Kerlen Ree) watches the street in case a guard patrol shows up. Have this wary thug make a Spot check (opposed by the PCs' Hide checks) to notice the PCs; if the Spot check fails, the PCs each get a standard action during the ensuing surprise round.

Jenya Urikas, the acting high priest of the Church of St. Cuthbert, sent Ruphus to console distraught children and staff members at the orphanage. He was heading back to the temple when the thugs ambushed him and dragged him into the alley.

The Last Laugh thieves' guild doesn't want the Church of St. Cuthbert snooping around the orphanage for clues about the recent abductions for a singularly sinister reason: the guild provides intelligence for the Cagewrights at the insistence of Lady Thifirane, and they've recently been asked to discourage people from investigating the abductions in order to give Lord Vhalantru an opportunity to track the child down and to prevent outsiders from learning too much about the child's special nature.

- **Street Thugs (3)**: hp 14 each; see Appendix 4.
- **Ruphus Laro**: hp 12 (currently has 10 points of nonlethal damage); see Appendix 4.

Tactics: The thugs want to scare Ruphus, not kill him. However, they draw swords when the PCs show up. One of them tells the heroes to "Bugger off!" If that doesn't work, they begin slowly backing away while readying actions to swing at anyone who rushes toward them. As they back away, the battered cleric makes his way toward the characters.

If attacked, the thugs draw their short swords as a free action (using the Quick Draw feat) and gang up on a single target at a time.

When battle erupts, Ruphus casts *bless* (on himself and the PCs), *magic weapon* (on his mace), and *enlarge person* on himself before joining the fray. He also heals wounded characters after the fight.

Development: If the heroes rescue Ruphus, he asks them to escort him to his temple. He tells the PCs that he was heading back to the temple when he was mugged. He thought the thugs planned to rob him until it became clear they were trying to intimidate him. Ruphus knows only that someone does not want the Church of St. Cuthbert involved in an investigation to find four missing children from the local orphanage, but he can't fathom why. In any case, he asks the PCs to escort him back to the temple, where he promises his superior can reward them for their kindness.

The thugs work for a rogue named Jil. She lurks on the roof of one building, where she cloaks herself in shadows, hoping to remain unseen. PCs who take a standard action to study the alley can make a Spot check (opposed by Jil's Hide check result) to notice her hiding 20 feet above.

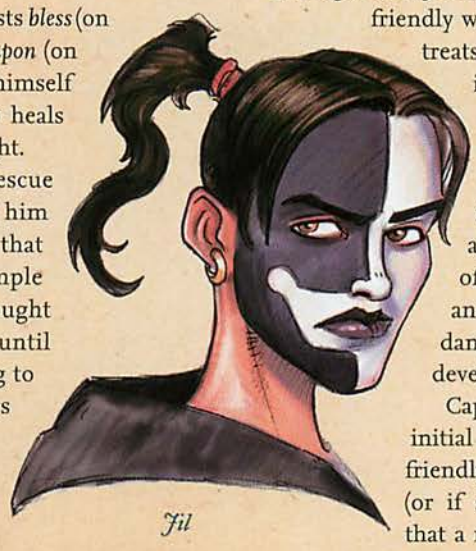
Jil stands 5 feet, 3 inches tall and has short black hair and dark brown eyes. She wears a hooded black cloak, black boots, and black leather gloves. Like all members of her guild, she paints her face white and black, transforming it into a grinning harlequin's visage. Intrigued by the brazen PCs, she does not attack them. She might fare quite well against them, but she never jumps blindly into combat against the unknown. If she is spotted or attacked, Jil calls out, "Well done! But the cleric lives because we wish it so, not because of your misplaced bravado." She then points a baleful finger at Ruphus and says, "Take these words back to your temple, priest! The children are lost and no longer St. Cuthbert's concern." She then flees the scene, activating her *wand of silence* to quiet her footfalls.

Jil has no concern for the welfare of the thugs. She hired them specifically to accost the cleric, and they know nothing of the guild's plans and associations.

Although she'd rather not fight the PCs at this time, Jil will fight to defend herself if forced to do so. She likes to sneak attack her prey using her poisoned short sword. Her death attack makes her especially dangerous if she can study her target for 3 rounds before striking. Jil uses her +1 *whip* to trip or disarm opponents from a safe distance.

Jil is quite capable of vanquishing a band of 1st-level adventurers by herself, but that is not her intent in this encounter. However, if the heroes perform well against the three toughs, Jil might pay closer attention to them in the future.

If a PC casts *charm person* on Jil and succeeds, or manages to adjust her initial attitude of unfriendly to friendly with a DC 25 Diplomacy check, she treats that character with uncharacteristic kindness but does not divulge guild secrets or stick around long enough to be captured. If she escapes, she might take a special interest in her new "friend" (even after the *charm person* spell wears off), partly because she's intrigued and partly because she likes to live dangerously. How this relationship develops is left for you to decide.



Jil

Captured or charmed thugs have an initial attitude of unfriendly. If made friendly with a DC 25 Diplomacy check (or if successfully charmed) they reveal that a member of the Last Laugh named Jil hired them to "send a clear message" to the Church of St. Cuthbert not to investigate the disappearance of the four children from the Lantern Street Orphanage. They also reveal that they work for the town guard and needed the money, and since the arrangement didn't involve killing the cleric, they agreed. PCs

can surrender these goons to the town guard, who takes them into custody and charge them with assault. The guards are held for three days and released after an anonymous source pays each of their 50 gp fines.

If the heroes get into trouble fighting the three off-duty guards, a patrol arrives to break up the fight. Ruphus's three attackers attempt to flee before their fellow guardsmen identify them. PCs who allow one or more of them to escape might encounter these guards again, possibly while they are on duty.

In any event, once this event doesn't go quite the way the Last Laugh intended, they wash their hands of their involvement. They don't want to attract undue attention, and for the remainder of this adventure their agents make no further attempts to discourage the PCs from tracking down the abductees.

Jil: hp 27 each; see Appendix 4.

EVENT 2: THE CHURCH OF ST. CUTHBERT

This encounter assumes the PCs escort Ruphus Laro back to the Church of St. Cuthbert on Obsidian Avenue. He seems grateful for their company, and the short trip can be spent sharing rumors. Consult the introduction for details on the Church of St. Cuthbert.

Ruphus invites the characters inside, if only to escape the rainy drizzle. He also encourages them to meet with his superior, Jenya Urikas, to whom he must report his recent harrowing encounter. Upon entering the temple, Ruphus is greeted by another acolyte and taken to Jenya's chambers. Meanwhile, the heroes are given warm blankets and invited to dry off and enjoy some hot tea.

After leaving the PCs to speak with Jenya, Ruphus does not return. Instead, Jenya approaches them. Jenya has premature streaks of gray in her rich brown hair, and wears a brown robe with golden trim and the symbol of St. Cuthbert around her neck. She thanks the PCs for coming to Ruphus' aid, then leads them to a room where they can sit down and enjoy a warm fire. If the PCs seem eager to leave, she invites them to stay long enough to entertain a proposal. She has not given up on helping the Lantern Street Orphanage, despite the recent attack on Ruphus Laro. If the PCs are willing to hear her proposal, she relates the following information.

- Four children were kidnapped from the local orphanage three nights ago. Their names were Deakon, Evelyn, Lucinda, and Terrem. The children are the most recent victims in a series of strange disappearance and robberies.
- The orphanage has two common bedchambers on the second floor—one for girls, the other for boys. Two children were taken from each room. None of the other children and none of the resident staff heard or saw anything.
- The orphanage has barred windows and excellent locks protecting its doors. The children are locked into their rooms at night to prevent any midnight mischief.
- In the wake of the kidnappings, the Church of St. Cuthbert has publicly vowed to locate the missing children and bring the kidnappers to justice.
- To locate the children, Jenya borrowed an item from the church's vault. This is a *+1 holy heavy mace* called the Star of Justice. It has the power to cast *divination* once per week. Only the church's high priest is supposed to use it, but in his absence, Jenya felt justified calling on the mace's great power.
- Jenya used the mace to ask the question, "Where are the children who were abducted from the Lantern Street Orphanage?" The response she received was a cryptic riddle. She wrote the riddle down and hands the PCs the note at this time:

> The locks are key to finding them. Look beyond the curtain, below the cauldron. Beware the doors with teeth. Descend into the malachite 'hold, where precious life is bought with gold. Half a dwarf binds them, but not for long.

St. Cuthbert's cryptic riddle holds many clues. The first sentence refers to the locks on the doors of the Lantern Street Orphanage; Keygan Ghelve, the locksmith who wrought them, owns a shop in town. The second sentence refers to the curtain in Keygan's shop, behind which is hidden a secret door that leads to an abandoned gnome enclave under Cauldron. The third sentence refers to the gear-shaped doors in the gnome enclave, many of which are trapped and none of which need be opened to reach the children. The fourth sentence refers to a stronghold carved from black malachite, where the children are being held until they can be sold as slaves. The last sentence refers to the half-dwarf slaver Kazmojen and his plans to sell the children to an eager buyer.

Jenya believes (correctly) that the first line of the riddle holds an important clue. She is uncertain which "locks" the riddle refers to, but she suspects the riddle might be referring to the locks at the Lantern Street Orphanage. Jenya isn't a lock expert, nor does she know that most of the city's locks come from a single source.

Creatures: Jenya is 30 years old, has brown eyes, and likes to wear her hair in various elaborate styles. Although she stands only 5 feet 4 inches tall, she walks tall and confronts evil with merciless resolve. Her good nature belies her fierce convictions, and she freely supports capital punishment for despicable crimes, including the kidnapping of orphaned children.

Jenya Urikas: hp 31; see Appendix 4.

Development: Jenya wants to hire the PCs to find the missing townsfolk (the children, in particular) and punish

the kidnappers for their crimes. She offers each PC a *potion of cure moderate wounds* as a token of good faith and promises an additional reward of 2,500 gp (total, not per PC) upon successful completion of the quest. The potion bottles are labeled with the symbol of St. Cuthbert.

PCs can inquire about locks around town. A successful Gather Information check (DC 10) reveals that a gnome locksmith named Keygan Ghelve fashions most of the town's locks. Most people can point heroes toward Keygan's shop on Lava Street without too much trouble.

If the PCs don't think to ask around, Jenya suggests that they investigate the Lantern Street Orphanage and ask about the locks there. In the meantime, Jenya can compile a list of recent kidnap victims (see "Recent Abductees" above) and have it ready for the PCs by morning.

EVENT 3: THE LANTERN STREET ORPHANAGE (EL 1)

If the PCs accept Jenya's quest, they might want to investigate the local orphanage for clues. Anyone at the Church of St. Cuthbert can point the heroes in the right direction. See the Introduction for general details about the orphanage.

If the PCs knock, an elderly halfling woman opens the door a crack and peers out. Not recognizing the PCs, her eyes flicker with suspicion. "Who sent you?" she asks curtly.

The woman is Gretchyn Tashykk (72-year-old female halfling commoner 1), the orphanage's headmistress. If the heroes claim they are working for the Church of St. Cuthbert, Gretchyn demands proof. The heroes must either succeed at a Diplomacy check (DC 15) or show her the potion bottles bearing the St. Cuthbert label given to them by Jenya Urikas.

Once she's convinced that the heroes do not pose a threat to her or her children, Gretchyn lets them inside and apologizes for her gruff demeanor.

Gretchyn tells the PCs that the orphanage has five staff members besides herself:

- Jaromir Copperbeard, the gardener (99-year-old male dwarf commoner 1).
- Neva Fanister, the nurse (31-year-old female human expert 2; Heal +6).
- Temar Flagonstern, the cook (48-year-old male human commoner 1).
- Willow Atherfell, the schoolteacher (54-year-old female half-elf commoner 1).
- Patch, the janitor (23-year-old male half-orc commoner 1/rogue 1).

The staff has worked at the orphanage for several years, and Gretchyn trusts them implicitly, but the headmistress holds a special affection for Patch, the half-orc janitor. He was brought to the orphanage twenty years ago, and the abuse he suffered as a child left him without his left eye. He wears an eye patch to hide the empty socket, and the children seem especially fond of him.

On the night the four children were taken, no one saw or heard anything, although one of the young boys remembered having a nightmare about an evil gnome with crooked teeth and a tattered cloak trying to snatch his breath. The PCs can question the lad (a hyperactive 8-year-old human boy named Andro), but his nightmare is unrelated.

Gretchyn also points out that the PCs aren't the only ones investigating the children's disappearance. The morning after the disappearances, members of the town guard took statements from each staff member and questioned many of the children. One day later, a pair of half-elf investigators working for the lord mayor returned and questioned her again, but didn't speak to the children or other staff members. Gretchyn took their names, naturally: Fario Ellegoth and Fellian Shard. Although they exchanged some peculiar glances and asked many of the same questions as the guards, they seemed genuinely concerned for the children.

The orphanage has good locks (Open Lock DC 30) built into the front and back doors, and only Gretchyn has the key to open them. Gretchyn insists that she always locks the doors before she retires for the night. A PC rogue who inspects the locks and succeeds at a DC 15 Search check can determine that the locks were fashioned by the same locksmith and are in perfect working condition. If asked, Gretchyn tells the heroes that Keygan Ghelve, a local locksmith, fashioned the locks for her many years ago, "and he charged a pretty coin, let me tell you!"

Creature: Unknown to anyone at the orphanage, Patch works for the Last Laugh. A low-ranking guild member named Revus Twindaggers contacted the half-orc last year and gave him 50 gp to "keep his eye" on Terrem Kharatys, one of the children, until the service was no longer required. Since then, Patch has honed his skills as a rogue and learned a few tricks from his new friend, indulging in petty acts of larceny.

If the PCs succeed at a DC 15 Diplomacy check or otherwise persuade Patch to divulge what he knows "for his sake and that of the children," he reveals his association to the Last Laugh but begs the PCs not to share this information with Headmistress Tashykk.

Patch doesn't know who took the four children, although he suspects the Last Laugh might be involved because Terrem was among those taken. He did not step forward with this information because of his involvement with the guild.

Patch, male half-orc commoner 1/rogue 1: hp 7; see Appendix 4.

Development: Patch has enjoyed more than a few drinks with Revus Twindaggers but has not seen the halfling in a month; he doesn't know where Revus lives, where he might be, or why the Last Laugh wanted him to watch over Terrem specifically. However, the half-orc dimly recalls a conversation he had with Revus several months ago, shortly after their first meeting. When Patch asked why the Last Laugh was interested in Terrem, the tipsy halfling shrugged his shoulders and replied, "All I know is that is

has something to do with his dead parents."

If the PCs visit the office of the lord mayor, they are denied an audience with the lord mayor himself but can obtain a list of recent kidnap victims (see "Recent Abductees") with a successful DC 15 Diplomacy check. If the heroes ask to meet with the half-elf investigators assigned to the case of the missing orphans, they are told that the lord mayor does not employ any half-elf investigators. The names Fario Ellegoth and Fellian Shard are met with raised eyebrows and blank stares.

Fellian Shard

Attempts to arrange meetings with actual representatives of the Last Laugh are hopeless for 1st-level characters, as are any attempts to locate the Last Laugh guildhouse. If they ask many people about Fario and Fellian, though, the half-elves eventually hear and contact the PCs in Event 4.

Ad-hoc XP Award: If the heroes pry information from Patch, award them experience as if they'd defeated the half-orc in combat.

EVENT 4: MEETING THE STRIDERS

At some point during the heroes' investigation, they'll catch the attention of a pair of half-elves named Fario Ellegoth and Fellian Shard, either by asking too many questions about them or because their multiple forays into the ruins below Cauldron have started to earn them reputations as adventurers.

The half-elves are members of the Striders of Fharlanghn, and work for a half-elf wizard named Meerthan. Although many of the Striders worship Fharlanghn (the god of roads and horizons), Meerthan does not. Still, he shares the organization's hatred of the Cagewrights, seeing them as a threat to the balance of power in the realm. Meerthan is in town posing as a dwarven merchant named Tyro Amberhelm; he currently stays at The Drowning Morkoth Inn. Meerthan has sent Fario and Fellian to uncover evidence of the Cagewrights' involvement in the recent string of abductions. See the Introduction for more information on Meerthan Eliothlorn and the Striders of Fharlanghn.

Fario and Fellian have learned that the Church of St. Cuthbert plans to investigate the abductions, in particular the disappearance of four children from the local orphanage. Since the high priest of St. Cuthbert is out of town, Meerthan suspects the church will turn to private investigators for help. He has cast *Rary's telepathic bond* on himself, Fario, and Fellian, and made it permanent using a *permanency* spell. The three remain in constant telepathic contact, speaking Draconic or Elven whenever possible. Fario and Fellian watch the temple and orphanage (respectively) from distant rooftops, using spyglasses to get a better view. Once they've identified the PCs, the half-elves attempt to follow them without being detected. Meerthan has provided them each with a *potion of invisibility*, but each dose lasts only 10 minutes, so the half-elves use the potions only in emergencies.

Fario Ellegoth

Creatures: Fario Ellegoth and Fellian Shard are relatively young and inexperienced Striders of Fharlanghn. They hope to learn more from Meerthan, as well as gain some prestige within the organization. Despite their friendship, the half-elves' ambitions and competitiveness sometimes get the better of them, and they constantly strive to one-up each other.

Fario is 20 years old with a pale complexion, crisp blue eyes, silky blonde hair cut short and left wild, and a pinky finger missing from his left hand. Fellian is 19 years old with a tanned complexion, bright green eyes, a small scar across his right eyebrow, short brown hair, and a cackling laugh.

Fario Ellegoth, male half-elf rogue 1/fighter 1: hp 14; see Appendix 4.

Fellian Shard, male half-elf rogue 1/cleric 1 (Fharlanghn): hp 12; see Appendix 4.

Tactics: The half-elves stay out of sight as long as possible. Their plan is to follow the PCs wherever they go, hoping to discover a connection between the recent abductions and the Cagewrights. If the PCs actively try to spot pursuers, have them make Spot checks opposed by the half-elves' Hide checks. Remember to apply a –1 penalty to the Spot check for every 10 feet of distance between the spotter and the nearest half-elf pursuer. Apply an additional –2 penalty if it is raining or foggy.

If the PCs attack them with ranged weapons, the half-elves duck into a nearby alley or scamper over a nearby wall. Fellian might cast *entropic shield* on himself, hoping to dodge some missile attacks. If the PCs pursue them relentlessly, Fario and Fellian quaff their *potions of invisibility*.

If the PCs face an imminent demise fighting the forces of evil, the half-elves come to their aid. Fario waits until Fellian casts *divine favor* and *shield of faith* on himself, allowing them to enter the fray during the same round. The two half-elves try to flank their quarry, tumbling to avoid attacks of opportunity and hoping to deal sneak attack damage. After the fight, if he is positively disposed toward the PCs, Fellian might offer to heal them using his cure spells or scrolls.

Development: Once they are discovered, Fario and Fellian try to avoid a conflict with the PCs. Instead, they offer to accompany the heroes on the remainder of their mission. They say they're good friends with Elethor Ashstaff, a half-elf wizard abducted from his home more than three weeks ago. They feign interest in finding Elethor and mention nothing of Meerthan or the Cagewrights.

The half-elves don't stick around when the adventure is over; they have other tasks to complete on their master's behalf. Nevertheless, Fario and Fellian can become mysterious recurring NPCs in the campaign, occasionally partaking in their own adventures and, like the PCs, gaining experience as they go.

GHELVE'S LOCKS

Armed with St. Cuthbert's riddle and suspicions concerning the local locksmith, the PCs investigate Ghelve's Locks, a modest shop and dwelling on Lava Avenue.

Keygan Ghelve, the locksmith, gave the skulks and dark creepers skeleton keys fitting most of the town's locks. Using these keys, the kidnappers can enter their victims' homes without too much fuss. However, Keygan is an unwilling accomplice eager to make amends—if only the evil skulks would release his familiar from captivity.

The PCs' goal here is to find the secret door under the staircase (area **G3**). Beyond the secret door lies the abandoned gnome enclave of Jzadirune, the current lair of the skulks and dark creepers. Jzadirune also holds Keygan's captive familiar and the way to the kidnapped townsfolk.

When the PCs approach, read or paraphrase the following.

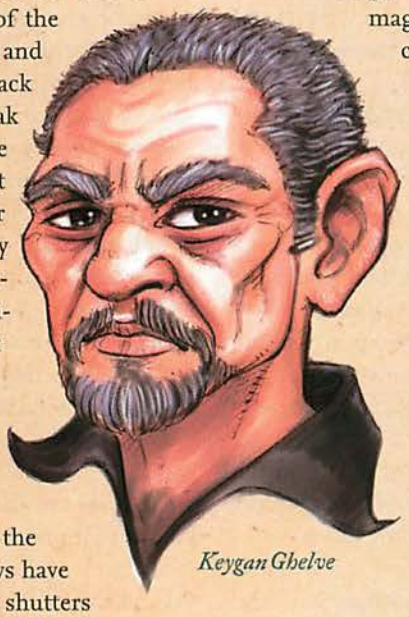
A small turret dominates the façade of this two-story black stone building. Iron bars are embedded in the thick window frames. Beyond the turret's ground-floor windows sits a lovely display of locks, from large to small, simple to complex. To the left of the turret, above a heavy oak door, swings a simple sign that reads "GHELVE'S LOCKS."

Ghelve's Locks opens at sunrise and closes at sunset. The shop also closes for an hour around lunchtime, when Keygan runs most of his errands.

Keygan charges fair prices for his locks. Although he has plenty of locks in inventory, and can make an average lock in 3 days and a good lock in 5 days, he lacks the skill to make amazingly good locks (although he has a few imported from Sasserine for sale).

The front door has three good locking mechanisms, each requiring a separate key or DC 30 Open Locks

check to open. The door is unlocked during work hours. If the PCs knock on the door at night when the shop is closed, Keygan goes to the kitchen on the second floor (area **G4**), opens one of the shuttered windows facing the street, and says, "Shop's closed, friend. Come back after sunrise." If the PCs ask to speak with him about recent events in the city, he replies, "It's late, and I'm not ready to talk business—yours or mine. Come back tomorrow!" Only a compelling argument—and a successful DC 15 Diplomacy or Intimidate check—persuades him to let the PCs inside after hours. If a PC threatens him and fails the Intimidate check, Keygan rushes downstairs to cast *hold portal* on the front door, adding +5 to its break DC.



Keygan Ghelve

PCs can force their way inside, but the front door is sturdy and the windows have bars hidden behind locked wooden shutters (Open Lock DC 30). An iron grill embedded in the chimney mortar prevents Small intruders from crawling down the chimney.

PCs might attempt to sneak inside while Keygan is running errands during lunch hour. Before setting out, the gnome casts an *alarm* on the front door (the spell lasts 2 hours). The spell activates whenever someone other than Keygan crosses the door's threshold, and the noise is loud enough to alert Keygan's closest neighbors (who are kind enough to summon the town guard).

Front Door (strong, iron-bound wood): 2 in. thick; Hardness 5; hp 30; break DC 25; three good locks (Open Lock, DC 30).

Interior Door (good wood): 1 1/2 in. thick; Hardness 5; hp 15; break DC 18; good lock (Open Lock, DC 30).

Window Shutters (simple wood): 1 in. thick; Hardness 5; hp 10; break DC 15; good lock (Open Lock, DC 30).

Window and Chimney Bars (iron): 1 in. thick; Hardness 10; hp 30; break DC 24.

Typical Lock: Hardness 15; hp 30; Open Lock (very simple: DC 20, average: DC 25, good: DC 30).

Creature: Keygan Ghelve is 110 years old, with salt-and-pepper hair and a neatly trimmed mustache and goatee. His bushy eyebrows, creased face, and graven frown make him look frumpy and dour, but he possesses a sly wit and a disarming manner.

Keygan doesn't like clients looking down on him while they're haggling over prices. During business hours, he wears a pair of wood-and-iron stilts that clamp to his calves and wears extra-long pants to hide them. The stilts make him appear nearly 6 feet tall. He is accustomed to walking on the stilts and suffers no penalty to his speed. He does not wear the stilts at night or while running errands, and leans them in a corner by the stairs when they're not in use.

Although he never lived in Jzadirune, Keygan visited the gnome enclave several times in his youth and spent the rest of his free time learning the locksmith trade and helping his father run Ghelve's Locks. He stopped visiting the enclave when a strange magical affliction called the Vanishing caused many of Jzadirune's denizens to fade into nothingness. His shop hides the only known entrance into Jzadirune, although only a handful of gnomes living in Cauldron know this. After 75 years, Jzadirune has faded from most people's memories.

Somewhat bored with his business, Keygan began studying magic a year ago. A little over three months ago, a gang of skulks and dark creepers found their way into Jzadirune from below. They followed the staircase up to the locksmith's shop, crept inside, and surprised both Keygan and his rat familiar, Starbrow. Taking the familiar hostage, they blackmailed Keygan into telling them everything he knew about Cauldron. When the skulks learned that the gnome had crafted many of the town's locks, they made him create a single key that could open all of them. Fearing they would kill him and his familiar, Keygan created special "skeleton keys" that would open any of his own locks. He then gave them a meticulous list of everyone in town to whom he'd sold locks in the past ten years.

Keygan is not proud of his complicity, but he dares not act against the skulks so long as they're watching him and holding his familiar hostage.

Keygan Ghelve, Male Gnome expert 3/illusionist 1: hp 17; see Appendix 4.

Tactics: If the heroes accuse Keygan of criminal wrongdoing or collusion, he denies their accusations. However, if they try to stir up pity for the kidnap victims, Keygan grows increasingly nervous and belligerent as he struggles to deal with his complicity.

Persuading Keygan to reveal the truth requires good roleplaying coupled with a successful DC 15 Diplomacy check. The PCs can also gain his trust with a *charm person* spell. Even then, the cagey gnome doesn't blurt out the truth where one or more skulks might hear him (see area **G3**). Instead, he tries to warn the PCs that he is not alone, using subtle gestures (arching eyebrows, a nod toward the back of his shop, and so forth) to tip them off. Keygan must make a successful DC 15 Bluff check to convey this information to the PCs. His Bluff check is only +0, though, and if he fails this check by 5 or more it might seem to the characters that he's inviting one of them into the back room for a little fun.

If attacked, Keygan tries to incapacitate as many PCs as possible using *color spray*. If all of the PCs are knocked unconscious by the spell, Keygan binds them with rope found in his workshop. It takes him 2 rounds to fetch the rope and return with it, and 2 rounds to

bind a single character. The skulk assigned to watch Keygan (see Development, below, and area **G3**) helps Keygan tie up the characters, then heads down to Jzadirune to fetch reinforcements. PCs can free themselves with a successful Escape Artist check (DC 10 + Keygan's Use Rope check result).

If his *color spray* fails horribly, or if he takes 9 or more points of damage, Keygan surrenders and promises to reveal everything he knows.

Development: One skulk guards the shop at all times. The skulk hides on the second-floor balcony overlooking area **G3**, within view of the secret door under the staircase. Hidden from plain sight, the skulk can overhear conversations in the shop and jump on anyone who detects the secret door under the staircase. The skulk does not come to Keygan's rescue if the gnome is attacked in his shop.

If he can be coaxed into helping the PCs find the missing townsfolk, Keygan reveals the following information about Jzadirune and its current denizens:

- The kidnappers also took his rat familiar, Starbrow. His rat familiar is located in a dark place within one mile, and through his empathic link, he can sense both the rat's hunger and fright.
- The kidnappers include two types of creatures: "tall ones" and "short ones." The "tall ones" resemble naked, hairless, genderless humans with blue pupilless eyes and gray skin that changes color, allowing them to blend perfectly with their surroundings. They are usually encountered in pairs or threes and often leave the shop wearing cloaks. The "short ones" are sinister gnomelike creatures with pallid skin, large noses, and soft black hooves for feet. They wear black cloaks and cowls that help them hide in shadows.
- The kidnappers share a common language that Keygan doesn't recognize (Undercommon).
- If the kidnappers have a leader, Keygan hasn't seen it. The "tall ones" and "short ones" seem to get along just fine without one.
- Keygan gave the kidnappers three different-sized skeleton keys that can open most of the town's locks (any lock with an Open Lock DC of 30 or lower). One of the "tall ones" carries the keys on a silver ring (see area **J15**).
- The "tall ones" wield rapiers and light crossbows. The "short ones" wield sharp daggers. They live in the ruins of Jzadirune.
- Jzadirune was a small enclave inhabited by gnome spellcasters. The enclave was abandoned 75 years ago after a magical plague called the Vanishing swept through it. The disease caused several of Jzadirune's residents to slowly fade away into nothingness. Keygan doesn't know whether the plague still poses a threat.
- Jzadirune's doors are gear-shaped and designed to roll to one side or the other. Many of them bore traps that only the gnomes could safely bypass.

Keygan can provide a worn map of Jzadirune, but he refuses to accompany the PCs into the gnome enclave unless charmed or forced at sword point. Although Keygan remembers his father telling him about secret passages in Jzadirune, Keygan doesn't know where any of them are, and they are not shown on his map. Keygan's memory of the various chambers and their contents is sketchy, at best.

Although Keygan's failure to report what he knew about the abductions might be understandable, it's still not excusable. If his compliance with the skulks is brought to the attention of the town guard, Keygan pleads guilty and begs for leniency. His eventual fate is left to you to decide, but certain powerful individuals in the region (particularly the slaver Vervil Ashmantle, who is tangentially tied to the abductions) might take action against him if he feels the gnome could pose a threat.

Ad-hoc XP Award: Award full experience for Keygan if the PCs befriend him or persuade him to make amends. Award half experience for Keygan if the PCs kill him without provocation.

G1. STOREFRONT

This storefront smells of wood and pipe smoke. Two padded chairs flank a hearth containing a small yet lively fire. The fireplace's carved mantle bears a tinderbox, a small vase of dried smoking leaves, and a finely wrought collection of pipes. A burgundy strip of carpet leads from the entrance to the wall across from it, where dozens—perhaps hundreds—of keys hang from tiny hooks. The keys come in all shapes and sizes. A handsomely engraved mahogany counter stretches along one wall. Behind it hangs a red curtain that neatly hides the rest of the store.

Keygan likes his customers to feel comfortable. The padded chairs, hearth, smoking pipes, and other accoutrements are intended to put visitors at ease.

The keys hanging on the wall open various locks. When Keygan sells a lock, he points to the key that opens it and allows the customer to remove it from the wall—a bit of ceremony goes a long way.

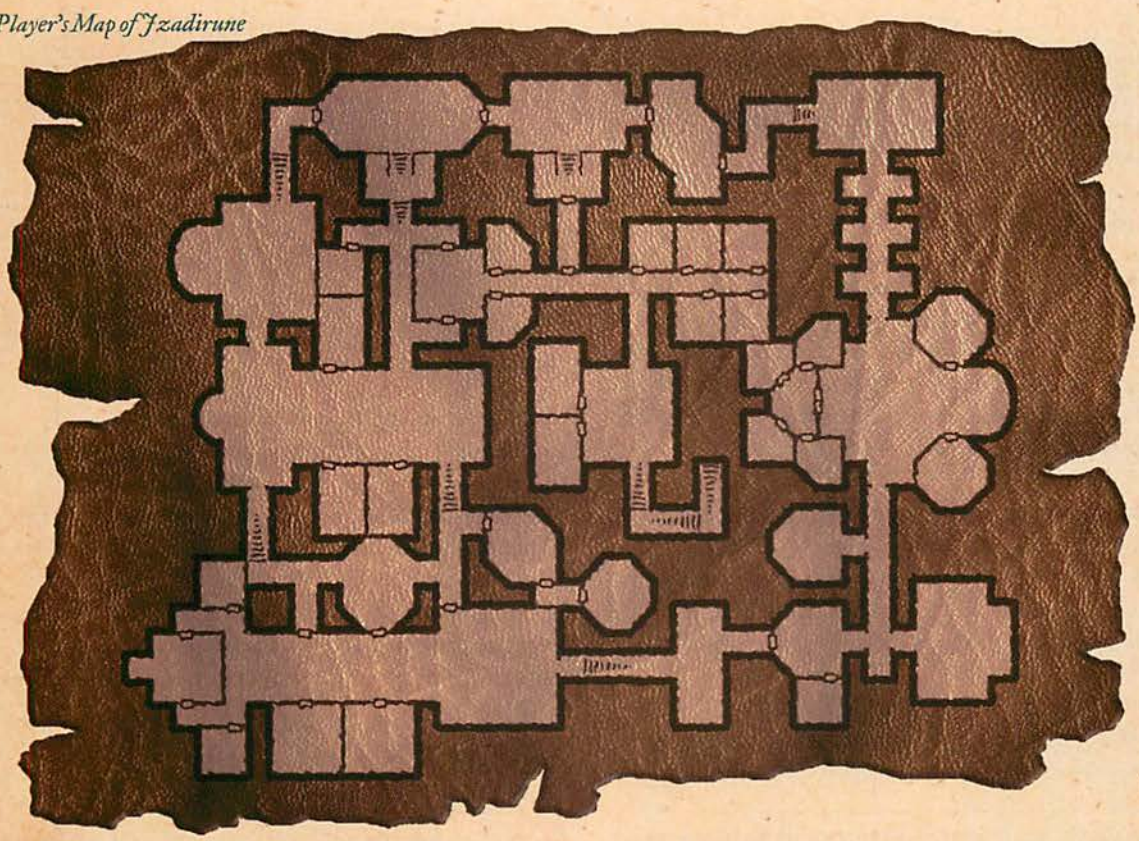
Treasure: PCs searching the counter find a book containing a complete list of sales made in the past several years and a locked iron strongbox (Open Lock DC 30). The strongbox holds three removable shelves; the top shelf holds 233 cp, the middle shelf holds 150 sp, and the bottom shelf holds 126 gp and 4 pp.

G2. WORKROOM

The door to this room is locked with a good quality lock (Open Lock DC 30).

Unlike the front of the store, the contents of this room are not neatly arranged. A stout-legged wooden table and matching stool stand at odd angles in the room, and tiny mechanisms and tools litter the tabletop. The floor is cluttered with upright kegs holding tiny gears, screws, metal lock casings, tumblers,

Player's Map of Jzadirune



springs, and keys. A bucket of coal, a short-handled spade, and a small iron oven equipped with a miniature bellows occupy the far corner of the workroom. A lantern rests on another stool near the door.

Keygan stores the raw materials for his locks and works his craft in this room. It takes him several nights of tireless work to finish a single lock, and he can make locks of varying quality and complexity.

The tools and lock components found here aren't valuable, except to a skilled locksmith.

G3. LOCK DISPLAY AND STORAGE (EL 2)

Black curtains partially obscure a window niche that faces the street. Ornate locks and complex locking mechanisms are neatly displayed in the niche. The room itself looks tidy, but lived in. Carpets cover the stone floor, and a broom leans against the railing of a wooden staircase leading up to a second floor balcony. Three wooden chests rest in the middle of the floor, their lids bound shut with sturdy iron padlocks. Small tables, shelves, and benches hold various knick-knacks, and a framed portrait of a silver-haired gnome hangs next to a tall wooden box at the base of the stairs. The wooden box contains an intricate array of ticking gears, counterweights, and cylindrical chimes, surmounted by a circular face that bears the numerals 1 through 12 on its circumference.

The construct at the base of the stairs is a grandfather clock built by Keygan's father, who is expertly depicted in the framed portrait. The clock weighs 300 pounds.

A secret door is hidden in the wall of the staircase, next to the red curtain. The secret door is well hidden and locked. With a loud squeal, it pushes open to reveal a 10-foot-square landing at the top of a stone staircase that descends into darkness.

Secret Door (wood): 2 in. thick; Hardness 5; hp 20; break DC 15; Search (DC 20); Open Lock (DC 20).

Creature: A skulk hides on the balcony overlooking this room.

Skulk: hp 12; see Appendix 4.

Tactics: The skulk leaps down when PCs find the secret door or motion toward the staircase, landing on its feet in a square adjacent to its intended target. The skulk must succeed at a Jump check (DC 15) to avoid taking 1d6 points of damage from the 10-foot drop. The skulk loses the advantage of higher ground but gets a free attack during the surprise round if the PCs fail a Listen check and Spot check to notice it. The skulk fights until captured or slain.

Treasure: The locks and mechanisms in the windows are nonfunctional display models and worth only a few copper pieces each. Keygan's valuable merchandise is kept in the three locked chests (Open Lock DC 30). The first chest holds Keygan's light crossbow and 10 crossbow bolts. The second chest contains twenty-five very simple locks (20 gp each) and sixteen average locks (40 gp each). The third chest holds eight good locks (80 gp each) and three amazing locks (150 gp each). The total value of the locks is 2,230 gp.

The grandfather clock, as an heirloom and oddity, might be worth as much as 2,500 gp to an interested buyer. The portrait of Keygan's father (illustrated by an unknown artist) is worth 5 gp.

Development: PCs who step through the secret door find themselves on a dark landing. A stone staircase (see area **J1**) descends into Jzadirune and the next chapter of the adventure.

G4. KITCHEN AND PANTRY

This kitchen contains all the basic amenities, including a table with an hourglass resting atop it. A fireplace dominates one wall, with pots hanging from hooks on either side. Two cabinets with frosted-glass doors hold dishware and utensils. A half-barrel washbasin stands in the far corner next to a locked pantry.

Nothing in the kitchen appears out of place. The lock on the pantry is very simple (Open Lock DC 20). Apart from the expected supply of preserved foodstuffs, spices, and soap, the pantry contains little of interest.

Treasure: The hourglass is worth 25 gp intact.

G5. KEYGAN'S BEDROOM (EL 1)

Keygan locks the door to this room at night before he goes to sleep. The door has a good lock (Open Lock DC 30).

This richly appointed bedroom holds furniture sized for a person of small stature. A coat rack sits by the door, while elsewhere in the room sit a cozy bed with a hand-sewn comforter, a clean bedpan, a chest of drawers at the foot of the bed, a wooden screen with birds painted on its panels, a wardrobe, and a small bookcase with some books and trinkets on it. A lantern sits atop a small end table by the bed.

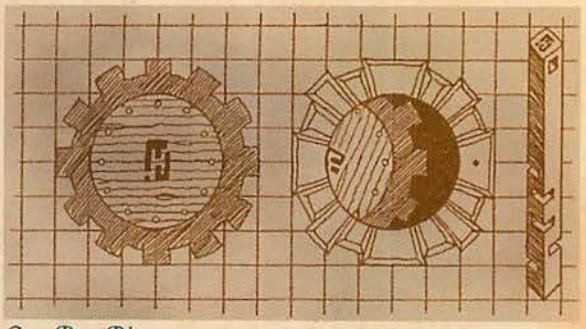
The wardrobe holds Keygan's clothes, including several small vests and three pairs of boots.

The chest at the foot of the bed holds three drawers, all held shut by a single good lock (Open Lock DC 30). The drawers hold the following:

Top Drawer: This drawer holds a varnished wooden comb, a sewing needle and spools of thread, blank pieces of parchment, a jar of sepia ink, and some quills.

Middle Drawer: This contains some handwritten notes on lock designs. Buried under them is a map of Jzadirune written on a tattered piece of coarse leather. The map does not reveal secret passages or show any of the new passages dug by the dark creepers.

Bottom Drawer: This drawer contains Keygan's spellbook. The drawer is also trapped (see below).



Gear Door Diagram

Trap: Two spring-loaded scything blades sweep out from narrow compartments between the drawers when the bottom drawer is opened without the proper key.

Scything Blade Trap: CR 1; mechanical; location trigger; automatic reset; Atk +8 melee (1d8/×3); Search DC 21; Disable Device DC 22.

Treasure: The painted screen is finely wrought and worth 25 gp intact. The bookcase holds some mundane books, including a thick volume titled Building Better Locks (worth 10 gp to a locksmith).

VANISHING IN JZADIRUNE

Gnome architects and artisans designed and built much of Cauldron. One of these architects, a gnome wizard named Jzadirune, also found time to carve out a secluded enclave beneath the city for himself and his kin. The enclave, which was named after its creator, became a sanctuary for gnome spellcasters and maesters. Jzadirune became known as a place to build or acquire wondrous magic items. No one suspected that Jzadirune had discovered a spell weaver vault during his early exploration of the region, or that his discoveries would imbue all he built in his enclave with a horrific lurking curse.

The wizard Jzadirune died of natural causes a few years after realizing his dream. Meanwhile, the enclave continued to churn out new magic items. Its forges spit out magic rings by the handful, its weavers spun magic clothing to pack a hundred wardrobes, and young gnomes were taught the fine arts of scroll scribing, wandmaking, and potion brewing. The gnomes of Jzadirune were also known for their way with machinery, and created an assortment of mechanical automatons.

Seventy-five years ago, the gnomes of Jzadirune fell prey to a magical plague called the Vanishing. The origin of the plague remains a mystery, although some scholars speculate that the gnomes' unorthodox meth-

Jzadirune glyphs

J Z A D I R U N E

ods for creating magic items spawned the disease. Others hypothesize that an unscrupulous competitor or a dissatisfied customer created the disease to put the gnomes out of business. In truth, the Vanishing was a magical ward created long ago by a sect of spell weaver necromancers as a method of punishing those who sought to steal their powerful magic. The Vanishing took some time to awaken after Jzadirune's theft of the ancient spell weaver vault, but when it did awaken inside the gnomes' magic items it infected anyone who handled them.

Several gnomes succumbed to the Vanishing, fading away into nothingness. Unable to eradicate the disease, the gnomes destroyed all the contaminated magic items they could find and abandoned Jzadirune. Many continued plying their trade on the surface, without further misfortune.

Although Jzadirune remained mostly abandoned in the intervening years, a few monsters managed to find their way into the enclave from the Underdark. A gang of dark creepers moved into the complex over a year ago and found many of its doors protected by magical traps. To circumvent the traps, the dark creepers used a pair of pulverizer automatons to drill narrow passages between various rooms, allowing them to navigate the complex without needing to open trapped doors. A few months after the dark creepers settled in, a coterie of skulks arrived. These skulks were spies for the half-troll slaver Kazmojen, sent to find a route to the surface. After a few fatal skirmishes with the dark creepers, the skulks negotiated a peace, helped the dark creepers kill a few other monsters that had claimed parts of the enclave, and found their route to the surface.

Jzadirune remains home to the skulks, the dark creepers (and their dark stalker leader), and an assortment of other nasty critters. The enclave also plays host to several lingering magical effects, left in play by the previous gnome tenants. The two most important of these lingering effects are the gear doors and the Vanishing.

GEAR DOOR (EL 1)

Most of the doors in Jzadirune are gear-shaped. Each door is designed to roll into a nearby wall cavity when properly opened. The 4-foot-diameter door is carved from 6-inch-thick wood and encircled with a ring of molded iron teeth. The entire door is encased within a double-frame of beveled stone.

Burned into the center of each door is a glyph representing one of nine letters (in the Gnome language): J, Z, A, D, I, R, U, N, and E. The various glyphs are depicted in the illustration of the Jzadirune Glyphs. PCs who speak Gnome recognize the glyphs instantly. A successful DC 15 Decipher Script check also reveals what each symbol means, as does a *comprehend languages* spell.

The gear doors are normally locked. Opening or closing a gear door requires a slim, rectangular, rod-shaped key to open. The key fits neatly into a tiny, diamond-shaped slot carved into the doorframe, and each key bears a tiny symbol at one end. For the key to work, the symbol on the key must match the glyph on the door. See Diagram #1: Gear Door and Key for a diagram showing a "J" door and matching "J" key. If the wrong key is placed in a door, nothing happens. Inserting the proper key causes a locked door to open or causes an open door to roll shut and lock.

A *knock* spell opens a locked door. However, opening a gear door without the proper key activates a trap.

Gear Door (strong, iron-bound wood): 4 in. thick, 4 ft. diameter; Hardness 5; hp 60; Break DC 26; Open Lock DC 30.

Trap: Most of the gear doors in Jzadirune are trapped. The nature of the trap depends on the glyph inscribed on the door, as shown below. The trap continues to function until the door is opened or destroyed.

Any of the following traps can be dispelled by casting a successful *dispel magic* against caster level 11th. The nature of the trap depends on the glyph inscribed on the door.

"J" Door: A door inscribed with the "J" glyph releases clouds of corrosive gas when improperly opened.

Corrosive Gas Trap: CR 1; mechanical; touch trigger; automatic reset; multiple targets (10-foot-by-10-foot by 10-foot volume on each side of the portal); 2d6 acid; DC 12 Reflex save half; Search DC 21; Disable Device DC 20.

"Z" Door: A door inscribed with the "Z" glyph has no real trap, but a *Leomund's trap* makes one think that opening the door improperly will trigger a deadly magic effect. Any attempt to disarm the trap fails, and nothing happens when the trap is "sprung."

"A" Door: A fan of magical flames, similar to a *burning hands* spell, fills the two 5-foot-squares directly in front of the door when it is opened improperly.

***Burning Hands* Trap**: CR 1; magic device, touch trigger; automatic reset, spell effect (*burning hands*, 2nd-level wizard, 2d4 fire; DC 11 Reflex save half); Search DC 22; Disable Device DC 19.

"D" Door: Crackling electricity fills the open doorway. The first creature that passes through the doorway takes 1d8+5 points of electricity damage. The electricity field dissipates after dealing damage.

Electrical Field Trap: CR 1; magic device; touch trigger; automatic reset; 1d8+5 electricity; Search DC 22; Disable Device DC 19.

"I" Door: Six *rays of frost* spring from the doorway when it is opened improperly, striking random targets within 10 feet.

***Rays of Frost* Trap**: CR 1; magic device; touch trigger; no reset; multiple targets (six random targets within 10 feet); +5 ranged touch (1d3 cold); Search DC 22; Disable Device DC 18.

"R" Door: Opening this door improperly instantly summons 1d3 fiendish dire rats. The summoned creatures attack any non-gnome they encounter, disappearing after 5 rounds or when "slain."

Rat Trap: CR 1; magic device; touch trigger; automatic reset; spell effect (*summon monster II*, 5th-level wizard); Search DC 22; Disable Device DC 19.

Fiendish Dire Rats (1d3): hp 5 each; *Monster Manual* 107.

"U" Door: Improperly opening this door triggers an *alarm* spell. Anyone within 60 feet of the door can hear the ringing *alarm* clearly. Reduce this distance by 10 feet for each interposing closed door and by 20 feet for each substantial intervening wall. In quiet conditions, the alarm can be heard faintly up to 180 feet away. The ringing lasts for 1 round.

In addition, two spectral sickles appear in the air and swing at the nearest non-gnome creature, after which they disappear. The sickles pass right through armor as though they were incorporeal weapons, dealing 1d6 points of damage with each successful hit.

Noisy Slasher Trap: CR 1; magic device; touch trigger; automatic reset; audible *alarm* and +4 melee touch (1d6 points of slashing damage, 2 sickles); Search DC 22; Disable Device DC 19.

"N" Door: A door inscribed with the "N" glyph releases clouds of poisonous twilight mist when improperly opened.

Twilight Mist Trap: CR 1; mechanical; touch trigger; no reset; multiple targets (everyone in a 10-foot by 10-foot by 10-foot area on each side of the door); poison gas (1d6 Dex/1d6 Dex, DC 13 Fortitude save negates); Search DC 21; Disable Device DC 20.

"E" Door: Three jets of flame fill the doorway whenever a non-gnome passes through the portal, dealing 3d4 points of fire damage. This trap activates each time a creature other than a gnome crosses the portal.

Flame Jet Trap: CR 1; magic device; location trigger; automatic reset; 3d4 fire; DC 15 Reflex half; Search DC 21; Disable Device DC 19.

Ad-hoc XP Award: The PCs should not receive experience points for every door trap in Jzadirune, since they can navigate the dungeon without disturbing many of the gear doors. Feel free to award XP the first time the PCs disable or survive a particular door trap; if they encounter the same trap again, they should gain no XP for surviving or "defeating" it.

THE VANISHING (EL 2)

The Vanishing clings to Jzadirune's magic items, infecting creatures that use their power. Although the gnomes tried to destroy all items infected with the contagion, they were not entirely successful. A few contaminated items still linger in forgotten corners of the enclave, waiting to be found.

A living creature that uses a contaminated magic item isn't immediately aware of the danger. One of the disease's most insidious qualities is that it uses the item's magic aura to mask its own faint transmutation aura. Thus, a *detect magic* spell does not reveal the disease's presence (although a *true seeing* spell reveals the infection).

A creature infected with the Vanishing must succeed at an immediate DC 15 Fortitude save or suffer 1d6 points of Charisma damage after a 1-day incubation period. Once a creature takes Charisma damage, it turns translucent, becoming increasingly transparent (and taking damage) with each passing day. Although the disease presents the illusion that the victim is fading away, the creature remains solid and does not actually turn incorporeal. Equipment is not rendered transparent by the disease.

The transparency affords one advantage: any creature reduced to half its Charisma or less by the disease is so transparent that it gains a +4 circumstance bonus on Hide checks.

Successful saves do not allow an afflicted creature to recover. Only magical treatment can save a victim of the Vanishing. A successful *break enchantment* (against caster level 10), *remove disease*, or *remove curse* spell cast upon the afflicted creature cures the malady. This can also remove the taint of the Vanishing from a magic item. Unlike normal diseases, the Vanishing cannot be treated using the Heal skill.

A creature reduced to 0 Charisma by the Vanishing fades away, leaving behind any items worn or held. The creature is slain, its body is lost, and it cannot be restored to life using a *raise dead* spell (although *reincarnate*, *resurrection*, and *true resurrection* work).

The effects of handling multiple infected items are not cumulative. The Vanishing cannot be passed from one creature to another by touch. Any character that is immune to disease is also immune to the Vanishing.

OTHER DUNGEON FEATURES

Unless stated otherwise, all rooms and corridors in Jzadirune are unlit. Most corridors have empty sconces along the walls (for torches), while most rooms have small hooks dangling from ceiling chains (for hanging lanterns).

All 10-foot-wide corridors have flat, 10-foot-high ceilings. The dark creepers' roughly hewn tunnels are tubular and 5 feet in diameter.

Ceiling heights in rooms vary widely. Assume a room has a 10-foot-high ceiling unless stated otherwise.

The secret doors in Jzadirune blend perfectly with the surrounding stonework. Except where noted otherwise, any secret door in Jzadirune can be found with a successful DC 20 Search check. Secret doors resemble 4-foot-square sections of stone that pivot on a central vertical axis. A cleverly hidden knob, panel, or pedal opens the door when depressed.

Unless otherwise noted, magical effects in Jzadirune function at caster level 12th.

J1. DESCENDING STAIRS

A stone staircase, its steps shrouded with cobwebs and dust, descends twenty feet to a ten-foot-square landing, then bends to the right and plunges into darkness.

Characters with Track can make a DC 12 Search check to notice small hoof prints (left by the dark creepers) in the dust. On a roll of 22 or higher, they also notice human-sized bare footprints (left by the skulks, who are more difficult to track). The tracks suggest the ascent and descent of multiple creatures, perhaps as many as a half dozen.

The staircase is unlit, although an iron torch sconce is mounted to one wall on each landing.

J2. WELL-HIDDEN SECRET DOOR (EL 1)

The staircase descends another twenty feet before opening into a room. From this landing, you can hear strange sounds emanating from the chamber below, specifically chirping birds, rustling leaves, and cheery giggles. The landing itself is bare save for an empty iron torch sconce mounted on the south wall.

The strange noises emanate from area **J3**. A secret door in the south wall is expertly hidden and requires a successful DC 25 Search check to locate. Turning the nearby torch sconce a quarter-turn clockwise opens the secret door; otherwise, the door can be opened with a successful DC 20 Open Lock check. Turning the sconce counter-clockwise triggers a Trap.

Trap: Turning the torch sconce counterclockwise causes the eastern end of the 10-foot landing to tilt upward. Anyone on the landing tumbles down the 20-foot staircase to the west, taking damage and landing prone in area **J3**. A successful Reflex save halves the damage. The trap and sconce reset after the trap has been triggered.

Tilting Floor: CR 1; mechanical; touch trigger; automatic reset; 2d6 falling damage; Reflex save DC 12 half; Search DC 25; Disable Device DC 20.

J3. GIGGLING MASKS

The staircase ends at a forty-foot-square room with a ten-foot-high ceiling. A slight draft blows into the room from a ten-foot-wide open passage in the far wall, directly across from the stairs. Two four-foot-diameter circular doors are set into the middle of the south wall. Each door is made of wood and framed with a ring of mortared stones. The westernmost door is closed and inscribed with a strange glyph. The easternmost door bears a different glyph but rests half-open. The half-open door reveals an iron rim of gearlike teeth, and dim light spills from the chamber beyond. Mounted to the walls of the room are twelve tarnished copper masks. The masks are two feet tall and cling four feet above the floor. Each one depicts a smiling gnome's visage. The soft giggling, chirping, and rustling noises seem to pour from the very walls.

The sounds of giggling gnomes, rustling leaves, and chirping birds are the result of permanent *ghost sound* spells cast within the chamber.

The twelve copper masks are held to the walls with *sovereign glue*; attempting to pry off a mask without the aid of *universal solvent* requires a DC 24 Strength check and results in the mask's destruction.

The mask located to the left of the west tunnel (marked with an X) has a permanent *magic mouth* spell cast on it. When a living creature enters the 10-foot-square directly in front of the mask, its mouth moves and says the following in Common:

Welcome to Jzadirune—behold the wonder!
But beware, ye who seek to plunder.
Traps abound and guardians peer
Beyond every portal, behind every gear.

Treasure: Intact or melted down, the tarnished copper masks are worth 10 gp each.

Development: If the characters make any noise or bring a light into the room, the skulks in area **J4** automatically notice.

J4. LURKING SHADOWS (EL 4)

The gear door to this room is partially open, creating a roughly crescent-shaped gap just wide enough for a Medium character to squeeze through. The door has been wedged open with a chunk of stone; removing the stone causes the door to close and lock, as well as reactivates the door's trap (see Gear Doors for details).

A dozen small cots and chests line the walls of this ten-foot-high dusty room. Cobwebs blanket many of the cots and chests, and tiny spiders scurry about. Two rough-hewn tunnels, each five feet in diameter and tubular, breach the eastern and southern walls. Stony rubble covers the floor near each tunnel. A one-foot-long iron rod lies in the middle of the floor, its golden tip shedding enough light to cast lurid shadows on the walls.

The skulks and dark creepers usually meet here before embarking on a surface raid. The skulks also rest here from time to time. The glowing rod lying on the floor is a sunrod with 1 hour of light remaining.

The twelve chests strewn about the room have been picked clean by the skulks, and any valuables were taken to area **J56**.

Creatures: Two naked skulks feast on the spiders in this room. When they detect intruders, the skulks flank the northern doorway and attempt to hide.

Skulks (2): hp 9 each; see Appendix 4.

Tactics: When an intruder enters the room, each skulk attempts a surprise flanking attack. On the following round, one skulk flees through the southern tunnel and heads to area **J15** to alert the skulk there. The second skulk flees down the eastern tunnel and heads to area **J44** to alert the dark creepers. The skulks use their peerless camouflage ability to remain hidden while fleeing.

The skulks are cowardly and do not engage multiple foes for more than a single round before fleeing.

Development: If one or both skulks escape, all other skulks and all dark creepers within Jzadirune are alerted to the PCs' presence. Sounds of battle here have a 50% chance of alerting the skulks in area **J15** and **J59**, neither of whom come to their comrades' aid.

J5. DUSTY BARRACKS

The room holds fifteen cots and fifteen small chests, covered in cobwebs and dust. None of the chests appears to be locked.

Each chest contains a dusty wool blanket, some worthless personal effects, and an off-white tabard emblazoned with the symbol of Jzadirune—an insignia depicting a wooden gear with a yellow, eight-pointed star in its hollow center.

J6. TILT-A-PIT TRAP (EL 2)

This dusty, cobweb-filled hall has a ten-foot-high ceiling and walls carved with frescoes depicting dour gnomes clad in chain shirts and helms, and brandishing hooked hammers. There are no obvious doors leading from this hall.

Three secret doors open into this hall: one at the south end of the hall (leading to area **J3**), one along the west wall (leading to area **J7**), and one at the north end (leading to area **J35**). The western secret door is concealed behind a gnome fresco and is especially difficult to detect (DC 22 Search).

Trap: The 10-foot-square section of floor marked in red on the map conceals a 10-foot-deep pit. The pit's hinged lid opens when at least 150 pounds of weight is applied, although a successful DC 17 Disable Device check jams the lid shut. Pulling down the lever in area **J34** locks the lid and deactivates the trap.

Anyone standing on the lid when it opens must succeed at a DC 15 Reflex save or fall into the pit, taking 1d6 points of damage and landing prone. Once the trap has sprung, have the characters roll initiative. The pit has an initiative check of +2. The bottom half of the pit is made of wood with rows of wooden spikes embedded in two opposite-facing walls.

On the first round, the pit's lid springs shut, and the bottom half of the pit tilts 90 degrees to the south, throwing anyone within onto 1d4 wall spikes (each dealing 1d4 points of piercing damage with a successful hit).

On the second round, the pit tilts back to its original upright position. Anyone in the tilting half of the pit drops to the wooden floor of the pit and is knocked prone if they fail a DC 15 Balance check, but suffers no damage.

On the third round, the pit tilts 90 degrees to the north, throwing anyone within onto the other wall of spikes.

On the fourth round, the pit tilts back to its original upright position. Anyone trapped inside the tilting half falls to the bare wooden floor and is knocked prone if they fail a DC 15 Balance check, but suffers no damage.

The pit stops tilting at this point until the trap is sprung again. If the pit's lid is held or wedged closed, the tilting continues. The lid can be pushed open with a successful DC 10 Strength check and wedged open with a successful DC 17 Disable Device check. The gear mechanisms that cause the wooden half of the pit to tilt back and forth lie 30 feet below the lip of the pit. When the pit is tilted to the north or south, these gears are clearly visible from the top of the pit. Dropping a dagger, rope, rock, or similar item into the gears requires a successful ranged attack against AC 15 and has a 20% chance of jamming the tilting mechanisms. Conversely, a rogue lowered down to the gear mechanisms can jam them with a successful DC 17 Disable Device check. Once the gears are jammed, the pit stops tilting. Trapped characters can smash through the wooden walls or floor of the pit to escape. They can also attempt to clamber out of the tilt-a-pit while it is upright. Getting out of the tilting half of the pit requires a Climb check (DC 10 if one uses a rope or the wooden spikes as handholds and footholds). If a knotted rope is used, the DC drops to 5. Climbing the stone walls in the top half of the pit requires a DC 20 Climb check. Anyone in the unlikely position of being crushed by the tilt-a-pit takes 4d6 points of damage, or half damage if a DC 15 Reflex save succeeds.

Tilt-a-Pit: CR 2; mechanical; location trigger; automatic reset; DC 15 Reflex save avoids; 10 ft. deep (1d6, fall) plus +3 melee (1d4 points of piercing damage, 1d4 spikes per wall); Reflex save DC 15 prevents fall; Search DC 17; Disable Device DC 17.

Tilt-a-Pit Walls and Floor (sturdy wood): 3 in. thick; Hardness 5; hp 45 per 5-foot by 5-foot section; Break DC 21.

Tilt-a-Pit Gearworks (sturdy wood): 2 in. thick; Hardness 5; hp 30; Break DC 21; Disable Device DC 17.

J7. SECRET ARMORY

Bare, dusty shelves line the north wall of this twenty-foot-square room. Freestanding weapon racks fill the southern half of the room, but most of the weapons have been removed. Three small steel shields and a suit of cobweb-choked half-plate armor hang from hooks along the south wall. Several more hooks remain bare. Below them rests a large wooden chest secured with a dusty padlock.

The gnomes took most of the weapons and armor when they abandoned Jzadirune. However, a few items were left behind in their haste to vacate the complex.

Treasure: The chest is bound with an average padlock (DC 25 Open Lock). It contains 16 crossbow bolts, 2 smokesticks, a thunderstone, and a tanglefoot bag.

A hidden compartment in the lid of the chest can be found with a successful DC 22 Search check; tucked inside this compartment is a *wand of burning hands* (25 charges) infected with the Vanishing.

A thorough search of the room also reveals the following weapons and armor: three gnome hooked hammers, two light picks, a heavy pick, a suit of half-plate armor, and three light steel shields emblazoned with the symbol of Jzadirune (see area **J5**). All of the weapons and armor found here are sized for Small humanoids.

J8. SLEEPING QUARTERS

Nothing remains in this room except four decrepit cots, four small wooden chests, and a wooden dresser with four drawers. Everything is draped in cobwebs.

The gnomes removed all items of value from this room before abandoning Jzadirune 75 years ago.

J9. NURSERY

Eight small cradles line the outer walls of this dark, ten-foot-high room. A wooden playpen, a rocking unicorn, and a lovingly crafted wooden toy box rest in the middle of the room. Everything is shrouded with dust and cobwebs.

The outside of the toy box has frescoes of dancing gnomes and small, burrowing animals; a few toys and painted letter blocks can be found within. Nothing of value remains in this abandoned nursery.

J10. WRECKED QUARTERS

This chamber's furnishings—three small cots, a small table, and a dresser—have been smashed to flinders, the wreckage strewn across the floor. A lonely chain hangs from the center of the ten-foot-high ceiling, and a lantern lies smashed in one corner.

The skulks entered this room though a secret door in the south wall (leading to area **J11**) and thoroughly searched it for treasure. A brief skirmish erupted when one of the skulks found a potion tucked in the dresser; after quaffing the potion, the skulk succumbed to the Vanishing and now lurks in area **J21**.

J11. CONTROL LEVER (EL 3)

Small mounds of rubble fill this ten-foot-high, twenty-foot-square chamber. Most of the detritus is piled near a roughly hewn, five-foot-diameter tunnel bored into the west wall. Three wooden chests sit in the middle of the floor. The chests' lids are carved and painted with anthropomorphic figures resembling a badger, a fox, and a rabbit respectively. The smashed remains of three padlocks lie strewn around the chests. A wooden lever juts from an iron plate set into the south wall. The lever looks like it can slide up or down, and is currently in the "down" position.

The wooden lever controls the tilt-a-pit trap in area **J12**. Pulling the lever up locks the pit's lid and deactivates the trap, allowing creatures to cross the pit safely.

The three chests were once locked and trapped with *summon monster I* spells, but the skulks smashed the locks, triggered the traps, and defeated the summoned monsters. They also removed most of the valuable items from the chests; however, a few items escaped their notice.

Treasure: The badger chest is completely empty. The fox chest appears empty as well but contains a false bottom that can be found with a successful DC 24 Search check. Inside the secret cavity is a finely wrought silver bracelet worth 25 gp, a small pouch containing three citrines worth 50 gp each, and a tiny glass vial containing a dose of *dust of illusion*.

The rabbit chest contains an unremarkable-looking gray bag with a *Nystul's undetectable aura* spell cast on it. A *detect magic* spell reveals the bag's magical nature but masks its aura. The bag is actually a gray *bag of tricks*.

Both the *dust of illusion* and the *bag of tricks* are infected with the Vanishing.

J12. TILT-A-PIT TRAP (EL 2)

A featureless, thirty-foot-long hall connects two round doors. A narrow, five-foot-diameter tunnel breaches the middle of the south wall and heads off into darkness. Stone debris litters the floor near the tunnel's mouth.

A secret door in the north wall leads to area **J11**. Directly across from the secret door, a rough-hewn tunnel leads to area **J13**.

Trap: The easternmost 10-foot section of floor is trapped by a tilt-a-pit trap identical to the one in area **J6**.

J13. CAPTAIN'S ROOM

Rubble and splintered furniture fills this dark, ten-foot-high room. Most of the detritus lies heaped between a pair of five-foot-diameter tunnels crudely carved into the west and northwest walls. A wooden lever juts from an iron plate set into the east wall, near the door. The lever looks like it can slide up or down; it is currently in the "down" position.

This room formerly belonged to Jzadirune's captain of the guard. A secret door in the south wall opens to reveal a dust-choked, 10-foot-square room. Hooks and shelves on the walls suggest that the chamber once served as a secret closet, but the last captain of the guard emptied it of valuables before leaving Jzadirune forever. The secret room no longer contains anything of value.

The wooden lever in the east wall controls the trap in area **J14**. Pulling the lever up locks the pit's lid and deactivates the trap, allowing creatures to cross the pit safely.

J14. TILT-A-PIT TRAP (EL 2)

The corridor ends with a pair of circular doors in the west and east walls. Dust and debris cover the floor.

Trap: Another tilt-a-pit lies in wait 10 feet from the south end of the hall. The trap is identical to the one in area **J6**. A dead, naked skulk is inside the pit, and his rapier, light crossbow, and six crossbow bolts lie scattered on the pit's floor.

Pulling down the lever in area **J13** locks the pit's lid and deactivates the trap.

J15. SKULK DEN (EL 2)

Dead rats, burnt tindertwigs, and bits of broken stone litter the floor of this room whose only furnishings include a cot against the northeast wall and a wooden chest bearing a dented lantern. The lantern is lit, but barely enough light escapes through its shutters to illuminate the room. Across from the round door in the west wall, a five-foot-diameter tunnel carves its way east into darkness.

A cloaked skulk sleeps in the cot (see Creature below). The wooden chest is unlocked and contains the Treasure.

Creature: The sleeping skulk gets a Listen check with a –10 penalty to detect intruders; if its check is equal to or greater than its opponents' worst Move Silently check, it awakens and reaches for its gear (which is stowed under the cot). If awakened by sounds of combat in area **J4**, the sleeping skulk casts off its cloak, grabs its equipment, and attempts to hide near the eastern tunnel. If one of the skulks from area **J4** flees here, it also tries to hide after waking its sleeping companion.

Skulk: hp 9; see Appendix 4.

Tactics: If it hides successfully, the skulk waits until all of its enemies enter the room before attacking the rearmost foe with its rapier. After the surprise round, it hurls a thunderstone into the back room as it flees to area **J17**. The exploding thunderstone alerts the skulks in areas **J4**, **J17**, **J58**, and **J59**.

Treasure: The chest contains several items the skulks have found in the complex, including two dark robes (bundled and tattered), three sunrods, two flasks of oil, two tindertwigs, a thunderstone, a ceramic stage mask portraying the sad visage of an anguished gnome with rabbit ears worth 5 gp, a silver ring shaped like a serpent with tiny azurite gems for eyes worth 25 gp, and a silver ewer adorned with dancing dryads and set with moss agates worth 75 gp.

J16. MAP ROOM

An *illusory wall* conceals the north entrance of this room. Although it looks like an unremarkable stone wall when viewed, physical objects and creatures can pass through it without difficulty. Touch or probing searches reveal the true nature of the surface, but do not cause the illusion to disappear.

Carved into the south wall is a large map showing various interconnected rooms and corridors. The lines of the map glow faintly but do not shed enough light to illuminate the chamber.

The map on the south wall shows Jzadirune's rooms and corridors, but none of its secret chambers or hidden hallways. Show the players the Players' Map of Jzadirune at this time, and allow them to view it only as long as their characters remain in the room.

J17. HALL OF DANCING LIGHTS (EL 4)

Flickering light spills from this great hall, and PCs who succeed at a DC 10 Listen check also hear the sound of trickling water from within.

Eight black marble pillars support the thirty-foot-high ceiling of this majestic hall. The pillars are carved to resemble gnome artisans and warriors standing on each other's shoulders, bracing the vaulted roof with their collective strength. The walls are adorned with faded murals depicting gnomes in reverie—playing pipes, dancing, performing acrobatic stunts, drinking wine, and so forth. The forty-foot-wide hall widens to sixty feet at the south end, where a large circular pool is enclosed by a semicircular, one-foot-high veined marble wall. Carved into the wall above the pool is a gnome visage with water spilling from its wide grin. Four bright lights illuminate the hall from end to end, corner to corner. They flicker and dance like torchlight and drift aimlessly about the hall, changing altitude and direction on a whim. Two piles of rubble, one in the northwest corner and another in the southwest corner, add elements of imperfection to this grand hall.

Jzadirune has many lingering magical effects, one of which is the *dancing lights* spell in this hall. The lights create many shifting shadows, allowing the skulks in this hall to hide (see Creatures, below). A successful *dispel magic* cast on the *dancing lights* (caster level 12) ruins them.

The 20-foot-diameter pool provided most of Jzadirune's fresh water supply. Purification spells rid the water of contaminants; although the spells are long gone, the water remains drinkable. The gnomes used to cast coins into the pool for good luck; the dark creepers swept up the tarnished coins shortly after they arrived.

The dark creepers created the two piles of rubble digging the 5-foot-diameter passages that lead to areas **J4**, **J15**, **J56**, and **J59**. The skulks have hidden some Treasure in the southernmost pile of rubble.

Creatures: Two skulks lurk behind the southern pillars. They attack anyone who dares to explore the south end of the hall.

Skulks (2): hp 9 each; see Appendix 4.

Tactics: If possible, the skulks try to flank a single opponent and attack with their rapiers. They hurl their thunderstones at enemy spellcasters who remain out of melee range and gain cover (+4 bonus to AC, +2 bonus on Reflex saves) when firing their crossbows from behind the pillars. The skulks flee through the south tunnel if either takes 5 or more points of damage. They hole up in area **J56**.

Treasure: Characters searching through the southern pile of rubble who make a DC 20 Search check unearth a small, engraved wooden box adorned with prancing sylvan creatures and set with shards of lapis lazuli. Inside, the box is filled with gears and other mechanical components. A tiny silver crank also rests inside the box.

When the crank is inserted into a hole in the front of the box and turned, the interior mechanisms produce soft, cheery music. The music box is worth 200 gp.

Development: Loud noises in this hall alert the creatures in areas **J4**, **J15**, **J21**, **J58**, and **J59**.

J18. STORAGE

This twenty-foot-high room has two levels: a twenty-foot-square lower level to the west and a ten-foot-by-twenty-foot loft to the east. A wooden ladder connects them. Stacked crates and casks fill the lower level. A cabinet stands against the north wall of the loft, which also contains a heavy wooden trunk. Everything is draped with cobwebs.

A secret door at the back of the loft opens into area **J58**. Neither the skulks nor the dark creepers have found the secret door—or found their way into this room.

The crates are empty—their contents removed years ago by the former gnome occupants. The casks hold ale, but time has rendered the entire supply undrinkable and worthless.

The cabinet holds dusty towels, two empty clay jugs, an iron kettle, and some crumbling bars of soap.

The wooden trunk holds miscellaneous items: 12 candles wrapped in a square yard of canvas, two 50-foot-long hemp ropes, nine torches, an empty map case, and a small box containing flint and steel.

J19. GUEST QUARTERS

The gnomes of Jzadirune set aside this room for honored guests. Three human-sized beds stand against the south wall. Other furnishings include a table and four chairs, and a carved dresser. The three dresser drawers are empty, and the room holds nothing of value.

J20. COSTUME AND PROP STORAGE

This room contains six bulky wooden trunks, their lids thrown open and their contents disgorged. Strewn about the dusty floor are dozens of ornate masks, gaudy robes, fancy costumes, mock weapons carved from wood, gnarled staffs, and similar stage props. A few costumes dangle from coat racks, wooden mannequins, and wall hooks between some heavier props, including a wooden folding screen painted with stars, a stuffed wolf, and a wooden sun carved with a grinning face.

The gnomes staged elaborate plays in their small theater (area **J22**) and stored all of their costumes and props here. The skulks entered the room through the secret door in the south wall and searched the trunks for valuables, but found little of worth.

The secret door in the west wall (leading to area **J21**) is slightly ajar and therefore easier to detect than normal. Anyone entering the room spots it with a successful DC 12 Spot check. A search of the wall automatically discovers it. PCs peering through the crack in the door can see that the room beyond is torchlit, but little else. The slightly ajar secret door also allows the skulk in area **J21** to hear PCs who noisily explore this room and its contents.

Characters can find all sorts of costumes, masks, and props here—none of them magical or valuable.

J21. VANISHING SKULK (EL 2)

If the PCs approach this room without attempting to dim their light sources or soften their footsteps, the room's denizen (a skulk afflicted with the Vanishing) notices them automatically and hides near one of the exits—whichever one is farthest from the PCs.

Dead rats, broken bits of furniture, and debris litter the floor of this dusty chamber. A torch burns in a sconce between a round door and a crudely burrowed tunnel in the west wall.

Creature: A skulk lairs here. It spends most of its time gnawing on dead rats and listening for other skulks. This skulk found a potion in area **J10**, imbibed it, and succumbed to the Vanishing. (The effects of the potion have long since expired.) The other skulks shun it, fearing they might catch the disease as well. This skulk has been left to its own devices.

The skulk has nearly faded away and appears almost ghostlike. It brandishes a normal rapier and wears a black ceramic wolf mask taken from area **J20**. It also wears a thick wolfskin cloak, which it uses to keep warm. It sheds the cloak if it needs to hide.

Skulks (2): hp 9 each; Cha 3; see Appendix 4.

Tactics: The skulk prefers to attack solitary foes. If it detects multiple enemies, it flees and hides in area **J13** or **J20**, where it makes its final stand.

J22. THEATER (EL 2)

Four ornate pillars support the twenty-foot-high vaulted ceiling of this room, which is illuminated by lanterns hanging in the corners. Tattered red curtains dangle from iron rods mounted to the walls and pillars. Four rows of ornately carved benches stand in the rectangular area defined by the pillars. Partially set into the south wall is a raised wooden stage with two short staircases leading up to it. Black curtains partially conceal the back wall of the stage, which is painted with an elaborate woodland mural.

If the PCs seat themselves in the theater or approach the stage, read or paraphrase the following:

One of the black stage curtains flutters, and a small figure steps out from behind it. A baby black bear—or rather, a gnome wearing a bear costume—takes center stage, raises a paw to his lips, and begins speaking softly.

"Night hath fallen in the Magic Woods, and while myriad woodland creatures dream, Willow-

bough and her faerie friends frolic beneath the sorcerous moon!"

The small bear curls up into a ball on the stage and feigns sleep. Moments later, a female gnome with briars for hair materializes on stage, as though she were standing invisibly a moment ago, and begins dancing. Solemn music fills the theater as butterfly-winged faeries appear from backstage and join in the ballet.

Lanterns lit by *continual flame* spells illuminate this theater. The gnomes, faeries, and music are *programmed images*. If the PCs let the scene play out, they bear witness to the drama of Willowbough and Silverarrow, a somber tale of a dryad who falls in love with a ranger, and Moontusk, the ranger's bitter wereboar nemesis who strives to ruin their love by destroying the dryad's sacred tree.

A trapdoor in the middle of the stage floor opens to reveal a 3-foot-tall, cobweb-filled storage area under the stage. It contains both a Creature and Treasure.

Creature: A choker lurks under the stage and tries to grab any PC who descends through the trapdoor.

Choker: hp 16; *Monster Manual* 34.

Tactics: The choker uses its 10-foot reach to snag its prey without getting too close to the trapdoor. If it succeeds in grabbing a character on the surprise round or the round following, the choker uses its extraordinary quickness to hold the trapdoor shut with one elongated arm while choking its prey with the other. PCs trying to open the trapdoor must succeed at an opposed Strength check to pull open the trapdoor, or they can smash through it.

Medium and larger characters suffer a –2 penalty on attack rolls while fighting in the cramped understage area.

Treasure: The understage area contains two items: a masterwork mandolin worth 100 gp and an unlocked wooden chest. The chest contains a fine cloak with a *Nystul's magical aura* spell cast on it, a small locked spellbook (DC 25 Open Lock), a *wand of detect secret doors* (15 charges) infected with the Vanishing, and a 5-inch-long steel rod with an engraved rune at one end and notches carved into the other (a key that unlocks all of the "J" gear doors in Jzadirune).

The spellbook contains the following spells: *change self, color spray, detect magic, ghost sound, invisibility, Leomund's trap, mage hand, minor image, misdirection, Nystul's magic aura, read magic,* and *silent image.*

Development: If the skulk in area **J21** hears the play begin, it peers into the theater through a hole in the northwest curtain and observes the PCs. Meanwhile, the skulks in area **J17** move to flank the archway east of the theater, attacking the first PC who steps through.

J23. EMPTY GALLERY

Two short flights of stairs lead up to a seventy-foot-long, thirty-foot-wide octagonal gallery with a fifteen-foot-high vaulted ceiling. Twenty web-shrouded ped-

estals stand about the room, and the walls show signs of having once born tapestries and other fixtures. However, the items once displayed here have long since been removed.

The gnomes of Jzadirune displayed many of their finest constructs here but removed the precious displays when they abandoned the complex. A secret door opens into area **J24**.

J24. SECRET ART VAULT

A *mirage arcana* spell makes this dusty room appear empty. However, tactile exploration of the room reveals several items leaning against the east wall (see Treasure, below). The paintings become visible if they are taken from the room.

Treasure: Hidden by the *mirage arcana* spell are six framed paintings covered in gray dust cloths. Each painting measures 4 feet long and 3 feet tall and depicts a natural or mystical landscape. The paintings can be sold to an interested art dealer for 100 gp each.

J25. KING'S HALL (EL 4)

Marble staircases split this room into three levels: a rubble-strewn foyer to the east, a ten-foot-square marble landing, and an upper hall supported by two pillars sculpted to resemble petrified trees. Between the pillars rests a graven throne. An elderly gnome wearing a silver crown is slumped in the throne, his soft snores echoing throughout the room. The thirty-foot expanse of wall behind the throne is carved with frescoes depicting a complex array of gears. Another noteworthy feature is a cherubic gnome's face carved in bas-relief on the west wall of the landing.

The cherubic bas-relief visage is part of a magical trap that triggers whenever a living creature sets foot on the 10-foot-square landing (see Trap, below).

The "sleeping gnome king" is a *permanent image* cast upon the throne. In his lap rests an illusory scepter that fades away when touched.

The throne's right armrest contains a secret compartment that can be found with a successful DC 20 Search check. When the secret compartment is opened, the gnome king mumbles the following words in his sleep, which can only be heard by characters standing within 10 feet:

> *"Betrayed we are by our own magic,*
> *One by one, we fade away—*
> *Jzadirune's lost! Oh, how tragic!*
> *We curse the vanishing day."*

Trap: When a living creature sets foot on the 10-foot-square marble landing, a *magic mouth* spell cast on the gnome's visage says in Common, "If you wish an audience with the king, place your finest coin in my mouth."

Any gold or platinum coin placed in the bas-relief's mouth is instantly teleported to the secret compartment in the throne's armrest. Nothing more happens. If a PC drops a coin of lesser value in the mouth, the coin is not teleported away and the magic mouth says "Miser! What a paltry tribute! I curse you with clumsiness!" The PC must succeed at a Will save (DC 14) or suffer a –6 penalty to Dexterity (as per the *bestow curse* spell); the PC's Dexterity score cannot drop below 1. The curse is permanent until removed with a *break enchantment, remove curse,* or similar spell.

***Bestow Curse* Trap:** CR 4; magic device, touch trigger; automatic reset after 3 round delay; spell effect (bestow curse, 5th-level cleric, target suffers a –6 penalty to Dexterity, DC 14 Will save negates); Search (DC 28); Disable Device (28).

Treasure: The secret compartment in the throne's armrest contains a bed of 75 gp (plus any additional coins teleported from the bas-relief visage's mouth) and two 5-inch-long steel rods, each with an engraved rune at one end and notches carved into the other. The rods are keys for the "N" and "E" gear doors, respectively.

J26. AUTOMATON FACTORY (EL 4)

Metal wreckage and broken gears lie strewn about this oddly shaped chamber. Standing in the middle of the room is the half-built metal framework of a four-legged, five-foot-tall construct with one arm ending in a spiked wedge. Its other arm is nowhere to be seen. Gear doors are set into the north and south walls. Near them, two roughly hewn tunnels lead into darkness. Webs fill the corners of the room.

A half-finished, nonfunctional pulverizer automaton stands in the middle of the room. Hiding behind the construct is the chamber's lone occupant—see Creature, below.

PCs sifting through the debris can find the smashed remains of two work tables, several metal springs and gears, a metal pincer claw, and bits of armor plating. The room holds little of value, however.

Creature: While scouring the dungeon for food and valuables, one of the skulks ran afoul of a strange creature called a raggamoffyn in area **J31**. The raggamoffyn wrapped itself around the skulk and took control of its mind. The captured skulk seeks to lure another humanoid creature (skulk or otherwise) into area **J31**, where a second raggamoffyn waits to gain a host. Other skulks have encountered the captured one, but they fled to avoid a similar fate and have shied away from this part of the dungeon ever since

A raggamoffyn is a mysterious construct formed when leftover magical energy interacts with inanimate objects. They can dominate hosts by shrouding them with their bodies, transforming their victim into a captured one.

Captured Skulk: hp 36 (raggamoffyn) and 10 (skulk); see Appendix 4.

Common Raggamoffyn: hp 36; see Appendix 4.

Tactics: As the PCs enter the room from the south, the captured skulk bolts through the north tunnel and heads to area **J31**.

If the PCs approach from the north and the captured skulk has no way to reach area **J31**, it attacks with its rapier. If the skulk drops to 0 or fewer hit points, the raggamoffyn abandons it to claim a new host.

J27. GEARWORKS (EL 3)

Smashed tables and chairs litter the floor of this room. Hundreds of tiny wooden and metal gear mechanisms spill from sundered crates, and a four-foot-high mound of stone rubble fills the northwest corner. Mounted to the twenty-foot-high ceiling are two large wooden fans strung with cobwebs. The fans are connected to some gears and rope belts that cross the ceiling and disappear into the wall on either side of the eastern exit. In the middle of the room stands something draped in a large gray sheet. The shrouded object is roughly five feet tall, five feet wide, and irregular in shape.

The gnomes of Jzadirune used to make gears and other mechanisms here. The ceiling fans helped circulate the air. The fan belts connect to a pair of nonfunctional gearwork generators in area **J28**.

Creature: The thing concealed beneath the sheet in the middle of the room is a pulverizer automaton. If the sheet is removed or the automaton disturbed, roll 1d20: On a roll of 11 or higher, it grinds to life and attacks anyone within 40 feet who is not a gnome or dark one. Otherwise, it remains inactive until further disturbed.

Embossed on the surface of the construct (in Gnome) are the command words for activating and deactivating the automaton ("thrymbryl" and "myglym," respectively). Characters who cannot read Gnome cannot speak the command words correctly.

When activated, the pulverizer follows simple commands in Gnome ("kill all humans," "halt," "turn left, "turn right," and so on). It has suffered damage in previous fights, and has a lower Strength score than most pulverizers as a result.

The dark stalker used this automaton to burrow tunnels through the rock.

Damaged Pulverizer Automaton: hp 18; see Appendix 4.

Treasure: The "heart" of the automaton is actually a deep blue spinel worth 500 gp. Finding it requires a successful DC 24 Search check.

J28. GENERATORS

Set into the north and south walls of this corridor are six ten-foot-deep niches filled with dust and cobwebs. Some of the niches contain elaborate, gear-covered contraptions. A makeshift wall composed of wooden planks and braces blocks the eastern end of the hall.

Four of the niches contain magically powered, gear-driven generators for the ceiling fans in areas **J27**, **J29**, and **J31**. Rope belts connected to each generator disappear through holes in the ceiling of each niche. Pulling a lever activates or shuts down each of the eastern generators, although finding the lever requires a successful DC 12 Search check. The western generators have had several gears removed from them and are no longer functional.

The northwest niche has a secret door at the back of it (leading to areas **J29**). The two middle niches contain nothing but dust and cobwebs.

The makeshift wall is described in area **J39**.

J29. SECRET LIBRARY (EL 1)

A permanent *obscuring mist* spell fills this chamber, obscuring all sight (including darkvision) beyond five feet. A *dispel magic* does not remove the mist, although a *gust of wind* disperses the mist in 4 rounds.

If the characters disperse the mist, read or paraphrase the following text:

A thin carpet of stone rubble covers the floor of this room, with mounds of shattered rock piled in nearby corners. Built into the walls are rows of stone shelves—perhaps bookshelves, although there are no books on them. A ladder leans against the northwest wall. An ominous silhouette in the middle of the room turns out to be a harmless wooden lectern.

This room was once a library, but the gnomes of Jzadirune removed their precious books before abandoning the complex. Mounted to the ceiling is a fan connected to a magical generator in area **J28**. Activating the ceiling fan clears the room of mist after 4 rounds.

The ladder allows one to reach the topmost shelves, just below the 15-foot-high ceiling. Both the shelves and the lectern are bare.

All of the secret doors here are hidden behind movable sections of shelving that require a successful DC 20 Strength check to open. The obscuring mist makes the secret doors harder to detect than normal (DC 22 Search check).

Creatures: Four Small monstrous centipedes attack PCs who explore this room.

Small Monstrous Centipedes (4): hp 2 each; *Monster Manual* 286.

Tactics: The centipedes pursue prey out of the room. They attack mindlessly until slain.

J30. SCROLL STORAGE

Arcane scrolls were once stored here, but the gnomes removed and destroyed all of them, fearing they might spread the Vanishing.

Entering the empty, dust-covered room sends a number of small, harmless spiders scurrying and triggers a *programmed image*. An elderly, translucent gnome wizard with a faintly glowing ruby in her left eye socket appears in the room and recites the following words in Common before fading away:

"I am Emirystul, librarian of Jzadirune. The scrolls you seek have been destroyed to keep you and others from fading into nothingness. The curse of the Vanishing began here, in these mystic halls, and here it will remain. Be careful what you find, and mind whatever magic was wrought here."

If the secret door to the room is closed and reopened, the *programmed image* resets.

J31. ALCHEMY LAB (EL 3)

An acrid stench fills this chamber, which contains two large tables draped in cobwebs. Alchemical apparatus clutters one tabletop, while the other table has been flipped on its side, spilling its contents into the middle of the room. Amid the fragments of shattered glass lie some broken candles, some spent tindertwigs, various sundry utensils, and a pile of rags. A five-foot-wide tunnel in the west wall leads into darkness. Against the opposite wall stands a cabinet, its doors set with jagged shards of frosted glass. It looks like someone smashed through the glass to reach the contents within. Mounted to the ceiling is a web-shrouded wooden fan connected to some gears and a rope belt that crosses the ceiling and disappears into the north wall.

The pile of rags is actually a Creature. It waits until someone enters the room before attacking. The room's other contents are detailed under Treasure, below. The wooden ceiling fan connects to a magically powered generator in area **J28**, but it is currently "off."

Creature: A common raggamoffyn disguises itself as a pile of rags in the middle of the room. It attacks the first living humanoid that enters the room.

Common Raggamoffyn: hp 36; see Appendix 4.

Treasure: The upright table bears an alchemist's lab worth 500 gp as well as the following items: five empty glass flasks, six flasks of harmless (nonmagical) powder, three flasks of hardened sludge (harmless), two flasks of acid, 20 tindertwigs, and a 5-inch-long steel rod with an engraved rune at one end and notches carved into the other. This key opens all "U" gear doors in Jzadirune.

On the floor near the "pile of rags" rests a tanglefoot bag.

The broken cabinet holds a few alchemical items of interest: three flasks of alchemist's fire, four vials of antitoxin, two smokesticks, eight sunrods, a thunderstone, and a vial containing two applications of *universal solvent*.

Development: If the captured skulk from area **J26** retreats to this room, it hides behind the overturned table and grabs the tanglefoot bag lying on the floor nearby. It hurls the bag at the first PC to enter the room before leaping into combat.

J32. SECRET POTION STORAGE

Three cabinets stand against the walls of this ten-foot-high room. The cabinet doors hang open, and a shroud of dust covers the floor.

The cabinets hold scores of flasks and vials containing liquids of various colors and consistencies. However, the gnomes dispelled all of the potions, believing they were contaminated with the Vanishing. None of the liquid stored here radiates magic, although many of the flasks bear labels with spell names on them (written in Gnome).

J33. SLEEPING QUARTERS

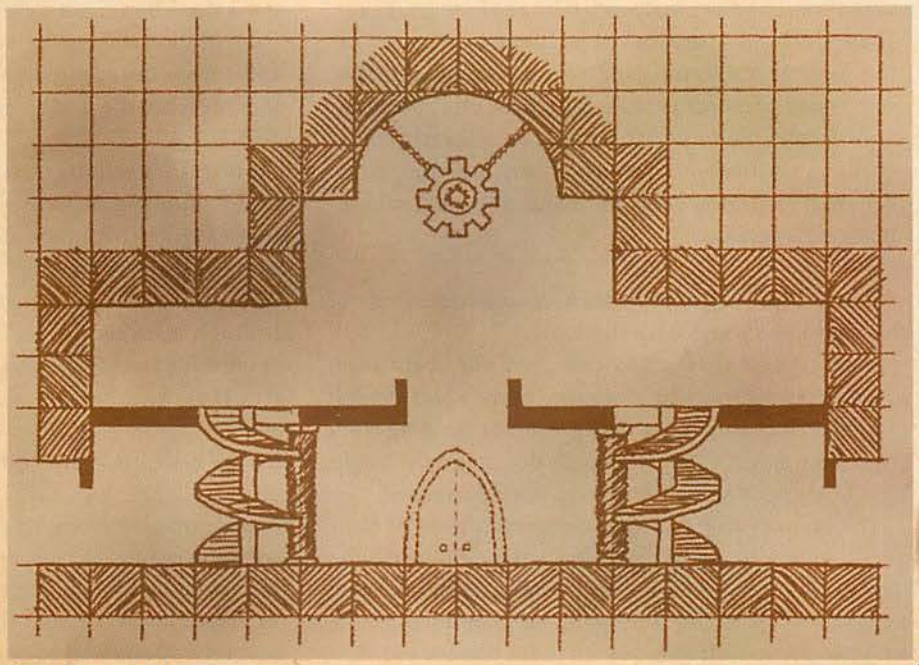
This room is identical to area **J8**.

J34. PIT LEVER AND RUBBLE

Chunks of broken stone and smaller debris fill this room. A wooden lever juts from an iron plate set into the west wall. A five-foot-diameter tunnel delves east into darkness.

The wooden lever controls the tilt-a-pit trap in area **J6**. Pulling the lever up locks the pit's lid and deactivates the trap, allowing creatures to cross the pit safely.

Characters searching through the rubble find some smashed furniture and, with a successful DC 22 Search



Great Factory Diagram

check, a five-inch-long metal rod with a rune engraved on one end and notches carved into the other. This key opens all "Z" gear doors in Jzadirune.

J35. FOYER AND IRON DOORS

Four circular doors—each one bearing a different rune—lead from this dusty fifteen-foot-high room. A semicircular mosaic of engraved floor tiles fans out from an arching set of double doors set in the north wall. Unlike the other portals, the northern doors are made of iron, embossed with gearlike patterns, and held to a stone doorframe by great iron hinges.

The iron double doors are locked from the south side, although they can be pushed open with ease from area **J36**. The key to unlock them has been lost. Engraved on the semicircular floor mosaic in front of the doors are nine glyphs—the same ones that appear on Jzadirune's gear doors (see Gear Doors for details). These are purely decorative and do not trigger any traps, magical or mundane.

Locked Iron Doors: 2 in. thick; Hardness 10; hp 60; Break DC 28; Open Lock DC 30.

J36. GREAT FACTORY (EL 3)

This enormous chamber has a ceiling that soars to a height of forty-five feet at its peak. Two great marble pillars support wooden balconies fifteen feet above the chamber's west and east wings. Two iron-wrought spiral staircases—located in the southwest and southeast corners—connect the balconies to the ground floor. The furnishings on the ground level suggest some sort of assembly area. Desks occupy much of the area, although a few boxes and crates fill various corners and nooks. An eight-foot-diameter wooden gear hangs from the ceiling at the north end of the chamber, suspended by a pair of great iron chains. A bright light burns in the hollow center of the huge gear, illuminating a large mosaic of interconnected gears painstakingly painted on the ceiling and walls of the room. The singular light casts many shadows throughout the chamber, and the faint sound of clattering gears resonates from somewhere not too far away.

The diagram below provides a cross-sectional view of this room, as viewed from the south.

A permanent *ghost sound* cast upon the room years ago invokes the sound of clattering gears, which doesn't travel far from this room. The great gear hanging from the ceiling is part of the chamber's décor, and the bright light burning in its center is a *continual flame* spell.

The gnomes of Jzadirune constructed most of their wondrous magic items here. Characters who search the desks and boxes find some of the raw materials needed to create such items, although the gnomes took the most valuable components with them when they left.

The dark creepers received an unpleasant surprise when they first discovered the room, leading them to seal off the area with makeshift walls (see area **J39**).

Creature: Not long after the gnomes left, a grell took residence here. For years it fed on tiny rats and vermin. When the dark creepers arrived, the grell captured and devoured one of them. It currently lurks in the shadows above the eastern balcony, waiting for other succulent morsels to blunder into its lair. A grell is a disgusting creature that looks like a massive pallid floating brain. Ten long tentacles dangle below its body, giving it the look of a massive jellyfish. A jellyfish with a big toothy beak.

Grell: hp 32; see Appendix 4.

Tactics: The grell drops down on prey from above or tries to grab a creature ascending the eastern spiral staircase. It uses its Flyby Attack feat to move both before and after taking an attack action; thus it can swoop down on an unsuspecting character, make a single tentacle attack, and hoist its grappled prey into the air.

Treasure: The bones and shredded black robe of the grell's dark creeper victim lie atop the eastern mezzanine amid the dusty desks. Amid the remains, PCs can find the following items: a Small masterwork dagger with a poison compartment holding one application of monstrous spider venom, a *potion of cure light wounds*, a *potion of invisibility*, and a black pouch containing 80 cp and 32 sp. Since the potions were not created in Jzadirune, they are not afflicted with the Vanishing.

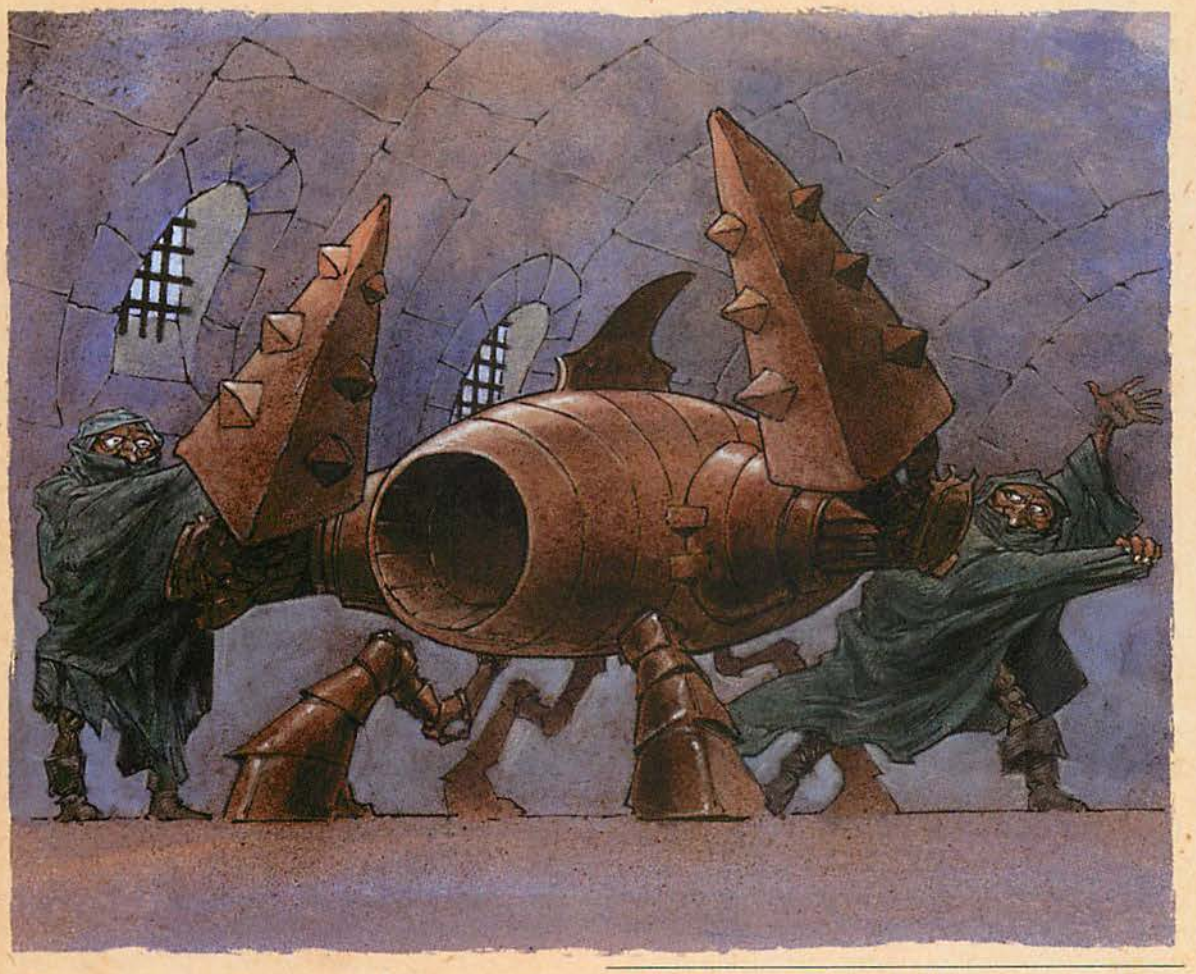
J37. CLASSROOM

Small desks have been arranged in three concentric semicircles facing the south wall of this fifteen-foot-high octagonal room. Chalkboards set in stone frames along the three southernmost walls bear faded equations and formulas. A web-shrouded lectern stands in front of them, facing the desks. A pile of stony rubble spills from the mouth of a five-foot-diameter tunnel that breaches the north wall.

Jzadirune's scholars used this classroom to teach young gnomes various subjects, including mathematics and the magical arts. The dark creepers searched this room and found no valuables; PCs who search the chamber also find nothing of value, although a successful DC 20 Search check reveals a secret door in the west wall that leads to the library (area **J29**).

J38. WEAVER'S WORKSHOP

A large wooden loom, its skeletal frame draped with cobwebs, stands in the middle of this fifteen-foot-high octagonal room. Three smaller spinning wheels surround it, also covered with cobweb sheets. An iron coat rack stands next to one of them.



The gnomes of Jzadirune wove clothing here. The three spinning wheels radiate moderate transmutation magic when a *detect magic* spell is cast.

Programmed *mage hand* spells cause the spinning wheels to spin and clatter whenever someone enters the room. The effect is harmless, but it may discourage interlopers from investigating the east wall, which conceals a secret door (leading to area **J42**).

J39. MAKESHIFT WALL

To confine the grell in area **J36**, the dark creepers erected these makeshift walls using wooden planks (taken from smashed benches in area **J51**). Iron spikes hammered into the walls and iron braces bolted to the floor keep the wall from tipping over. There is no easy way past the makeshift wall except to smash through. Fortunately for the dark creepers, the grell's tentacles don't deal enough damage to overcome the wall's hardness, and the creature isn't quite strong enough to simply knock it down.

Makeshift Wooden Wall: 2 in. thick; Hardness 5; hp 30; Break DC 22.

J40. WOODSHOP (EL 3)

If the PCs approach this room quietly in darkness, without raising alarms in area **J44** or **J45**, allow them to make a Move Silently check to surprise the dark creeper located here. The check is opposed by the dark creeper's Listen check.

Half-made kegs, tables, bookshelves, and chests clutter this dark room. Most of these unfinished works have been pushed against the outer walls, making room for four cots in the middle of the floor. Two workbenches covered with carpenter's tools flank the north exit. A few rat bones litter the floor.

Characters searching the room for treasure can, with a successful DC 12 Search check, find a small trove stashed in a lidless chest (see Treasure, below).

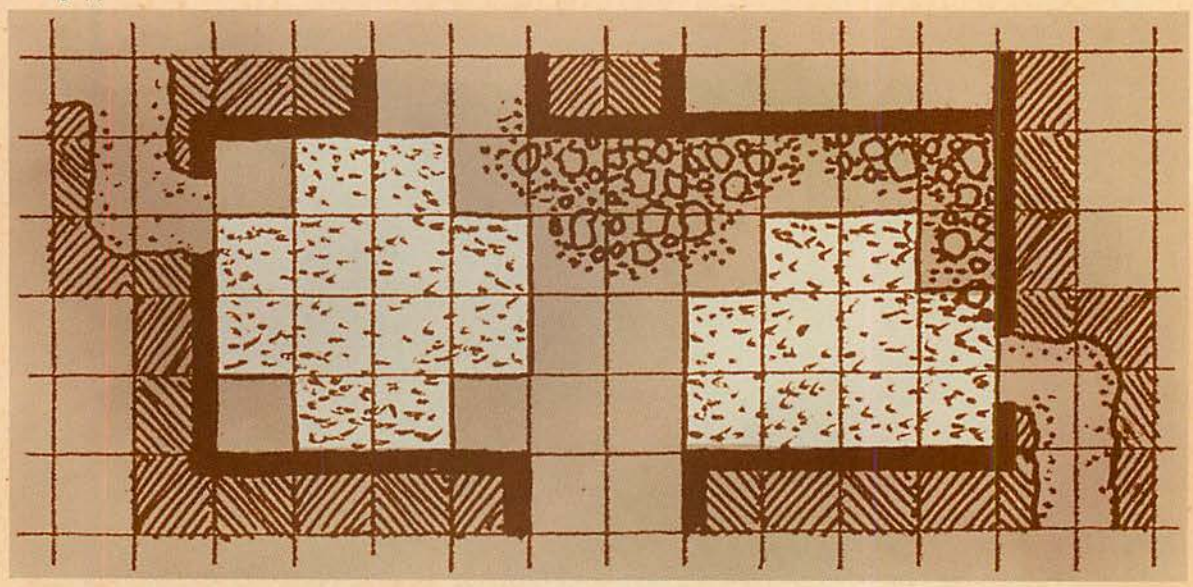
Creatures: A dark creeper lairs here. If the PCs use silence and darkness to conceal their approach, they might catch the dark creeper napping in its cot. Otherwise, the dark creeper is hiding among the half-finished furnishings.

Dark creepers despise light and attack PCs carrying torches or lanterns above all others. Some even spend a move action extinguishing torches and lanterns dropped in the heat of battle. Dark creepers are stunted humanoids with pallid skin, large noses, and sinister eyes beneath hairy brows. Instead of feet, they have small, soft black hooves.

Dark Creeper: hp 5; see Appendix 4.

Tactics: If alerted to the PCs' approach, the dark creeper tries to gain a sneak attack, using its shadow cloak ability to gain partial concealment as it strikes.

Treasure: The dark creepers keep some miscellaneous valuables in a lidless chest in this room. In addition to



some worthless trinkets, PCs find the following: four engraved copper cups worth 2 gp each, a silver cloak pin set with a bloodstone worth 45 gp, three zircons worth 50 gp each, a gold comb set with citrines worth 160 gp, 26 sp, and 130 cp.

J41. FORGE

Four soot-blackened hearths are set into the corners of the room. In front of each rests an anvil and bellows, and implements of the smithing trade hang from nearby hooks. Two barrels of scummy water, once used to cool searing hot iron weapons and implements, stand against the north wall. Two more flank the south exit, and a pair of empty weapon racks stands in the middle of the room.

Characters who sift the bottom of the barrel marked "X" on the map and succeed at a DC 20 Search check find a 5-inch-long steel rod with a rune engraved on one end and notches carved into the other. This key unlocks all of the "I" gear doors in Jzadirune.

A secret door in the west wall leads to area **J42**.

J42. SECRET HALLWAY (EL 2)

This dust-choked T-shaped corridor leads to area **J43**; it contains a Trap.

Trap: The 20-foot stretch of corridor north of the T-shaped intersection is trapped. The entire 20-foot-by-10-foot section of floor is one pressure plate. When 250 pounds of weight (or more) is applied to the pressure plate, spring-loaded spears extend and retract quickly from holes in the walls (at varying heights). The spears continue to extend and retract as long as the pressure plate remains depressed.

Any creature in the 20-foot-long section of hall when the trap activates is attacked by 1d4 spears. The holes in the walls are concealed by *illusory wall* spells, but they can be detected by touch.

The trap was designed so that gnomes (who are typically lighter than 250 pounds) could navigate the hallway without triggering it.

Spear Trap: CR 2; mechanical, location trigger; automatic reset; Atk +3 melee (1d6, 1d4 spears); Search DC 15; Disable Device DC 18.

J43. SECRET VAULT

The gnomes stored many of their most precious magic items and weapons in this musty, 10-foot-high chamber. However, these items were either sold or destroyed before the gnomes vacated Jzadirune.

J44. HIDDEN FOES (EL 4)

A five-foot-wide, rough-hewn circular tunnel breaches the west wall of this chamber. Another punches through the east wall. The rubble left by the excavation of these tunnels has been pushed into the northeast part of the room, leaving the rest of this chamber clear. A few rat bones litter the floor, but otherwise the room appears empty.

Two permanent 10-foot-radius *invisibility spheres* conceal this chamber's occupants. The areas of invisibility are fixed and encompass the 5-foot squares shown in the diagram. The *invisibility spheres*, created by some miscast magic years ago, mask only living creatures and items in their possession.

Creatures: A damaged pulverizer automaton stands in the southeast corner of the room, hidden by an *invisibility sphere*. It is not alone; a dark creeper stands guard near the northwest corner, inside the other *invisibility sphere*.

Damaged Pulverizer Automaton: hp 47 (currently 28); see Appendix 4.

Dark Creeper: hp 5; see Appendix 4.

Tactics: If it sees intruders approaching from the south passage or southeast tunnel, the dark creeper barks a command to the pulverizer in Gnome ("Taral yan zyggek!" or "Attack all intruders!") and withdraws

to area J45 to warn its master. Although it cannot speak Gnome fluently, the dark creeper knows the command words from hearing the dark stalker speak them.

If the PCs enter the room through the northwest tunnel, the dark creeper stealthily moves across the room and uses the southeast passage to reach area J52. It prefers not to fight the PCs without the presence of other creepers.

Anyone who speaks Gnome can command the pulverizer to cease its attacks. The automaton can also be commanded to perform other simple tasks. If it is given conflicting instructions in the same round, it takes no actions on its next turn.

Treasure: If the pulverizer is destroyed, PCs can search the sundered remains. A successful DC 24 Search check reveals a deep blue spinel "heart" worth 500 gp and a 5-inch-long steel rod with a rune engraved on one end and notches carved into the other. The rod is a key that unlocks all "A" gear doors in Jzadirune.

J45. GLASSBLOWING WORKSHOP (EL 4)

This dark room has exits in the north and southwest walls, plus gear doors set into the south and east walls. A stone oven fills the northwest corner. Iron tongs hang from a hook nearby. Bottles, flasks, and pottery clutter shelves and tables haphazardly pushed against the bare walls. Shards of broken glass and ceramic cover the floor such that you think it would be difficult to cross the room without stepping on them.

Creature: Little evidence suggests that something lives here, but the leader of the dark ones calls this room his lair. This dark stalker, Yuathyb, requires very little sleep, and he suspects that his dark creeper followers secretly conspire to betray him. For this reason, he prefers to remain alone until the skulks have need of his minions' services.

Yuathyb has pushed a heavily laden table in front of the secret door to area J47. Moving the table takes a move action, as does opening the secret door.

Yuathyb recently contracted the Vanishing and has acquired a ghostlike translucence. His current state gives him a +4 circumstance bonus on Hide checks, which he uses to full advantage.

Yuathyb, Dark Stalker: hp 16; see Appendix 4.

Tactics: The dark stalker prefers not to fight if outnumbered. Yuathyb tries to hide, attacking only if the PCs find the secret door to area J47. In that case, he tries to deal sneak attack damage with a poisoned weapon and holds his ground until reinforcements arrive from area J40 or J44 (at which point he can deal sneak attack damage to flanked opponents). If reduced to 8 hit points or fewer, he uses *fog cloud* to escape, tumbling past foes if necessary to reach an exit.

Development: If the PCs can speak Gnome or Undercommon, they can negotiate with the wily dark stalker. His initial attitude toward the PCs is hostile, but if the PCs open the encounter with words he'll listen to what they have to say for a minute before he attacks. If someone makes a DC 20 Diplomacy check, he becomes unfriendly. He won't attack the PCs, and grants them 1d4 more rounds of talking before he gets fed up and attacks. A DC 25 (or DC 15 if he's unfriendly and not hostile) check is enough to make him indifferent, which is as friendly as he'll get. Friendly enough, in any event, that he's willing to talk to the PCs—he has no great loyalty to Kazmojen.

Yuathyb does not know how he contracted the Vanishing but is anxious to find a cure. If the heroes can offer one, the dark stalker listens to them. If the PCs can cure him, he can also be persuaded not to interfere in the PCs' plans, provided they deal no (further) harm to him or his dark creeper followers.

Yuathyb has no loyalty to the skulks, although they have helped him in the past. He doesn't actively oppose the skulks but can provide information on their approximate numbers and whereabouts. He also knows where they're keeping Keygan's rat familiar (in area J60) and how to get there without opening any of the gear doors.

If the PCs have nothing to offer, Yuathyb might agree to leave them alone or reveal the way to Kazmojen's fortress (the elevator in area J63) if they promise to kill the grell in area J36 and return with proof of the creature's death (all 10 of its tentacles, for instance).

Ad-hoc XP Award: If the PCs successfully negotiate with Yuathyb, award them experience as if they'd defeated the dark stalker in combat.

J46. JEWELER'S WORKSHOP

This chamber contains a stout desk and matching chair. The table bears a set of copper scales and a jar of dried-up ink with a feather quill sticking out of it. Shelves line the far wall. Everything is caked in dust.

Jzadirune's resident jeweler used to work in this small office. Everything of value was removed except for a 5-inch-long steel rod tucked in the back of a small drawer built into the tabletop. A successful DC 15 Search check locates the rod, which has a small rune engraved on one end and notches worked into the other. The rod is a key that opens all "R" gear doors in Jzadirune.

J47. SECRET TREASURY

This chamber is completely free of dust and cobwebs. Green marble tiles cover the floor, and the walls are painted with bright murals depicting a forest of enormous fungi. A gnome-sized suit of full-plate armor, complete with visor and helm, stands in the middle of the room. Next to it sits a two-foot-tall clay urn filled with treasure.

Magic spells keep this chamber clean. The "fungi forest" mural cleverly conceals the secret doors in the east and south walls, making them harder to locate (DC 22 Search).

The clay urn contains all of the treasure the dark creepers have amassed since coming to Jzadirune, including items pilfered from the city above (see Treasure, below).

Treasure: The suit of armor is filled head-to-toe with coins—4,500 sp, to be exact. If moved, the armor falls apart, causing the coins to spill onto the floor. The armor is ordinary gnome-sized full plate.

The clay urn has handles so that it can be carried easily. It holds the following items, 622 cp, 958 sp, 75 gp, three silver rings worth 5 gp each, a tiny silver locket worth 10 gp containing ashes (a pinch of someone's cremated remains), two plain gold rings worth 25 gp each, a platinum bracelet worth 175 gp engraved with the following words in Dwarven: "To Sondor, my deepest love. Lorthan," a set of masterwork thieves' tools, a *potion of delay poison*, and a *wand of sleep* (8 charges).

J48. SECRET VAULT (EL 3)

Standing against the south wall of this room is a gnome-sized suit of banded mail clutching a finely forged gnome hooked hammer. At its feet rests an iron chest secured with an iron padlock.

The dark stalker and dark creepers did not locate this vault during their search of the dungeon.

The iron chest is held to the floor with *sovereign glue*. (The *universal solvent* in area **J31** can be used to dissolve the glue.) The chest is locked (Open Lock DC 25) and holds the Treasure.

Creature: The armor is actually an animated suit known as a dread guard that attacks if it or the chest is disturbed.

Dread Guard: hp 37; see Appendix 4.

Treasure: A *permanent image* makes the chest appear empty. An investigation of the chest grants a DC 19 Will save to disbelieve this effect. Items removed from the chest become visible instantly. They include the following: three shrew statuettes carved from smoky quartz worth 75 gp each, a mother-of-pearl-inlaid board with matching wooden game pieces (gnome kings, queens, knights, and other figures) worth 250 gp for the set, and a tiny silk pouch containing three white pearls worth 100 gp each.

J49. SECRET VAULT

The dark stalker and dark creepers did not locate this vault during their search of the dungeon.

All three chests in this room are unlocked but have *Leomund's trap* spells cast on them to make them appear trapped. The chests are all empty—looted by the gnomes before they left Jzadirune. Strange glyphs on their lids might once have warded them, but any magic was long since discharged.

J50. FALSE FOREST

This section of the dungeon looks like a small forest. Four great trees sprout from the grassy floor, their leafy crowns fanning out twenty feet overhead to form a roof of deciduous leaves through which rays of sunshine filter. Brambles and thickets form impassible walls, although bramble archways set into the north and south walls lead to dark passages and chambers beyond. Two mounds of stony rubble flank a hole in the middle of the east wall that appears to be a natural tunnel through the underbrush. A gentle zephyr causes leaves to rustle, and birds chirp merrily in the boughs above.

An effect similar to a permanent *hallucinatory terrain* spell has transformed pillars into trees, walls into brambles, and floor tiles into patches of grass. The room looks, smells, sounds, and feels like a forest. The two piles of rubble against the east wall (left behind from the dark creepers' excavations) appeared later and were not incorporated into the illusion.

The secret door in the northwest corner is well hidden by the illusion; locating it from this side requires a DC 25 Search check.

The dark creepers despise this area and generally avoid it whenever possible.

J51. DINING HALL

Once a dining hall, this chamber contains only the wreckage of once-fine furniture. Two iron chandeliers dangle from the ceiling, while a third—its rope severed—lies amid the debris on the floor.

Characters can hear the sounds of chirping birds and rustling leaves through the northern archway (see area **J50** for details). Nothing of value remains here.

J52. KITCHEN (EL 5)

Two stone hearths fill the east corners of this kitchen. Stone shelves, barren and dusty, fill the wall space between the blackened fireplaces. In the middle of the room stand two stout tables covered in old webs, while against the south wall rests a dilapidated wooden cabinet on the verge of collapsing under its own weight. Debris from a roughly hewn, five-foot-diameter tunnel in the north wall spills into the room. Near the opening are heaped the shriveled husks of three enormous spiders.

The dark creepers fought and killed three monstrous spiders in this room. They then drained the arachnids of their virulent venom.

Searching the cabinet might have dire consequences, as detailed under Trap, below. Hidden amid the clay dishware in the cabinet is a 5-inch-long steel rod with a rune engraved on one end and notches carved into the other. This key unlocks all "Z" gear doors in Jzadirune.

Creatures: Two dark creepers lurk here. If the dark creeper from area **J44** fled to this room, it is also hiding in the room (behind a dead spider or under a table).

Encountered in pairs or threes, dark creepers are extremely dangerous due to their sneak attack and shadow cloak abilities.

Dark Creepers (2): hp 5 each; see Appendix 4.

Tactics: The dark creepers hide in the fireplaces until an enemy approaches; they then move to flank, hoping to deal sneak attack damage. They rely on their shadow cloak ability to avoid taking damage and use their Tumble skill to avoid taking attacks of opportunity while maneuvering in tight spaces.

Trap: The large cabinet holds varnished clay dishware left behind by the gnomes of Jzadirune. Opening or otherwise tampering with the cabinet causes it to topple. Anyone standing in front of the cabinet can make a DC 10 Reflex save to take half damage.

Collapsing Cabinet: CR 1; mechanical; touch trigger; no reset; 2d6 points of damage; DC 10 Reflex save halves; Search DC 13; Disable Device DC 16.

J53. PANTRY

The gnomes removed most of the edibles from the pantry before vacating the complex. However, a few scattered jars and baskets of dried herbs remain amid some casks of vinegar, loaves of dry bread, and mold.

J54. SLEEPING QUARTERS

This room is identical to area **J8**.

J55. LATRINE

Thin wooden walls separate six curtained stalls that stretch across the northern wall, although none of the dividers prevent the stench of this chamber from filling the air. A fish-shaped fresco carved into the back wall once served as a waterspout to a rectangular pool of now-brackish water, although water no longer pours from its gaping mouth.

Waste from the latrine stalls drops into a 30-foot-square cistern located 20 feet below this chamber. The foul stench rises from this cistern. The southern basin contains fouled water and nothing more.

J56. SKULK TREASURY

Bits of rubble and debris cover the floor of this cold room. Patches of green mold grow on the damp walls and cling to the ceiling. Lying in a heap in the southeast corner are the gutted, putrefied remains of an eight-foot-long green worm with multiple legs and eight slimy tentacles sprouting from its bulbous head. A heap of armor and shields lies nearby.

Several months ago, the skulks and dark creepers killed a carrion crawler that had found its way into the complex. The skulks gutted it and stashed their treasure (including plunder from the city above) inside its moldering remains (see Treasure below).

Treasure: The skulks have hidden two unlocked wooden coffers inside the dead carrion crawler. Only by searching the remains can the characters spot the coffers within.

Coffer #1 contains 140 cp, 225 sp, and 178 gp.

Coffer #2 contains the following items: a small silver-framed mirror worth 15 gp, a healer's kit, a silver dragon pendant with moonstone eyes worth 125 gp, and a plugged copper scroll tube (worth 1 gp) containing a scroll of *mirror image* and a scroll of *mage armor*, both infected with the Vanishing.

The armor consists of ten Small chain shirts and ten bucklers.

Development: If the skulks from area **J17** withdrew to this chamber, they hide in the shadows on either side of the hole in the floor. They try to flank and kill a single foe, fleeing via the secret door if faced with equal or superior numbers (but avoiding area **J58**).

If one of the skulks is captured or cornered here, it pleads for its life in Undercommon. If the PCs can communicate with it, a successful Bluff, Diplomacy, or Intimidate check convinces the skulk to reveal where Keygan's familiar is kept (in area **J60**) and the safest way to get there (via area **J59**).

J57. FLOOR TRAP (EL 1)

The secret door leading to area **J56** is locked from this side. The door can be opened with a successful DC 20 Open Lock check or by turning a nearby torch sconce a quarter-turn counterclockwise; finding the correct mechanism to open the door requires a successful DC 22 Search check.

Turning the torch sconce clockwise or unlocking the secret door without properly turning the sconce triggers the Trap.

Trap: If the secret door is opened improperly, the 10-foot-square section of floor in front of the door tilts up toward the west. Anyone standing on the floor must succeed at a DC 15 Reflex save or tumble down the western staircase toward area **J17**, landing prone. A successful DC 15 Tumble check halves the damage and allows the PC to land on his or her feet.

Tilt-and-Tumble Trap: CR 1; mechanical; touch trigger; automatic reset; 2d6 points of damage; DC 15 Reflex save negates; DC 15 Tumble check for half damage; Search DC 23; Disable Device DC 25.

J58. BATHROOM (EL 2)

Turquoise ceramic tiles adorn the walls and floor of this room, in the middle of which rests a large octagonal bathing pool with a two-foot-tall raised lip. Pristine water pours into the pool from a smiling stone face carved into an overhanging wall. The water exits through a small circular drain at the east end of the pool. A narrow stone ledge encircles the ceiling, which is hidden behind a tangled mass of thick webs. Suspended from the webs by ropy filaments is a co-

cooned humanoid corpse that dangles five feet above the pool's glassy surface.

See the diagram below for a cross-sectional view of this room. The skulks avoid this area.

The water pouring from the stone face and filling the pool is a *permanent image* that looks, sounds, and feels real. PCs can fill their waterskins with the water, but the water mysteriously disappears once it leaves the room. Disbelieving the illusion requires a successful DC 15 Will save; the DM can reduce the DC of the save if the PCs have good cause to suspect the water is illusory.

The creature suspended in the cocoon is a dead skulk. Its bodily fluids have been completely drained by the monsters that lurk in the webs and in the pool (see Creatures, below). The webs suspending the dead skulk have 6 hit points or require a DC 26 Strength check to break. The skulk still carries some Treasure.

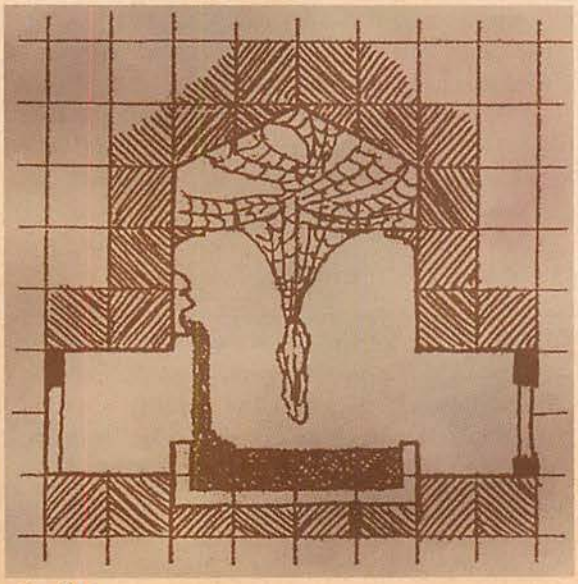
Creatures: A Medium monstrous spider lurks in the empty pool, hidden by the watery illusion. It lacks the intelligence to perceive the illusory water and leaps out of the empty pool to attack the first creature that comes within 5 feet.

Two "baby" spiders (actually Small monstrous spiders) prowl among the webs that stretch across the ceiling. They descend to attack only if the skulk's husk or the webs are disturbed. They use fine web filaments to drop on prey from above, gaining a +1 bonus on their melee attacks for higher ground.

Medium Monstrous Spider: hp 11; *Monster Manual* 289.

Small Monstrous Spiders (2): hp 4 each; *Monster Manual* 289.

Treasure: Characters searching the shriveled skulk corpse find a pouch containing two tourmalines worth 100 gp each and a *clear spindle ioun stone* infected with the Vanishing.



Area J58

J59. SECRET CLOSET

This hidden closet connects to area **J60** by a secret door. A 5-foot-diameter hole in the floor drops about 7 feet and turns sharply west.

Creature: A lone skulk lurks here, waiting to strike anyone who comes up through the hole in the floor. The skulk wears a tiny silver key around its neck that opens the cage in area **J60**.

Skulk: hp 9; see Appendix 4.

Tactics: The skulk gains a +1 bonus on its attack roll when attacking a foe coming up from below, since it has the higher ground advantage. It fights until reduced to 4 hit points or fewer, at which point it drops its rapier and pleads for its life in Undercommon.

Development: If the skulk surrenders, it offers to trade its life for the safe return of Keygan's rat familiar (from area **J60**). It even shows PCs the way to Kazmojen's stronghold (using the secret door in area **J2** to reach area **J63**).

J60. CAGED RAT (EL 4)

Empty weapon racks line the walls of this dusty, 10-foot-high room. In the middle of the floor rests a large wooden chest with a flat lid and iron hinges. Atop the chest sits a small silver cage holding a rat with a white star-shaped splotch of fur on its tiny forehead. It grips the bars and squeaks excitedly.

Creatures: The gnomes cleared all the weapons from this room before vacating Jzadirune. Starbrow, Keygan's anxious rat familiar, is locked in the silver cage; unlocking it requires the proper key (found in area **J59**), a *knock* spell, or a successful DC 20 Open Lock check.

The chest under the cage is actually a friendly mimic lulled into helping the skulks. Characters who succeed at a DC 22 Spot check notice some slight imperfections in the "chest." The mimic reveals itself if anyone approaches within 5 feet of it or the silver cage. A toothy mouth splits the front of the chest as it speaks to them in Undercommon (see Development, below).

Mimic: hp 52; *Monster Manual* 186.

Starbrow, Keygan's rat familiar: hp 8; see Appendix 4.

Tactics: The skulks keep the mimic fed on a diet of rats and spiders. It loathes fighting Medium or larger creatures, although it defends itself without hesitation if attacked.

Unlike most mimics, this creature speaks only Undercommon. Nevertheless, it tries to negotiate with the PCs, allowing them to take the rat familiar in exchange for a week's worth of tasty rations or 200 gp worth of treasure. If the PCs can adjust its initial attitude of indifferent to friendly, it settles for half these amounts.

Development: The PCs can pry some useful information from the mimic at no cost. It knows the following:

- The skulks raid the surface for slaves and hand them off to some hobgoblins, who then take the slaves to a place called the Malachite Fortress.

- The skulks work with a gang of "dark ones" led by a dark stalker named Yuathyb. They all work for an Underdark slaver named Kazmojen. Kazmojen pays them a share of the proceeds from his sales, and the skulks and dark ones keep whatever they pilfer from the city above.
- Another mimic used to lair here as well, but a pair of hobgoblins working for Kazmojen "offered it a job" guarding treasure in Kazmojen's stronghold. The hobgoblins showed up several weeks ago and haven't returned since. The other mimic is a particularly mean and greedy thug, and this mimic wasn't sad to see him go.

Ad-hoc XP Award: If the PCs successfully negotiate with the mimic, award them experience as if they'd defeated it in combat.

J61. SECRET SLIME ROOM (EL 2)

This dusty hall has secret doors set in the north and east walls (leading to areas **J2** and **J63**, respectively).

Trap: Opening the secret door in the east wall triggers a 10-foot-square, 10-foot-deep pit trap that fills the eastern half of the hall. The floor of the pit contains a 2-inch-thick layer of black, acidic slime that deals 1d6 points of acid damage per round of contact. Raising the secret lever in area **J62** closes the pit doors and locks them; pulling the lever down again resets the trap.

The skulks safely bypass the trap by knocking three times on the secret door; this alerts the hobgoblins in area **J63**, one of whom raises the lever in area **J62**.

Slime Pit (10 feet deep): CR 2; mechanical; location trigger, manual reset; DC 20 Reflex save avoids; 10 ft. deep (1d6, fall); acidic slime (1d6 acid per round); multiple targets (first target in each of two adjacent 5-ft. squares); Search DC 19; Disable Device DC 19.

Development: Opening the secret door alerts the hobgoblin guards in area **J63**, who hurl their javelins at PCs in the pit or on the other side of the pit, gaining cover from the secret door.

J62. SLIME PIT LEVER

A trail of bootprints through the dust leads from the secret door to a wooden lever jutting from an iron plate bolted to the north wall. When the lever is in the "up" position, the doors to the pit trap in area **J61** are locked shut. When the lever is in the "down" position, the pit trap is active. The room is otherwise empty.

J63. ELEVATOR SHAFT (EL 1)

The floor of this octagonal room is actually a large wooden platform supported by taut iron chains looped over eight enormous pulleys bolted to the fifteen-foot-high ceiling. One end of each chain is fastened to a corner of the platform, while the other end drops through a hole in the platform, connected to something far below. Set into the northeast wall is an iron panel with an iron lever jutting from it.

The wooden floor of this room is actually an elevator that descends 200 feet to area **M1** of the Malachite Fortress. When the iron lever is pulled down, the chains and pulleys lower the floor at a speed of 20 feet per round. Thus, it takes the elevator 10 rounds (1 minute) to reach area **M1**.

Creatures: Standing guard on the elevator are two hobgoblins dressed in banded mail and carrying longswords, javelins, and small steel shields.

Hobgoblins (2): hp 6 each; *Monster Manual* 153.

Treasure: Each hobgoblin carries a pouch of 50 sp and 50 cp.

KAZMOJEN'S BAZAAR

Two hundred feet below the gnomish enclave of Jzadirune lies the Malachite Fortress, a stronghold built by dwarves and gnomes to guard against incursions from the Underdark. When the gnomes abandoned Jzadirune, they left the dwarves to maintain the Malachite Fortress. Their leader, a righteous dwarven defender named Zenith Splintershield, foolishly decided to wage a campaign against the Underdark not long after. He took his best fighting dwarves into the bowels of the world and vanished (see Chapter Four for details on Zenith's fate).

The half-troll half-dwarf Kazmojen came to the Malachite Fortress one year ago with a small force of hobgoblins, convinced the few remaining defenders to surrender, and incarcerated them. He has spent the past year building his slave trade business, fortifying his hold on the fortress, and cultivating a loyal clientele. In that time, his activities caught the attention of Vervil Ashmantle, a prominent businessman from Kingfisher Hollow who just happens to control the underground slave trade in the region. Vervil has been in contact with Kazmojen, and has recently recruited him into his unsavory organization. With Vervil's support, Kazmojen's bazaar could become a major source of slave trade in the region.

Vervil also informed his close friend Vhalantru about Kazmojen's presence under Cauldron. The beholder paid Kazmojen a visit in his beholder form to put a scare into him. He allows the half-troll to continue his raids in exchange for information on various "movers and shakers" in the Underdark. Kazmojen receives this information from many of his clients, among them a vile durzagon (half-fiend duergar) named Pyllrak Shyraat.

PCs who come to the Malachite Fortress must deal with Kazmojen, his hobgoblin allies, and the durzagon Pyllrak (who is interested in buying the four children plucked from the Lantern Street Orphanage). They also appear at an auspicious time, as Lord Vhalantru himself appears to claim the young boy Terrem, whose destiny lies elsewhere.

THE MALACHITE FORTRESS

The walls, floors, and ceilings inside the Malachite Fortress are carved from black stone and smoothly polished.

The vertical surfaces cannot be climbed without the aid of climbing gear or magic (such as a *spider climb* spell).

Unless stated otherwise, all rooms and corridors in the Malachite Fortress are unlit. Most corridors have empty sconces along the walls (for torches), while most rooms have iron-wrought cages dangling from ceiling chains (for trapping fire beetles).

Unless stated otherwise, the ceilings in most areas are 20 feet high and vaulted.

Doors: The Malachite Fortress features three kinds of doors: strong wooden single doors with iron hinges and reinforcements, heavy iron doors with iron hinges, and stone secret doors. Assume doors are unlocked unless specified otherwise.

Secret doors blend almost seamlessly with the surrounding stonework, are soundproof, and require a successful DC 20 Search check to locate. Secret doors have hidden hinges on one side or the other and are spring-loaded so that they close automatically unless held or wedged open.

Because the secret doors are soundproof, any Listen checks made to hear things on the other side of a closed secret door are treated as if impeded by walls rather than doors.

Strong Wooden Door: 2 in. thick; Hardness 5; hp 20; Break DC 25; Open Lock DC 30.

Iron Door: 2 in. thick; Hardness 10; hp 60; Break DC 28; Open Lock DC 32.

Stone Secret Door: 4 in. thick; Hardness 8; hp 60; Break DC 28.

CAPTURED!

The PCs face many perils as they explore the Malachite Fortress, particularly if they raise a general alarm and bring all of the fortress's defenses down on them at once. At some point during the adventure, the PCs might be captured or knocked unconscious. In such a case, the campaign shouldn't come to a sudden end.

Once Kazmojen learns of the PCs, he views them more as commodities than threats. He would rather incarcerate them and sell them as slaves than simply kill and loot them. Captured PCs are dragged to area **M18** and imprisoned in individual cells, where they are held for days or weeks before an interested Underdark client arrives in search of new slaves. The PCs might even receive a visit from Vervil Ashmantle, come to appraise their potential. The PCs' mundane gear is stashed in area **M19**, while their more valuable treasures (anything worth more than 100 gp) are added to Kazmojen's trove in area **M11**.

Food and water are passed to the PCs through the barred windows in their cell doors, but occasionally their jailers might haul one of them to the torture chamber (area **M22**) for an hour of pointless interrogation. If the PCs are unable to mount their own escape, days or weeks might drift by before fortune smiles on them. The half-elves Fario and Fellian might come to their rescue, or the PCs might be sold in chains to Pyllrak Shyraat, Vervil Ashmantle, a derro wizard, a barghest, or some other visiting flunky of a greater Underdark power. Once free of the Malachite Fortress, they might find freedom easier to achieve.

M1. ELEVATOR SHAFT

The walls turn from bare gray stone to polished black malachite as the elevator creaks and groans. After a minute-long descent down the dark shaft, the wooden floor shudders as it comes to rest, and the chains stop rattling. Above, the shaft rises into darkness. The only exit from this room appears to be an iron-reinforced wooden door set into one wall.

A secret door in the south wall leads to area **M2**. PCs can ascend the shaft using the elevator (by pulling the lever in area **M2**). They can also clamber up the chains and use the nearby walls to brace their ascent (DC 5 Climb check) or ascend using magic.

M2. SECRET LEVER

This is a cold, dark room. An iron lever juts from an iron plate bolted to the eastern wall.

When the elevator is down, so is the lever. Shifting the lever into the "up" position causes loud grinding noises as iron winches hidden deep behind the walls prepare to hoist the wooden elevator floor in area **M1** back to the top of the shaft.

Two rounds after the lever is pulled up, the wooden floor in area **M1** begins ascending the elevator shaft, reaching area **J63** in 10 rounds. If the lever is pulled down, the floor starts to descend again.

M3. STONY GREETINGS (EL 2)

The ceiling of this hall rises to an apex twenty feet overhead. The floor, walls, and vaulted ceiling are composed of smooth black stone that almost seems to absorb light. Two cylindrical iron cages, each one five feet tall and two feet wide, dangle from the ceiling by iron chains. The base of each cage hangs five feet above the floor. A strange sculpture stands in the middle of the hall between the two cages: a five-foot tall column of roughly hewn gray stone covered with sharp protrusions. Four crystal-tipped appendages jut from the stony mass, each one pointing in a different direction.

The "strange sculpture" is the Creature. The empty iron cages were designed to hold giant fire beetles, which in turn provided the hall with illumination. Both cages are currently empty.

Creature: A stone spike guards this hall. One of the stranger creatures brought to the fortress by Kazmojen, this elemental resembles a roughly sculpted column of stone with four crystal-tipped arms. It usually waits until intruders pass beyond the first iron cage before attacking. It does not attack if one or both hobgoblins

from area **J63** accompany the party, instead passing itself off as an inanimate piece of décor.

Stone Spike: hp 25; see Appendix 4.

Development: Sounds of combat in this area attract the attention of the fortress's major-domo, Xukasus (see area **M4** for details). Xukasus enters the hall 1 round after battle erupts.

M4. MAJOR-DOMO'S QUARTERS (EL 3)

A putrid stench fills this room. The rectangular chamber beyond is splattered wall-to-wall with filth, bile, bones, and other disgusting remains. Although the room contains no furnishings per se, some of the older refuse has hardened into a crude chair, and an iron chest rests half-buried in a small mound of dung in the southeast corner.

Creature: Among Kazmojen's loyal servitors is the repulsive Xukasus, an unusually smart otyugh polymorphed long ago into an unusually gangly ogre by a *polymorph any object* trap. Xukasus lairs here, devouring his garbage, gathering waste from other areas of the fortress to replenish his larder, and haphazardly guarding the locked iron chest at the back of the room (see Treasure below).

The vile Xukasus enjoys his new form. In combat, he wields an enormous filth-encrusted falchion, even though he doesn't have proficiency with the weapon. Like all otyughs, Xukasus speaks Common, greeting intruders with the cheery catchphrase, "More carrion for my larder! Very nice."

Xukasus retains his ogre form if slain. A successful *dispel magic* against caster level 18th returns Xukasus to his true form.

Xukasus, male ogre (polymorphed otyugh): hp 42; see Appendix 4.

Treasure: The iron chest is locked (Open Lock DC 30) and contains the following treasure: 5,990 cp, 2,248 sp, two deep green spinels worth 100 gp each, and a dried fungi flask containing a *potion of cure moderate wounds*.

Ad-hoc XP Award: An otyugh is usually a CR 4 monster. However, Xukasus lost his otyugh special attacks. In his ogre form, he is considered a CR 3 creature, since he has no proficiency with his weapon and can't use one of his feats.

M5. SECRET CORRIDOR

This unlit, L-shaped corridor connects areas **M3** and **M28**. The hall enables fortress guards to move quickly between different areas of the stronghold.

M6. ZENITH'S HALL (EL 4)

The ceiling in this square chamber rises to an apex thirty feet overhead. Great pairs of iron doors are set into opposite-facing walls, although only the northwest doors are sealed with a heavy iron bar. Each corner of the room holds a two-foot-tall stone brazier carved in the likeness of an ovoid creature with three stubby legs, three eyes, and three spindly arms spaced equidistantly around its pebbly body. Smoke issues from a gaping mouth atop the creature's "head." A dark, pungent haze fills the room. A nine-foot-tall gray stone statue of a dwarven warrior stands before the southeast set of iron doors, facing northeast. The dwarf stares blankly forward, two glistening black gems embedded in his eyes, a spiked helmet resting atop his formidable brow. His armor bears graven glyphs, and a shield is slung over his back. His stony gauntlets rest on the handle of a stone greataxe etched with fiery patterns. The head of the weapon is planted firmly on the floor. Draped over the statue is a mass of iron chains ending in nasty barbs, spikes, hooks, and blades. Some of them are coiled around the statue's arms and legs to keep them from sliding off.

The stone braziers are carved to resemble xorns. The coals that burn in them are sprinkled with dried subterranean plants that exude a horrible stench when burned.

The statue depicts Zenith Splintershield, the noble dwarven defender who once commanded the fortress garrison. The gems embedded in its eye sockets are held in place with *sovereign glue* and can be easily removed if *universal solvent* is applied; prying them loose without applying magical solvent damages them and reduces their value to one-tenth normal. The gems represent the only Treasure to be found here.

Creatures: Four hobgoblins stand guard here: two flanking each set of iron doors. Eyeholes in the northwest set of doors allow them and other creatures to peer into area **M7**. The iron bar that binds the northwest set of doors can be slid to one side with ease. The double doors are not otherwise locked.

The four hobgoblins keep their eyes and ears open for Underdark visitors, escorting Kazmojen's clients from area **M7** to prearranged quarters (areas **M23–M24**) or their master's slave bazaar (area **M34**). The hobgoblins here attack any intruders who are not accompanied by a hobgoblin escort.

The mass of chains draped over the statue is an animated construct given to Kazmojen by Vervil Ashmantle as a gift. The animated mass of chains stirs only if it or the statue is disturbed, or if Kazmojen himself commands it to attack. It moves by shambling across the floor. These chains are treated as a Medium animated object with Hardness 10 and the constrict special attack.

Hobgoblins (2): hp 6 each; *Monster Manual* 153.

Mass of Chains, Medium animated object: hp 31, *Monster Manual* 13.

Treasure: The two black sapphires set into the statue's eye sockets are worth 1,000 gp apiece intact, or 100 gp apiece if damaged.

Development: The southeast doors are designed to allow sound to pass through them; the guards in area **M21** hear sounds of combat emanating from this room

and alert Kazmojen in area **M34**, but otherwise remain at their posts.

M7. ARCHED STONE BRIDGE

A stone bridge arches across a chasm. Thirty feet below lies a pool of still black water.

The stone bridge is secure and enclosed on each side by a 2-foot-high stone railing. Anyone who falls from the bridge lands in a 70-foot-deep pool of icy water. Mineral deposits have turned the water black, but the real danger comes from the water's cold temperature; see "Water Dangers" in the *Dungeon Master's Guide*, page 85, for drowning and hypothermia rules, if they become necessary.

M8. TO THE UNDERDARK

A wide tunnel at the back of this dark, cold cavern slopes down into darkness. A small forest of stalagmites sprouts from the uneven floor, but the cavern otherwise appears empty.

The tunnel leads to the vast network of caverns known as the Underdark. Underdark denizens such as Pyllrak Shyraat (see **M34**) travel this tunnel whenever they visit the Malachite Fortress to secure new slaves. If the PCs insist on exploring this region of the Underdark, consult Chapter Four for some pointers and sample encounters.

M9. GUARD BARRACKS (EL 2)

A hellish glow fills this room, emanating from a two-foot-long beetle imprisoned in an iron-wrought cage suspended from the ceiling. Glands above the beetle's eyes shed the light, illuminating the sparse furnishings of this rectangular chamber. Four malachite slabs, each one covered with a pallet of greenish-black moss, jut from the walls. A wooden table stands in the middle of the room, surrounded by four chairs. The table bears four empty clay flagons and an iron cask.

This simply furnished chamber is occupied. The moss-covered slabs serve as beds for the guards stationed here.

Creatures: Four hobgoblins lair here. Two are awake and seated at the table, drinking mead from the iron cask. The other two are asleep on their beds, snoring loudly. The caged fire beetle presents no threat unless it is released, in which case it attacks a random target.

- **Hobgoblins (2)**: hp 6 each; *Monster Manual* 153.
- **Giant Fire Beetle**: hp 4; *Monster Manual* 285.

Tactics: At the first sign of trouble, the alert guards grab their weapons and wake their sleeping comrades. The awakened guards spend another round gathering their gear and "shaking out the cobwebs" from having imbibed too much bad mead. The hobgoblins flank foes as they can.

M10. KAZMOJEN'S QUARTERS

This room is horridly appointed. The walls are carved with tall, narrow niches piled high with skulls, and the skinned hides of various monsters hang on the bare walls between them. A large chair made of monster skins stretched over a framework of bones stands in the middle of the room. A draconic skull surmounts the chair, empty eye sockets starting menacingly. Behind the chair, near the far wall, a bed of soft moss and fungi sprouts from a large heap of carrion. A few bones lie scattered around the bed.

Kazmojen sleeps on the bed of moss, fungi, and carrion and sits in the chair during private meetings with Lord Vhalantru, Vervil Ashmantle, and various sordid Underdark clients.

Kazmojen collects and displays the skulls and hides of past victims. The walls are adorned with the skinned hides of a basilisk, digester, displacer beast, ettercap, medusa, and salamander. The skulls are mostly goblinoid but also include a few gnome, dwarf, duergar, dark elf, grimlock, and troglodyte skulls. A hydra skull rests atop his "throne of skins and bones."

Characters searching the room find scattered bones, animal droppings, and long quills on the floor—all left by Kazmojen's pet howler.

Kazmojen keeps no valuables here. A secret door in the south wall leads to his hidden treasury (area **M11**).

M11. SECRET VAULT (EL 4)

This thirty-foot-square room has no other visible exits. In the middle of the chamber rest three padlocked chests, three casks brimming with coins, a small stone bowl filled with gems, a heap of armor, and two large shields used as trays to hold more coins. Various other trinkets and trophies add to the trove, including a gem-encrusted horn, an ornate walking cane, and an engraved golden gong hanging from an intricately sculpted wooden frame. An iron lever juts from an iron plate in the south wall. The lever is current in the "down" position.

The three chests are locked (Open Lock DC 25), and Kazmojen carries the keys. Closer inspection of the chests reveals that one is iron-bound and has handles on its sides for easy transport. Another is blackened by fire and has a toothy, crescent-shaped grin painted on its front in dried blood. The third has copper fittings, a dagger-shaped symbol carved into its lid, and a hidden Trap.

The iron lever in the south wall controls the pit trap in area **M12**. When the lever is raised, the pit locks shut and is safe to cross.

Creature: A mimic has assumed the form of the gold gong and its wooden frame. Kazmojen's allies brought

the mimic from Jzadirune (see area **J60**). It attacks anyone other than Kazmojen who approaches within 5 feet of the hoard.

Mimic: hp 52; *Monster Manual* 186.

Trap: The chest with the dagger carved into its lid radiates moderate evocation magic under the scrutiny of a *detect magic* spell. Anyone who opens the lid releases a spectral dagger that attacks the opener for 7 rounds before disappearing. The dagger cannot switch targets and otherwise behaves exactly as a *spiritual weapon* cast by a 7th-level cleric with 14 Wisdom.

Spectral Dagger Trap: CR 2; magic device; touch trigger; repair reset; Atk +5 melee (1d4+2, spiritual dagger); lasts 7 rounds; Search DC 22; Disable Device DC 20.

Treasure: The iron-bound chest contains four large iron keys shaped like black demons resting on a bed of 4,225 sp. The keys do not open any doors in the Malachite Fortress but might prove useful elsewhere in the Underdark.

The scorched chest with the bloody smile contains 450 gp, a silver crescent moon pendant on a silver chain (worth 30 gp), and two *potions of darkvision*, all buried under a layer of worthless black iron coins.

The trapped chest contains hundreds of worthless glass beads. However, the beads can be poured over a 20-foot-square area, requiring any creature that moves across them at normal speed or faster to succeed at a Reflex save (DC 12) or fall prone.

Other treasures found here include the following: an oak cask containing 2,219 cp, a fungal cask containing 696 sp and 1,451 cp, an iron cask containing 522 gp and 900 sp, a masterwork chain shirt a suit of masterwork studded leather armor, a composite shortbow (+2 Strength), a silvered two-bladed sword, a darkwood shield holding 180 sp, a large steel shield holding 362 cp, an engraved stone bowl containing 19 gems (six chunks of blue quartz worth 10 gp each, four carnelians worth 50 gp each, four peridots worth 75 gp each, two white pearls worth 100 gp each, a pink pearl worth 250 gp, and two aquamarines worth 500 gp each), an ivory horn set with bloodstones worth 450 gp, and an ash walking cane with a silver, angel-shaped handle worth 55 gp which unscrews to reveal a tiny compartment containing a *potion of cure moderate wounds* in a vial. The cane belongs to Coryston Pike (see area **M21**).

Development: A DC 22 search of the room finds a crumpled piece of paper behind the scorched chest. This is a recent letter (no more than a week old) to Kazmojen from Vervil Ashmantle asking him in not so gentle words to ease off on the snatching of slaves-to-be from Cauldron. Vervil warns Kazmojen that it's easy to become "too successful" at this job, which usually results in the unpleasant involvement of jealous competitors or offended do-gooders. The letter closes by stating bluntly that if Kazmojen doesn't slow down on the abductions, he'll attract the wrong sort of attention. Kazmojen is mentioned by name many times, but Vervil never mentions his own name. He signed the letter with nothing more than a stamp of a flying kingfisher clutching a scroll in its beak. A successful DC 20 Knowledge (local) check identifies this stamp as the mark of a messenger service based in Kingfisher Hollow called "Kingfisher Sendings."

Vervil Ashmantle is scheduled to confront the PCs in Chapter Eight. For now, his involvement in the problems facing Cauldron amounts to little more than a red herring.

M12. TRAPPED ROOM (EL 2)

Located between two secret doors, this room contains a Trap.

Trap: The floor of this room is actually the lid of a twenty-foot-deep spiked pit. It opens when the first character sets foot in the room. The pit's lid can be locked shut by raising the lever in area **M11**. The pit trap can be closed and the trap reset by raising and lowering the lever.

Spiked Pit (20 feet deep): CR 2; mechanical; location trigger; manual reset; DC 20 Reflex save avoids; 20 ft. deep (2d6, fall); multiple targets (first target in each of two adjacent 5-ft. squares); pit spikes (Atk +10 melee, 1d4 spikes per target for 1d4+2 each); Search DC 18; Disable Device DC 15.

M13. ARCHED BRIDGE

An arched stone bridge connects to a ten-foot-wide causeway that spans one wall of a great cavern. Fused with the rough-hewn cavern walls are smooth walls of dull black stone, some with doors and windows set into them. Two nine-foot-tall statues carved from white marble stand in alcoves on each side of a reinforced wooden door set deep into the west wall. The statues depict a male and female dwarf clad in armor, each of which brandishes an urgrosh. The cavern plunges thirty feet below the level of the causeway, ending in a pool of still, black water.

The arched bridge leads to a door that opens into area **M34**. Opposite this door is another portal opening into area **M14**. The dwarf statues, though fearsome in stature and well crafted, are unremarkable.

Anyone who falls from the bridge or causeway lands in a 40-foot-deep pool of icy water. See "Water Dangers" on page 304 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide* for drowning and hypothermia rules, if they become necessary.

Development: Loud noises in this cavern can be heard by the hobgoblin guards in areas **M9**, **M21**, and **M34**, who investigate the following round.

M14. AUTOMATON GUARD (EL 5)

Illusory walls separate this room into a 10-foot-wide corridor with two chambers to the north and south . The *illusory walls* are represented as dotted lines on the map. Although the walls appear solid and real, touching them reveals their insubstantial nature.

Characters who enter this room from the north or south find themselves in a 20-foot-by-30-foot room

bound by the *illusory walls*. They also see one of two automatons standing guard here (see Creatures, below).

The room contains no furnishings. Wooden levers protrude from iron panels bolted to the northwest and southwest walls. The levers are currently in the "up" position; pulling them down causes the stone blocks in area **M15** to seal off the western cellblocks (areas **M16** and **M17**).

Creatures: Two hammerer automatons guard this chamber. One stands by the north lever, while the other stands beside the south lever. A rust monster damaged both constructs several years ago, and no one has bothered to repair them. A hammerer is a roughly human-shaped construct. One of its two arms ends in a massive pincer, and the other in an even more massive hammer.

Hammerer Automatons (2): hp 36 (currently 24 and 19); see Appendix 4.

Tactics: If someone other than Kazmojen, a hobgoblin, or an ogre enters this room, the automatons have instructions to pull down the levers, sealing off the western cellblocks. Once the levers have been pulled, the automatons attack intruders, striking from behind the *illusory walls*.

A hammerer attempts to grapple the nearest foe with its pincer. If it succeeds, it smashes the trapped victim with its hammer on subsequent rounds until the victim is dead or goes limp, at which point it releases its prey and seeks out its next target. A grappled character can trick the automaton into releasing its hold by using a full-round action to "play dead." A successful Bluff check (opposed by the hammerer's Wisdom check) fools the hammerer into releasing its hold on its next action and choosing a new target. The character playing dead falls prone at the start of the hammerer's turn.

Treasure: The "heart" of each automaton is actually a violet garnet worth 500 gp. Finding it requires a successful DC 24 Search check.

Ad-hoc XP Award: Hammerer automatons are normally CR 4 monsters. However, these ones are already damaged and should be treated as CR 3 creatures.

M15. SLIDING BLOCKS

The corridors leading to the cellblocks (areas **M16** and **M17**) are 10 feet high. Recessed into the walls are two great blocks of malachite on stone rollers. The blocks fit the corridor perfectly, allowing only the slightest gap between them and the surrounding floor, walls, and ceiling.

When the levers in area **M14** are pulled, the blocks roll 10 feet to the east, effectively sealing off the cellblocks and trapping the prisoners within. Keeping a block from rolling into place requires a successful DC 25 Strength check; if the check fails, any creature in the space to be occupied by the block is pushed back 10 feet automatically.

A rolled block must be physically pushed back into its niche; this requires a successful DC 25 Strength check. Moving the block is a lot harder from inside the sealed-off cellblock, requiring a DC 30 Strength check.

M16. EMPTY CELLBLOCK

This corridor stretches for nearly a hundred feet, ending at a blank wall. In the east and west walls are several six-foot-tall, two-foot-wide iron doors kept locked by iron bars. The iron doors are typical except for the six-inch-wide, three-inch-high barred windows set into them at dwarven eye level.

Each ten-foot-square cell contains an uncomfortable stone slab (actually a protrusion of the far wall), an iron chamber pot, a clay jug for holding water, and the occasional gnawed bone, chunk of dried bread, or piece of moldy cheese.

None of the cells is currently occupied.

M17. EMPTY CELLBLOCK

This cellblock is similar in configuration to area **M16**. No prisoners are currently kept here.

M18. CELLBLOCK

The layout of this corridor is identical to that in area **M16**. The difference here is that a successful DC 5 Listen check reveals faint whimpers from down the hall.

The cells are furnished similarly to the ones found in area **M16**. Attempting to unbar and open a cell door without attracting the attention of the guards in area **M20** requires a successful Move Silently check opposed by the guards' Listen checks.

Creatures: Four prisoners, all kidnapped townsfolk, are incarcerated in separate cells. They wear tattered and stained clothes, but any other possessions of possible value or use have been stored in area **M19**.

Krylscar Endercott (warrior 2, hp 14 [currently 5]), a 24-year-old male human, remains impertinent and contentious despite a terrific beating given to him by his jailers. Not surprisingly, the scruffy, ornery, and obnoxious loudmouth remains an unsold commodity.

Deven Myrzal (commoner 1; hp 3), an 18-year-old male human, has lost all hope of being rescued and has endured special torment at the hands of his jailers, who have vowed to eat him soon if no one buys him as a slave.

Irruth Mercadi (commoner 1; hp 4), a 36-year-old female human, trembles quietly in a dark corner of her cell, imagining the various horrors that await her.

Jasper Drundlesput (expert 2; hp 6), a 74-year-old gnome, mumbles quietly to himself most of the time. He has used a sharp stone to carve mathematical formulas into the walls of his cell, mostly to pass the idle time.

Tactics: Deven, Irruth, and Jasper are not much good in a fight, but Krylscar will swing a sword, a chair, or whatever else he can find to win his freedom. He rebukes authority and doesn't take orders well, however. Use the stats for a street thug (Appendix 4) if the PCs recruit Krylscar's aid in this manner.

Development: These prisoners know that they are not the only ones being held in the fortress. Four children were recently removed from their cells and taken to the auction chamber (area **M34**), and six

other slaves have been put to work in the forge (area **M27**). The prisoners know how to get to both rooms from this cellblock.

Ad-hoc XP Award: Award the party 100 XP for each prisoner returned to Cauldron alive and 50 XP for each slain prisoner they return to the town for proper burial.

M19. PRISONER GEAR

Two stone slabs jutting from the west wall of this room bear a number of common items, from articles of clothing to daggers.

Prisoners detained in the cellblocks are stripped of all belongings; unnecessary clothing and other mundane equipment is stored here. PCs searching the tables find several bundled outfits, as well as vests, cloaks, belts, slippers, and boots. The room also contains some equipment taken from captured Underdark denizens, who are more likely to carry weapons and armor than city-dwelling folk; see Treasure, below, for details.

Treasure: Among the worthless clothing and personal effects, PCs find the following gear: a Small suit of studded leather armor, a bloodstained chain shirt, a blood-encrusted short sword, two longswords, a leather bag of caltrops, a 30-foot length of hemp rope, three torches, an empty backpack, and any items worth 100 gp or less taken from captured PCs.

M20. JAILER'S QUARTERS (EL 1)

Moss pallets cover five malachite slabs that protrude from the walls of this rank chamber. A somewhat mistreated wooden table and four chairs stand in the middle of the room. A rack of javelins occupies the northeast corner.

The moss-covered slabs serve as beds for the chief jailer and his four subordinates—all hobgoblins. Only two hobgoblins are in the room at present, but the others are close by in area **M21**.

The weapon rack in the northeast corner holds 16 normal javelins.

Creatures: Two hobgoblins rest here. Although they are lying down, they are kept awake by the sounds of torture in area **M21**.

Hobgoblins (2): hp 6 each; *Monster Manual* 153.

Tactics: If anyone enters the room or if they hear loud noises in area **M13** or **M18**, the two hobgoblins grab their swords and shout for reinforcements. They like to flank foes in combat.

Development: Any disturbance in this room attracts the monsters in area **M21**, who appear one round later.

M21. TORTURE CHAMBER (EL 2)

Ghastly furnishings decorate this hellishly lit chamber. Glowing-hot coals fill the black belly of a six-foot-diameter iron oven that dominates the room. Three branding irons lie half-immersed in the coals. Two iron cages hang from the ceiling on either side of the oven: one holds an enormous beetle with red-glowing glands, and the other holds a pile of bones and skulls. The latter cage hangs by a narrow window that looks out into a dark cavern. Against the south wall, a haggard woman sits in a tall, iron-wrought chair, metal clamps around her wrists, ankles, and neck.

Unless a disturbance lures them elsewhere, Kazmojen's chief jailer and two other hobgoblins lurk here. They are killing time by torturing one of their master's prisoners—an attractive middle-aged woman named Coryston Pike. Her shackles are held shut with iron pins, which can be easily removed to set her free.

The caged giant fire beetle poses no threat as long as it remains confined. The other cage contains bones from many different creatures, placed here to add to the décor.

Creatures: The chief jailer is an ebon-skinned hobgoblin with one arm named Zarkad; he impressed Kazmojen in battle despite his apparent infirmity. The other two hobgoblins are typical of their kind.

Coryston Pike gave up adventuring 13 years ago after a marauding troll tore her comrades to pieces and nearly did the same to her. She walks with a limp—a painful reminder of her encounter with the troll. If the PCs set her free, she assists them any way she can.

Giant Fire Beetle: hp 4; *Monster Manual* 285.

Hobgoblins (2): hp 6 each; *Monster Manual* 153.

Zarkad, male hobgoblin warrior 2: hp 15; see Appendix 4

Coryston Pike, female human rogue 1/sorcerer 2: hp 17 (currently 5); see Appendix 4.

Ad-hoc XP Award: Award the party 150 XP if Coryston is returned to Cauldron alive, or 75 XP if the PCs return her dead body to the town for proper burial.

M22. MAIN HALL (EL 2+)

This hall is guarded and trapped. If the PCs enter the hall with a hobgoblin escort (either charmed or otherwise befriended), they are allowed to traverse the hall and knock on the doors leading to Kazmojen's auction chamber (area **M34**). If the PCs enter the hall unescorted, they are attacked.

Creatures: Two hobgoblin guards stand at the south end of the hall, on either side of the iron double doors leading to area **M34**. Their darkvision allows them to see the length of the hall.

Hobgoblins (2): hp 6 each; *Monster Manual* 153.

Tactics: If they spot the PCs, the hobgoblins bang on the double doors and shout "Croleks!" ("Intruders!"), alerting the occupants of areas **M26** and **M34**. They then begin shooting arrows at the intruders.

On the second round, four hobgoblins from area **M26** enter the hall, stopping just short of the pit traps (see Trap, below). The two archers ready actions to pull down the levers, opening the pit traps when they think they can catch the most intruders.

The hobgoblins try to catch as many PCs as possible in the pit traps, then begin hurling javelins down at them. Once the levers are pulled, the two archers resume shooting arrows at PCs still in the hall proper.

Trap: The hall contains two 10-foot-by-20-foot pit traps. The pits open when the levers by the southern doors are pulled; the west lever opens the northernmost pit, and the east lever opens the southernmost pit. Each pit is 10 feet deep and lined with spikes. The inside walls of the pit are polished smooth and cannot be climbed without climbing gear.

The pit lids can be closed and locked by pulling up the levers, although the lids are heavy and take a round to close.

Spiked Pits: CR 1; mechanical; manual trigger; manual reset; 20-ft. deep; 1d6 damage (fall); Atk +3 melee (1d4 points of piercing damage, 1d4 spikes); Reflex save (DC 15) avoids; Search DC 17; Disable Device DC 17.

Development: When they hear the call to arms, the two hobgoblins in area **M34** watch the battle unfold through tiny eyeholes in the southern set of double doors. If the hall guards are overwhelmed, the hobgoblins in area **M34** bar the double doors leading to that area and use a circuitous route (through areas **M29** and **M27**) to reach the interlopers. Kazmojen remains in area **M34**.

M23. GUEST QUARTERS

An iron cage dangles from the ceiling in one corner of this room. Trapped inside the cage, a large beetle with glowing glands bathes the room in an infernal light. The room contains a pair of simple beds and a table with two chairs.

These two rooms are set aside for Kazmojen's clients. Neither room is currently in use.

Creature: If released, the caged beetle attacks the nearest creature.

Giant Fire Beetle: hp 4; *Monster Manual* 285.

Ad-hoc XP Award: PCs do not receive experience for releasing and killing the giant fire beetle.

M24. GUEST QUARTERS

Kazmojen reserves this room for special guests (like Vervil Ashmantle), but it is currently not in use. An empty iron cage dangles from the ceiling in one corner. The room's furnishings include a large bed, its corner posts shaped like dwarven sentinels. Three cots, a table, and four chairs fill out the décor.

M25. PYLLRAK'S QUARTERS (EL 2)

An iron cage dangles from the ceiling in one corner of this rectangular chamber. Trapped inside are two enormous beetles that shed a hellish light. The room's furnishings include a large bed covered with animal hides, its corner posts shaped like dwarven sentinels. Next to the bed sits an iron trunk with claw-shaped feet and four chains bolted to its sides.

Pyllrak Shyraat, one of Kazmojen's best clients, claims this room as his own.

The iron chest is locked (Open Lock, DC 25) and contains Pyllrak's supplies and personal effects (see Treasure, below). The four chains attached to the chest end in shackles; Pyllrak has keys for the shackles, which he uses to bind his slaves during long treks through the Underdark.

Creatures: Two horrid blobs of flesh lurk here as well; these are Pyllrak's lemure thralls. They have orders to attack anyone other than Pyllrak who enters the room.

Lemures (2): hp 9 each; *Monster Manual* 48.

Treasure: Pyllrak's locked trunk contains the following items: an explorer's outfit, a bedroll, a jug of wine, a full waterskin, four spare sets of manacles, four small empty sacks, and two *potions of cure light wounds.*

M26. MAIN BARRACKS (EL 2)

The door to this room is slightly ajar, allowing the guards within to hear cries of alarm in area **M22**.

These barracks, which hold four rows of iron-wrought bunk beds, can accommodate 32 guards, although only half that many hobgoblins sleep here. The bunks are sized for dwarves, much to the hobgoblins' chagrin. Two empty iron cages hang from the ceiling.

Creatures: Four hobgoblins rest here, their weapons leaning against their bunks or lying on the floor nearby. They respond quickly to cries of alarm or sounds of battle in area **M22**.

Hobgoblins (4): hp 6 each; *Monster Manual* 153.

M27. FORGE (EL 3)

PCs who listen at the west or south door can hear the sounds of a roaring fire and hammers striking metal. The north secret door is soundproof.

This smithy is unpleasantly warm and filled with the stench of hot metal and ash. A blazing forge dominates the east wall, flanked by malachite caryatids depicting dwarven metalsmiths. In front of the hearth rests a ten-foot-wide, twenty-foot-long slab of gray stone surmounted by two black anvils. Barrels of water and metalsmithing tools rest nearby. Two cylindrical iron cages, each one five feet tall and two feet wide, dangle from the ceiling by iron chains. The bottoms of the cages hang five feet above the floor, and the giant fire beetles locked within them shed a lurid orange glow. Atop the slab, a female dwarf and three goblins hammer away at pair of newly forged javelins while two halflings sit on the floor nearby, linking together tiny chains for what will ultimately become a suit of armor. The dwarf and halflings have manacles binding their ankles.

Dwarves used the forge to craft armor and weapons, and Kazmojen has just begun using the room for a similar purpose. His slaves are not well trained in the art of metalsmithing, however, and progress has been slow.

One of the hobgoblins carries the key that unlocks the slaves' manacles. Otherwise, the manacles must be picked, smashed, or magically opened.

Creatures: The four hobgoblins who guard the slaves here are tired of watching them work. The loud hammering and roaring fire prevent them from hearing cries of alarm elsewhere in the fortress.

In addition, three goblins can be found here. They fight alongside the hobgoblins. If all of the hobgoblins are slain, the goblins surrender. They can be goaded into helping the PCs, but they remain untrustworthy and turn against the PCs to save their skins.

The dwarf and halflings are Cauldron townsfolk. They wear tattered clothes, but any other possessions of possible value or use have been stored in area **M19**.

Sondor Ironfold (commoner 1; hp 4), a 127-year-old female dwarf who came here with her husband who was sold off four weeks ago. She has felt alone ever since.

Jeneer Everdawn (commoner 1; hp 2; Appraise +4) is a 42-year-old male halfling and is delirious with fear. Red rings around his eyes attest to the nightmares that consume his sleep.

Maple (see below) is a 32-year-old female halfling who constantly looks for a way to escape captivity. Escape and self-preservation are always foremost in her mind. She also speaks Goblin, so she secretly knows what her captors are saying.

If released from their cages, the giant fire beetles attack nearby targets indiscriminately.

- **Hobgoblins (4):** hp 6 each; *Monster Manual* 153.
- **Goblins (3):** hp 5 each; *Monster Manual* 133.
- **Maple, female halfling rogue 1:** hp 5; see Appendix 4.
- **Giant Fire Beetle:** hp 4; *Monster Manual* 285.

Ad-hoc XP Award: Award the party 100 XP for each townsperson returned to Cauldron alive, or 50 XP for each dead NPC returned to the town for proper burial.

M28. SECRET ARMORY

Dozens of forged weapons are neatly arrayed on four wrought-iron weapon racks standing in the middle of this floor. Pushed against the east wall are two tables covered with suits of armor.

Treasure: Characters who search this room find the following equipment: two chain shirts, two suits of banded mail, a suit of half-plate, two spiked gauntlets, a masterwork greataxe, 15 shortspears, ten throwing axes, ten handaxes, five battleaxes, five heavy picks, and five warhammers.

M29. DINING HALL

The dining hall is currently unoccupied, although the hobgoblin garrison gathers here every 24 hours to partake in a feast served by their enslaved cooks (see area **M33**). They seat themselves on benches around the four long tables, which are littered with empty tankards, smashed pottery, and moldering scraps of food.

M30. COOK'S QUARTERS

The cooks (see area **M33**) sleep here and have neither valuables nor a place to hide them. The room holds only three cots atop a gray, stained rug.

M31. LARDER

Four slabs of meat hanging from hooked chains are the skinned, dried corpses of four Medium-size monsters: a giant lizard, a krenshar, a hunting bat, and a snake.

These remains will eventually be cooked and served up to Kazmojen and his garrison.

M32. PANTRY

Characters who search the jugs, flasks, pots, casks, and sacks on the stone shelves find various edible foodstuffs purchased from Underdark traders. Most of the food consists of edible fungi, mold, small vermin, and ale.

Treasure: Exotic Underdark spices and seasonings fill bottles along the shelves. Characters can collect 15 bottles of exotic spices worth 2 gp each.

M33. KITCHEN (EL 1)

This sparsely appointed kitchen has a stone hearth set into the southeast corner, a worktable in the middle of the room, and some shelves carved into the west wall. The table bears many pots and utensils, and clay dishware clutters the shelves.

The kitchen contains little of value but is usually occupied.

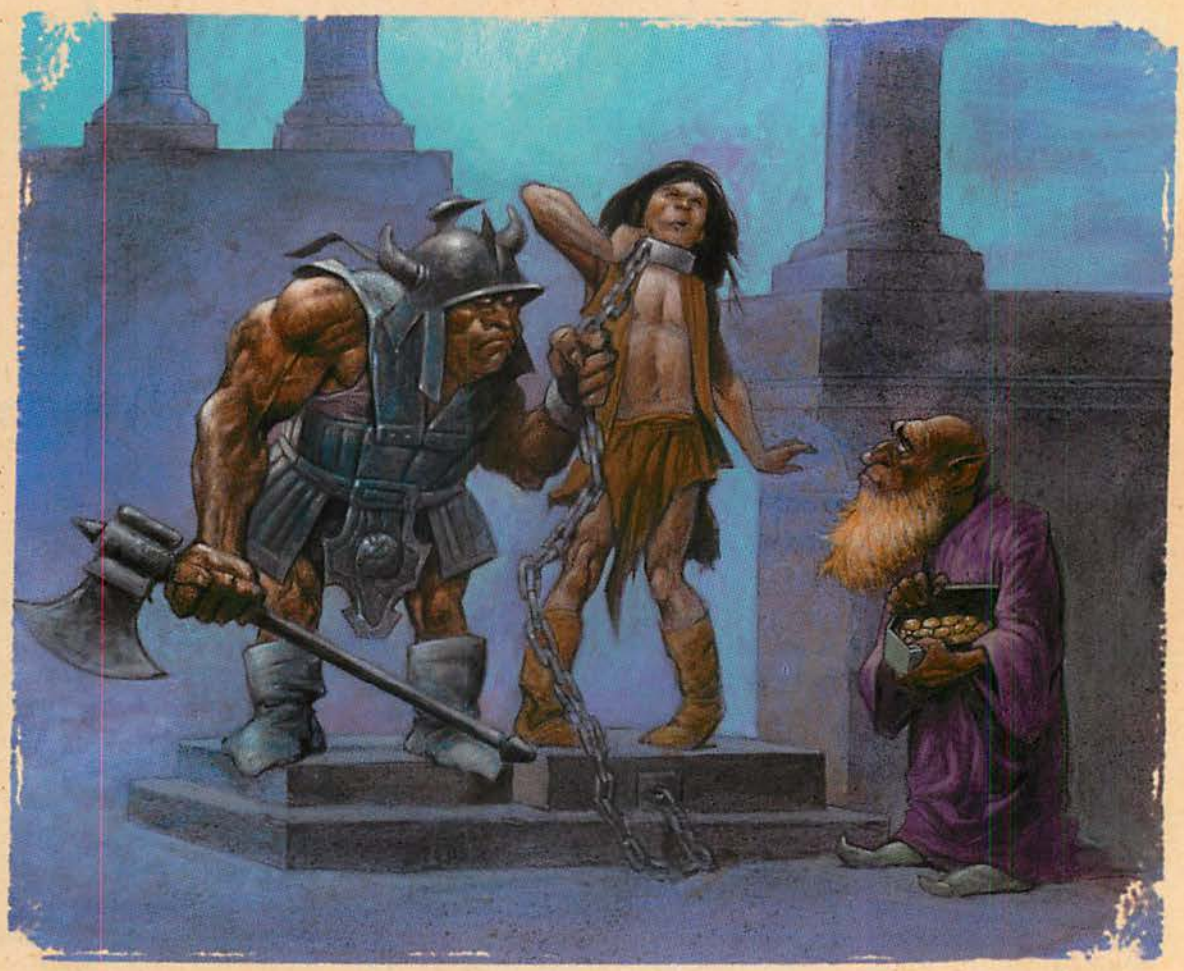
Creatures: **Gryffon Malek** (commoner 1; hp 4), a 33-year-old human barkeeper from Cauldron, serves as Kazmojen's head cook. He wormed his way into the position to avoid Kazmojen's slave auction. In exchange for his loyal service, he gets to sleep in a cot instead of a cell, and he gets to eat warm leftovers instead of cold ones. On the downside, he must work with two goblin assistants who can't tell the difference between a fork and a spoon.

- **Goblins (2):** hp 5 each; *Monster Manual* 133.

Tactics: The hobgoblins have instructed the two goblins to watch Gryffon and test the food he cooks to make sure it's not poisoned. The goblins are bullies who yield when injured or faced with certain death.

If presented with a no-fail plan of escape, Gryffon agrees to accompany the PCs. However, if his so-called "saviors" fail to present a viable plan of escape, Gryffon would rather stay here than risk Kazmojen's ire. Convincing him to accompany the PCs requires a successful Bluff, Diplomacy, or Intimidate check, with a +2 circumstance bonus if his friend Krylscar (see area **M18**) is present.

Ad-hoc XP Award: Award the party 100 XP if Gryffon is returned to Cauldron alive or 50 XP if the PCs return his dead body to the town for proper burial.



M34. SLAVE BAZAAR (EL 6)

Four malachite pillars support the twenty-foot-high ceiling of this grand chamber. Hanging from an iron brace mounted near the top of each pillar is a cylindrical iron cage containing a giant beetle that sheds an infernal orange light. The southern half of the chamber rises five feet, and a wide black staircase leads up to the raised floor. Just past the top of the stairs, an eight-foot-tall iron post erupts from the floor. Iron shackles hang from the top of the post. Five narrow windows carved into the south wall stand open to the darkness beyond.

The northern double doors leading to this room have small eyeholes set into them, allowing Kazmojen's hobgoblin guards to keep abreast of events in area **M22**. The shutters for the eyeholes can be closed and locked from the south side.

If the guards in area **M22** raise a general alarm, Kazmojen orders the two hobgoblin guards in this room to slide an iron bar across the northern double doors, sealing them. He then sends the guards through areas **M29** and **M27** to deal with the intruders (see area **M22** for details).

If the PCs reach this chamber with the aid of a charmed hobgoblin escort (and without raising a general alarm), they are allowed inside.

Creatures: A 5-foot-tall muscular figure clad in black plate armor stands on the staircase, his face hidden behind a visor. In one gauntlet, he clutches a wicked dwarven urgrosh. In the other, he grasps a chain ending in an iron ring clamped around a human boy's neck. This is Kazmojen, the Underdark slaver behind the abductions that have plagued Cauldron. Behind him, crouched at the top of the stairs, looms his howler pet.

Kazmojen was the product of a mad wizard's experiment at crossbreeding a male dwarf with a female troll. Lacking strong parental guidance as an ugly youth, Kazmojen quickly learned the three rules of survival in the Underdark: never buy food from a stranger, never take your eyes off your traveling companions, and never let anyone see you cry. His troll heritage also reinforced a general loathing of acid and fire.

Kazmojen found Prickles, his juvenile howler companion, on an Underdark expedition. He treats Prickles better than all of his other servants combined and becomes positively enraged if Prickles is slain.

Kazmojen is currently haggling with a creature that looks like an ash-skinned dwarf with sharply pointed ears and yellow eyes. He wears robes encrusted with mold, and he holds a bone box filled with coins. This is Pyllrak Shyraat, Kazmojen's latest customer.

Shackled to the slave posts in this room are three children: Deakon Stormshield, Evelyn Radavec, and Lucinda Aldreen. Kazmojen (the figure in black armor) carries the keys to their shackles. He holds the

shackles of the fourth prisoner—Terrem Kharatys—so that Pyllrak can inspect the boy more closely.

Terrem Kharatys bears a hidden mark on his left cheek: a Carcerian Sign. The birthmark is naturally invisible and can be seen using a *see invisibility* or *true seeing* spell. Pyllrak specifically requested child slaves because they are easier to subjugate and less likely to revolt. However, something about Terrem unnerves Pyllrak, although the durzagon can't put his finger on it. He has already negotiated a fair price for the other three children; the bone box he carries contains his offer.

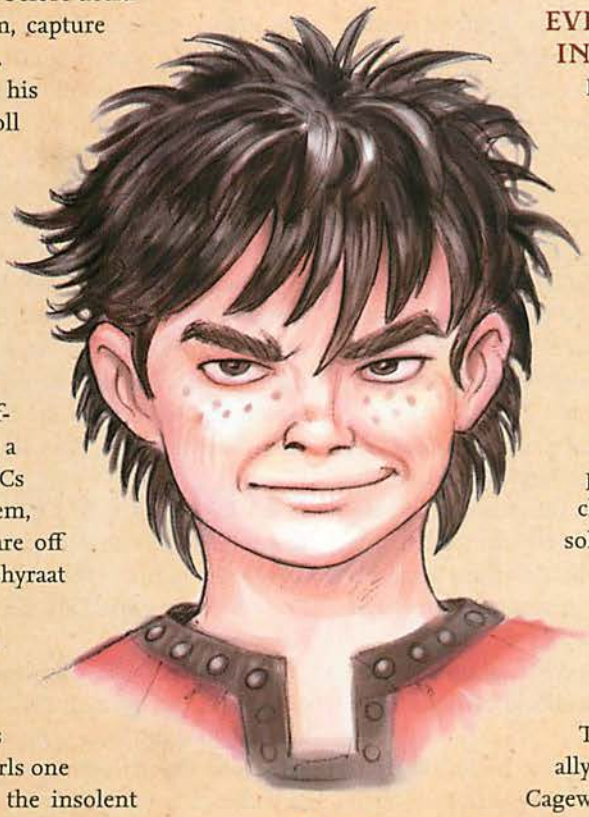
The other occupants of the room include a pair of hobgoblin sentries (who stand guard just inside the northern double doors), Pyllrak, and the four kidnapped children.

- **Kazmojen, male half-troll/half-dwarf fighter 3**: hp 39; see Appendix 4.
- **Prickles, juvenile howler**: hp 29; see Appendix 4.
- **Pyllrak Shyraat, male durzagon**: hp 32; see Appendix 4.
- **Hobgoblins (2)**: hp 6 each; *Monster Manual* 153.
- **Giant Fire Beetles (4)**: hp 4; *Monster Manual* 285.

Tactics: Kazmojen is busy pushing the sale of the fourth child, Terrem, and becomes quite annoyed if the PCs interrupt his "negotiations." Still, he's curious to know why the PCs have come to his stronghold and allows them to speak before deciding whether to kill them, capture them, or trade with them.

Although he inherited his evil ways from his troll mother, Kazmojen also inherited his father's lawful nature. He has agreed in principle to give Pyllrak three of the children (Deakon, Evelyn, and Lucinda) for 50 gp each and is currently offering to sell Terrem "at a discount" of 30 gp. The PCs are free to "bid" on Terrem, but the other children are off limits as long as Pyllrak Shyraat is alive.

If the PCs threaten Kazmojen or attempt to take the children by force, Kazmojen orders Prickles to attack and hurls one of his throwing axes at the insolent PCs. He then wades into melee with his urgrosh, leaving Terrem unguarded by the stairs. If disarmed, he uses his sharp teeth and clawed gauntlets to rend foes. Prickles's desperate howls are loud enough to be heard by every living hobgoblin in the fortress (but not Xukasus in area **M4**), and they quickly converge on the auction chamber.



Terrem

The round after combat erupts, Pyllrak turns *invisible* and tries to stay out of harm's way. If either Kazmojen or Prickles falls in battle, Pyllrak flees the room (using *darkness* to mask his exit, if necessary) and returns to his quarters (area **M25**) to gather his belongings. He then vacates the fortress with his lemure minions.

Unlike Kazmojen, Pyllrak has no taste for blood. If the PCs challenge him for ownership of the children, Pyllrak backs down, agreeing to their demands provided he receives "compensation" in the form of 450 gp worth of coins or magic items (which he expects the PCs—not Kazmojen—to pay). A successful DC 15 Diplomacy check persuades him to reduce the amount, although he won't go lower than 150 gp.

PCs can negotiate for Terrem. Pyllrak does not protest when Kazmojen offers to sell the boy for 100 gp. PCs can haggle over the price, although Kazmojen is already mad at them for "arriving unannounced." A successful DC 20 Diplomacy check persuades Kazmojen to drop his price by as much as half.

Ad-hoc XP Award: Award the party 100 XP per child returned safely to the Lantern Street Orphanage in Cauldron, or half that amount for each dead child brought back to the town for proper burial.

Do not award experience for Pyllrak Shyraat unless the PCs defeat him in combat.

EVENT 5: VHALANTRU'S INTERVENTION (EL 18)

Lord Vhalantru knows about Kazmojen's slave ring operation; the beholder receives monthly payments from the half-troll in order to ensure that the operation can continue. When Terrem was abducted, the beholder was annoyed but knew he could come to collect the child at any moment. Instead, he allowed Kazmojen to continue, planning on showing up to reclaim the child once Kazmojen sold him off. This way, the half-troll would have a chance to profit from the sale (and of course, a portion of that profit gets siphoned up to Vhalantru). Ever since Terrem's abduction, Vhalantru's ally Thifirane (herself one of the Cagewrights) has scryed upon Terrem regularly to make sure he's not being treated too poorly. Once the PCs manage to rescue him (or once his sale is complete), she quickly reports the development to Vhalantru. The two then prepare to gather up the Shackleborn boy.

Thifirane casts *greater invisibility* on herself and Vhalantru removed his *simulacrum suit* to assume his true

beholder form, and then Thifirane casts *greater teleport* to transport both of them to Terrem's side. The timing of this event is left to you, but you should strive to present their arrival at a dramatic moment, perhaps as the PCs are fighting their way out of the Malachite Fortress.

Creatures: The appearance of a beholder should shock the PCs. Even if none of the players realize what danger they're in and attack him, Vhalantru should have no problem handling them as detailed below in Tactics. Vhalantru keeps his central eye closed unless he needs it in an emergency—he doesn't want to risk catching Terrem in its area of effect and revealing his Shackleborn birthmark to the PCs.

If one or more PCs can see invisible creatures, they also see a lithe figure standing next to the beholder: a flying human woman wearing black robes and a tall black headdress, her face concealed behind a dark veil. In one hand she clutches a slender crystal wand, and around her neck she wears a pendant shaped like a tiny silver cage. This is, of course, Thifirane. She's careful to avoid being caught in Vhalantru's anti-magic eye, should he open it.

If Kazmojen lives and is present, Vhalantru addresses him directly. Otherwise, the beholder speaks to whomever seems to be in charge of the child for the moment.

"I have come for Terrem Kharatys. That boy should not have been taken from Cauldron. I intend to see that he is safely returned to his orphanage. You can keep the others. They are of no consequence. Come, Terrem—you will be safe with me."

Vhalantru, beholder: hp 157; see Appendix 4.

Thifirane Rhiavadi, female human transmuter 13: hp 51; see Appendix 4.

Tactics: Vhalantru can annihilate a low-level group of adventurers, but he has no interest in harming the PCs since he might have a use for them later (see Chapter Four). Once Terrem is handed over, Thifirane teleports them all back to Vhalantru's manor.

Vhalantru does not divulge his name, and does not feel compelled to answer any of the PCs' questions. If they do not surrender Terrem into his custody, the beholder takes the child by force. He can tell that the PCs are relative weaklings and abstains from using his lethal rays, instead using his charm person, fear, and sleep rays, hoping to preserve the PCs for later use.

Although she thinks it's a mistake to let the PCs live, Thifirane follows Vhalantru's lead and refrains from killing anyone.

Vhalantru offers to pay Kazmojen 50 pp for his trouble, at which point the veiled woman yields a pouch filled with coins. The beholder offers the same amount to the PCs if they're in control.

If Terrem dies before Vhalantru can claim him, the beholder tries to claim Terrem's body so that the boy can be raised from the dead.

Development: The PCs have little hope of "saving" Terrem from the beholder. The best they can hope for is to return Deakon, Evelyn, and Lucinda safely to the orphanage. Assuming they make it back to the orphanage, they discover that Terrem has been returned unharmed. The orphanage headmistress knows only that a mysterious woman wearing a dark veil escorted Terrem to the doorstep, then quickly departed. Terrem did not recognize the woman, nor did he think to ask her name.

If Kazmojen is still alive after Vhalantru departs, he refuses to impart any information about the beholder. Even if a PC successfully charms him, he declines to speak of the beholder, believing that Vhalantru would find out and kill him. In any case, he's always dealt with the beholder in his natural form, and knows him only by the name of Orbius—Kazmojen is unaware that "Orbius" and "Vhalantru" are the same creature. If Vhalantru arrived in the middle of a battle, Kazmojen is no friendlier toward the heroes after the beholder departs. He raises his urgrosh and says, "The deal is done! Now, you die."

BEHIND THE SCENES: LIFE'S BAZAAR

This first chapter should introduce the PCs to Cauldron and some of the key NPCs they'll be dealing with during the rest of the campaign: Jenya, the Striders of Fharlanghn, and Vhalantru the beholder. They shouldn't learn anything of the overall plot of the campaign yet, nor should they come out of the Malachite Fortress knowing anything bigger than it seems is afoot in the region.

Likewise, most of the various evil organizations featured in this campaign take no real notice of the PCs during this chapter. The exceptions, of course, are the Last Laugh (who at this point view the PCs as little more than lucky do-gooders) and Vhalantru (who sees promise in the group and begins to solidify his plans for them—plans that come to fruition in Chapter Four). Although Thifirane is a member of the Cagewrights, she doesn't think of the PCs as anything more than unimportant pawns at this stage and doesn't even mention their existence to her allies.

ENDING THE CHAPTER

To complete this chapter successfully, the heroes must survive the perils of the Malachite Fortress and return Deakon, Evelyn, and Lucinda to the Lantern Street Orphanage alive.

The church of St. Cuthbert pays the characters the promised 2,500 gp if all four orphans are returned unharmed. In addition, Jenya puts in a word with the office of the lord mayor, recommending that the PCs be granted an audience at some time in the near future to be commended for their deeds and offered future employment. The church reduces the award by 500 gp per child slain or not safely brought back to the orphanage. Jenya still recommends the PCs to the lord mayor, but not with the same feeling or commendations. She has no hard feelings toward the PCs; she just feels that an incomplete job is not what she promised to compensate.

CAULDRON

KEY

1 North Gate
2 East Gate
3 South Gate
4 West Gate
5 Town Hall
6 Town Guard Barracks
7 Church of St. Cuthbert
8 Maavu Warehouses
9 Slippery Eel Tavern
10 Cusp of Sunrise
11 Maavu's Main Warehouse
12 Tygot's Old Things
13 Maavu Imports
14 Drunken Morkoth Inn
15 Tipped Tankard Tavern
16 Garthûn Imports
17 Skie's Treasury
18 Lantern Street Orphanage
19 Coy Nixie
20 Lakeside Pavillion
21 Vanderboren Manor
22 Minuta's Board
23 Sure Foot Livery
24 Gurnezarn's Smithy
25 Temple of Lordly Might (Kord)
26 Lord Mayor's Residence
27 Weer's Elixirs
28 The Brass Trumpet
29 Church of Wee Jas
30 Ghelve's Locks
31 Orak's Bathhouse
32 Bluewater Academy
33 Church of Pelor
34 House Vhalantru
35 Westkey's Map Emporium
36 House Rhiavadi
37 Taskerhill Manor
38 Zanathor's Provisions
39 Lathenmire Manor
40 Entrance to Lava Tubes
41 Half-Orc Mercenary Camp

0 400 800 1200 1600 2000
Feet

WEST

CHAPTER TWO

CHAPTER TWO

DRAKTHAR'S WAY

BY CHRISTOPHER PERKINS

Not long after the PCs break up Kazmojen's slaver ring, a minor crime wave grips the town of Cauldron. Goblins seem to appear out of nowhere, robbing locals in dark alleys, breaking into warehouses, and defacing public property with lewd graffiti. The goblins seem most active at night, and although the local constabulary has killed a half dozen of the little menaces, the Office of the Lord Mayor fears that Cauldron might have a goblin infestation too great for the town guards to handle. Captain Terseon Skellerang decides to turn to a group of able adventurers to help root out the goblins' lair and exterminate the irksome pests.

Terseon Skellerang has also issued some threatening rhetoric toward the Last Laugh. Members of the Last Laugh have been advised to help the Town Guard locate the goblins' lair, lest Skellerang begin cracking down on all criminal activity in Cauldron. To this end, Jester Velior Thazo sends agents to locate the goblins' lair and share their findings with whoever might be interested in the information.

Unknown to the Office of the Lord Mayor, the local constabulary, and the Last Laugh thieves' guild, the goblins are merely shadows of a greater threat lurking beneath Cauldron. The goblins have lived in a set of caves below Cauldron for several decades, preying on other subterranean creatures like kobolds, skulks, and dark creepers. This changed when a bugbear named Drakthar took ownership of the complex that the goblins call home.

When the Cagewrights discovered that Drakthar's caves extend all the way from the slopes of the dormant volcano to the caldera itself, they reasoned that "Drakthar's Way" would be an excellent route for bringing materiel and personnel into Cauldron without having to smuggle them through the town gates and risk discovery. The Cagewrights toyed with the notion of eliminating Drakthar, taking over the complex, and running it on their own, but ultimately decided to use proxies, since the smuggling operation would have to interact directly with the city of Cauldron, and thus ran a much higher chance of being discovered by meddlers and adventurers. By using proxies, the Cagewrights wouldn't expose their organization if the smuggling operation were to fail.

As their proxy, they turned to Zarn Kyass, leader of a large band of mercenaries that has operated with some success in the region. Zarn hires his mercenaries out to local interests as small armies for hire, and has made a respectable profit for his troubles. The Cagewrights have anticipated a time when they'll need just such an army, and using Drakthar's Way to smuggle the mercenaries into place seemed to them like an excellent plan.

Local noble (and Cagewright apprentice) Thifirane Rhiavadi was put in charge of organizing the operation. She made contact with Zarn Kyass, who approached Drakthar at her bidding with an offer of alliance. Zarn was surprised to learn in his first face-to-face meeting with Drakthar that he was a vampire. Still, he was able to arrange an accord with him by telling him that he served a powerful secret society that had big plans for Cauldron, and that Drakthar's aid now would secure for him a position of power in the new order to come. Drakthar agreed, allowing three of Zarn's underlings to remain in "his" dungeon to aid in preparing the smuggling operation and to serve as primary points of contact in the future.

Drakthar is sly but impatient. He knows that the three humanoids he's allowed (for now) to live in his domain are part of something big, but he can't wait for this "new order" to come. He wants a piece of the action now, and although he's demanded to meet directly with a member of this group, so far none have deigned to grant him an audience. Drakthar is certain that some of this group's leaders live in Cauldron, so he's recently decided to demonstrate to them the true extent of his power and influence. Perhaps foolishly, he has instructed his goblin minions—the "Eyes of Drakthar"—to terrorize and pillage the town, hoping that if these mysterious leaders want the reckless raids to stop, they will recognize him as an equal and invite him into their inner circle.

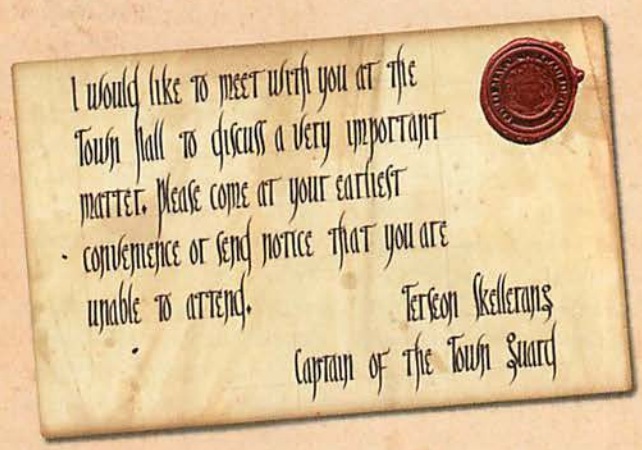
STARTING THE CHAPTER: DRAKTHAR'S WAY

Allow the PCs a chance to recover from their adventrues in Jzadirune and the Malachite Fortress; give them time to spend their money and get a little more settled in the city. They should be 3rd level when you start the chapter. If the PCs are finding that the challenges in Chapter One are too much for them, you can put that chapter on hold and start this one as well, although juggling two concurrent adventures can make things a bit complicated.

Lady Thifirane Rhiavadi doesn't want the authorities to learn about Drakthar's Way, particularly since Zarn Kyass is finally in the midst of smuggling a company of half-orc mercenaries into town through the passages. She's not ready to entertain the chaotic vampire's morningstar-rattling, but she has placed the entrance to Drakthar's Way under secret surveillance.

Hunting Goblins

This adventure assumes that the PCs return to Cauldron after surviving the events chronicled in "Life's Bazaar," where they'll find an invitation from Terseon Skellerang waiting for them at either the Church of St. Cuthbert or the PCs' primary residence. The letter bears the wax seal of the Office of the Lord Mayor.



Terseon Skellerang has a lot on his mind these days and gets right to the point. He tells the characters about the "possible goblin infestation" and asks for their help in locating the goblins' lair. If the PCs ask why he chose them for the assignment, Terseon mentions that he was speaking with Jenya Urikas, the cleric at the Church of St. Cuthbert, after services and she recommended them. Although he expects that the PCs want to help, he offers to pay 5 gp for every goblin ear they bring him. (The trophies, though morbid, demonstrate to the lord mayor that something is being done about the goblin threat.)

In all likelihood, the characters suspect that goblins are only part of the problem. Terseon encourages them to act on what they learn, but keep him informed. As long as their investigations don't damage the town's property, he doesn't care how they get the job done.

Captain Skellerang can provide the following additional information:

- The goblins appear at night, and mostly on cloudy, overcast, or foggy nights. They tend to rove in gangs of three to six.
- Most of the goblins are armed with short swords and light crossbows.
- Goblins have been sighted all over town. There doesn't seem to be a pattern to suggest when or where they'll strike next.
- The goblins have broken into a couple warehouses, robbed some folk, and vandalized buildings with graffiti. However, they haven't killed anyone... yet.
- The graffiti, presumably written in Goblin, was never translated. Terseon dismisses it as "meaningless vandalism."
- Town guards have cornered and killed six goblins in the past week, yet the robberies, break-ins, and vandalism continue.

In "Life's Bazaar," the PCs overcame a band of skulks and dark creepers infesting Jzadirune. They might find it curious that goblins have now started rearing their ugly heads. Captain Skellerang doesn't rule out the possibility that the two might be related, but he points out that the dormant volcano upon which Cauldron is built contains vast networks of tunnels and caves, many of which have undoubtedly become havens for monsters. He also points out that the "ease" with which the PCs handled the skulks and dark creepers makes them doubly qualified to deal with the goblin threat.

It's okay for the PCs to spend a few days to a week looking into the goblin matter. Captain Skellerang accepts that they need time to rest, recuperate, and spend their hard-won treasure from their recent underground forays. Hunting down the goblins is not urgent, given the petty nature of their crimes.

Using the Star of Justice

Characters might want to speak with Jenya Urikas, acting high cleric of the Church of St. Cuthbert. She doesn't know any more about the goblin infestation than Captain Skellerang. However, she has access to an item that benefited the PCs once before: the *Star of Justice*. Assuming it's been a week since the last time the mace was used, Jenya is willing to use it again to help the characters. The response Jenya receives from the *divination* spell depends on the question asked:

Where is the goblins' lair? "Ask the red-eyed dwarf, and he'll lie."

What do the goblins want? "To play like rats, steal coins, and please their master."

Whom do the goblins serve? "Drakthar the Bloodmonger."

No amount of in-town investigation reveals anything about Drakthar the Bloodmonger. However, a successful DC 20 Gather Information or Knowledge (local) check reveals that the "red-eyed dwarf" is likely Orak Stonehaven, a retired dwarf adventurer who lost his right eye several years back and wears an eye patch with a red gem sewn into it (a growing fashion amongst his clan). Success also reveals that Orak runs a modest bathhouse on Lava Avenue. With a follow-up DC 20 Gather Information check, PCs learn that Orak, a one-time regular at the Tipped Tankard, stopped frequenting the tavern over a month ago and pretty much keeps to himself these days.

SEARCHING IN THE TOWN

Characters can check the local taverns, temples, and hospices for information about the goblins. They can learn the names of places and people attacked by the goblins in the past week, but they won't gain any meaningful information beyond what Captain Skellerang has already told them.

Goblin Graffiti: Drakthar doesn't realize that his goblin thralls have taken their compulsive scribbling up into the town. Most of the goblin graffiti was written in chalk and has been washed away by the rain or cleaned up by the city guard. However, a few scant samples of the goblins' handiwork remain. With a DC 15 Gather Information check, characters locate 1d4 places where the goblin graffiti remains. The graffiti looks like a mess of weird signs and scribbles, but anyone who understands Goblin can translate them and gain subtle insights into Drakthar's intentions and true nature. Have one of the players roll percentile dice, and consult the Goblin Graffiti table to determine what the graffiti says.

GOBLIN GRAFFITI

Roll	Graffiti
01–10	"Drakthar owns this."
11–20	"Hail Drakthar, lord of the rats."
21–30	"Drakthar is dead! Long live Drakthar!"
31–40	"Murrd wrote this."
41–50	"Who builds town in volcano? Stupid humans."
51–60	"Drakthar is the fog!"
61–70	"As a wolf, Drakthar hunts."
71–80	"Hey, Cage Makers! This is our town, too!"
81–90	"Drakthar has bat ears."
91–100	"Snerk smells like dung!"

Night Patrols: Cauldron is enjoying a damp autumn. Rain falls throughout the night, giving way to a thick fog after midnight. Characters who wander the streets between dusk and dawn encounter regular guard patrols, most of which stop and question them. There is a 15% chance every night that they encounter a small gang of 1d4+2 goblin sneaks lurking in an alley, scribbling graffiti on a wall or trying to break into a locked shop. Drakthar has dominated the goblins into not revealing the location of the entrance to his dungeon complex (specifically Orak's Bathhouse). Instead, they flee anywhere but Orak's Bathhouse, hole up, and wait. Eventually, Drakthar notices they have not returned and sends them instructions telepathically.

If the PCs manage to hide from the goblin sneaks, they can wait for the goblins to finish what they're doing and then follow them back to the bathhouse, in which case you should check twice to see whether the goblins notice the PCs (once initially and once as they are leaving for the bathhouse).

JIL'S TIP (EL 6)

Eventually, a member of the Last Laugh thieves' guild named Jil approaches the characters when they are alone. Players encountered her early on in "Life's Bazaar," when she and two Last Laugh thugs accosted a cleric of St. Cuthbert in a rain-soaked alleyway. She uses a *disguise self* spell (cast from a scroll) to conceal her appearance in this encounter, so the PCs might not recognize her unless they pierce the illusion.

When Jil catches up with the PCs, she's disguised as a plump young woman, standing 5 feet tall and sporting a wry smile. She has red hair and jade-green eyes, and wears a black cloak over a finely made suit of studded leather armor. A sheathed sword and a coiled whip hang from her belt. Characters who physically touch Jil may attempt a DC 12 Will save to pierce the illusion concealing her true form.

Creature: Jil is a female human rogue/assassin who, in her true form, stands 5 feet, 3 inches tall and has a ponytail of black hair and dark brown eyes. Characters who met her in "Life's Bazaar" can make a DC 12 Spot check to recognize her without her half-white, half-black harlequin face makeup. Her attire is unchanged from the description above.

If Jil realizes that her illusion spell has been pierced, she smiles wryly and says, "Funny we should meet again so soon."

Jil, female human rogue 5/assassin 1: hp 27; see Appendix 4.

Tactics: Jil doesn't want a long, boring conversation with the PCs. She delivers the following message, then attempts to depart:

> "I hear that you're helping the town guard deal with the goblin infestation. I have some information that might be useful. Check out Orak's Bathhouse on Lava Avenue. I think you'll find that's where the goblins come from. Orak, the one-eyed dwarf who owns and runs the place, hangs around there at night as well. He's also a retired adventurer, so don't underestimate him."

Jil admits that it's odd for a dwarf to be working with goblins, and vice versa, since dwarves and goblins generally despise each other. She suspects that Orak is under some sort of influence, although she assumes blackmail, not magic.

Characters can follow Jil, but at one point she sheds her illusion and attempts to vanish into the nearest crowd. If the PCs successfully oppose her Hide check, she may resort to using an *obscuring mist* spell to facilitate escape. She may also have some Last Laugh thugs (see Appendix 4) watching her back.

Development: As the DM, you might want to create some romantic tension between Jil and a charismatic PC. Jil's demeanor might lighten up slightly as a consequence, but she remains canny and aloof. Under no circumstances should Jil assist the PCs any more than she has already.

RATS IN THE BATHHOUSE

Onyx tiles cover the floor of the bathhouse, and the vaulted ceiling rises to a height of twenty feet. A

twenty-five-foot-diameter sunken basin is set into the floor against the south wall, and water fills it. A translucent crystal dome above the pool allows light to enter and creates water reflections on the walls. Several smaller areas lead off of the main room; however, bead curtains or doors block your view of these areas.

Orak's Bathhouse is a squat, windowless building of dark stone located on Lava Avenue, due west of Crater Lake. The building is open from noon to midnight every day. The owner, Orak Stonehaven, runs the place by himself. Years ago, he stumbled upon a *decanter of endless water* and now uses it to fill his bath pools. Every night before closing, Orak drains the pools and refills them with fresh water. Used water drains through pipes in the floor, eventually spilling out into the lake. Orak doesn't reside at the bathhouse normally; his modest apartment is a few blocks away. However, since Drakthar dominated him, the dwarf rarely leaves the bathhouse, going so far as to sleep in one of the change rooms.

Although the bathhouse is locked up tight from midnight to noon, Orak answers any knock at the door. He doesn't allow anyone to enter the bathhouse after hours (except the goblins, of course), although forceful PCs might push or talk their way inside (see below).

Orak charges 1 sp for a bath and 1 sp for a bar of soap. Use of a towel is free. Orak doesn't allow weapons or armor inside the bathhouse.

Orak doesn't like to answer questions about his business and grows belligerent when pressed. Here are some of his answers to questions the PCs might ask:

What do you know about the goblins? "They're degenerate creatures that wallow in their own filth. That's all I know or care to know about goblins."

Have you seen any goblins? "I've seen many goblins in my lifetime, but none lately."

Why are you working with the goblins? "I'm not."

Where is the goblins' lair? "Not here."

Whom do you serve? "I'm self-employed."

A successful Sense Motive check (opposed by Orak's Bluff check) reveals that Orak is lying or being evasive. If the PCs talk with Orak for at least 1 minute, a DC 15 Sense Motive check reveals that the dwarf is under some sort of spell-like or supernatural influence.

Characters may threaten to notify the authorities if Orak doesn't truthfully answer their questions or allow them to inspect the bathhouse. Unless they succeed on an Intimidate check, Orak can't be reasoned with on this level and tries to throw them out and lock the front doors.

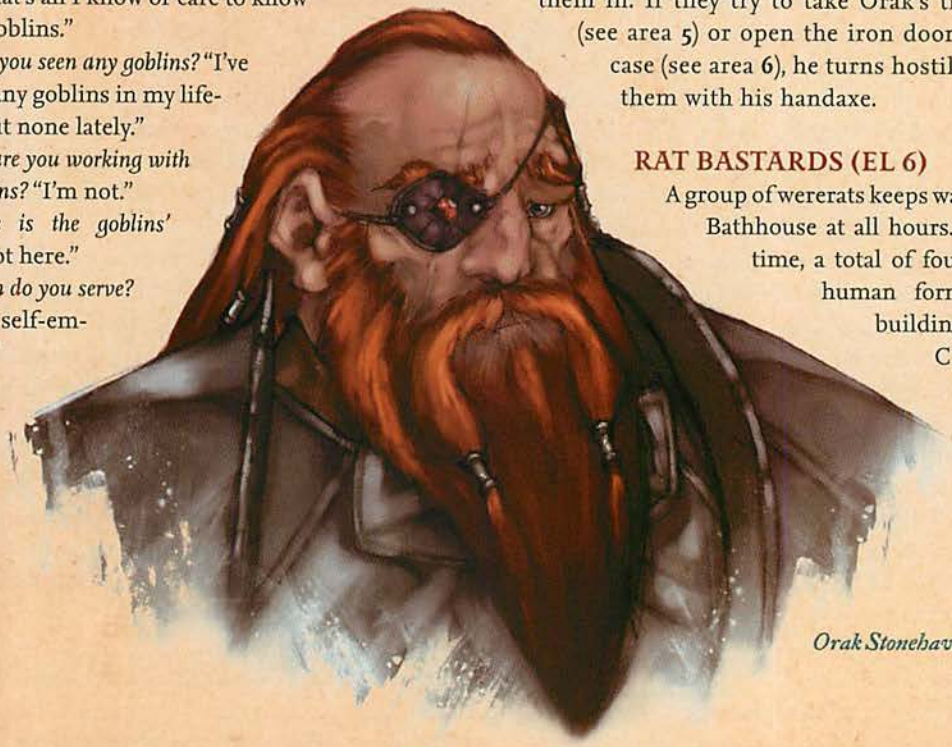
Creature: Orak Stonehaven stopped adventuring when he found the *decanter of endless water* and realized he could build a business around it. He lost his right eye to a dart trap in the same dungeon where he found the decanter, although he claims the injury had nothing to do with his retirement.

Orak is a middle-aged dwarf with a ruddy complexion, thinning red hair, and a long beard. He wears a black eye patch set with a small ruby gemstone over his missing right eye. Although he doesn't wear armor or bring large weapons to the bathhouse, he keeps a handaxe looped to his belt, just in case.

Orak Stonehaven, male dwarf fighter 4: hp 35; see Appendix 4.

Tactics: Drakthar has given the dominated dwarf specific instructions: let the goblins in and out at night, don't let anyone else reach the staircase leading to the dungeon, and don't tell anyone about what goes on at the bathhouse at night.

PCs can use Bluff, Diplomacy, or Intimidate to convince Orak to let them into the bathhouse. Orak's attitude toward the PCs is unfriendly at first, and they must either improve his attitude to indifferent, bully their way inside, or dupe the dwarf into letting them in. If they try to take Orak's treasure chest (see area 5) or open the iron door to the staircase (see area 6), he turns hostile and attacks them with his handaxe.



Orak Stonehaven

RAT BASTARDS (EL 6)

A group of wererats keeps watch on Orak's Bathhouse at all hours. At any given time, a total of four wererats in human form watch the building's entrance. Characters

looking for enemy surveillance can make a Spot check (opposed by the wererats' Hide checks) to see a cloaked figure watching the building from some discrete vantage point (either a rooftop or alleyway). The wererat does not flee when approached; instead, it whistles for backup as it assumes hybrid form and draws either a rapier or crossbow.

If the PCs get inside the bathhouse, the wererats (in hybrid form) follow them inside and attack. The following battle can be played out in the street instead of the bathhouse if the PCs notice the wererats' surveillance.

Creatures: The wererats prefer to fight in hybrid form and do not make "small talk."

Wererats (4): hp 12 each; see *Monster Manual* pages 172–173.

Tactics: The wererats like to gang up on one or two opponents at a time. They rely on their damage reduction to protect them from harm. They cannot be bribed.

Development: The wererats aren't local, and they don't know that Thifirane Rhiavadi is paying for their service. If one of the wererats is captured or charmed, it reveals the name of the man who hired them, but the information won't do the PCs any good because the man was magically disguised and the name he gave the wererats (Gaelen Trodor) was false. A successful DC 15 Knowledge (history) or Knowledge (local) check reveals that Gaelen Trodor was one of Cauldron's founders, and has been dead for hundreds of years.

The PCs may need to recuperate after this first battle. They can persuade Captain Skellerang to place guards inside or around the bathhouse to frighten off any remaining wererats, as well as deal with goblins that come up from the dungeon below. Presented with enough circumstantial evidence, Skellerang can also have Orak Stonehaven detained and questioned for a day or two. However, Skellerang maintains that the PCs are much better equipped to explore the dungeon beneath the bathhouse than his town guards.

1. MAIN BATH

This large pool contains 3 feet of room-temperature water.

2. TOWEL STORAGE

Gray bath towels hang from hooks on the west wall. Orak keeps folded towels on a covered shelf underneath the hanging towels.

3. CHANGE ROOMS

Each of these rooms contains a wooden bench.

4. PRIVATE BATHS

Each of these rooms contains a stone tub filled with hot water. The water is heated by a natural spring under the bathhouse.

5. ORAK'S OFFICE

Orak's office contains a wooden desk and two chairs, as well as a shelf lined with 150 bars of soap, each of which sells for 1 sp.

Treasure: Orak keeps a small money chest under his desk. The chest is locked (Open Lock DC 30), but Orak carries the key. It holds Orak's *decanter of endless water* plus 34 gp, 65 sp, and 187 cp in three separate pouches.

6. LOCKED IRON DOOR

Orak carries the key to this locked iron door and does not yield it to anyone without Drakthar's permission, fighting to keep it if he must. The stone staircase beyond descends 30 feet to area 1 of Drakthar's Way.

Iron Door: 2 in. thick; hardness 10; hp 60; break DC 28; Open Lock DC 30.

DRAKTHAR'S WAY

The rest of the chapter details the dungeon complex under Orak's Bathhouse. Before running this part of the adventure, carefully review Drakthar's statistics and combat tactics.

THE EYES OF DRAKTHAR

The Eyes of Drakthar are wretched goblins that have been dominated, enslaved, or won over by Drakthar. Drakthar's makeshift "tribe" contains four types of goblins, described below:

Goblin Adepts: The goblin adepts provide spiritual guidance to the Eyes of Drakthar, but their primary function is to brew potions for the tribe. They serve the bugbear vampire only because he has dominated them; in truth, they are terrified of him.

Goblin Sneaks: The sneaks are the stealthy rogues who creep into Cauldron and wreak havoc nightly. They prefer hit-and-run tactics and attempt to make sneak attacks. They believe Drakthar will reward them with gold for their loyalty, but only because he has dominated them and duped them into thinking that.

Goblin Skirmishers: The skirmishers account for most of the goblins in Drakthar's Way and serve as the rank-and-file warriors. Like the adepts, they fear Drakthar and respect his power. Their usefulness is limited, so Drakthar doesn't waste time trying to dominate them.

Silent Wolf Goblins: These goblin ranger/rogues once belonged to the Silent Wolf tribe and now serve Drakthar willingly and eagerly. They see him as the undying champion of Maglubiyet and howl with delight when they see Drakthar assume wolf or dire wolf form. They are Drakthar's lieutenants, and each one has a worg ally that serves as a mount.

GOBLIN NAMES

Although the PCs aren't likely to speak at length with the goblins, they might learn a few of their names during interrogations. Here, then, is a short list of male and female goblin names that you can drop, as needed.

Male: Brog, Fergi, Galt, Gerdi, Grud, Herg, Jort, Krud, Murrd, Prut, Rugi, Slurrt, Yag.

Female: Drek, Essek, Gruk, Horrk, Irgu, Jark, Loku, Nerrk, Ogu, Snerk, Thok, Ugu, Vak.

CAPTURED GOBLINS

Drakthar has dominated the goblin adepts and goblin sneaks, who do not share information with their captors even when intimidated. If a character spends at least 1 minute interrogating a dominated goblin, she can make a DC 15 Sense Motive check to determine that the goblin is under some powerful enchantment. The goblin skirmishers can be intimidated easily enough, but they are not aware of Drakthar's true nature. They have been told that Drakthar is a bugbear wizard who can turn into fog and summon rats, wolves, and other creatures to do his bidding. The Silent Wolf goblins haven't been dominated and know that Drakthar is a vampire, but they are much harder to intimidate.

All of Drakthar's goblins know the layout of the dungeon complex and can lead captors wherever they want to go, including to Drakthar's lair (area **31**). However, the goblins are poor cartographers; a goblin commanded to draw a map of the complex must succeed on a DC 20 Intelligence check to create an even remotely accurate representation of the dungeon. Captured goblins can warn PCs about known hazards in the dungeon, particularly the "flying face-eaters" (darkmantles) in area **18**.

FEATURES OF DRAKTHAR'S WAY

The most prominent feature of Drakthar's Way is a naturally formed jagged sloping passage that cuts through the earth from the foot of the volcano to just below the town of Cauldron. Over the years, dwarf stonemasons reshaped the passage a bit to make it less arduous to traverse. Dwarves also built an underground complex around the rough-hewn passage. This complex is now infested with goblins and other monsters.

Drakthar's Way has several recurring features, which are described below:

Illumination: There are no lights in Drakthar's Way. Drakthar, his goblins, and all other dungeon natives rely on darkvision to see.

Walls: Drakthar's Way has masonry walls and unworked walls, both made of dark, volcanic stone.

The smoother areas of the dungeon have 1-foot-thick, cracked masonry walls. Nearly every inch of these walls is covered with goblin graffiti written in chalk, blood, excrement, or slime. Among the many lewd drawings and crude symbols are frequently misspelled proclamations about Drakthar and various named goblins (see the Goblin Graffiti table for examples).

The rough-hewn passage that cuts through the volcano bears no such markings and features abundant ledges and handholds. Climbing along a masonry wall requires a DC 20 Climb check, while climbing along an unworked stone wall requires a DC 15 Climb check.

Ceilings: Unless noted otherwise, ceilings in areas with masonry walls are 10 feet high. Ceilings in rough-hewn passages vary in height, but generally range from 20 to 30 feet high.

Doors: All doors in Drakthar's Way are made of strong wood with iron hinges (see Table 3–10: Doors, page 61 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide*, for door and hinge statistics).

Contour Lines: The rough-hewn tunnels that cut through the dungeon complex have contour lines with measurements designed to show the slope of the passage and how many feet the tunnels descend. The measurements are relative to the floor of area **17**, which is considered to be "0 feet" (the point at which the tunnel climbs no further). So, a contour line that reads "–50 ft." is 50 feet lower the floor in area **17**.

ENCOUNTERS IN DRAKTHAR'S WAY

Drakthar's Way is a living dungeon, and its inhabitants tend to move around. Consequently, when a fight erupts in the dungeon, it doesn't take long for the goblins and other intelligent denizens to hear about it and respond in force.

Alerted Goblins: Once the goblins are alerted to intruders, they begin scouring the dungeon for enemies. They gather in small packs and creep stealthily along corridors and through dungeon chambers, using their Hide and Move Silently skills. When they spot intruders, they shout "Bree yark!" before attacking. If overwhelmed, they withdraw and group with other packs to increase their numbers.

Wandering Monsters: In addition to the planned encounters, PCs have a 10% chance per hour spent in the dungeon of encountering one or more wandering monsters. If an encounter is indicated, have one of the players roll percentile dice, then match the result on the table below to determine the exact encounter.

If the PCs defeat wandering goblins, do not subtract them from the dungeon's roster; Drakthar quickly replaces lost goblins with new ones plucked from the surrounding Underdark passages.

WANDERING MONSTERS

Roll	Monsters
01–25	6 goblin skirmishers (EL 2)
26–40	3 goblin sneaks (EL 3)
41–55	1 goblin adept with 3 goblin skirmishers (EL 4)
56–65	1 Silent Wolf goblin with 1 worg (EL 4)
66–70	3 dire rats (EL 1)
71–75	1 ethereal filcher (EL 3)
76–80	2 stirges (EL 1)
81–85	1 bat swarm (EL 2)
86–90	1 rat swarm (EL 2)
91–100	Drakthar (EL 4)

1. WELCOME TO THE DUNGEON (EL 1/2)

The stone stairs from Orak's Bathhouse descend thirty feet, eventually opening into a five-foot-wide corridor that runs east to west. The masonry walls are covered with crude graffiti written in chalk, blood, slime, excrement, and other less recognizable

substances. To the east, you hear a strange cacophony of monstrous chatter and barking dogs. There are two openings in the south wall. The doors that once sealed these openings have been removed, but their hinges remain in place.

The graffiti on the walls consists of lewd drawings and goblin epithets. On the wall directly across from the staircase, written in goblin blood in the Goblin tongue, are the words "DRAKTHAR IS DEAD! LONG LIVE DRAKTHAR!"

The goblins have strung a tripwire across the floor in the square marked "T" on the map. The wire continues along the north wall and is tied to an alarm bell in area **9A**. Any character that enters the trapped square without first detecting the tripwire (DC 11 Search check) tugs on the wire hard enough to ring the alarm bell and alert the goblins.

Development: If the PCs enter the dungeon with one or more light sources, the two goblin sentries in area **6** detect them automatically.

2. DEFILED CHAPEL

Four pillars support the ceiling of this room, each pillar carved to resemble a dwarf warrior clad in full plate armor. At the far end of the room stands a decapitated seven-foot-tall statue, its stony hands raising a massive warhammer. The statue probably represents a dwarf, but its head is nowhere to be seen. An ornate stone brazier stands before the altar. The walls are carved with bas-reliefs of dwarf artisans at work, but they have been defiled with excrement and crudely painted images of goblins stabbing the dwarves in the back with spears.

This chapel, dedicated to the dwarven god Moradin, has been defiled by the goblins. They took the trouble to break the head off of the statue of Moradin and roll it down the long hall outside the chapel (it can be found in area **10**). They also filled the brazier with dung, and it's now a bed for squirming maggots.

3. PRIESTS' QUARTERS

This chamber, once reserved for dwarf clerics, has been thoroughly looted and contains only smashed furnishings, a broken kiln, and the triangular shards of a shattered mirror.

4. OLD LIBRARY

Four stone pillars support the ceiling of this square room. Half of the southwest pillar has broken away and collapsed into a heap of rubble. Rows of one-inch-diameter holes are bored into the walls, and a few contain splinters of wood.

The walls of this ancient library were once lined with wooden shelves, but the shelves have long since been removed, leaving many 3-inch-deep holes and a few with shattered wooden pegs sticking out of them.

5. MERCENARY QUARTERS

Four pillars support the ceiling of this otherwise empty square room. Graffiti covers the walls, and the southern door hangs ajar. Nine sturdy wooden cots covered with folded wool blankets are neatly pushed against the walls.

The goblins have set aside this room as temporary quarters for half-orc mercenaries brought into the city. The wooden cots are for them.

6. STORAGE (EL 2)

Crates, chests, and casks fill this room, each one burned with a symbol resembling a birdcage. Narrow avenues cut between the piles of supplies.

The crates, chests, and casks belong to the three mercenaries who work for Zarn Kyass. As the PCs move through the room, have them make Spot checks to determine whether they see the Creatures hiding here.

Creatures: Two goblin sneaks lurk among the crates and casks in this room, in the squares marked "G" on the map.

Goblin Sneaks (2): hp 7 each; see Appendix 4.

Treasure: Characters who search the room thoroughly find five greatswords, 12 pairs of manacles, 20 days' worth of trail rations, four disguise kits, 20 peasant's outfits, 25 gallons of ale and three casks, each one containing the equivalent of 50 flasks of oil

Development: The goblins in area **16A** are alerted by sounds of combat or light sources in this room and appear 1 round later, followed one round after that by the goblins in area **16B**.

7. SMUGGLER'S PIT

The southeast corner of this fifteen-foot-square chamber has partially collapsed. Aside from the resulting rubble, the room appears empty.

The middle 5-foot section of floor is a single square tile that can be lifted up to reveal a 4-foot-square, 5-foot-deep compartment underneath. Locating the stone "lid" requires a DC 15 Search check, and lifting it requires a DC 15 Strength check.

Dwarves built the secret compartment to hide valuables, and the goblins have yet to discover it. Four Medium creatures and their gear can hide in the compartment, although it's a tight fit. Miniscule holes in the stone floor tile permit air to enter the compartment and allow those confined within to hear what's going on in the room above.

Treasure: The hidden compartment currently holds the following items: four flasks of alchemist's fire, four

thunderstones, a tanglefoot bag, a healer's kit, a set of masterwork artisan's tools, and a set of masterwork thieves' tools.

8. GOBLINS' PERCH (EL 2)

This chamber opens into the side of a thirty-foot-high, rough-hewn passage that slopes down toward the west and up toward the east. Two moldy pallets lie against the north wall.

The floor of this chamber is 20 feet above the floor of the tunnel to the south. A pair of goblins uses the pallets as beds, but they keep nothing of value here.

Creatures: Two goblin sneaks stand watch here. They fire their crossbows at any unescorted intruders they see in the southern tunnel and draw their short swords if attacked from the west.

Goblin Sneaks (2): hp 7 each; see Appendix 4.

9. SKIRMISHERS' LAIR (EL 6)

The doors to area **9A** have been left ajar so that the goblins in these chambers can hear sounds of alarm from elsewhere in the dungeon.

A foul stench taints the air of this filthy chamber. Crude pallets lie strewn on the floor amid small heaps of bones and offal.

Drakthar's goblin skirmishers have claimed all four of these rooms. The goblins leave nothing of value lying about.

Creatures: Area **9A** contains two goblin skirmishers who scream "Bree yark!" at the first sign of intruders. Three more skirmishers wait in area **9B**. Area **9C** contains five sleeping goblin skirmishers, and area **9D** contains four sleeping goblin skirmishers and four more that are sharing jokes and stories. All told, 18 goblin skirmishers live here.

Goblin Skirmishers (18 total): hp 5 each; see Appendix 4.

10. MORADIN'S HEAD

The eastward tunnel ends in collapse. The stone head of a regal dwarf lies amid the rubble, staring up at you with blind granite eyes.

The goblins broke off the head of the statue of Moradin in the chapel (area **2**) and rolled it here. The tunnel beyond collapsed many years ago.

11. WATER SUPPLY

A stone basin fills nearly half of this circular chamber. The lip of the basin is ornately carved, and water pours into it through the mouth of a smiling dwarven face carved in bas-relief on the southeast wall.

This pool contains a supply of fresh water. The water comes from the purified lake and seeps out through drain holes in the bottom of the basin. The goblins have taken care not to pollute the water supply. However, the tiled floor around the basin and the walls are smeared with slime and excrement.

12. SNEAKS' LAIR (EL 3)

An eye-watering stink fills this cavern. Filthy straw pallets lie heaped amid moldy food, dung, and yellowing bones.

Drakthar's goblin sneaks have claimed both of these rooms. The goblins leave nothing of value lying about.

Creatures: Area **12A** contains four pallets and three goblin sneaks (the fourth goblin sneak is stationed in area **35**). Area **12B** contains two pallets, but no goblins are present (these two missing goblin sneaks are standing watch in area **5**). Area **12C** contains four pallets and no goblin sneaks (they are scattered elsewhere in the dungeon).

Goblin Sneaks (3): hp 7 each; see Appendix 4.

13. ADEPTS' LAIR (EL 3)

Four mangy pallets rest against the west and east walls of this rank chamber.

This room sleeps four goblin adepts, only one of which is typically present (see Creature below). The others can normally be found in areas **14**, **19A**, and **31** respectively.

Creatures: A goblin adept waits here with a readied action. A rat familiar perches on the adept's shoulder. The rat familiar has AC 16 (touch 14, flat-footed 14), 7 hit points, and improved evasion.

Goblin Adept: hp 14; see Appendix 4.

Tactics: Given time, the goblin adept quaffs a *potion of aid* and a *potion of invisibility*. The adept then readies an action to cast a spell (either *burning hands* or *sleep*) the instant intruders open the north door.

14. BREWERY (EL 3)

A stone cauldron stands in one corner of the room, plumes of smoke rising from its gaping mouth. In the opposite corner stands a rickety table covered with clay flasks and jugs.

The goblin adepts brew potions in this chamber. The cauldron, the table, and their respective contents are described under Treasure below.

Creature: A goblin adept stands next to the rickety table. A rat familiar weaves among the flasks on the table. It has AC 16 (touch 14, flat-footed 14), 7 hit points, and improved evasion.

Goblin Adept: hp 14; see Appendix 4.

Tactics: Given time, the goblin adept drinks a *potion of aid* and *potion of invisibility*, then casts a *scorching ray*

spell (as a readied action) at the first adversary to come through the door.

Treasure: Most of the clay flasks and jugs on the table are empty, but one contains a *potion of see invisibility*. The stone cauldron is a magic item created by the dwarves. Three times per day, it can boil up to 10 gallons of liquid without need of fire; it weighs 250 pounds and is worth 2,500 gp. The liquid currently brewing in the cauldron evaporates after 1 hour, leaving behind a *potion of cure moderate wounds*.

15. LARDER

This room is festooned with a half-dozen hooked chains that dangle from the ceiling. Skinned animal carcasses and large, smelly fish hang from the hooks.

The Silent Wolf goblins do most of the hunting for the Eyes of Drakthar and store the skinned carcasses and cleaned fish here. The six carcasses include two baboons, two wild boars, and two 6-foot-long pikes.

16. SNEAKY GOBLINS (EL 3)

Areas **16A** and **16B** are goblin guard posts.

Creatures: Two goblin sneaks stand guard in area **16A**, and another two lurk in the shadowy recesses of area **16B**. Both pairs are within earshot of each other.

- **Goblin Sneaks (4 total):** hp 7 each; see Appendix 4.

Tactics: The goblin sneaks do their best to surprise and flank foes. If half their number is defeated, the survivors attempt to flee west, down the rough-hewn passage.

Development: Sounds of combat in this area alert the Silent Wolf goblins and worgs in area **17**, which appear 1 round later.

17. SILENT WOLF GOBLINS

This area has both rough-hewn walls and masonry walls. A natural passage continues west. Against the east wall rest two large straw pallets hopping with lice. Gnawed animal bones litter the floor, and more bones fill two crude alcoves in the northeast corner.

The Silent Wolf goblins have claimed this area as their own. However, only one of the goblins is present at any given time.

Creatures: A Silent Wolf goblin and its worg mount inhabit this area. The goblin is teaching the worg a new trick. At the first sign of trouble, the goblin mounts the worg. The goblin and the worg unleash loud howls as they rush into battle, and their howls can be heard all the way to area **19**.

- **Silent Wolf Goblin:** hp 19; see Appendix 4.
- **Worg:** hp 30; *Monster Manual* 256.

Tactics: Although the Silent Wolf goblin rides the worg into battle, it dismounts to attack with its swords.

If the worg successfully trips an opponent, the goblin attacks the prone foe.

Treasure: Lodged in one of the northeast alcoves is a dwarf skeleton clad in a rusted chain shirt. Hidden under the chain shirt is an *amulet of natural armor +1*.

Development: The howling of the goblin and worg can be heard by the goblins stationed in area **19**. Another Silent Wolf goblin and its worg mount investigate, arriving in 3 rounds.

18. DEATH FROM ABOVE (EL 3)

The floor of this tunnel is quite uneven, and stalactites cling to the thirty-foot-high ceiling. Narrow ledges jut from the walls at varying heights, but they are bare. A few small bones are scattered here and there.

The floor of this tunnel is considered difficult terrain, and creatures crossing the passage move at half speed. The goblins avoid this tunnel, fearing the creatures that reside here. A couple goblin skirmishers died exploring it, and their gear lies scattered among their bones on the tunnel floor. Characters who make a DC 15 Search check find the worthless remains.

Creatures: Three of the stalactites are actually darkmantles in disguise.

- **Darkmantles (3):** hp 6 each; *Monster Manual* 38.

Tactics: As the PCs make their way through the tunnel, the darkmantles use their *darkness* ability, then drop down on their blinded prey.

19. TUNNEL AMBUSH (EL 7)

As the PCs reach this tunnel intersection, have them make Listen checks. Then make an opposed Move Silently check for the goblin adept, the Silent Wolf goblin, the worg (Move Silently +6), and the goblin skirmishers (just roll once for the skirmishers). Due to the acoustics in this area, the PCs get a +2 circumstance bonus on their Listen checks. If the Silent Wolf goblin and worg have been lured away, you do not need to make Move Silently checks for them.

At this point, the unworked tunnel breaks into side passages to the north and south. A ten-foot-high ledge overlooks this naturally formed intersection.

Goblins lurk in areas **19A–19C**, ready to attack intruders as they head up or down the main tunnel. The ceilings in these areas are 30 feet tall.

Creatures: Huddled in area **19A** are five goblin skirmishers, a goblin adept, and the adept's rat familiar, which has AC 16 (touch 14, flat-footed 14), 7 hit points, and improved evasion. They are trying to be quiet, but the cave's good acoustics make that difficult, and consequently PCs gain a +2 circumstance bonus on Listen checks made to detect them. Hiding in the recesses of area **19B** is a Silent Wolf goblin astride a worg. Finally, three goblin sneaks are crouched atop the 10-foot-high ledge overlooking the intersection (area **19C**).

- **Goblin Adept:** hp 14; see Appendix 4.
- **Goblin Skirmishers (5):** hp 5 each; see Appendix 4.
- **Goblin Sneaks (3):** hp 7 each; see Appendix 4.
- **Silent Wolf Goblin:** hp 19; see Appendix 4.
- **Worg:** hp 30; *Monster Manual* 256.

Tactics: The goblin skirmishers rush out to attack the PCs, while the Silent Wolf goblin moves into a flanking position. Meanwhile, the worg tries to trip and maul the nearest foe. Both the Silent Wolf goblin and the worg howl loudly as they spring into battle, alerting the denizens of areas **22–33**. The goblin sneaks pepper the PCs with crossbow bolts; if one of them falls, the remaining sneaks retreat to area **28** (crossing the rope bridge at area **20**).

The goblin adept drinks its *potion of invisibility* and casts *bless*. It then casts a *scorching ray* spell against an opponent not engaged in melee combat. Once it loses the benefit of the *potion of invisibility*, the cowardly adept scampers up to area **22**, pulls up the wooden ladder, and casts *burning hands* and *sleep* at pursuers that come into view.

Development: If the Silent Wolf goblin and worg have been lured elsewhere (see area **17**), they will not be encountered here. Drakthar (see area **31**) can hear the sounds of combat but waits until the battle ends before making an appearance (see Drakthar's Tactics for details).

20. ROPE BRIDGE

A sagging rope bridge spans the rough-hewn passage at a height of thirty feet, connecting two ends of a five-foot-wide worked tunnel. Sturdy wooden posts hold the bridge in place.

Goblin sneaks use the frail rope bridge extensively. It can support three Small creatures or one Medium creature at a time. Any additional weight causes the bridge to break, and a fall from this height deals 3d6 points of damage. Characters adjacent to a tunnel mouth when the bridge breaks can make a DC 15 Reflex save to grab onto the ledge and avoid the fall.

In addition, the rope bridge is quite unsteady and requires a DC 10 Balance check to cross safely. A creature that fails its Balance check must succeed on a DC 15 Reflex save or fall; even if the save succeeds, the creature cannot move any farther on this turn.

21. GOBLINS' LAIR

Goblin graffiti covers the walls of this room, which contains three moldy straw pallets. The far wall has partially collapsed.

The three goblin sneaks stationed at area **19C** sleep here. Characters who search the room find some bones and goblin waste, but no treasure.

22. THE HIGH GROUND

The tunnel breaks into a fifteen-foot-square room with no graffiti or furnishings of any kind. A makeshift wooden ladder connects the room with the floor of the tunnel ten feet below.

The goblins built the makeshift ladder, which is sturdy enough to support the weight of Small and Medium creatures. The ladder can be moved easily.

23. EMPTY CHAMBER

The northeast and southwest corners of this room have collapsed into rubble. Aside from the debris, the room is empty and bereft of graffiti.

A careful search of this room yields nothing of value.

Kallev

24. FOOD SUPPLIES

Drakthar has made this room off-limits to the goblins. The Eyes of Drakthar never enter it without the permission of Drakthar or the mercenaries in area **26**.

This fifteen-foot-square room contains several wooden crates and casks. Each container bears the symbol of a small black birdcage.

The crates and casks contain various perishables. Characters who search the room get a quick sense of the inventory, which includes enough food for a group of 3 people for at least a month.

Chorlyndyr

25. UNGUARDED LEDGE

A staircase climbs the north wall of the tunnel, doubling back on itself at one point before rising to meet the floor of a ten-foot-wide, fifteen-foot-deep chamber covered in goblin graffiti. The floor of the chamber is twenty-five feet above the floor of the adjoining tunnel.

No goblins stand watch here. The adjoining tunnel to the south is 40 feet high from floor to ceiling, which puts the opening of this room near the tunnel roof.

26. MERCENARY QUARTERS

This octagonal chamber has a twenty-foot-high vaulted ceiling painted with an elaborate mural depicting a multitude of dwarf artisans raising their hammers high and immersing them in a great flame that fills the ceiling's apex. The flame actually sheds light, bathing the room in flickering orange firelight. However, the room is not particularly warm. A stern dwarf's visage carved in bas-relief on the northwest wall spews clear water into a large basin that dominates that corner of the room. Gems are set into the eyes of the stone face. Other furnishings include three sturdy wooden cots covered with wool blankets, a small wooden table, and three matching stools.

The original purpose of this room is lost to time, although the basin fills with fresh water from the caldera. Small holes in the floor of the basin allow the water to seep out, and a thin stone lip around the edge of the basin keeps the water confined. The fiery light emanating from the ceiling is equivalent to a *continual flame* spell (caster level 7th).

The cots, table, and stools are meager furnishings at best, but they serve. Only two of the three mercenaries stationed in Drakthar's Way are present (see Creatures below). The third can be found in area **35**.

Creatures: This room contains two mercenaries named Chorlyndyr and Kallev, as well as Chorlyndyr's lizard familiar, which has AC 16 (touch 14, flat-footed 14), 9 hit points, and improved evasion. Due to the sound of water pouring into the basin, they do not hear any sounds of combat from outside the room and may be taken by surprise.

Chorlyndyr, a male human sorcerer, oversees Zarn Kyass' interests in Drakthar's Way and regularly meets with (and negotiates with) the bugbear vampire. An ambitious and self-interested young man of 24 years, he wants to please Zarn and eventually get promoted to a position of command in the Blue Duke's private army.

Kallev is a brash and disagreeable tiefling fighter who served three months of jail time in Cauldron for grievously wounding three members of the town guard. She was exiled from the town upon her release (over a year ago) and would like nothing better than to see Cauldron wiped out. She has cloven hooves for feet and spiky horns jutting from her brow. Drakthar has dominated her, although none of her fellow mercenaries have realized this yet.

- **Chorlyndyr:** hp 18; see Appendix 4.
- **Kallev:** hp 30; see Appendix 4.

Tactics: Chorlyndyr and Kallev realize they're on the same side, but they don't get along well and tend to act independently. They are also prone to berating one another in the heat of combat. Both have the Dodge feat and use it wisely.

Chorlyndyr relies on his Improved Initiative feat to get the drop on his enemies. He abhors melee combat and immediately begins casting his *summon monster II* spell, calling forth a lemure devil (*Monster Manual* 57) that appears at the start of his next turn. He then begins hurling *Melf's acid arrow* spells from behind Kallev or the lemure.

Kallev rushes into battle, swinging her halberd maniacally. If reduced to fewer than half her hit points, she casts *darkness* and heads straight to Drakthar's throne room (area **31**), where she drinks her healing potions and briefs her secret master on the apparent strengths and weaknesses of the invaders. If her escape is blocked, she drinks her potions in the darkness or uses her Blind-Fight feat to help her strike down the foes she cannot see. Regardless, she leaves Chorlyndyr to his own devices.

Development: If captured and interrogated, both Chorlyndyr and Kallev remain stoic and evasive. They are quite loyal to their boss, and only in extreme situations do they talk. Nonetheless, if magically compelled to talk, or if their hostile attitudes can be made helpful, they'll reveal what little they know (some of which is based on faulty supposition):

- Chorlyndyr, Kallev, and their ally Xoden were part of a group of adventuring mercenaries who work for an ogre mage they call the "Blue Duke" (in fact Zarn Kyass, although they don't know his real name or that he's currently masquerading as a human in Cauldron). They overheard their boss speaking with a soft-spoken woman (Thifirane) some time ago, and learned that the woman was a member of a secret society of cabalists and demon cultists based somewhere in the region.
- The Blue Duke keeps a private army of half-orc soldiers, and is currently in negotiations with one of the nobles in Cauldron. This noble wants to augment his or her personal bodyguards with stronger mercenaries, but doesn't want to do so publicly. The Blue Duke plans on smuggling these mercenaries into town using the goblin tunnels, and stationed Chorlyndyr, Kallev, and Xoden here to set things up.
- They don't know which noble is trying to bolster his bodyguard count, or why, but wryly observe that things are changing in Cauldron. The mercenaries might even hint that, in the months to come, the PCs might find themselves working for the Blue Duke.

27. ALCOVES

Two irregular alcoves appear in the walls of the tunnel, across from one another. The western alcove has a ceiling only five feet high. The eastern alcove has a ten-foot-high ceiling and sits atop a ten-foot-high ledge. The ceiling of the main tunnel is thirty feet high at this point.

Characters who inspect the western alcove (area **27A**) see that it is littered with animal and humanoid bones, including some goblin bones. The eastern alcove (area **27B**) is sometimes used as a guard station by goblins and shows evidence of goblin use (scratch marks on the walls, dried lumps of excrement in the corners, and such). Characters who climb up into the alcove see a symbol painted in dried blood on one wall. Characters who understand Goblin or succeed on a DC 15 Decipher Script check recognize this as a goblin warning sign for "vampire."

28. LEDGE

This half-formed room looms 25 feet above the floor of the tunnel to the north, which has a 30-foot-high ceiling.

Development: This ledge is usually vacant, although the goblin sneaks from area **19C** might retreat to here. If so, they fire their crossbows at any intruders they spot in the tunnel or on the rope bridge (area **20**).

29. SHOCKER LIZARD DEN (EL 5)

Three moldy straw pallets lay heaped against the eastern wall of this chamber, which has a door to the south and an open archway to the north. The walls are covered in goblin graffiti, and large rat droppings litter the floor.

This dark room contains several Creatures, described below.

Creatures: A goblin adept and a mated pair of shocker lizards inhabit this room. The goblin adept stands adjacent to the south door and keeps the shocker lizards between itself and the open north entrance. The shocker lizards have accepted the goblins as co-inhabitants of the dungeon and do not attack them; however, they attack non-goblins on sight. The shocker lizards have not laid any eggs yet, but when they do, the goblins hope to rear the young as guardians. Or as food. They haven't decided yet.

- **Goblin Adept:** hp 14; see The Eyes of Drakthar.
- **Shocker Lizards (2):** hp 13 each; *Monster Manual* 224.

Tactics: Given enough time to prepare, the goblin adept drinks a *potion of aid* and readies a *sleep* spell, hoping to catch enemies as they reach the top of the north stairs. The lizards react by generating a bolt of electricity each round at the intruder, dealing 4d8 electrical damage on any one target within 20 feet of one of them (DC 12 Reflex half). The adept flees if wounded or if one of the shocker lizards is slain. Once outside of the room, the goblin adept quaffs a *potion of invisibility*, tries to go someplace where there are more goblins, and then uses a *potion of cure light wounds* to undo any damage it may have suffered.

30. ARCHERS' POINT (EL 3)

A large section of this room has fallen away, forming a gash in the west wall and a forty-foot-high precipice overlooking a rough-hewn tunnel, the ceiling of which is the same height as the roof of this chamber. Three moldy straw pallets are heaped in the southeast corner of the room, which contains no other furnishings.

Drakthar has assigned three dominated goblins the task of watching the western tunnel for intruders. Their high perch gives them an unobstructed view of the tunnel in question.

Creatures: Three goblin sneaks are stationed here.

- **Goblin Sneaks (3):** hp 7 each; see Appendix 4.

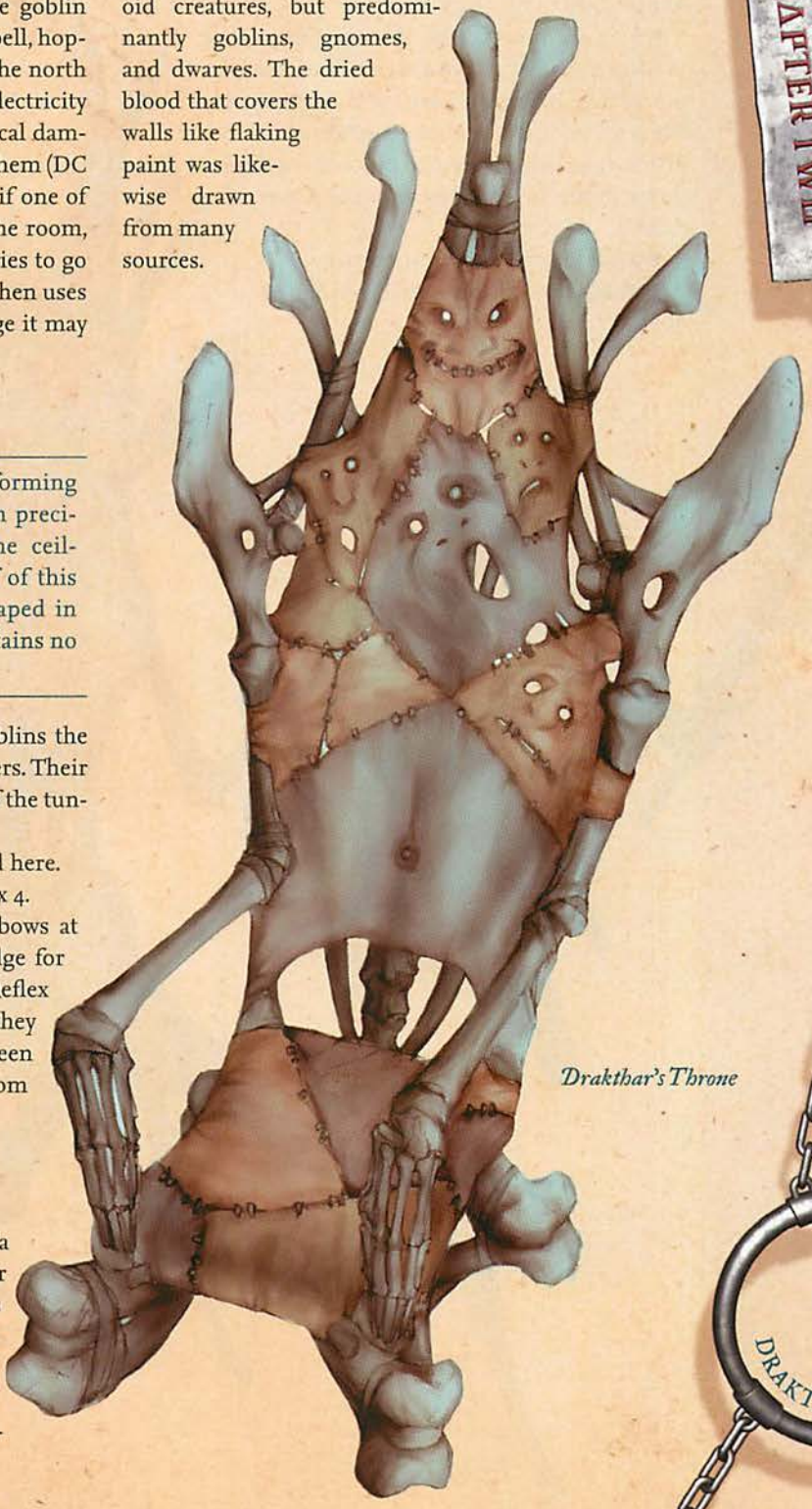
Tactics: The goblin sneaks fire their crossbows at any intruders they see. They use the high ledge for cover (+4 cover bonus to AC and +2 bonus on Reflex saves) against foes in the western tunnel, and they use the gash in the floor to create a gap between them and enemies that enter the chamber from the north.

31. DRAKTHAR'S THRONE ROOM (EL 3)

If the PCs somehow manage to reach this area without raising an alarm, they catch Drakthar sitting on his throne, immersed in thought as he ponders how best to manipulate Zarn Kyass and his mercenaries. Because the throne faces the only entrance to the room, the PCs will have a hard time sneaking into the room without Drakthar seeing them.

The walls of this sinister chamber are painted in blood, which has dried and turned a rusty shade of brown. The back corner of the room has fallen away into a dark crevice, and a roomy chair made of stitched skins, torn-off faces, and bundled bones sits in front of the gaping orifice.

Drakthar uses this room as an audience chamber. None may pass into the cavern beyond (area 32) without Drakthar's permission, lest they incur the bugbear vampire's undying and painful wrath. The throne is fashioned from the skins and bones of various humanoid creatures, but predominantly goblins, gnomes, and dwarves. The dried blood that covers the walls like flaking paint was likewise drawn from many sources.



Drakthar's Throne

Creature: If Drakthar is present, refer to the Drakthar Attacks section below for tips on how to run the bugbear vampire.

Drakthar's throne is an undead creature that came into being on its own. It has become suffused with the barest shred of Drakthar's will to live, a supernatural awareness that doesn't quite amount to sentience or intelligence. Most of the time, the throne remains perfectly still, but whenever Drakthar is forced to return to his coffin (in area **33**), it becomes animate and attacks any creature that tries to cross the room. Drakthar can also command it to animate as a free action if he has line of sight to the throne.

When it animates, the throne sprouts four skeletal legs and two thick skeletal arms. It does not radiate magic; however, it can be turned like any undead creature. It prefers to stay in the room and does not move more than 30 feet from the chamber regardless, even if turned.

- **Drakthar:** hp 19; see Appendix 4.
- **Drakthar's Throne:** hp 39; see Appendix 4.

32. DIRE BAT CAVE (EL 2)

This ledge overlooks a cavern nearly twenty feet across and fifty feet high. The cavern floor, which slopes down gently toward the southwest, is twenty feet below and quite uneven. A twenty-foot-long makeshift wooden ladder rests against the side of the ledge, offering an easy way down. Thirty feet to the south, a similar makeshift ladder climbing twenty feet to a recess carved into the wall of the cavern is visible.

PCs can descend and ascend the wooden ladders safely. However, the floor of the cavern is treated as difficult terrain (movement costs double).

Creature: This cavern is home to a dire bat, which normally hangs from the ceiling in the southwest corner. It attacks any creature except Drakthar that attempts to cross the cavern. It fights until slain. The dire bat cannot easily fly into area **31**, but it can reach opponents in area **33**. Drakthar ensures that the dire bat is well fed.

- **Dire Bat:** hp 30; *Monster Manual* 62.

33. DRAKTHAR'S COFFIN

Various treasures have been haphazardly strewn against the back wall of this ten-foot-high recess amid heaps of dust and bones.

Loose copper and silver coins, assorted weapons and armor, and a wooden chest are apparent in the scattered mess.

The items scattered about the alcove are catalogued under Treasure, below.

The middle 5-foot section of floor is a single square tile that can be lifted up to reveal a 4-foot-square, 5-foot-deep compartment underneath. Locating the stone "lid" requires a successful DC 15 Search check, and lifting it requires a DC 15 Strength check. If the PCs located the similar compartment in area 7, they get a +2 circumstance bonus on their Search checks.

Dwarves built the secret compartment to hide valuables, but Drakthar uses it as his coffin. The compartment is filled with earth, except for a vaguely bugbear-shaped pocket dug out of the middle. Miniscule holes in the stone tile permit the bugbear vampire to enter and leave the compartment in gaseous form.

If the PCs defile Drakthar's coffin by pouring one or more vials of holy water into it, the bugbear vampire can no longer use the coffin and is effectively doomed once reduced to 0 hit points. Drakthar is incensed by the destruction of his coffin and attacks the PCs fearlessly, determined to wipe them out.

Xoden Nightshield

Treasure: The items strewn about this area were seized from Drakthar's victims or handed over as tribute. They include 17,200 cp and 3,500 sp in loose coinage, a rusty battleaxe that breaks on a natural roll of 1, a composite longbow (+3 Str bonus), a *quiver of Ehlonna*, a masterwork rapier, a masterwork spear with a silvered head, a breastplate shaped in the likeness of a griffon, a mithral shirt, a heavy darkwood shield, and a locked wooden chest (Open Lock DC 20) containing a finely wrought gold bracelet worth 50 gp, a silver comb inlaid with amber worth 155 gp, a small ivory flute with jade inlays worth 250 gp, a *necklace of fireballs (type II)* wrapped in a purple velvet cloth, and a *Quaal's feather token (bird)*.

34. SLIME DROP (EL 4)

The sloping passage narrows at this point, forming a natural archway a little over five feet wide and ten feet tall.

The first character that steps into the square directly below the arch receives an unpleasant surprise, as a patch of green slime fills a slender crack in the top of the natural arch. The slime drops down on the first living creature to pass through the opening. For more information on green slime, see page 76 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide*.

Development: The goblins and Cagewrights are aware of the green slime and value it as a trap. They avoid the slime by using the narrower passageways that wend through the rock farther south.

35. HALF-ORC MERCENARIES (EL 7)

The passage widens, forming a rough-hewn cavern with a forty-foot-high ceiling. The floor slopes down toward a southwest exit. Two natural columns of rock support the ceiling, and a twenty-foot-high ledge connects the westernmost column to a nearby wall.

Characters who search the cave discover a few scattered bones, rusted bits of equipment, and pools of harmless slime.

Creatures: A lone goblin sneak stands atop the western ledge. In addition to its normal gear, it carries a wooden horn, which it blows if it spots intruders approaching from the southwest. The horn can be heard in areas **8**, **16–20**, **22**, **25**, and **28–35**. However, since the PCs are likely to enter the cavern from the north, the goblin does not blow the horn. Instead, it fires its crossbow while using the ledge or nearby column for cover (+4 cover bonus to AC, +2 cover bonus on Reflex saves).

Voices emanating from the cavern belong to six half-orc mercenaries who have just recently arrived from one of Zarn Kyass' encampments in the surrounding wilderness. They are part of a much larger company that's slowly being smuggled into Cauldron. A grimy, bald dwarf named Xoden Nightshield greets the half-orcs. Although his superiors occasionally need his skills as an artisan, Xoden currently handles the logistics of moving mercenaries and materiel through Drakthar's Way. He is also the only mercenary present who speaks Goblin, although he abhors goblins and constantly threatens to inflict bodily harm upon them. Xoden thinks Chorlyndyr and Kallev are bickering screw-ups too eager to serve

their own puny ambitions. He doesn't normally like to wear armor, but around goblins he can never be too careful!

Xoden, the half-orcs, and the goblin sentry rely on darkvision to see. The half-orcs are named Graytusk, Harla, Krohlag, Mincer, Trullek, and Varla.

- **Xoden:** hp 22; see Appendix 4.
- **Half-orc Mercenaries (6):** hp 19 each; see Appendix 4 (use stats for Town Guard but add a *potion of bull's strength* to possessions).
- **Goblin Sneak:** hp 7; see Appendix 4.

Tactics: PCs can fool Xoden and the half-orcs into thinking they belong in the dungeon with a successful Bluff check (opposed by the villains' Sense Motive check). If Xoden realizes that the PCs don't belong in the dungeon, he orders the half-orcs to attack them while he attempts to flee to area **26** via one of the narrow tunnels heading north. If he finds the other two Cagewrights dead or missing, he spends a couple rounds gathering provisions in area **24** before attempting to flee the dungeon. If cornered, he fights with his dwarven waraxe.

The half-orcs each drink a *potion of bull's strength* before entering combat, time allowing. Then they rush into battle, charging if possible while making use of their Dodge feat. In subsequent rounds, they attempt to flank opponents. If a half-orc misses with its sword two rounds in a row, it changes tactics and instead attempts to aid another half-orc's attack (see *Player's Handbook* page 154). If three or more half-orcs are defeated, the rest attempt to withdraw from the dungeon and regroup in the woods outside.

Development: The half-orcs have traveled far and are quite weary, and they are not predisposed to taking orders from the dwarf. Their initial attitude is hostile, but a DC 25 Diplomacy check changes their attitude to unfriendly, at which point the half-orcs can be convinced to parley. They admit to being mercenaries-for-hire but no more. If the PCs manage to adjust the half-orcs' attitude to friendly (or successfully cast *charm person* on one of them), they can learn the identity of their superior, the Blue Duke. Attempts to interrogate Xoden should yield similar results to those gained from interrogating his two mercenary allies (detailed in area **26**).

36. TUNNEL MOUTH

Drakthar's Way comes to an end at this point, where the mouth of the tunnel meets a heavily wooded area on the slope of the volcano. Creeping plants obscure the entrance somewhat, making it difficult to spot from outside. Nothing dangerous greets the PCs if they emerge from the tunnel and explore the immediate surroundings.

DRAKTHAR ATTACKS! (EL 4)

At some point, the PCs encounter Drakthar, either as a wandering monster or because he has been alerted to their presence. The bugbear vampire isn't confined to any one area of the dungeon. In fact, he likes to hunt intruders. He harangues them with hit-and-run tactics and relishes any opportunity to turn them against one another. As the PCs get closer to Drakthar's coffin (area **33**), the bugbear vampire's attacks become less playful and more determined. His impressive Hide, Listen, Move Silently, and Spot bonuses make him difficult to surprise and even harder to detect.

Drakthar looks like an underfed bugbear with bloodshot eyes. The stench of death clings to him. He has human, elf, and dwarf hands and tongues nailed to his wooden shield.

Drakthar doesn't try to wipe out the PCs all at once. Instead, he gnaws at them. Between encounters, Drakthar relies on his fast healing ability to regain any hit points he may have lost.

Drakthar doesn't like fighting alongside his goblin minions and leaves them to their own devices. Before entering into combat with an enemy, he chooses one of three approaches, each of which is described below:

Crush the Body: Drakthar approaches his enemies and starts bashing them with his morningstar and slamming them with his fist. After taking down one foe, he turns gaseous and withdraws. If the PCs chase him, he leads them into area **18** or some other dangerous part of the dungeon (but away from areas **31–33**).

Break the Spirit: Drakthar summons 1d6+1 rat swarms or 1d4+1 bat swarms and sends them after his enemies. He then chooses one target to dominate, turning the dominated foe against his or her comrades. Whether the attempt to dominate succeeds or fails, he doesn't leave the battle until at least one enemy is taken down, at which point he assumes an alternate form and withdraws.

BEHIND THE SCENES: DRAKTHAR'S WAY

During this chapter, the PCs should gain their first hints that there's something big going on in Cauldron. They may learn about the Blue Duke, although they probably won't learn his name, so when they meet him in Chapter Five during Event 18 they might not make the connection.

This chapter also serves to foreshadow events later in the campaign, when the Cauldron city guard starts to hire half-orc mercenaries to augment their ranks. Terseon Skellerang remembers the PCs' findings during this chapter and, in a strange sort of way, the PCs themselves may thus be responsible for much of the racial tension that begins to build in Cauldron starting in Chapter Five.

The Cagewrights are disappointed with the loss of Drakthar's Way as an easy smuggling route, but in the end this loss has little impact on their plans. Terseon Skellerang proves to be much more accommodating to Vhalantru's need for more mercenaries, and by Chapter Four the augmentation of the city guard with Zarn Kyass' half-orc mercenaries happens above ground and in public.

Devour the Soul: Drakthar assumes the form of a dire wolf and howls as he nears his enemies' location, hoping to unnerve them. He tries to trip one enemy and pin it under his lupine form. He then uses his blood drain ability on the pinned victim. Once the victim is killed or completely drained of blood, Drakthar withdraws.

TROUBLESHOOTING

Even though he's somewhat weaker than a normal vampire, Drakthar is a tough foe for 3rd-level characters, especially since he can take them down with only three of his slam (and energy drain) attacks. Here are answers to some basic questions that might arise as the PCs confront Drakthar:

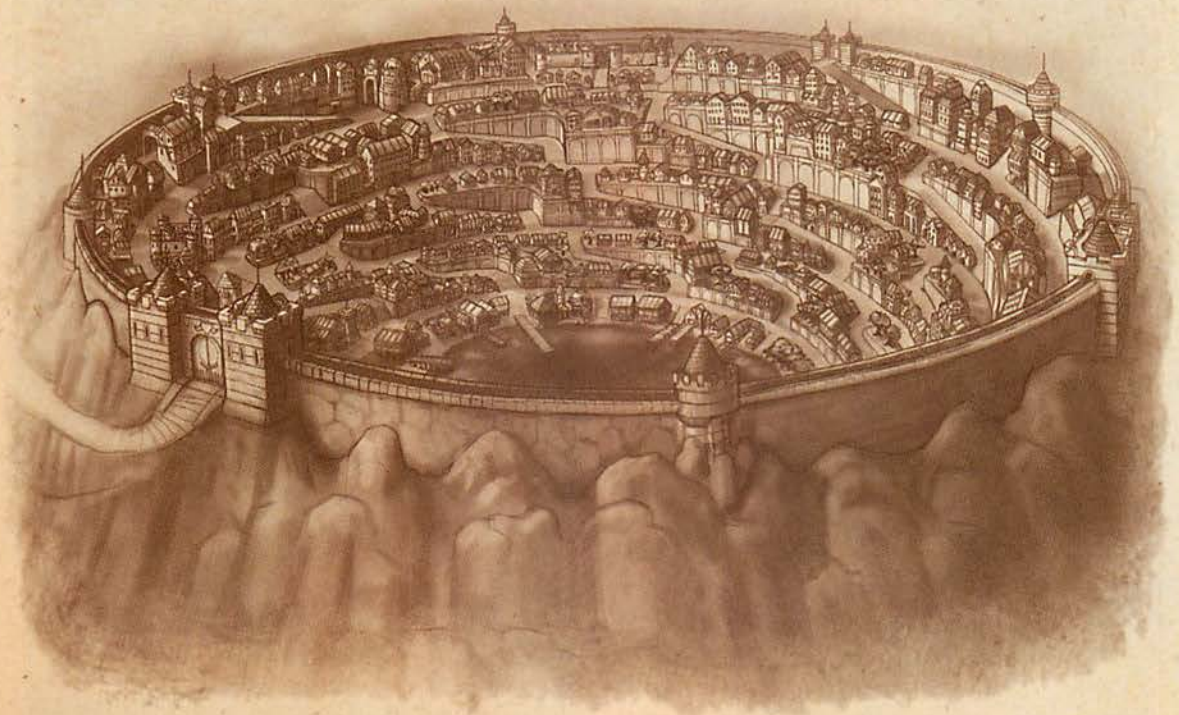
How does Drakthar choose his victims? He doesn't like to be turned or confronted with the horror of his undead existence, so he tries to kill clerics and paladins first. He's smart enough to use his dominate ability on fighter-types and rogue-types, and he prefers to use his blood drain ability against arcane spellcasters.

What happens when Drakthar is reduced to 0 hit points? He turns gaseous and returns to his coffin (in area 33). If he thinks he's being followed, he takes a circuitous route guaranteed to slow down his pursuers or place them in jeopardy, then slips away.

What happens if Drakthar succeeds in dominating all of the PCs? Instead of dispatching them, Drakthar decides to use the PCs as his spies in Cauldron. He wants them to find out more about the Cagewrights' plans. He demands an update every seven days. He doesn't care how his new thralls complete their task or whether it places them in conflict with the Cagewrights. Drakthar also instructs the PCs not to reveal his location or true nature, or cause harm to befall him or his minions. Although Drakthar can issue instructions telepathically over great distances, his dominated minions cannot telepathically transmit messages or sensory input back to him.

ENDING THE CHAPTER

Drakthar's destruction liberates any creature under the effect of his *dominate* ability. The vampire's goblin thralls slowly disband, retreating deep into the Underdark or hiding out in the forests around Cauldron. Characters formerly under the vampire's sway are no longer bound to his service. Orak Stonehaven, if alive, likewise regains his senses and rewards the party with free baths and a pouch containing four 100 gp gems.



CHAPTER THREE

CHAPTER THREE

FLOOD SEASON

BY JAMES JACOBS

As winter draws near, the citizens of Cauldron begin shoring up their homes and businesses in preparation for the flood season. Since the town is essentially built inside a large bowl, the rainy seasons of winter can be particularly dangerous. The mouth of the dormant volcano catches the falling rain with great efficiency, and the gutters and alleyways of Cauldron quickly become filled with turbulent rivers that more often than not overflow into the streets as they drain down the inner surface of the volcano and into the central lake. This rainfall can quickly overcome the lake's drainage into the Underdark and nearby rivers. As a result, the water level slowly creeps up, flooding the lower buildings and forcing the inhabitants to flee to higher ground. Since the buildings along the lakeshore tend to be poorly constructed, and their inhabitants poor, sick, and destitute, the damage done by these yearly floods can be devastating.

After a particularly wet winter several decades ago, when the central lake's waters reached Ash Avenue and completely submerged many of the lower buildings, the town's leaders decided to do something about the recurring problem. Representatives of the churches of Pelor, Wee Jas, and Kord got together under the urging of the then-high-priestess of the church of St. Cuthbert, pooled their resources, and created several *wands of control water* to combat the next flood season. That winter, clerics from these four temples patrolled the lower streets of Cauldron and fought back the flood using the wands. The citizens were grateful for the aid, and assisted with sandbagging and shoring of buildings where they could; even with the magic wands, the flood waters could still do significant damage.

So successful were these measures that, after that flood season ended, the city of Cauldron erupted into a massive festival. In the years to follow, this grew into a tradition, the Flood Festival, beginning earlier each year until it started before the first rains fell. Each year, the clerics of the city created *wands of control water* to fight the floods, and each year the floods were controlled. For a few years, the clerics even dabbled with *scrolls of control weather*, but this option was abandoned before long because too many mishaps cropped up when lower-level clerics miscast these powerful spells.

But time breeds contentment, and the Flood Festival became too successful for its own good. As the years went by, the churches began to refine their uses of the wands and found that they could build fewer wands and still make it through the season. At the same time, the festivals grew more gaudy and extravagant. Over the past decade, the winters have been fairly mild, and it is doubtful that the lake would have flooded even if its waters weren't held back by magic. As the apparent need for protection faded, so did the city's memories of the floods of decades past, and the need for the *wands of control water* slipped.

As a result, the long-standing alliance between the four temples of Cauldron weakened. The church of Kord always balked at the cost of building the wands, and this year its priesthood turned its focus to the Flood Festival itself, organizing numerous sporting events to entertain the city. The church of Wee Jas would rather spend their efforts creating "more constructive magic items," and they too have dropped from the wand-creation program. The church of Pelor, although still supportive of the program, has a relatively small presence in Cauldron now, and last spring it lost its two most powerful priests to a tragic accident. No current member of their clergy has the expertise to build *wands of control water*.

That leaves the church of St. Cuthbert. Sarcem Delasharn, the current high priest of the temple, grew worried as the year wore on. He couldn't make enough wands himself for the festival, and certainly didn't think that the calm winters Cauldron had witnessed over the past decade would last much longer. He collected what funds he could and kept the wand shortage as low-key and secret as he could; he didn't want to distress the populace any more than necessary. After all, they might not even need the wands this year. But Sarcem wasn't willing to leave that to chance. A few weeks before the beginning of the campaign, he left Cauldron to visit Sasserine, ostensibly to take part in a two-month-long dedication of a new shrine recently constructed there, but also to engage the services of that city's clerics in the creation of eight new *wands of control water*. In his absence he named Jenya Urikas as the acting high priestess of St. Cuthbert in Cauldron.

Unfortunately, something far more sinister and dangerous than floods is brewing in Cauldron's shadows this year. Only a day away from his return

STARTING THE CHAPTER

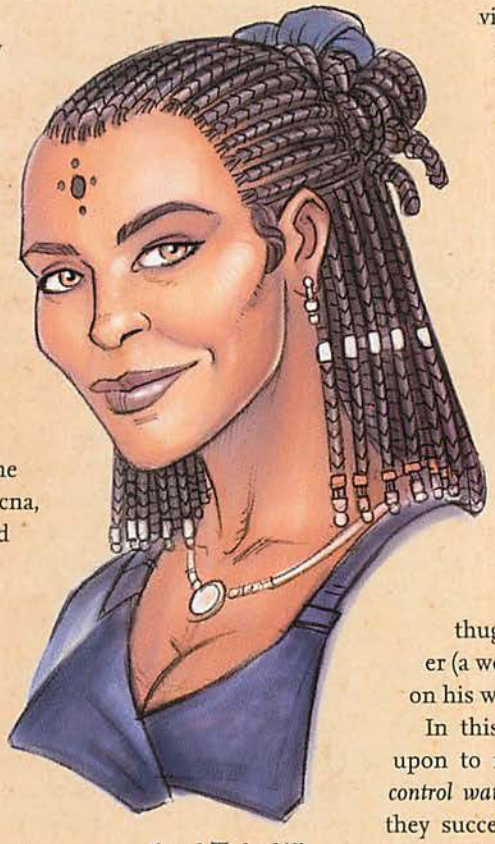
The PCs should be 4th-level when they begin this chapter. They should be well-settled into Cauldron by now, and have probably made several friends and allies of the town's citizens.

journey to Cauldron, Sarcem has stopped at a nearby roadside tavern called the Lucky Monkey to rest for the evening. Unfortunately, his activities have been watched by a sinister cult called the Ebon Triad.

The Ebon Triad is a relatively new cult comprised of heretics from the churches of Erythnul, Hextor, and Vecna. They believe that their deities represent a fragmented divinity, and that through their actions they can merge the power of their three deities into one overdeity of extreme and unimaginable power. The Ebon Triad has cells throughout the world, each working to raise funds to finance their ambitious project. The official churches of Erythnul, Vecna, and Hextor are less than pleased with the foundation of the Ebon Triad. Tradition and belief have always kept these three churches at odds with one another, and the majority of these faithful have no wish to see the glory and power of their patron deity "diluted" through mixing with "lesser" religions. The fact that their deities continue to grant spells to the cultists of the Ebon Triad is vexing and disturbing to the traditionalists, and in time these three evil churches might launch programs to put down the upstart cultists before their radical ideas gain too many more followers.

One such cell existed in the Cauldron region for many years, led by a dangerous cleric named Grehlia Cairnis. It was she the Cagewrights contacted with the task of creating the *soulcages* they needed. She and an expert blacksmith fire giant named Dugobras spent several years creating the thirteen *soulcages* (including two spares in case of unexpected emergencies) the Cagewrights paid for. Near the end, as time grew short, Grehlia called on the assistance of the three remaining members of her Triad cell: a disgraced town guard named Triel Eldurast, a secretive halfling diviner named Skaven, and a loathsome gnoll cleric named Tarkilar. Working together, the five were able to finish the last *soulcage* only a few months ago.

Grehlia particularly impressed Nulin "Fish" Wiejeron, and she immediately accepted his offer to become an apprentice Cagewright upon the completion of the final *soulcage*. She abandoned the Ebon Triad, and the fire giant Dugobras relocated to a cave near the Demonskar to pursue other goals (see Chapter Five). The remaining three members of the Cauldron Ebon Triad cell, Triel, Skaven, and Tarkilar, felt more than a little slighted at their leader's abandonment of their cause.



Annah Taskerhill

Unfortunately for them, Grehlia and Dugobras kept all the earnings from their stint with the Cagewrights. With few funds, the remaining Triad members spent several months devising a way to save up enough money to relocate to a less remote location and possibly join a different Triad cell. It was Triel who hit upon the idea of stealing the *wands of control water* and ransoming them back to Cauldron as the rains began. Skaven kept an eye on Sarcem's progress in Sasserine via *scrying* spells while Triel hired a large group of thugs to aid in stealing the wands and defending their hideout deep below Cauldron. When Sarcem began his return journey from Sasserine, Triel sent the thugs, led by her cohort Tongueater (a werebaboon) to ambush Sarcem on his way back to town.

In this chapter, the party is called upon to retrieve these eight *wands of control water* from the Ebon Triad after they successfully steal them from Sarcem, leaving the poor high priest dead in their wake.

EVENT 6: MEET THE COMPETITION (EL 7)

Word of the party's adventures in and below Cauldron, and the role they played in putting a stop to the kidnappings and the goblin vandals, has spread. Every once in a while, a commoner or shopkeeper should recognize the group and thank them profusely for their work; some shopkeepers might even go so far as to give them small discounts on their merchandise. Unfortunately, not everyone in Cauldron is pleased with the party's growing fame.

One group in particular, a band of adventurers calling themselves the "Stormblades," has taken an especially foul view of the PCs. Comprised of four local adventurers who are also all members of various noble families in Cauldron, these four young aristocrats decided to form an adventuring party to get some excitement, fame, and extra cash several months ago, and have spent those months exploring some of the less dangerous catacombs and lava tubes below the city. In particular, they recently wiped out a large tribe of pesky kobolds that had taken up residence in some old lava tubes below the southern section of Cauldron.

In any case, the news of the PCs' triumph over the slaver ring and the goblins of Drakthar's Way has all but eclipsed their less impressive accomplishments, and the Stormblades aren't happy about it. Rather than

seeking greater glories for themselves, they obsess over the PCs. As time progresses, the PCs may hear rumors that some people have been asking about them. They also might catch a glimpse of one of the Stormblades (most likely Todd Vanderboren) stalking them. Eventually, the entire group confronts the PCs as they relax at a tavern (perhaps at the Tipped Tankard) or busy themselves at market or somewhere similar; stage this event at a time when the interruption is obnoxious but not dangerous—sometime before the Flood Festival begins.

Creatures: The Stormblades merely want to harass the party and mock them publicly in an attempt to sully their prestige and reputation. If all goes according to their plan, they hope to goad the PCs into attacking them. If they're successful, the Stormblades fight back to defend themselves, but strive to do only nonlethal damage since they want to come out of the battle looking like the good guys. The city watch responds quickly to this public disturbance, since the Stormblades take care to stage their plan in a place where the city watch is never far away. Within 2d4 rounds a patrol arrives to put an end to the disturbance.

Cora Lathenmire

Annah Taskerhill is the leader of the Stormblades, if only due to her remarkable gift with words and her shocking beauty. She has a knack for knowing how to say exactly the right thing at the right time, and it's rare indeed that she is forced to pay for her own meal or room while out on the road. The other members of the Stormblades all look up to her, and without her leadership the group would quickly fall apart.

Annah is tall, with smooth dusky skin, long black hair braided into numerous cornrows, sharp features, and a great sense of fashion. She prefers to hang back in combat and encourage her three friends to fight for her with her bardic music, supporting them with her crossbow or whip as she gets the chance. Her actual feelings for the other members of the Stormblades is coldly mercenary; she sees them as little more than minions, but maintains the charade of friendship to further encourage their support. Her parents are some of Cauldron's most important nobles, and her father Ankhin is reportedly a close personal friend of the lord mayor. If Annah comes to harm, Ankhin is likely to hire assassins to seek vengeance.

Cora Lathenmire is the most quiet and bloodthirsty of the group. Quick to anger, most of the Stormblades' fights start when Cora imagines an insult directed at her or her lover, Zachary. Cora's fighting style is an unusual combination of graceful jabs and powerful stabs, she's a natural at fighting with finesse but her patience often runs out by the third round of combat, at which point she starts to utilize her Power Attack feat. As she gains levels, she learns how to focus her anger with more grace, but never fully learns to control her emotions. She has short red hair, numerous scars (mostly on her hands and forearms), and a swaggering gait. She dotes on Zachary, but thinks Todd is a coward and would like to teach him a thing or two about combat the hard way if given the opportunity. Her parents are well-known weapons traders, and employ a number of smiths in town; characters who anger her parents may find that many of Cauldron's weapons and armor dealers start charging them inflated prices.

Todd Vanderboren is the only truly evil member of the Stormblades, but he keeps the true extent of his depravity well concealed. His goal is to someday take command of the Stormblades and found a criminal syndicate. Unfortunately, he has a horrible habit of insulting anyone and everyone, then cackling loudly and mockingly at their discomfort. He's a little too thin for his frame, and his weak chin and long face make him look a bit like a weasel. His eyes are watery and his hair short and brown; his clothes are well made but he wears them without grace. He doesn't really like any of the other members of the Stormblades except Annah, with whom he's been in not-so-secret-lust for many years. He endures Zachary and Cora's presence only because Annah seems to prefer their company. Todd's real parents are dead; his adoptive parents are among Cauldron's newest nobles, and although they have tried valiantly to raise Todd right, his rebellious nature has all but exhausted their patience.

Zachary Aslaxin II is the most level-headed member of the Stormblades, perhaps because of his newfound faith in Kord. Although he has yet to fully embrace his teachings, in time Zachary might repent his callous ways and turn to a less troublesome life. He has been with Cora for several months now, since before the Stormblades were founded, but lately he's been finding her rough nature tiresome and annoying despite her continued devotion to him. Annah has increasingly caught his eye of late, and before long he plans to dump Cora to court the bard. He hasn't figured out how to do this gracefully yet, so for now he hides his feelings and bides his time. Zachary is tall and ruggedly handsome,

with a well-trimmed beard and curly dark brown hair. His parents are amongst Cauldron's nobility, and run a high-class inn named "The Coy Nixie" near the eastern gate of Cauldron.

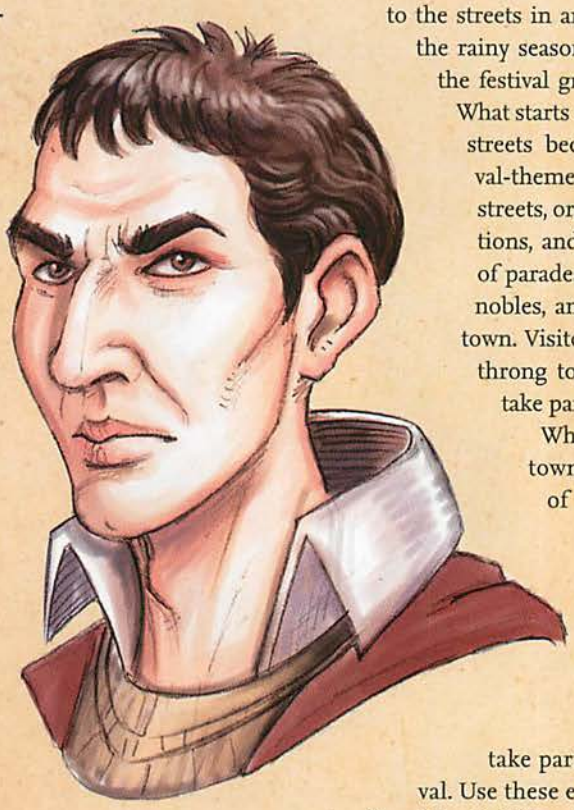
Annah Taskerhill, female human aristocrat 1/bard 3: hp 17; see Appendix 4.

Cora Lathenmire, female human aristocrat 1/swashbuckler 3: hp 33; see Appendix 4.

Todd Vanderboren, male human aristocrat 1/rogue 3: hp 22, see Appendix 4.

Zachary Aslaxin II, male human aristocrat 1/ranger 2/cleric 1: hp 18; see Appendix 4.

Development: Once the battle is over, assuming the Stormblades survive, they continue to harbor a grudge against the PCs. If they lost, the humiliation of being beaten down in a public place further enrages them; if they won, their success emboldens them and convinces them that the PCs' fame is even more misplaced. If any members of the Stormblades are wounded with real damage or killed, the survivors vow to see the player characters imprisoned. Since each member of this group is the child of an influential member of Cauldron's upper class, the Stormblades' parents are more than willing to fund legal action against the PCs on behalf of their children. If all four members are killed, their parents and the guard press for the imprisonment and possible execution of the PCs. The extent of such legal actions are beyond the scope of this adventure, but they can haunt the party throughout their entire career in Cauldron if they don't handle the situation well.



Todd Vanderboren

Although the Stormblades could pose a fairly dangerous threat to a group of four 4th-level characters, they are an intrinsically chaotic group of thugs and it won't take much to make their practiced, almost choreographed fighting teamwork fall apart if the party manages to separate them or goad one of the members into doing something foolish.

Assuming that the PCs and the Stormblades both survive this event relatively intact, the Stormblades can play an important role for the rest of the campaign, serving as foils against the characters' successes, or even eventually as their allies. Even if they don't survive, their parents are rich enough to pay for *raise dead* spells.

Ad-hoc XP Award: Award full experience points to the party if they manage to roleplay through a confrontation with the Stormblades and avoid getting into a fight with them.

EVENT 7: THE FLOOD FESTIVAL

As this chapter starts, the city of Cauldron is preparing for the Flood Festival. Before the PCs are summoned by Jenya during event 8, you should give them a few days to relax and enjoy the festival.

Traditionally, the festival begins on the first day in winter that sees any noticeable rainfall. Work comes to a sudden stop in the city on this day as the citizens flock to the streets in an impromptu celebration of the rainy season. For the next several days, the festival grows increasingly organized. What starts as impromptu parties on the streets becomes rows of Flood-Festival-themed merchant stalls lining the streets, organized games and competitions, and a seemingly endless series of parades put on by churches, guilds, nobles, and other groups throughout town. Visitors from neighboring towns throng to the streets of Cauldron to take part in the festivities.

Whenever the PCs move about town during the first sections of this adventure, make sure to impress on them the chaos and excitement that infects the city. Listed below are several sample competitions, games, and events that the PCs can take part in during the Flood Festival. Use these events as guides for creating Flood Festival fun of your own!

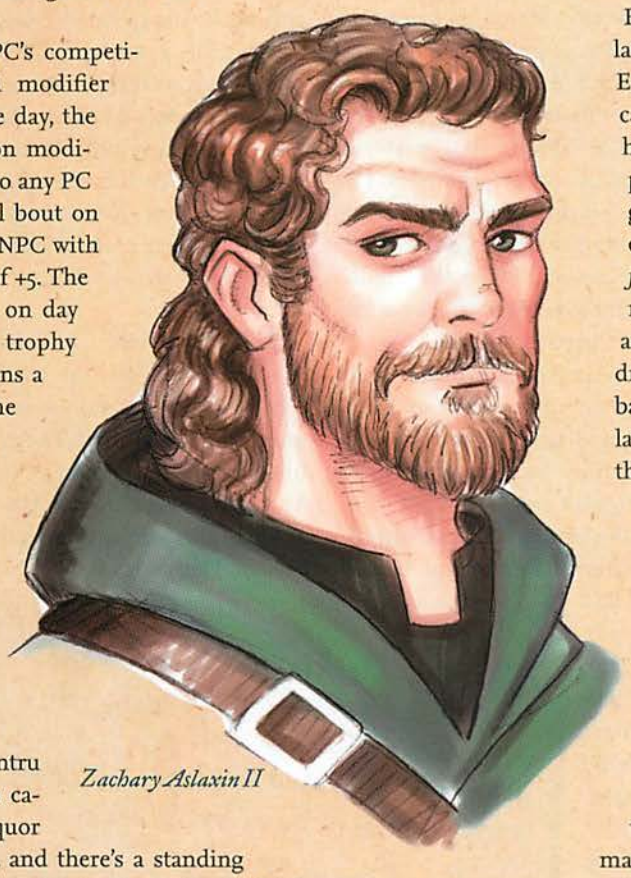
Flood Festival Sales: A fair amount of Cauldron's citizens save up their earnings over the course of the year in anticipation of the Flood Festival sales. During the festival, all of Cauldron's merchants give a discount of at least 15% off their regular prices; some merchants (like Skie of Skie's Treasuries) go as high as a 20% discount.

Drink Down the Flood!: Cauldron's taverns hold an elaborate drinking contest during the length of the festival. This contest symbolizes Cauldron's more prodigious drinkers pitching in to lessen the flood damage by drinking away the excess liquids in town—it just so happens that the contest focuses on the consumption of the alcoholic liquids. Any contestant can register for the contest at any of Cauldron's taverns on the first day of the festival by entering his name on the grand roster of contestants (kept posted on a board in front of the Tipped Tankard Tavern) and paying the entry fee of 1 gp. There are only 64 slots open for contestants, so often large groups hold mini-competitions of their own earlier in the year to select "champions."

If a character wishes to take part in this contest, he must pay the fee and register on the first day. He must

then take part in one drinking bout per day for the next six days, each of which takes about 10 minutes to settle. The character makes a series of Constitution checks while his opponent does the same, one after the other. The first check is DC 5; each additional check increases by 1. Once a contestant fails a check, he passes out and the other contestant wins the bout. If both contestants pass out, the bout is declared a draw and both contestants are out of the running. If a contestant fails to show for his scheduled bout, he is knocked out of the running as well. Each evening, the day's winners are posted, as is the schedule of who drinks against who the next day.

On the first day, the PC's competition has a Constitution modifier of +0. On each successive day, the competition's Constitution modifier increases by 1 point, so any PC who makes it to the final bout on day 6 goes up against an NPC with a Constitution modifier of +5. The winner of the final bout on day 6 not only wins a nice trophy (worth 10 gp), but also wins a 30 gp prize taken from the entry fees. (The balance of the entry fees is split evenly amongst the tavern owners who run the event.)



Zachary Aslaxin II

On the seventh day, the winner of the contest is invited to one final bout—a drinking contest with Lord Vhalantru himself. Lord Vhalantru's capacity for holding his liquor is legendary in Cauldron, and there's a standing award of 500 gp to anyone who manages to out-drink him. To date, no one's collected. This final bout is always held in the tavern of the contest winner's choice, and traditionally draws huge crowds—competition amongst tavern owners to curry the winner's favor is fierce.

Of course, Vhalantru is a beholder, and beholders are horribly difficult to get drunk. Their alien bodies process alcohol with great efficiency. If a PC takes part in this bout, roll the dice for Vhalantru and act like he's doing great. He'll never fail his check, and eventually the PC will succumb. If the PC manages to go for at least 15 rounds before passing out, though, his fame in town is assured.

A character who wins Cauldron's drinking contest gains a +2 bonus on all Diplomacy checks made against Cauldron citizens. If that character goes for at least 15 rounds with Lord Vhalantru, that bonus increases to +6.

On the chance that the PC in the contest can cope with alcohol as well as Vhalantru, the drinking contest lasts until round 50, at which point an intrigued Vhalantru declares the contest a draw. He allows the character to collect half the 500 gp award, and makes a mental note to keep one of his many eyes on him from this point onward.

Crater Lake Monster Hunt: On the second day of the Flood Festival, Bluecrater Academy holds their annual Crater Lake Monster Hunt. At sunrise, students from the university set hundreds and hundreds of tiny boats afloat on the surface of Crater Lake. During the morning hours, anyone who wants a shot at catching the monster pays a 1 sp entry fee for a wooden chit.

By noon, the surface of the lake is clogged with boats. Each of these boats is identical in shape, but one of them has a contingent illusion placed upon it—once it is grabbed and the wooden chit is fitted to its deck, a *major image* of a vast tentacled monster springs up from around the boat to flail about dramatically before crashing back into the surrounding lake. The person who fitted the chit into the boat is immediately affected by a *faerie fire* spell, and wins the hunt (and a trophy worth 10 gp).

Hundreds of people join in the Crater Lake Monster Hunt. If some of the PCs wish to take part in the hunt, you can simulate the hunt by having all PCs make DC 10 Swim checks each round. Success indicates that they can grab a boat and fit their chit to its deck. The PC should roll a d20 at this point—if he rolls a 20, he immediately rolls again (as if he were confirming a critical hit). If this second d20 roll is also a 20, he has selected the right boat and wins. When the contest begins, roll 1d10+10—the result is the amount of Swim checks (and thus the amount of tries) a character gets before someone else catches the monster.

Several dozen accomplished swimmers accompany the hunters; if a PC fails his Swim check by 5 or more and begins to drown, one of these swimmers comes to his aid and pulls the character to shore and to safety.

Street Performance: On the third day of the Festival, tradition holds that Cauldron's amateur performers get a chance to show their stuff. The streets are filled with singers, dancers, instrument players, and all manner of skilled (or not-so-skilled) performers trying to catch the eye of a potential patron.

Characters who wish to take part in this tradition need only select a section of street and start making Perform checks. The character can make ten Perform checks. If he makes at least six of these DC 20 checks, he attracts the attention of a prominent merchant or even a noble of Cauldron, and is approached with a long-term job offer. Over the next several weeks, the character must spend at least 8 hours a week working on this commissioned piece for his patron. At the end of each week, he makes a Perform check and notes the result. At the end of three months (12 Perform checks), the character tallies the total of his perform checks. If this total exceeds 200, the patron is pleased. If not, the patron is underwhelmed. He pays the PC 50 gp for his time and wants nothing more to do with him.

If pleased, the patron invites many of his associates to a private party, at which the PC is expected to perform his work. He must now make a final Perform check. He gains a cumulative +2 bonus on this check for every 10 points by which his 12 prior Perform checks exceed 200. Multiply the result of this final check by 20; the resulting number is how many gp the pleased patron pays the character for his efforts after the party.

A character who makes a DC 25 check with this final performance makes an impression on many of Cauldron's movers and shakers, and gains a +2 bonus on all Diplomacy checks and Gather Information checks made in Cauldron from this point on.

The Demonskar Ball: On the last night of the Festival, the Aslaxins hold their traditional Demonskar Ball at the Coy Nixie. This is an invitation-only event that takes place in the Nixie's large upper floor ballroom. If any of the PCs have caught Aslaxin's eye (perhaps because he noticed their street performing skills, or maybe one of the PCs did well in the drinking contest), he invites that PC and a guest. Alternately, if the PCs have tangled with the Stormblades, Aslaxin's son convinces him to invite the PCs, in hopes that the Stormblades (who will be in attendance at the ball) will get another chance to publicly humiliate and mock the party.

The ball itself is a masked costume ball. Each attendee's invitation bears one of two symbols: a mountain, or a crater. If an invitation indicates a mountain, that character and his guest are expected to come dressed as one of Cauldron's founders—the role of Surabar Spellmason is reserved for Zachary. If an invitation indicates a crater, that character and his guest are expected to come dressed as a demon. If the invitation indicates a crater with a demonic claw rising out of it, that character is expected to dress as Nabthatoron. At the start of the ball, everyone gathers at either side of the ballroom in their two groups to watch "Surabar" and "Nabthatoron" engage in a mock battle. The battle ends with "Surabar" striking "Nabthatoron" with a glowing staff, at which point the person playing "Nabthatoron" is expected to collapse. After this, Zachary Aslaxin removes his mask and helps "Nabthatoron" back to his feet and reveals who he had chosen to play the role. The gala then becomes a more traditional costumed ball—often, the person who played "Nabthatoron" finds himself at the center of attention.

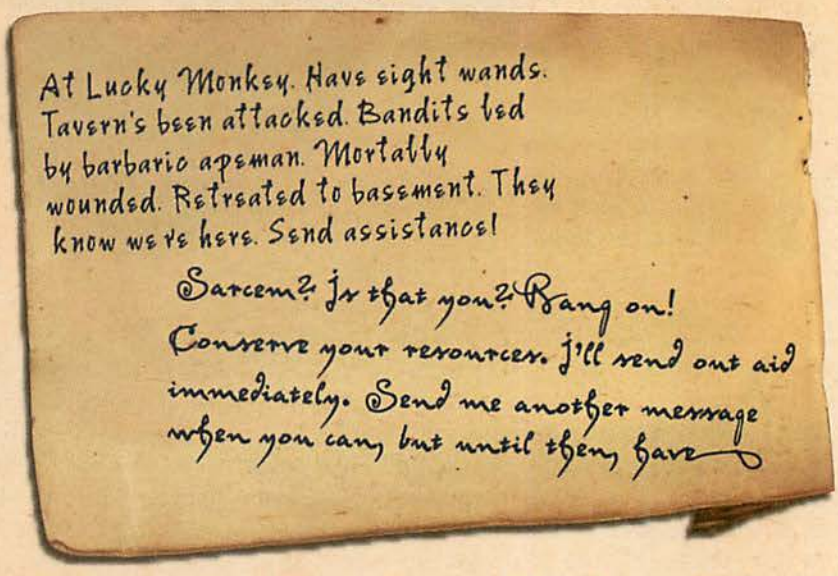
Of course, if the PCs are invited, you should have one of them receive the Nabthatoron invitation!

Booth Games: Numerous idle booth games are available at the many street vendors in town. Each of these games costs 1 sp to play. These games are either tests of Strength or tests of Dexterity. To play the game, the character makes a DC 20 ability check of the appropriate type. Success indicates he wins a minor prize worth 5 gp. If he beats this check by 10, he wins a grand prize worth 1d6×5 gp. Once a character wins five grand prizes, word of his skill spreads and the booth merchants won't allow him to play anymore.

EVENT 8: SARCEM'S SENDING

At some point after the Flood Festival begins, the PCs receive an urgent summons from Jenya Urikas at the temple of St. Cuthbert. The message says that she's been in contact with high priest Sarcem Delasharn and that he needs immediate assistance.

When the party arrives at the Church of St. Cuthbert, they find Jenya in a state of panic. She quickly ushers the PCs into a side room while worshipers and acolytes look on worriedly. Once the PCs and Jenya are in a private area, she confides to them that she just received a terribly disturbing message from Sarcem Delasharn, the high priest of the church. He sent the message via a *sending* spell to Jenya; she wrote down the message and her reply as soon as she was able and passes the hastily scribbled note to the party for them to examine.



When the PCs have read the note, Jenya tells them she meant to tell Sarcem to "have faith," but she ran out of room and the response was sent. Since the *sending*, Jenya

has grown distraught. Aside from agonizing over the fact that she didn't plan her *sending* response that well, she's sure that each passing minute puts Sarcem in greater peril. She briefly contemplated riding out to save him herself, but she can't leave the church unattended; if a disaster struck the city and the church was needed, Sarcem would never forgive her. So she turned to the PCs.

She asks them to ride out to the Lucky Monkey immediately to save Sarcem. She's willing to answer a few questions before the PCs leave; likely questions and her answers are given below.

What/where is the Lucky Monkey? "The Lucky Monkey is a roadside tavern about a day's ride northwest of Cauldron. It's a convenient rest stop for travelers on the northwest road, and a popular place with the local lumberjacks." Jenya can provide a map of the Cauldron region that shows the route to the Lucky Monkey.

Can you come with us to the Lucky Monkey? "I cannot accompany you, even though I desperately want to. Alas, I must remain in Cauldron and tend to the church and any emergencies that might arise."

Can you send any help with us? "I can send Rufus, but Alek is tending to another urgent matter in Redgorge and cannot be reached in time." She refuses to go into any more detail about Alek's activities in Redgorge, since she doesn't want to spread rumors of government corruption until she's sure such corruption exists. Rufus Laro hasn't gained any experience levels since the PCs rescued him at the start of Chapter One; he won't be much help to them as a result, but if the PCs accept the offer, his stats can be found in Appendix 4.

What was Sarcem talking about when he mentioned the wands? "Sarcem purchased eight *wands of control water* during this trip to Sasserine; these wands are used to help control the waters of the central lake during the rainy season. Since the flood seasons have been minor over the last several years, and the other three churches have lost interest in providing the time and effort to build wands this year, he was forced to go to Sasserine to procure them. It is vital that the wands get back to Cauldron before the flood season starts."

Who do you think assaulted the Lucky Monkey? "I have no idea. I've heard rumors of bandits operating in the area, but an assault on the Lucky Monkey makes no sense. The owners aren't particularly wealthy, and bandits have never attacked any established structures in the region for as long as I can remember."

What's in it for us? Naturally, Jenya hopes that the PCs agree to ride to Sarcem's aid out of a sense of compassion, but she understands if they take a more mercenary angle to her request. She offers a reward of 5,000 gp (total, not per PC) if they can save Sarcem and return the wands to her.

If the party needs mounts, Jenya can arrange for a number of riding horses for them. She also provides each PC with a *potion of cure moderate wounds* taken from the church's supply. She urges them to make haste to the Lucky Monkey; Sarcem is a fairly powerful cleric and he wouldn't call for help like this unless he were in dire peril. Jenya tries to arrange for a patrol of city guards to head out to the Lucky Monkey as well, but wading through the red tape might take some time... time Sarcem doesn't have.

DEATH AT THE LUCKY MONKEY

Unfortunately, no matter how fast the PCs are, they are too late to help Sarcem. The cleric has been killed by the werebaboon Tongueater and his minions, and the villains are now busy looting the place and recovering from the battle. The wands themselves are already in the Ebon Triad's clutches below. While they do expect travelers to continue to stop by, and planned to set up a few of their number as fake employees to turn away such visitors as needed, they think that their actions have gone unnoticed and are not expecting retaliation this soon.

If the PCs think ahead, they can secure maps of the Lucky Monkey in Cauldron before they leave. The Lucky Monkey is a popular place to stay for travelers along the northwest road, so securing a map of the roadhouse is fairly easy. If the PCs find a map, you can provide them with a copy of the inn's map.

Likewise, the PCs can obtain a copy of a map of the region surrounding Cauldron from Jenya or, barring that, from any number of merchants in town for a mere 15 gp. A PC who succeeds at a DC 15 bardic knowledge or Knowledge (geography) check knows enough about the region that he can draft his own copy of this map. The map only shows relative positions of areas of interest. The Lucky Monkey (as well as the three frontier villages of Kingfisher Hollow, Hollowsky, and Redgorge) are all approximately 24 miles away from Cauldron. For more information about the Cauldron region, consult the Introduction.

Apart from encounters with local wildlife, the most disturbing thing that happens on the trip to the Lucky Monkey might even go unnoticed by some parties. At several points during the journey through the lowlands, they pass within a few hundred feet of several large troops of baboons. Allow characters a DC 23 Spot check (or DC 18 if the character has the wild empathy special ability) as they do; success indicates that character notices the baboons become quiet and still as the group passes. Dozens of sinister black eyes follow their progress until the PCs are a bit down the road, at which time the baboons resume their normal behavior. A typical troop of baboons numbers about 30, and they defend themselves and their territory with great ferocity if threatened.

THE LUCKY MONKEY

The Lucky Monkey sits to the east of the road, partially surrounded by the dense jungle. The building is old and well used—the chimneys stained with soot, the roof sagging, the wood siding weathered and stained from last year's mildew. A smaller stable stands to the building's side in a similar condition. The building's façade sports numerous carved wooden monkeys, many of whom are engaged in risky, death-defying

stunts. In one, a wooden monkey balances on a narrow tree branch to get a banana hanging over a sleeping tiger; in another, a monkey sits on a boulder completely unaware that a poacher sneaking up behind him was suddenly attacked and eaten by an ankheg.

Once the PCs get closer to the building, they immediately recognize that something dreadful has happened at the roadhouse. Here, a broken window yawns open. There, a spray of blood glistens against the wall. Crushed plants and churned up earth fill the space between the façade and the road. Then there's the harsh sound of construction... or more likely, destruction, coming from the building's interior.

Although several bandits still lurk in the Lucky Monkey when the party arrives, they are not in the best condition to defend their ill-gotten gains. Triel led the attack on the tavern. Once she made sure that Sarcem was dead and that she had the *wands of control water*, she left for her headquarters below Cauldron, leaving Tongueater and the rest of her minions behind to scrounge what wealth they could from the place and finish off the last few survivors. She doesn't expect her cohort to return to the cult headquarters for a few days.

The majority of the villains encountered in this chapter (including the hillfolk and Alleybashers) have been at the alcohol stores; as a result they are all rather drunk. As long as they remain drunk (approximately 2 hours after they realize they're under attack), the bandits suffer a –2 circumstance penalty on all attack rolls, saving throws, and skill checks. Defeating a drunk bandit is much easier than defeating a sober one, so you should reduce the XP award for such defeats by 50%. Likewise, the ELs given in encounters with drunk bandits is generally 1 lower than it should be; if the PCs give the bandits time to sober up, these encounters become more difficult.

Should the bandits discover they're under attack, they try to rally, but their drunken state fills them with false bravado. Rather than forming an organized defense, they tend to hit the party in small groups of three or four. As they search the roadhouse for the PCs, keep in mind that their drunkenness impacts their skill checks, saves, and attack rolls.

Sturdy wooden shutters cover both ground and second floor windows of the inn. The shutters were closed for the night when the bandits attacked, and the intruders have left them closed and locked. Breaking or forcing the shutters automatically alerts those in the room beyond that someone is attempting a forced entry.

Locked Shutters: 1 in. thick; Hardness 5; hp 10; Open Locks DC 15; Break DC 13.

Wooden Doors: 2 in. thick; Hardness 5; hp 15; Open Locks DC 20; Break DC 18.

OUTSIDE THE LUCKY MONKEY

The encounters in this section refer to the map of the Lucky Monkey and surrounding area.

1. THE LUCKY MONKEY

The bandits have locked the front doors (Open Locks DC 28) and propped a ruined table against them in an attempt to further block the doors from outside intruders. Unfortunately, the drunken bandits neglected to note the fact that the doors open outward, so once the doors are unlocked, it's a simple matter to pull them open and then push aside the table as a standard action.

2. STABLES

The stables can house up to twenty-four horses, although at the time the bandits struck the building held only fourteen. These horses have fled the stables, driven to terror by the lycanthrope's proximity.

3. SIDE ENTRANCE

These exterior doors to the Lucky Monkey have been locked (Open Locks DC 28) and barricaded with a desk in the same inefficient manner as the front doors.

4. SERVICE ENTRANCE

Tongueater has converted the kitchen into his base of operations in the Lucky Monkey. Unlike his drunken minions, he's barricaded the service entrance more efficiently. Not only are the doors locked (Open Locks DC 28), but a stout length of wood has been jammed through the door's inside handles, forming an impromptu bar. Once the service doors are unlocked, a successful DC 20 Strength check is required to break the doors open.

5. HUNGRY WILDLIFE (EL 5)

After the slaughter of the Lucky Monkey's guests and employees, Tongueater and his bandits hauled the bodies out to the edge of the jungle behind the roadhouse and stacked them here. The morbid mound of corpses numbers fifteen in all. The bandits have already looted the bodies thoroughly.

Creatures: The mound of bodies quickly drew the attention of local scavengers and predators, but they were chased off by the arrival of a pair of hungry deinonychuses. The dinosaurs have claimed the mound of bodies as their own and currently chew away at them contentedly. They attack any creature that attacks them or approaches within 20 feet of their feast.

Deinonychuses (2): hp 34; *Monster Manual* 60.

INSIDE THE LUCKY MONKEY

The interior of the Lucky Monkey is comfortable, but most of it has been savaged by the bandits in their search for loot and booze. Most of the rooms have windows for light; after dark, lanterns and candles served to light the place. Throughout the roadhouse, the motif of lucky monkeys can be seen. For example, the mantles of the carved stone fireplaces feature numerous monkeys cavorting through trap-filled passageways.

M1. COMMON ROOM (EL 5)

Ruined tavern tables, bloodstains, torn-up floorboards, and general wreckage dominate this once-cozy tavern room.

Creatures: Although many of the bandits Triel hired are simple thugs recruited from bandit camps hidden throughout the surrounding hills, a similar number consists of Alleybashers, a group of rogues from Cauldron recently fallen on hard times due to the Last Laugh's rising dominance over the city's crime scene. The Alleybashers think of the hillfolk as little more than mongrels and often try to order them around. For their part, the hillfolk detest being told what to do by "city folk", and minor fights between the two groups are common.

Four hillfolk and two Alleybashers drink and carouse here.

Nather, Terney, Lence, and Jendy, hillfolk (4): hp 19 each; see Appendix 4.

Nathilie and Feristin, Alleybashers (2): hp 14 each; see Appendix 4.

M2–4. PRIVATE BOOTHS (EL 3)

These smaller rooms were rented out to larger parties for private dining or meetings.

Creatures: One of the hillfolk and a curious Alleybasher have retreated to area **M3** for a more private place to explore their unexpected interests in each other. They are unlikely to immediately notice the sounds of combat in the main room.

Pierto, hillfolk: hp 19; see Appendix 4.

Bria, Alleybasher: hp 14; see Appendix 4.

M5. STAIRS

This flight of stairs leads up to area **M31** of the upper floor.

M6. STAGE (EL 1)

This raised platform is arranged like a stage; two large chairs sit against the walls before an extraordinarily large fireplace. Ashes have been scattered across the floor, and the fireplace itself is in ruins—large holes are smashed in the sides and back of it and crumbled bricks lie stacked haphazardly to the side.

Creature: A semiconscious bandit lies in one of the chairs here. She rouses in 1d4 rounds if combat erupts in area **M1**.

Corene, Hillfolk: hp 19; see Appendix 4.

M7. BAR

The flight of stairs behind the bar leads up to area **M28**.

M8–9. RESTROOMS

The doors to each of these restrooms can be locked from the inside. Tongueater currently holds the keys to open these locks; if any of the PCs are captured, the bandits turn these rooms into impromptu jail cells.

M10. TRAVELER'S ENTRANCE

Most travelers, after leaving their horses in the nearby stable, entered the Lucky Monkey via this door and arranged for rooms with a receptionist here.

M11. NIGHTCLERK'S QUARTERS

This room served as the personal quarters of the Lucky Monkey's night clerk.

M12. ROOM KEY STORAGE

This room contains a large ruined chest of drawers that once contained copies of keys for all the rooms on the upper floor. The bandits smashed the drawers apart and took the keys to aid in their search.

M13. STOREROOM

This large room is a complete mess; it was used to store everything from firewood to bed linens to lamp oil to lumber.

M14. RECORDS ROOM/LIBRARY

Cabinets and shelves line the walls of this room; additional free-standing shelves clutter the central portion. Most of them have been knocked over, and scrolls, papers, and books are scattered across the floor.

This room contained reading material for use by the Lucky Monkey's guests. It also held old guest books and other records kept by the roadhouse.

M15. CHAPEL TO FHARLANGHN

Once a comfortable, well-tended, and cozy chapel, this chamber now lies in ruins. Shattered chairs and torn-up swaths of carpet clutter the floor, and holes have been knocked in the walls. Even the altar has been smashed to splinters.

Funding for the Lucky Monkey's construction was partially provided by the church of Fharlanghn, on the condition that a small chapel dedicated to the Dweller on the Horizon is maintained on site. The caretaker of the shrine was a half-elf named Shensen, now the only survivor of Triel and Tongueater's attack on the Lucky Monkey (see area **M43**).

M16. PRIVATE LOUNGE

This lounge was used by the employees of the Lucky Monkey to relax, game, and eat.

M17. SHENSEN'S ROOM

This room looks like it once served as a combination lounge, library, conservatory, and bedroom. Unfortunately, it's now in the same condition as the rest of this place—in ruins. The bed's mattress is torn into tatters, a small upright piano lies in fragments against the southern wall, and pieces of furniture lie in heaps on the floor.

This is where Shensen Tesserill, the Lucky Monkey's current keeper of the Chapel of Fharlanghn, lived. She preferred to spend most of her time outside and was returning from a walk when the bandits attacked. She is the only survivor of the bandit attack and has barricaded herself in the well room (area **M43**).

M18–19. EMPLOYEE QUARTERS

The waitresses, cooks, bartenders, and chambermaids employed by the Lucky Monkey lived in these rooms.

M20. GARDENING SUPPLIES

This room contains numerous gardening tools, along with a tiny bunk used by the Lucky Monkey's groundskeeper.

M21. COURTYARD (EL 6)

This central courtyard looks like it escaped the devastation that has been visited upon the rest of the roadhouse. Trees and flowerbeds accent the area, and a white gravel path winds past a pair of marble fountains that bear intricate carvings of monkeys taunting all manner of strange monsters.

While the bandits have left this area untouched, most of Tongueater's baboon minions have settled into the courtyard.

Creatures: Five hill baboons lurk in the courtyard. The baboons are loyal to Tongueater and won't attack him or anyone wearing a red sash on their wrist. The thugs and Alleybashers (all human men and women) are careful to always wear these sashes when they're around the savage creatures

Hill Baboons (5): hp 22; see Appendix 4.

Tactics: The baboons attack anyone in the room who doesn't wear a red sash. They fight fiercely until slain.

Development: If a PC manages to *charm* or *dominate* one of the baboons, it can provide some information if a *speak with animals* spell is used. A captive baboon "speaks" glowingly about its great ape leader (a reference to Tongueater), and mentions that he currently resides in the man-food room (a reference to the kitchen—area **M27**). A baboon can describe Tongueater in vague terms, but it always describes his baboon form. A friendly baboon also mentions its leader's metal "tooth" (a reference to the lycanthrope's falchion). The baboons don't remember Triel much beyond her armor and bright red hair and don't volunteer information about her unless specifically asked if the great ape leader serves another.

M22. BANQUET HALL

This room was rented to host banquets for large groups of important visitors. The stairs ascend to the second floor.

M23. STOREROOM

Cleaning supplies are kept here.

M24. PREPARATION ROOM

This room was used to prepare dinners for the banquet hall.

M25. MEETING ROOM

This small office was used by the employees for meetings.

M26. TREASURY

Five large iron safes sit against the opposite wall—each of them hanging open and empty. A desk against the wall to the south lies on its side, its front smashed in and its mundane contents strewn about the place.

The door to this room is completely battered down. Several large safes held the monetary holdings of the Lucky Monkey; the Alleybashers have already cracked these safes and consolidated the money in the kitchen (area **M27**).

M27. KITCHEN (EL 7)

This large room was obviously the roadhouse's kitchen. The large metal tables for food preparation have all been pushed against the walls, leaving the firepit in the center of the room isolated. Impressive stacks of coins, paintings, silverware, bottles of wine, and other costly-looking treasures lie near the firepit in organized piles.

The bandits decided to make this room their base of operations. The stairs lead up to area **M30**, and a broken-down door below them leads to a flight of stairs heading to the basement.

Creatures: Tongueater is here, busily counting the loot his minions have gathered so far, or cursing and mocking Sarcem's severed and tongueless head. Three hill baboons lurk in the room as well; they fight to the death to defend their beloved master.

Tongueater is a half-orc who prefers to spend most of his time in hybrid form. In this form, his face and snout are baboonish, complete with large, razor-sharp fangs. A large mane of black hair sprouts from his head, and he is quite fond of facial warpaint, body piercings (mostly of bone or metal jewelry), and decorative, self-inflicted scar patterns. His studded leather armor is tailored to fit him in half-orc or hybrid form, but if he assumes baboon form the armor falls off.

Tongueater, male half-orc werebaboon barbarian 3: hp 41; see Appendix 4.

Hill Baboons (3): hp 22; see Appendix 4.

Tactics: The bandits in area **M38** arrive in 3 rounds to aid Tongueater if they hear the sounds of battle in the kitchen. Although Tongueater ignores the sounds of fighting in other rooms (the hillfolk and Alleybashers often get into scuffles), if he hears the sound of combat in a nearby room last for longer than four rounds he comes to investigate.

Tongueater prefers to fight in hybrid form. He can be quite devastating with his falchion in combat, and generally focuses his attentions on the most heavily armored enemy he can see.

Treasure: Tongueater has spread out the collected loot from the Lucky Monkey on a large table and sorts through it, piling it into large leather sacks for transport back to Triel's lair in the Kopru Ruins. The loot consists of 2,680 cp, 1,953 sp, 742 gp, 18 pp, and 4,500 gp worth of various art objects (paintings, sculptures, silverware, wine, and so forth) weighing a total of 120 pounds. This loot belongs to the murdered guests and employees of the Lucky Monkey. Tracking down the families of the victims is a daunting task, and few would fault the PCs if they keep the loot.

One final item of note to be found here is Sarcem's severed head (the rest of his body can be found in the basement). Tongueater has mounted this grisly trophy on the wall and has eaten its tongue.

Development: Tongueater is fanatically loyal to Triel, and interrogations of the werebaboon are difficult. See Event 9 for more details on what can be learned from the lycanthrope if he's taken prisoner and successfully interrogated.

M28. STAIRS

These stairs descend to area **M7**.

M29. BRIDGE

This bridge leads over the courtyard below and allows the cooks to move between the bar and kitchen without disrupting the guests in the courtyard. It arcs 10 feet over the ground below.

M30. STAIRS

These stairs descend to area **M27**.

M31. STAIRS

These stairs descend to area **M5**.

M32. FLOPROOM

This large room contains several bunks for travelers on a tight budget.

M33. GUEST ROOMS (EL 4 OR 7)

Several bandits are in the process of looting and destructively searching these rooms.

Creatures: Two of these rooms (determined randomly when the PCs arrive) each contain a group of two thugs and two Alleybashers busy dismantling the place looking for loot. If one group of four bandits is attacked and they call for help, the second group of four comes to their aid if they hear the cries.

Shanni, Rollin, Wart, and Daniki, hillfolk (4): hp 19; see Appendix 4.

Chana, Dantiano, Chuto, and Lystiviny, Alleybashers (4): hp 14; see Appendix 4.

M34. GUEST LOUNGE

This room gave guests a quiet place to relax or play cards away from the hustle and bustle of the common room downstairs.

M35–36. BATHS

Each of these rooms contains a large round tub and a cabinet containing towels, scented oils, and soaps.

M37. HIGH CLASS GUEST ROOMS

These four guest rooms were fairly extravagant before the bandits took them apart.

M38. ORIN'S BEDROOM (EL 4)

This large room looks like a combination office, lounge, and bedroom. At one point, several wooden panels could be moved to separate the room into smaller areas, but they, like most of the other furniture in this room, have been smashed.

The one-time owner of the Lucky Monkey, a human expert named Orin Marsh, lived in and ran his business from this large combination bedroom and office.

Creatures: A group of two hillfolk and an Alleybasher are still busy tearing this room apart.

- **Teruch and Ilsawyn, hillfolk (2):** hp 19; see Appendix 4.
- **Paldi, Alleybasher:** hp 14; see Appendix 4.

Development: These bandits rush down the stairs to aid Tongueater if they hear sounds of battle or cries for help coming from the kitchen.

M39. BATTLEFIELD (EL 5)

This room is dominated by several large tanks, kegs, and other brewing equipment. The tanks are now empty and hacked to pieces, and the floor is a stinking morass of muddy earth soaked with a mixture of beer, mead, and blood. A terrible battle must have taken place here.

Sarcem and several others made a final stand in this chamber. Most of the bodies (including those of fallen bandits) were taken away to be piled at the edge of the jungle behind the roadhouse, but Tongueater was particularly angry with Sarcem, who put up quite a fight. The high priest's mutilated body lies slumped against the base of a battered keg, the head missing completely. After being burned by Sarcem's magic mace, Tongueater decided to leave the body's gear intact until he was ready to return to Cauldron.

Creatures: Three bandits and two Alleybashers have gathered near the passageway opposite the stairs, trying to come up with a safe way to batter down the door at the far end without getting too close to the deadly barricade (see area **M42**). An earlier attempt to burn the door down resulted in disaster.

Nisty, Moruka, and Lakus, hillfolk (3): hp 19; see Appendix 4.

Arn and Ildawyn, Alleybashers (2): hp 14; see Appendix 4.

Treasure: Sarcem's bloody hand still grips his *+1 holy light mace*. His other gear consists of a suit of *+1 banded mail*, three empty potion bottles, a *ring of protection +1*, and a *periapt of Wisdom +2*. There is no sign of the *wands of control water* he was bringing to Cauldron.

Development: These bandits rush up the stairs to aid Tongueater if they hear sounds of battle or cries for help coming from the kitchen.

M40. WINE CELLAR

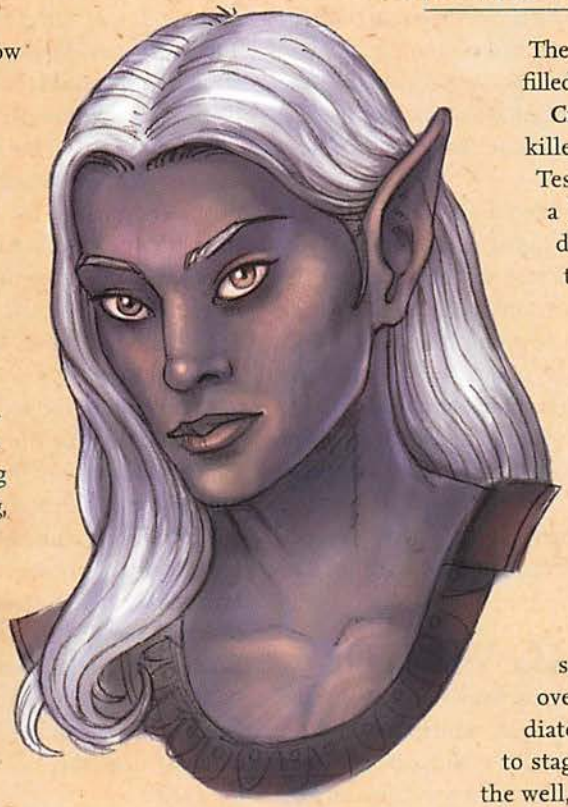
This room contains several (now empty) wine racks.

M41. FRUIT CELLAR

This room contains fruit and vegetables, although most have been cast carelessly to the dirt floor by bandits searching for treasure.

M42. COLD STORAGE

This room feels moist and humid. Several sides of meat hang from hooks set into the ceiling, and a number of storage bins line the west wall. The far end of the room is empty except for an open metal box lying on its side; the box is lined with slowly melting frost. A large sign hangs near the door, its bold red letters reading, "NO FIRE BEYOND THIS POINT!"



Shensen Tesseril

This room was used to store meat and other perishables; the room itself was kept cold by a small container of brown mold (see page 117 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide*) kept in a sealed metal box at the far end of the room. Shensen used the box of mold to create a barricade; the room is still cool, but not quite as cold as area **M43**.

M43. WELL ROOM (EL 2)

The door at the end of the hall is a solid, iron-reinforced wooden door that bulges at the seams, almost as if the wood had melted and expanded to clog its frame. The iron bands that reinforce the door are caked with frost, as are the bodies of three thugs who lie huddled on the ground before it. One of the bodies grips an extinguished torch.

The unusual warping of the door is the result of Shensen's use of *wood shape*; a DC 22 Spellcraft check reveals this fact. The three dead Alleybashers who lie on the ground before the door were killed by the trap when they tried to burn the door down.

Warped Wooden Door: 2 in. thick; Hardness 5; hp 20; Break DC 24.

Assuming the party can get by this door and the Trap, read them the following text.

The temperature in this room is near freezing. A thin layer of frost coats the floor and walls of the northern portion of the room. A low, circular well sits in the center of the room, its mouth partially covered by a few planks of wood.

The well is 30 feet deep, and filled with 10 more feet of water.

Creature: When Sarcem was killed by Tongueater, Shensen Tesseril knew she had only a few seconds to live if she didn't think fast. She ran to the cold storage room, grabbed the metal box of brown mold, then fled to this room. She sealed the door with a *wood shape* as the bandits were finishing off Sarcem, and then threw the metal box at the door from across the room. It burst open as it hit, scattering brown mold all over the door and the immediate area. She then managed to stagger over to huddle behind the well, where she now waits, hoping to survive the night long enough to heal herself and escape.

Shensen has long silver hair, dusky skin, and is nimble and athletic, although she is currently in poor shape from her fight with Tongueater and his goons. As a child, she was raised in a monastery and trained as a monk. When her elders turned away a wounded bard who sought protection from wrongful punishment at the hands of an angry mob, she went against the wishes of her elders and let the bard into the monastery through a secret door. When her actions were discovered, the monks turned the bard over to the mob (which quickly lynched him) and exiled Shensen. The experience left her embittered toward the overly ordered and detached lifestyle of the monk, and although she retains some of the training she gained at the monastery, she never returned to that lifestyle. Instead, she became an explorer and wandering storyteller, combining the social graces of a minstrel with a reverence for nature. Eventually, she encountered the Striders of Fharlanghn and joined their ranks, and for the past year she's been

the attendant caretaker of the chapel of Fharlanghn at the Lucky Monkey.

Shensen can become one of the party's most supportive allies throughout the course of this adventure. Her good word goes a long way with Meerthan, should the party wish to join the Striders of Fharlanghn at a later date. She is more than willing to donate her skills, spells, and knowledge to the party for their use, and may even fall in love with a PC of similar interests or skills to her own.

Shensen Tesseril, female half-drow monk 2/bard 1/druid 3: hp 29(currently 2); see Appendix 4.

Trap: The 5-foot squares to either side of the door to this room are thick with brown mold. Opening the door instantly exposes the character before it to the mold.

Brown Mold: CR 2; 3d6 nonlethal cold damage within 5 feet; fire brought within 5 feet doubles its size; can be destroyed by cold damage (see the *Dungeon Master's Guide* 76).

Development: If rescued, Shensen is grateful, but her first order of business is to contact her mentor Meerthan Eliothlorn and inform him of the attack on the Lucky Monkey. She asks to travel with the party back to town, and promises not to forget the aid the PCs gave her. Some time after she reports to Meerthan (no more than a day after the PCs return to Cauldron), she returns to the group and rewards them with a pair of *boots of striding and springing*, given to her by Meerthan as thanks for her rescue.

Ad-Hoc Experience Award: If the party rescues Shensen, award them experience points as if they had defeated her in combat.

The Missing Wands

With Sarcem murdered and the *wands of control water* nowhere to be seen, the PCs must return to Cauldron with empty hands. As they do, the clouds above gather and the rain begins to fall, first in big wet drops and by the time they return to town, in miserable sheets. The mood in the city has dampened as well, as an undercurrent of tension spreads through the citizenry. Rumors that the *wands of control water* used to hold the floodwaters at bay are lost spread, and the churches of Cauldron do little to refute this gossip.

Over the next several days, the rainstorms continue. They relent for a few hours each day, but it soon becomes clear that this will be a wet winter. As the days go by, the Flood Festival begins to lose steam. The relentless rainstorms depress the public, and the inexorable rise of the water level begins to worry them. If the *wands of control water* are not recovered quickly, flooding and riots become real dangers to the people of Cauldron. You should time the rise of the waters to provide a constant growing threat in the background. Use them to keep the PCs focused on their task, but not to punish them. Crater Lake has several natural drains into the Underdark and also out the side of the volcano into a number of surrounding rivers, so it won't overflow overnight. Most of the buildings around the lakeshore are built on stilts to avoid minor floods, but if the party takes too long to recover the wands, not even these measures can save the lower quarters of the city from flooding.

Event 9: Hunting for the Wands

The PCs should return to the Church of St. Cuthbert and report their findings to Jenya. After a brief moment of despair upon learning of Sarcem's death, her tearing eyes fill with a steely resolve. She's just become the high priestess of the church, and full authority to act on the situation is hers and hers alone. If she promised to reward the PCs with money for their rescue attempt, she points out that the group has yet to retrieve the wands, and until they do so, their reward stays in the temple treasury. She hopes that she won't have to resort to such tactics to enlist the party's aid in recovering the wands, of course. If the PCs have it, she requests the return of Sarcem's holy mace, which is actually the property of the church and the badge of office of the new high priest or priestess. She does allow them to keep his other possessions if they brought his body back for proper interment in the church's burial catacombs. If they PCs left the body behind, Jenya sends a pair of acolytes to retrieve it.

At this point, the recovery of the *wands of control water* should become the party's primary goal. They likely have no idea where the wands have been taken, but fortunately several leads present themselves. These various leads are outlined below. Searching for these clues is difficult and time consuming. Researching a specific lead should take, on average, 4 hours of work. Jenya encourages the PCs to seek out the wands, but she is just as adamant that someone seek justice for Sarcem. If the PCs don't suggest casting *speak with dead* on his body, Jenya brings it up the following day, tracking the PCs down, if necessary, so they can observe the casting of the spell.

Divination Magic: If a PC wishes to use a spell that the party doesn't have access to but that Jenya can cast, she gladly casts the spell for them for free if the request is brought to her attention.

Divination: If the PCs cannot cast this spell, Jenya can cast it using the *Star of Justice*. If the PCs ask her to perform a *divination* about the current situation, she gladly does so. You should allow the PCs to come up with the question, and frame the answer such that it steers them toward a local fence named Artus (see event 10); this way the party can approach Artus for information rather than waiting for him to come to them. Doing so catches Artus off guard. As a result, he hasn't had time to properly work up a price for his services and only charges the PCs 300 gp for the information.

Locate Object: The *wands of control water* are kept in various rooms in the Kopru Ruins, deep below Cauldron. Success shows that the wands are deep underground, approximately 550 feet beneath the western gate. Unfortunately, this spell doesn't provide directions on how to

reach this apparently inaccessible location, and keep in mind that lower-level casters might be out of range of the wands' location when they cast the spell, depending on where the spell is used.

Speak with Animals/Speak with Plants: If the PCs use this spell to interrogate the local flora and fauna near the Lucky Monkey, there's a 5% chance that the animal or plant can provide a rough description of Triel ("bright red hair and face marks and shiny spiky metal skin"). Any of the hill baboons located in the Lucky Monkey can provide this description automatically, assuming their savage, hungry natures can be quelled long enough for a decent conversation.

Speak with Dead: The party can use this spell to interrogate fallen bandits or Tongueater without having to resort to Intimidate checks. Of course, their bodies probably gain a saving throw to avoid the spell, and the answers are often cryptic, unclear, or repetitive. More importantly, the party can use this spell to speak with Sarcem's head, although his mutilated state incurs a 50% chance of outright spell failure with each casting. A failed casting does not count against the limit of one use of *speak with dead* on a body for a week. Sarcem can provide a description of Triel, and even verify that Triel took the wands from his body just before Tongueater cut off his head.

Ebon Triad Symbol: If the PCs recovered Tongueater's unholy symbol, they'll have a clue as to the nature of their enemy. The symbol is a triangle of wood, painted black and with tiny shapes carved into each point: a hand gripping an eyeball, six arrows in an X-shape, and a wrathful demonic face. A DC 10 Knowledge (religion) check is enough to identify these smaller shapes as the unholy symbols of Vecna, Hextor, and Erythnul, respectively. A DC 25 Knowledge (religion) check is required to learn that this particular symbol is the symbol of the Ebon Triad, a group of heretics from these three churches who seek to merge their three malign deities into one powerful Overdeity of unsurpassed malevolence. Unfortunately, no known cultists of the Ebon Triad (or of Vecna, Hextor, or Erythnul, for that matter) dwell in Cauldron. If such individuals do live here, they have masked their agendas well.

Interrogating Prisoners: The PCs might have managed to capture one or more bandits at the Lucky Monkey. They are not too loyal, and once captured their attitude becomes unfriendly. A successful DC 15 Diplomacy or Intimidate check is enough to get them talking—they're quite afraid that their roles in the assassination of a prominent local figure might get them executed. Unfortunately, interrogating them yields little useful information. They were all hired by Triel from the alleys of Cauldron or the surrounding environs, but none of them have been to (or even suspect the existence of) the Kopru Ruins under Cauldron. They can provide a detailed description of Triel, though, and know that their mission was to provide support for Tongueater, who had been charged with Sarcem's assassination and the theft of some magic items he was carrying.

Tongueater knows quite a bit more—he's actually been to the Kopru Ruins several times and knows about the secret entrance to the lava tube that leads to the ruins. It is unlikely that he can be captured alive, though, since he is fanatic and fights to the death. If captured he remains hostile, and requires a DC 25 Diplomacy check or a successful Intimidate check to make him admit that he works for Triel. If further pressed, he tries to Bluff his captors by feeding them false information (perhaps by telling them that Triel has a base of operations in Redgorge or a dangerous region like the Demonskar). Getting the actual location of the Kopru Ruins out of him is possible only if his attitude is adjusted to helpful.

If the PCs take Tongueater prisoner, Triel eventually finds out and sends groups of Alleybashers to save him. The first group consists of four Alleybashers. If they fail she personally leads a second group of six Alleybashers in an attempt to save her cohort.

Interrogating the Survivor: Shensen doesn't have much information to impart about the attack. She was returning from a walk when she heard the sounds of combat from within the Lucky Monkey. She ran to investigate and found that the bandits had already slain most of the guests and employees. Only a few remained standing, including a human cleric who seemed to be the focus of the bandits' attention. She knows that the bandits were led by a horrible man-beast, and that this creature followed the orders of a beautiful woman with red hair, facial tattoos, and a suit of spiked full plate emblazoned with Hextor's unholy symbol. She lent what aid she could to the defenders, but they were eventually forced to retreat into the basement, where the beast-man killed the cleric. This left Shensen alone and outnumbered. She fled to the far end of the basement, barricaded herself in, and spent the next several hours praying.

Triel, the Red-Haired Woman: If the PCs get a detailed description of Triel, allow them a DC 25 Knowledge (local) or bardic knowledge check. If the group fails this check, they can uncover the following information by interviewing locals in town and making a successful DC 21 Gather Information check. Each attempt takes 4 hours and costs 2d6 gp in bribes. A successful identification reveals her to be none other than the notorious Triel Eldurast, a one-time town guard who escaped punishment after murdering several of her fellow guards while on duty. This event took place nearly a decade ago, so the specifics have grown hazy in the memories of the people of Cauldron. Nothing has been heard of Triel since her escape, so the guard and citizens eventually assumed she succumbed to her wounds and died in the wilderness.

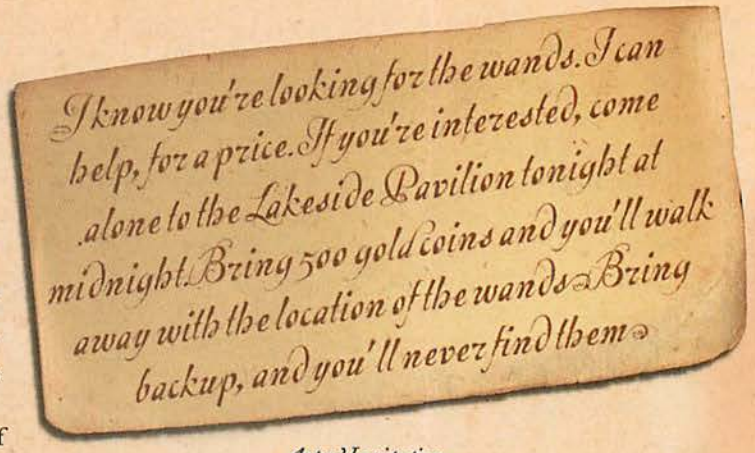
Visiting Other Churches: Cunning (or paranoid) PCs no doubt become suspicious of the three churches in Cauldron who used to help with flood control but have lately lost interest in the ritual. If this is brought to Jenya's attention, she too becomes concerned and agrees that it might be helpful to speak with representatives of the other three major churches in town.

The Shrine of Pelor: If Kristof Jurgensen learns of the missing wands, he becomes quite concerned and makes a visit to Jenya to pledge his aid in any way that he can, but unfortunately his resources are limited. The shrine to Pelor has always been fairly small and minor in Cauldron, especially since Kristof's two superiors recently died, leaving him in charge of the entire shrine. Kristof is genuinely concerned about the situation, but he has no idea what happened to the wands.

The Church of Kord: The high-priest of Kord, Asfelkir Hranleurt, has little time to talk to anyone about missing wands. Asfelkir is convinced that the lake won't flood anyway, since it hasn't flooded in over a decade. All the buildings down by the lake have been rebuilt on stilts and behind breakwaters, so there shouldn't be a problem. He doesn't know what happened to the wands, but if pressed, he drops hints that the clerics of Wee Jas might have had something to do with it. This is more because Asfelkir is trying to get the PCs off his back and has a natural dislike for the Wee Jas clerics than from any actual suspicions. In truth, the church of Wee Jas does have something to hide, it's just not the theft of these eight wands.

The Cathedral of Wee Jas: High priestess Embril Aloustinai rarely sees visitors and leaves the day-to-day operations to her subordinate Ike Iverson. The PCs aren't allowed to speak to Embril, and even Ike remains aloof and uninterested in their worries. He's always viewed the Flood Festival as a waste of resources and time, and has no problems stating as much to the PCs. He's a haughty, disdainful character who doesn't think the PCs are important enough to spend more than a few minutes talking to. He doesn't know what became of the wands, but if the PCs confront him with a description of Triel, he can honestly deny recognizing her.

Ad-Hoc Experience Award: If the party manages to learn about Triel's involvement in the conspiracy, award them XP for a CR 3 encounter. If they manage to get the location of the Kopru Ruins out of Tongueater, award them experience points for a CR 5 encounter (which helps offset the fact that they no longer need to go through event 10 to locate the ruins).



Artus' Invitation

EVENT 10: INFORMATION FOR SALE (EL 5)

Eventually, the party's questions and investigations attract the attention of Artus Shemwick, fence and information broker extraordinaire. Artus works part time at the Tipped Tankard tavern as a cook, but his real source of income is from fencing stolen gems, art objects, and minor magic items for the Last Laugh. He also brokers in rumors and information. He has numerous contacts among the low-lives of Cauldron, and it isn't long before the party's investigation comes to his attention, possibly even via first-hand observation if they ever visit the Tipped Tankard and make a point of discussing their problems aloud.

Artus Shemwick

Artus makes contact with the party by having an urchin deliver a note to one of the PCs. The note is brief (see handout above).

The Lakeside Pavilion is a large open building on the east shore of the lake; many public ceremonies take place here, but at night the place is deserted and sinister. If the PC who received the note goes there at midnight, Artus steps from the shadows to deal with him. If the PC brought backup that Artus can see, he calls off the meeting and does not make contact that night. Each night, he repeats his offer, adding 300 gp to his fee each time until the PCs simply don't show up or the contacted PC finally shows up alone.

Creature: Artus has no intention of robbing the PC, although his methods of communication might not make that clear. If the PC honors the terms of the deal, Artus accepts the 500 gp payment and tells the character that Triel has joined a cult known as the Ebon Triad. She and her fellow cultists (of whom Artus has not been able to find out much at all) plan to ransom the wands back to Cauldron after the town becomes

desperate. He also tells them that Triel and her minions have set up a base of operations in a subterranean ruin below Cauldron that can be reached by a hidden lava tube. He gives the PC a crude map of Cauldron with an "X" marked on the outer northeastern slope, about 200 feet down from the wall; this "X" marks the hidden entrance to the lava tube.

Artus is a fairly nondescript man in his early twenties, but this is mostly an act. He can turn on the charm with ease, and cleans up real nice when he wants to make an impression on an important client.

Artus Shemwick, male human rogue 5: hp 20; see Appendix 4.

Development: Artus is a member of the Last Laugh, and has numerous friends in Cauldron. If the PCs attack him and he escapes, he tries to get revenge on them at a later date, possibly by secretly poisoning food or drink they order at the Tipped Tankard. He might also have other members of the thieves' guild harass the PCs.

If the transaction goes well, Artus can become a valuable resource for the PCs throughout the campaign. His prices for information rise as his clients become more rich and powerful, and he tries to keep close tabs on his best customers so that if the need arises, he can blackmail them for additional funds or to keep them quiet about his actual source of income.

Ad-Hoc Experience Award: If the PCs manage to learn what Artus knows without resorting to combat, grant them experience points as if they had defeated him in combat.

The Kopru Ruins

The PCs can find out about the Ebon Triad hideout in the caverns below Cauldron in a number of ways: they can learn of its existence from Artus, by successfully interrogating Tongueater, or through sheer luck and persistence. Characters who watch the northeastern slopes of Cauldron after dark have a chance of seeing Triel enter or exit the secret lava tube; there's a nightly cumulative 5% chance she exits or enters the tube during any watch of at least 4 hours in length. She isn't particularly sneaky but usually operates under a *silence* spell when she exits the tunnel. The cover afforded by the terrain grants her a +2 circumstance bonus on her Hide check, bringing her total Hide check modifier to –2. Remember that Spot checks to notice her suffer a –1 penalty per 10 feet of distance, and stormy conditions further impact Spot checks by imposing a –8 penalty.

Two entrances grant access to these ruins. The secret lava tube entrance connects the northeast slope of Cauldron to area **K1** of the ruins. It consists of a long, circular, winding, downhill passage that maintains a universal diameter of about six feet. The second entrance is an underwater passage that connects the Phantom Lake (area **K6**) to the central lake of Cauldron. This passageway also connects to several other underground lakes in the area,

and is horribly complex to navigate. The most direct route between the Phantom Lake and the central lake is about 2,400 feet long and emerges into the central watery shaft at a depth of about 1,300 feet below its surface.

Dungeon Features: The ruins themselves are gloomy and dark, periodically lit by patches of phosphorescent fungus and *continual flame* spells placed at key positions by the cultists. The architecture is smooth and somewhat unsettling, looking almost like a more stable structure of dwarven design that was allowed to partially melt; all angles on the interior and exterior are smooth and curved. In many places, badly eroded carvings on the walls depict the ancient kopru enslaving other races and partaking in all forms of vile practices.

Numerous small fissures in the rock walls provide ventilation in this area. Nonetheless, the air in this entire complex is warm, humid, stale, and nasty smelling. The air won't hurt anyone who breathes it for extended periods, but it is unpleasant to smell and taste.

Unless stated otherwise, the ceilings in most artificial areas are 10 feet high. In caverns, the height increases to 20 feet, and in the outer cavern it reaches 120 feet at the highest point.

Doors: The doors in the ruins are constructed of heavy stones that pivot on a central bar, allowing the door to rotate along the center and providing an opening to either side a little less than 3 feet wide. The cultists have fitted several key doors with locks, but if the text doesn't say that a door is locked (or can be locked), it cannot be locked at all.

Stone Door: 4 in. thick; Hardness 8; hp 60; Break DC 28.

K1. OVERLOOK

The lava tube suddenly ends at a small ledge overlooking a vast cavern. A small pile of wooden planks is stacked on the edge of the ledge. Nearly a hundred feet below, the waters of a lake filled with dimly glowing green algae lap against cave walls encrusted with pallid fungi. A small stone building is built into the side of the ledge wall, and a pair of heavy ropes descends from a winch on the building's side, dangling across the lake to a similar winch attached to a wooden structure on the lake's far shore. Suspended on these ropes is a rickety wood-and-iron cage mounted on a system of pulleys. The lake's phosphorescence just barely illuminates the vast cavern, and you can see what appear to be the partially melted ruins of several buildings protruding from a sparkling wall of volcanic rock along the far wall of the cave. Several of these buildings have small doorways at ground level, but you see no windows in the ominous dark façades. The air here is thick, warm, and excessively humid.

The planks can be used to form a makeshift bridge between the hanging cage and the ledge, allowing people to cross into the cage with ease when it is retracted up to this location. Anyone who falls off the ledge drops 90 feet into the nasty green water below and takes 2d3 points of nonlethal damage plus 5d6 points of normal damage.

K2. TRANSPORT CAGE

This cage can be raised or lowered between areas **K1** and **K9**. The winches in areas **K3** and **K11** control the cage operation.

The cage itself looks rickety, but it can support up to three Medium creatures with no problem. Up to six Medium creatures can cram into the cage, but this runs a chance of snapping the ropes that hold the cage. Each round the cage is overloaded, it must make a DC 10 Fortitude save (+2 per additional Medium creature in the cage over the normal limit of three) to avoid crashing into the lake below. The cage has a Fortitude save bonus of +2. The cage descends 15 feet per round (90-foot total descent), so creatures in a falling cage take less damage the closer to area **K11** they are. Anyone who inspects the cage and makes a DC 20 Knowledge (architecture and engineering) check can determine the cage's safety threshold.

A character can descend the ropes without the cage with a successful DC 18 Balance check or a DC 15 Climb check.

K3. UPPER WINCH

This room is dominated by a large winch. Operating the winch requires a successful DC 10 Strength check. Each round, the winch moves the cage 10 feet. Since the distance between the two areas is about 100 feet, it takes one minute for someone to move the cage from one location to the next. Safety features on the winch halt the progress of the cage if the operator ceases to use it before the cage reaches the other side. A successful DC 20 Disable Device check removes this safety feature; with a result of 30 on the check, the missing safety isn't obvious. The winch also has a locking mechanism that prevents it from functioning; releasing this lock requires a DC 25 Open Locks check.

A tiny one-foot-square circular window is set into the southern wall. Affixed to the wall next to this window is a *stone of alarm*; it can be activated by touch and removed from its mount with a successful DC 15 Strength check.

K4. WINCH OPERATOR'S BARRACKS (EL 3)

This room contains two bunks, a table, and two chairs; the thugs prefer to pass the time playing cards or taking shifts sleeping, for the most part.

Creatures: Two of Triel's thugs are always stationed here; they make sure no one uses the winch to lower the cage unless they're attended by Triel or one of the other cultists. Guard duty here is considered fairly relaxing, and is usually awarded to minions who have pleased Triel in some way. Each of the thugs carries a key to lock and unlock the winch in area **K3**.

Narthus and Kildivy, hillfolk (2): hp 19; see Appendix 4.

Tactics: If the thugs realize that someone is trying to invade the cavern, one of them quickly makes sure that the winch in area **K3** is locked down, while the other

activates the *stone of alarm*, filling the main cavern with a cacophonous din and alerting the cavern denizens.

K5. STORAGE

This small room contains two week's rations and drinkable water, along with a sizable stack of replacement planks for the pile in area **K1**.

K6. THE PHANTOM LAKE

The waters of this large lake glow softly with thick, ropy, glowing algae. Now and then tiny curls of steam rise from the lake, filling the area with a cloying stink of soggy plant matter. The surface of the water ripples now and again, but it's impossible to tell if these ripples come from underwater currents welling up from below or from something hungrier.

The water below the layer of algae—which grows to a depth of roughly five feet—is warm (around 80°F) thanks to the presence of several volcanic vents located in its bed. The phosphorescent algae provides illumination equal to that emitted by a torch, but dies quickly when removed from water or exposed to sunlight.

The lake itself is about 200 feet deep, but it has no true bottom. Rather, its bed branches into numerous aquatic waterways that wind through the rock; most of them eventually empty into the watery central shaft, but a few emerge from the sides of Cauldron to form rivers or streams.

Development: The lake itself is strangely free of animal life. This is due to the presence of the ravenous demon that has taken up residence on the eastern beach (see area **K7**). The demon is watchful, and if it sees anyone enter the waters of the lake it quickly slithers into the water and swims out to feed.

K7. NIGHTMARE BEACH (EL 4)

This beach is horrifying. Thick carpets of pale fungus intermingle with sheets of clotted blood and partially eaten entrails and body parts. The entire place reeks of decay.

To aid in guarding this area while they were helping build the *soulcages*, Grehila Cairnis arranged for a single skulvyn demon to help guard the lake. Since she left the Ebon Triad for the Cagewrights, the remaining cultists have lost control the demon, but they periodically throw tributes to it in the form of homeless people or criminals snatched from the alleys of Cauldron. So long as they let it keep its territory, the skulvyn is content to leave them alone.

Creature: If the PCs manage to reach this beach without entering the waters of the lake, they can find the skulvyn lurking here. A skulvyn is an aquatic demon that looks like a streamlined lizard with flippers instead of feet and four long tails that end in razor sharp spines. The demon slithers out into the lake to attack anything it hears or spots in or near the water. It is savage and cruel to the core, and defends its beach with fearless rage.

Skulvyn: hp 26; see Appendix 4.

Tactics: Once the skulvyn senses prey nearby, it quickly slithers into the lake since it gains a substantial bonus to its Hide check in the water. The demon swims beneath anyone near the shore or in the water to catch them in its *slow* aura, then surges forth to grab one victim with a grapple before retreating underwater.

K8. KOPRU LAIR (EL 6)

This low cavern is filled with steam and thick sheets of ropy fungus. The place reeks of something rotten.

The fungus that coats the floor and walls here is thick and slippery; any bipedal creature attempting to walk on the ground must succeed at a DC 12 Balance check each round. The creature that lives here can slither around on the fungus sheets with ease.

Creature: A lone and insane kopru has moved into this chamber, having traveled up through the lightless underwater tunnels of the Underdark, seeking the fabled ruins of its ancestors. The monster was enraged to learn that the ruins had been taken over by air-breathers, but it was wise enough to know that a frontal attack on the ruins would quickly turn sour since it was so outnumbered. Compounding its problems is the skulvyn in area **K7**; when the kopru first arrived here, it and the demon got into a terrible battle. The result of the fight was a draw, but only because the kopru managed to hold and constrict the demon for a couple rounds before the skulvyn broke free and retreated.

Kopru: hp 36 (currently 30); see Appendix 4.

Development: The kopru knows that it only survived its tangle with the skulvyn through luck—its normal attacks couldn't easily penetrate the demon's damage reduction. For the past few days, the monster has subsisted on the fungus in this cave while recuperating and trying to decide how to proceed.

It sees the arrival of the PCs as its greatest hope; it attempts to dominate one of them and uses its new minion to convince the other PCs to help it, first by slaying the skulvyn and then by systematically wiping out the intruders in the ruins. While the goals of the kopru and the PCs might seem similar, the kopru has no intention of letting the PCs go once they have outlived their usefulness. Those it can't dominate it kills and eats.

K9. BEACH OF RUIN

This large beach is covered with rocks and patches of fitfully glowing phosphorescent fungus and algae. More impressive are the stony ruins that protrude from the sheer rock wall along the beach's western edge. The architecture of these ruins seems melted and somehow intimidating—whatever creatures

built these dwellings were obviously inhuman and alien in nature.

A small building made of wood sits apart from these structures; the ropes descending from the ledge on the opposite side of the lake attach to a second winch on the side of this building.

If the characters manage to reach this area without alerting the cavern, chances are that they can infiltrate any of the buildings with ease. The denizens of the ruins are confident that no one knows about their hideout and as a result don't keep a watchful eye on this beach.

K10. TRAPPED FOYER (EL 4)

Trap: A low tripwire just past the arc of the northern door is triggered when a creature walks through this area. When triggered, the tripwire snaps and releases several key bits of webbing that hold the eastern wall in place, causing the entire mass of timber and wood to come crashing down into the corridor.

Falling Wall Trap: CR 4; mechanical; location trigger; repair reset; Atk +14 melee (6d6, falling timbers); Search (DC 27); Disable Device (DC 23).

K11. LOWER WINCH

This winch operates in the same way as the one in area **K3**. The cultists don't normally post guards here, since they figure that the trap in area **K10** is protection enough.

K12. MAIN ENTRANCE

The ceiling of this large room rises in a forty-foot-high dome; the floor is polished smooth. Water from condensation runs down the walls, and a pair of large braziers to the northeast and southeast provide smoky light. A long table with a dozen chairs dominates the center of the room.

Currently empty, the Ebon Triad once used this chamber to meet with their Cagewright contact (Nulin Wiejeron). More recently, Triel used it to meet with the Alleybashers. There is nothing of interest here for the PCs now.

K13. THE GAUNTLET (EL 2 OR 7)

This long vaulted hallway seems empty and harmless; in truth, it is anything but. The eastern and western ends of the corridor hide two Traps, and anyone standing in the "safe" central section of the corridor is subject to attack from the guards to the north and south.

Trap: A pair of pit traps are located at either end of the corridor. The levers in area **K16** can deactivate them, but both are currently active. Each pit trap is identical and fills a 10-foot-square region.

20-Foot-Deep Pit Traps (2): CR 1; mechanical; location trigger; manual reset; switch bypass; Reflex saving throw (DC 15) avoids; 20-ft.-deep (2d6, fall); multiple targets (first target in each of two adjacent 5-foot squares); Search (DC 20); Disable Device (DC 23).

Development: As long as the complex is on alert, the Alleybashers in areas **K14** and **K15** keep an eye on this corridor through the arrowslits in the northern and southern walls. They fire upon any intruders they can see in the corridor.

K14. NORTHERN GUARDROOM (EL 3)

The three Alleybashers from area **K40** wait here if the complex is on alert. The northern secret door leads to area **K34**.

Secret Door: 4 in. thick; Hardness 8; hp 60; Break DC 28; Search DC 20.

Creatures: The three Alleybashers can make attacks with their arrows at any target in area **K13** by utilizing the arrowslits in the wall.

Tilavast, Oarus, and Ristikus, Alleybashers (3): hp 14; see Appendix 4.

K15. SOUTHERN GUARDROOM (EL 3)

If the complex is on alert status, the three Alleybashers from area **K22** are located here. The southern secret door leads to area **K26**.

Secret Door: 4 in. thick; Hardness 8; hp 60; Break DC 28; Search DC 20.

Creatures: The three Alleybashers can make attacks with their arrows at any target in area **K13** by utilizing the arrowslits in the wall.

Samus, Iteyl, and Abernath, Alleybashers (3): hp 14; see Appendix 4.

K16. WORKROOM (EL 6)

The edges of this huge room fade into darkness. Several large worktables covered with bits and pieces of scrap metal stand in the center of the room. Somewhere from the depths of the room, strange skittering sounds echo off unseen walls.

This large room was once a kopru spawning chamber, but after the Ebon Triad cultists moved in they cleared out the room and transformed it into a huge workroom for *soulcage* construction. They intend to keep using the room in the future for additional projects, but for now the room lies unused and mostly empty, except for the Creature that Grehlia abandoned here.

A pair of levers located next to the doors leading into this room can be pulled to activate or deactivate the pit traps in area **K13**.

Creature: A mud slaad lurks in the far reaches of the room. This pitiful creature once served Grehlia as a minion, but when she fell in with the Cagewrights she left it here. Since then, the mud slaad has spent most of its time chasing the odd tiny monstrous spiders that sometimes find their way into this room. A mud slaad is a five-foot-tall frog-like humanoid with sickly brownish green skin. It has the slaad's characteristic wide mouth full of sharp teeth and strong, sharp talons on the ends of its long spindly arms.

Mud Slaad: hp 39; see Appendix 4.

Tactics: The mud slaad, despite its appearance, harbors deep feelings of inferiority and shame after eons spent being tormented and mocked by more powerful slaadi. It lives in constant fear that more slaadi could appear at any moment to torture it, so it will not summon a red slaad, and it only attempts to call another mud slaad if it is in dire peril (it drops to fewer than 10 hit points and its cringe ability is ineffective). It prefers to open combat with its screech and then flail away with its bite and claws. If hard pressed, it feigns death and hopes its tormentors wander away.

Treasure: The slaad keeps its treasures wrapped in a ragged cloak in the far end of the room under a table; a DC 15 Search check reveals it. This trove consists of 150 pp, three gems (worth 600 gp, 100 gp, and 6 gp), and a masterwork lute. Unknown to the mud slaad, the rag it wraps its treasure in is its greatest possession: a *cloak of arachnida.*

Development: A character who examines the bits of metal and tools lying about this room and makes a successful DC 25 Knowledge (arcana) check can tell that this room was used to build some sort of magic device, most likely something connected to the schools of conjuration, abjuration, and necromancy. Beyond this, nothing can be learned from investigating the remains.

K17. WELCOME TRAP (EL 1)

Hundreds of thin white cords stretch from wall to wall in this chamber, all about six inches off the ground. The cords make a tangled sheet, and it looks nearly impossible to pass through the room without stumbling.

This room seems unused, but it actually contains a Trap.

Trap: The floor of this room is criss-crossed with tightly strung ettercap webs. The cultists and their minions know which parts of the floor are safe to tread upon, but anyone who walks carelessly into the room triggers the Trap. This causes a large ettercap web to drop from the ceiling, covering a 10-foot square area. The web has tiny bells attached to it, so the triggering of the trap alerts the guards on duty in area **K18.**

Falling Web Trap: CR 1; mechanical; location trigger; manual reset; Reflex saving throw avoids (DC 15); entangles (Escape Artist, DC 20, or Strength check, DC 26, to escape); Search DC 20; Disable Device DC 21.

K18. GUARDROOM (EL 6)

This room contains a table and several chairs, along with the Creatures.

Creatures: Four thugs lurk here, playing a complicated dice game, arguing loudly, and waiting for their shift to end.

Kristoff, Mathus, Stysai, and Jestie, hillfolk (4): hp 19 each; see Appendix 4. Each of these thugs carries one flask of alchemist's fire.

Tactics: If the guards hear the trap triggered in area **K17**, one of their number heads south to alert the other cultists while the remaining three open the door to area **K17** and begin to throw vials of alchemist's fire into the room onto trapped PCs. Once each has thrown a vial, they close and block the door by pushing the table up against it. Once the door between rooms **K17** and **K18** is blocked, its Break DC increases to 30.

K19. STOREROOM

This room contains two weeks of dried food rations and drinking water kept in large barrels.

K20. SOUTHERN ARMORY

The walls of this room are loaded with weapon and armor racks. Swords and bows hang from pegs, and a dozen suits of armor hang on the far wall. A barrel of arrows and two small wooden kegs sit behind the armor stands.

The door to this room is locked (Open Locks DC 30); Skaven has the key. The small kegs hold cheap ale.

Treasure: The weapon racks contain 12 longswords, 6 rapiers, and 8 longbows. A barrel in the corner holds 120 arrows. The armor stands hold nine suits of studded leather armor and four suits of chainmail. The ale is particularly cheap (5 gp per barrel) and hardly worth the cost of transport. Skaven uses the ale to reward the mercenaries who work for him.

K21. MESS HALL

This room contains a table and several chairs. A cabinet against one wall contains wooden eating utensils, plates, and the like.

Off-duty bandits use this room to eat, relax, and gamble, unlike their guard posts, which they use just to gamble. No one occupies this room right now.

K22. BARRACKS (EL 4)

This room contains several bunks. It looks like about a dozen people could sleep here.

Creatures: The bandits who work directly for Skaven sleep in these bunks. A Search check (DC 15) reveals that eleven human-sized individuals quarter here.

Samus, Iteyl, and Abernath, Alleybashers (3): hp 14 each; see Appendix 4.

Development: If the complex has been alerted, these Alleybashers have relocated to area **K15.** Otherwise, they are asleep here when the party enters the room.

K23. SOUTHERN ENTRANCE (EL 5)

This chamber seems to be some sort of meeting room; a large table with a dozen chairs sits in the center of the room.

Creatures: A pair of thugs and a pair of Alleybashers can be found in this room.

Makrity and Chyles, hillfolk (4): hp 19 each; see Appendix 4.

Klarkus and Blare, Alleybashers (2): hp 14 each; see Appendix 4.

Tactics: If the alarm has been raised, the mercenaries have upended the table for cover; the Alleybashers have readied actions to fire upon anyone who comes through the northeast door, and the hillfolk aid their Armor Classes with the aid another action by blocking attacks with their shields. The hired swords spring into melee should intruders get close enough to attack.

K24. SKAVEN'S PARLOR (EL 3 OR 8)

The door to this room is kept locked with an *arcane lock* cast by Skaven. Without the *arcane lock*, the door still requires a DC 30 Open Locks check or one of Skaven's keys to open it.

This room is a breath of fresh air. While still a little warm, the air is dry and nowhere near as foul in here. A well-made desk sits against the opposite wall, which looks like it has been partially melted by an ancient lava flow. A bookshelf sits against the northern wall, and the room is well lit by a softly glowing continual flame that hangs from a chain set into the ceiling.

This room and the room directly to the north are the personal quarters of one of the three cultists responsible for the theft of the *wands of control water*.

Creatures: Unlike his two fellow cultists, Skaven Umbermead is not actually a cleric. Although he's trained as a wizard (specifically, as a diviner), his faith in his deity is as strong and devout as that of his fellow cultists. What his fellow conspirators don't know is that Skaven worships Vecna. Triel has always assumed he worships Erythnul, and although Tarkilar no longer cares, he used to think Skaven worshiped Hextor.

Skaven can be found in this room if the complex isn't on alert; otherwise, he is in area **K32**. If he is encountered here, he is sitting at his desk poring over some ancient scrolls.

The air quality in this room and in area **K25** is the result of the work of a Medium air elemental that Skaven bound to these rooms using a scroll of *lesser planar binding* several months ago. The elemental is ordered to maintain air quality in here and to defend it from anyone but Skaven who tries to touch any of the books or scrolls on the shelves in here or in area **K25**.

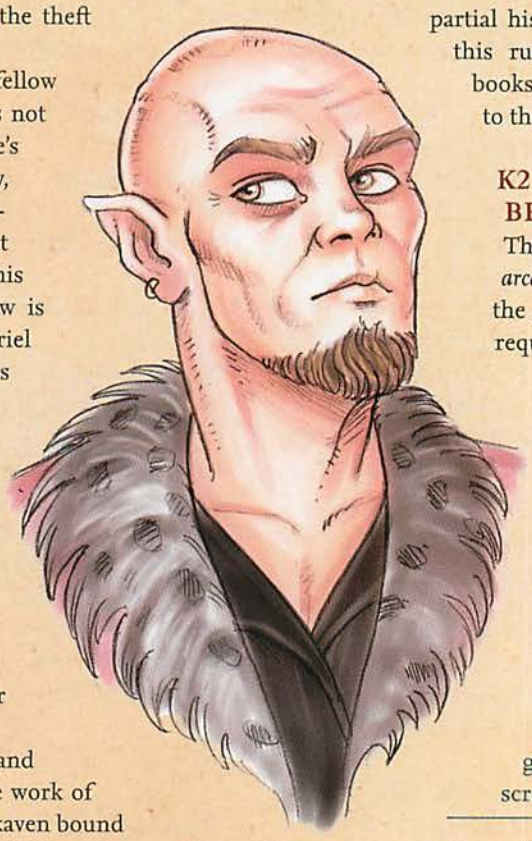
Skaven is mysterious and introverted. He's bald, keeps his beard trimmed neatly, and has a dark complexion. Still, while handsome, he has little concept of social graces and would rather avoid contact with others. He tends to let the Alleybashers and thugs that work for him do as they please, as long as they don't disturb his studies. He eschews weaponplay and combat, and he doesn't openly wear a symbol of Vecna, keeping his faith a secret. Aside from his cat familiar, Pywakit, Skaven prefers the company of the ettercaps and spiders that live in the caverns to the south.

Skaven Umbermead, male halfling wizard (diviner) 7: hp 26; see Appendix 4.

Medium Air Elemental: hp 26; *Monster Manual* 96.

Tactics: Skaven prefers to avoid combat. If attacked, he attempts to escape the room by turning invisible or using one of his *potions of hiding*. If he manages to escape, he heads to area **K32** to enlist the aid of the harpoon spider against the PCs. If unable to escape, Skaven uses his combat spells in an attempt to scatter the PCs and enable his flight to the harpoon spider.

Treasure: The numerous books and scrolls found here cover a range of topics and are written in a variety of languages. One common theme binds them together: mystery. Skaven is obsessed with mysteries and spends long hours poring over ancient texts of unexplained events. The scrolls currently on his desk are partial histories of the kopru that built this ruined city. This collection of books and scrolls is worth 1,200 gp to the right buyer.



Skaven Umbermead

K25. SKAVEN'S BEDCHAMBERS (EL 6)

The door to this room has been *arcane locked* by Skaven. Without the *arcane lock*, the door lock still requires an Open Lock check (DC 30) or one of Skaven's keys to open. The door also bears a Trap.

This room, like the last one, is fairly cool and dry—and comfortable. A bed sits against the north wall, and a thick carpet covers most of the floor. More bookshelves line the walls here, their shelves sagging with books, tomes, and scrolls of all shapes and sizes.

Trap: Skaven has used his magic to ward this room. Aside from the *arcane lock* on the door, he has placed a *sepia snake sigil*

on the door. The false back to the eastern bookshelf (see Treasure, below) is also warded by a *sepia snake sigil.*

***Sepia Snake Sigils* (2)**: CR 4; spell; spell trigger; no reset; spell effect (*sepia snake sigil*, 7th-level wizard, Reflex save, DC 16, negates); Search DC 28; Disable Device DC 28.

Treasure: The back of the top shelf of the eastern bookcase can be pulled out, as revealed by a successful DC 25 Search check. The removable back is warded with a *sepia snake sigil.* In the hollow beyond the false back are two valuable objects: Skaven's spellbook and one of the stolen *wands of control water.*

K26. WORKROOM STORAGE

This large room was used to store extra supplies for the workroom (area **K16**); it's currently empty. The secret door to the north can be discovered with a successful DC 20 Search check.

K27. SPIDER NEST (EL 3)

The door to this room is more difficult to open than most others; its Break DC is 30 due to the webs on the other side.

Creatures: Six small monstrous spiders lurk at various points in this room; they quickly skitter forth to attack anyone foolish enough to open the door.

Small Monstrous Spiders (6): hp 4 each; *Monster Manual* 288.

K28. ABANDONED WEBS

The corners of this room are clogged with webbing, but a five-foot-wide, eight-foot-tall web-lined tunnel leads south.

The webs here and in the caves beyond coat every inch of floor, wall, and ceiling. Although most of the webbing is no longer sticky, it is quite soft. All creatures in this room and areas **K30–K32** gain a +4 circumstance bonus on Move Silently checks.

K29. SECRET PASSAGE

Both of the secret doors that allow access to this passageway are masterfully hidden and require DC 25 Search checks to discover.

K30. WEBBED CAVERN (EL 6)

The air in this cavern is thick, stuffy, and humid, and stinks of rotting fungus. Sheets of thick white webs choke every surface, and coils of the sticky stuff hang from above in thick ropy sheets. The webbing muffles sound, making the cavern seem much smaller than it actually is. In fact, the thick webs make it quite difficult to accurately judge the size of the chamber, or what might be lurking in its depths.

Creatures: Five monstrous spiders nest in this cavern. If combat here lasts more than 4 rounds, the two ettercaps from area **K31** arrive on the fifth round to aid their spider allies.

Medium Monstrous Spiders (4): hp 14, 12, 11, 10; *Monster Manual* 288.

Large Monstrous Spiders (2): hp 28, 22; *Monster Manual* 289.

Trap: Several portions of the floor in this room consist of fresh, sticky webbing. Each round a character who doesn't know the safe routes in the chamber moves more than 5 feet, the character must make a DC 15 Reflex saving throw to avoid becoming stuck.

Sticky Webs: CR 1; mechanical; location trigger; no reset; Reflex saving throw (DC 15) avoids; entangles (Escape Artist, DC 26, or Strength check, DC 32, to break, 12 hit points per 5-foot section); Search DC 22; Disable Device DC 22.

Treasure: The spiders have collected a fair amount of treasure. It's shrouded in a ball of webbing, and a successful DC 24 Search check is necessary to locate it. The treasure consists of 620 gp, 4 pearls worth 100 gp each, a scroll of *summon monster I*, a *potion of clairaudience/clairvoyance*, and a *wand of burning hands* (23 charges).

K31. ETTERCAP LAIR (EL 6)

The floor of this cavern is trapped with masses of sticky webs, as detailed in area **K30**.

Creatures: A sizable nest of ettercaps lurks in this room, although only two of them can be encountered here at this time. They rush to the aid of the spiders in area **K30** when they hear sounds of battle.

Ettercaps (2): hp 27 each; *Monster Manual* 106.

Tactics: The ettercaps use the sticky webs in this cave to their advantage, luring intruders into sticky sections of floor or bull rushing them into sticky walls as the opportunity presents itself. If they begin to lose the battle, they quickly flee to the east to area **K32** and alert the harpoon spider there.

K32. HARPOON SPIDER LAIR (EL 6)

The spiderwebs in this cave are thick and tangled, hanging from the unseen roof above in coiling sheets. Large mounds of webs lie heaped on the floor, almost like sand dunes. The air in this cave is stale, hot, and stinks of decaying fungus.

Like areas **K30** and **K31**, the floor of this cave is dotted with sticky spider webs.

Creatures: A dangerous predator from the Underdark known as a harpoon spider has lived in this cavern for some time, trapped here when a lava tube that led into this cave collapsed. The harpoon spider lived for some time on the indigenous bats and fish in the main cave, but eventually a tiny group of ettercaps and their spider allies found a way here. The ettercaps, amazed by the harpoon spider, worship it as a god, tending to its every

need. One of the three ettercaps in the group can always be found by the harpoon spider's side.

If the complex is on alert, Skaven retreats to this cave. Skaven and the harpoon spider have become friends over the past several months; the spider is intrigued by Skaven's tales of Vecna, while Skaven finds the harpoon spider an amazing creature and wants to learn all he can about the subterranean predator.

A harpoon spider is the size of a large horse. It has ten legs and a body covered with sharp spines, and its eight eyes look more human than arachnid.

Harpoon Spider: hp 42; see Appendix 4.

Ettercap: hp 26; *Monster Manual* 106.

Treasure: The harpoon spider keeps its valuables encased in a niche near the ceiling in the easternmost cul-de-sac of this cave; characters searching this area specifically can discover it with a successful DC 25 Search check. The treasure consists of 500 sp, 450 gp, a darkwood and silver masterwork lap harp worth 800 gp, a diamond ring worth 5,000 gp, a jade idol of Yondalla worth 700 gp, a +1 *light steel shield*, an *elixir of hiding*, and *bracers of armor* +2. Skaven has also entrusted one of the *wands of control water* to the harpoon spider for safe keeping.

K33. TRAPPED CHAMBER (EL 5)

Trap: This trap is triggered whenever the door in the northwest corner of the room is opened. Dozens of holes then open in the ceiling and floor, and a forest of rapier-thin poison spikes lances out of these holes to impale anything in the room. The spikes retract into the wall and the door closes itself after one round, at which point the trap automatically resets.

Poison Spike Trap: CR 5; mechanical; touch trigger; automatic reset; Atk +16 melee (1d8+4 plus poison, spike); multiple targets (all creatures in area K33); poison (Medium spider venom, Fortitude save, DC 14, resists, 1d4 Str/1d6 Str); Search DC 17; Disable Device DC 21.

K34. STOREROOM

This room contains two weeks of dried food rations and drinking water kept in large barrels. The secret door to the south can be discovered with a successful DC 20 Search check.

K35. NORTHERN ARMORY

The door to this room is locked (Open Locks DC 30); Triel has the key. The east and west walls of this room are dominated by weapon racks and armor stands. A wine rack with several unopened bottles sits against the southern wall.

Treasure: The weapon racks contain 7 longswords, 5 rapiers, and 11 longbows. The armor stands hold 3 suits of studded leather armor and 6 suits of chainmail. Each of the 17 bottles of wine on the rack is worth 50 gp.

K36. TRIEL'S CHAMBERS (EL 7)

This large room is elegantly appointed and, if anything, even more humid and cloying than the other chambers. The reason is probably the large pool of bubbling water in the southern end of the room. A hammock swings to the west of the pool above a large chest, and the northern portion of the room seems to have been converted into a small combat training ground, complete with thick mats and combat dummies.

The door to this room is locked (Open Locks DC 30); Triel has the key. The door also contains a Trap.

This room is the personal quarters of Triel Eldurast, the cultist most directly responsible for Sarcem's death and the theft of the *wands of control water*.

Creature: Triel can be found in this room whether or not the alarm has been raised; she prefers to spend most of her time here when she isn't working. Triel is quite fond of the martial aspects of Hextor's teachings. She has short but wild red hair, and she wears a suit of full plate festooned with spikes and the symbol of Hextor. She also bears several intricate tattoos, including some on her face. Of the three Ebon Triad cultists that remain in this area, she is easily the most beautiful and charismatic, and as a result she's the one they rely on to take care of things outside of the Kopru Ruins. She was once a city guard in Cauldron, but her growing bloodlust eventually got her into trouble. She fled the city for several years and eventually became a cleric of Hextor before joining the Ebon Triad.

Triel Eldurast

Triel Eldurast, female human fighter 4/cleric 3: hp 46; see Appendix 4.

Tactics: If the PCs have managed to invade this far without triggering an alert, they find Triel naked and enjoying a soak in her hot spring; she responds to

unwelcome intrusions with great anger and attacks at once, despite her lack of armor. If only one PC enters, she tries to seduce the character into joining her in the pool, at which point she'll try to drown the gullible fool before suiting up and stalking through the complex looking for other intruders.

If the complex is on alert, Triel is ready to unleash pain on anyone foolish enough to invade this room; she has also called the four Alleybashers from area K42 to her room for assistance. She casts *bull's strength* and *shield of faith* on herself, given time, then wades into combat, flail swinging, targeting opposing clerics before others. She pauses to heal herself if reduced to 20 hit points or less.

Trap: Anyone who tries to pass through the door without depressing a cleverly hidden switch on the exposed upper rim of the door (Search check DC 30) suddenly finds the revolving door swinging shut while numerous razors extend from both its edges. If the door trap hits the character, he becomes pinned in place until the door is forced open (Strength check DC 28) or he makes a DC 26 Escape Artist check.

Razordoor Trap: CR 3; mechanical; touch trigger; automatic reset; Atk +15 melee (1d12+8/×3 plus pinning); Search DC 15; Disable Device DC 27.

Treasure: Triel prefers to carry her treasure with her, but when she sleeps or is bathing she keeps it stacked in the large chest under her hammock. This chest can be locked (Open Locks DC 30) with a key she carries.

Ad-Hoc Experience Award: If the party defeats an unarmored Triel, award them 80% the normal experience point total due to her reduced Armor Class.

K37. MESS HALL (EL 6)

This room is a combination mess hall and lounge used by Triel's minions to relax and unwind when they get the chance.

Creatures: Six thugs can be found here; if the alarm has been raised they are alert and ready for action.

Thistle, Adjar, Pyrus, Sukoro, Zoth, and Lonjiku, hillfolk: hp 19; see Appendix 4.

K38. MEETING ROOM

This unremarkable room is used by Triel to meet with her minions and hand out daily orders. A plain table and some uncomfortable chairs sit in the center and several broken chairs are stacked in the corners of the room.

K39. THUG BARRACKS (EL 5)

This room contains several bunks; a dozen people could sleep here, although not all the beds look lived in.

Creatures: The thugs who work directly for Triel sleep in these bunks. A successful DC 15 Search check determines that ten human-sized people sleep here.

Milo, Hamfist, Mari, and Eirlinaki, hillfolk: hp 19; see Appendix 4.

Development: If the complex has been alerted to the PCs, this room is empty and these thugs wait in area K46. Otherwise, the four thugs are asleep when the party enters the room.

K40. ALLEYBASHER BARRACKS (EL 4)

More bunks fill this chamber. A quick glance reveals that while several people probably live here, the room could accommodate more people than currently use the chamber.

Creatures: The Alleybashers working directly for Triel sleep in these bunks. A successful Search check (DC 15) determines that seven Alleybashers sleep here.

Tilavast, Oarus, and Ristikus, Alleybasher: hp 14; see Appendix 4.

Development: If the complex has been alerted to the PCs, this room is empty, its denizens stationed at area K14. Otherwise, three Alleybashers sleep here when the party enters the room.

K41. BLOODBATH (EL 5)

This room seems to be empty of anything of interest, but in truth, it holds a dangerous Trap—an illusory floor covers a large pit in the center of the room. A 3-foot-wide ledge winds around the edges of the room, providing the only safe place to walk. The pit is filled with water and a swarm of creatures.

Creature: The water in the pit is filled with a hungry swarm of bloodbloater oozes. Bloodbloaters are Diminutive aquatic oozes that feed on blood. Individually they pose little threat, but they have a propensity to swarm in huge clouds of hungry protoplasm.

Bloodbloater Ooze Swarm: hp 22; see Appendix 4.

Trap: The center of this room is actually a 20-foot-deep pit filled with 10 feet of water. Falling in the pit won't hurt unless the victim is encumbered or can't swim. Of course, the monsters that lurk in the water are much more dangerous.

20-Foot-Deep Water-Filled Pit: CR 1; magical; constant effect; illusory floor covering pit; Reflex save (DC 20) avoids; 20 feet deep with 10 ft. water; Search DC 24.

Treasure: Triel dropped one of the *wands of control water* into this pit for safe keeping. When she wants to retrieve it, she intends to simply use another wand to lower the water to an inch or two deep and snatch the wand from the relatively helpless landlocked bloodbloaters with a quick and well-gauntleted hand.

K42. NORTHERN ENTRANCE (EL 6)

This room seems fairly empty and clean, but like many other rooms in the ruins, it contains a dangerous Trap. The ceiling in this room is 40 feet up, and a 5-foot-wide balcony runs around the rim of the room 20 feet above ground. A knotted rope that can be lowered to provide

access to the balcony has been pulled up by the Creatures hiding above.

Creatures: Four Alleybashers lurk on the balcony surrounding this room. PCs can make DC 33 Spot checks to detect the waiting rogues.

Meryin, Sorkalath, Durkal, and Pindinson, Alleybasher: hp 14; see Appendix 4.

Tactics: The mercenaries fire arrows at any intruders that enter the room, although they wait and see if opponents first set off the trap. Characters who bypass the footshredder aren't attacked until the last PC has entered the room.

Trap: Anyone who opens the western door triggers this room's trap. Doing so causes the floor of the room to retract 6 inches down, revealing a forest of tiny spikes designed to shred the sole of the foot.

Footshredder Floor: CR 1; mechanical; touch trigger; manual reset; multiple targets (all in contact with the floor of area **K42**); Atk +14 melee; any creature struck suffers 1d4 points of damage and is wounded as if by caltrops; Search DC 20; Disable Device DC 23.

Development: If the caves are on alert, these rogues have joined Triel in area **K36**.

K43. PRISON

This room contains four small cages. Each can be locked with keys carried by Triel or with a successful DC 30 Open Lock check. These cages are used to hold prisoners of the cult, but they are all currently empty. PCs captured by the cult probably end up in one of these cages.

K44. INTERROGATION CHAMBER

This room contains a desk, a chair, and a strange apparatus that looks like a wooden bed covered with various iron straps and spikes. The device looks... uncomfortable.

The device is a torture rack designed to painfully stretch the person strapped into it. Triel uses this room to interrogate prisoners. Although no one is currently held here, PCs who are unlucky enough to be captured might end up in this device. If you have access to the *Book of Vile Darkness*, treat this device as a masterwork rack, otherwise assume that for each round a character spends on the rack, he suffers 1 point of damage. A successful DC 22 Escape Artist check is required to escape.

K45. UNFINISHED TRAP

The rough, unfinished floor of this room seems to be pockmarked with hundreds of tiny holes drilled into the floor. There is no indication as to the purpose of these holes, but it must have taken someone months of mind-numbing work to drill them all.

Triel is in the process of building a second foot-shredder trap (see area **K42**) here, but she can't quite get the logistics of the project down and has given up on it for now. PCs in a hurry might waste valuable time trying to figure out what kind of weird trap awaits them in this chamber.

K46. GUARDROOM (EL 5)

Creatures: If the complex is on alert, Triel has posted the four thugs from area **K39** to guard this route toward the treasury. The thugs do their best to prevent intruders from penetrating any further into the complex via this route.

Milo, Hamfist, Mari, and Eirlinaki, Hillfolk: hp 19; see Appendix 4.

K47. ENTRANCE TO TARKILAR'S CAVERNS

This long room is partially collapsed. The northwestern portion has been destroyed by an ancient lava flow, but two circular lava tubes seem to provide access to the caves beyond.

The network of caves here (areas **K48–K56**) are the domain of the third Ebon Triad cultist, Tarkilar. Since Tarkilar became a huecuva, he has become less interested in aiding his one-time companions, and more interested in fostering his hatred of the living. Someday soon he might finally forget his old alliances and seek out his old allies to satiate his growing spite.

K48. BONE GUARDIAN (EL 8)

Creature: Before Tarkilar was transformed into a huecuva several months ago, he managed to get his hands on a high-level *animate dead* scroll. He found the remains of a dead tyrannosaurus in the foothills to the east of Cauldron, and over the course of several weeks smuggled the skeleton into this chamber, bone by bone. He then reassembled the skeleton and used the *animate dead* scroll to create a massive skeleton. The undead dinosaur must squeeze to pursue characters who flee beyond this room.

Tyrannosaurus Skeleton: hp 117; see Appendix 4.

K49. SAFE CAVERN

The fairly narrow passage leading to this chamber is too small for the tyrannosaur skeleton even to squeeze into. A PC who makes it to this cave might be able to do significant damage to the skeleton with ranged attacks and magic from the safety of this room.

K50. UNDEAD OGRES (EL 5)

The stink in this cavern is overwhelming. Sticky pools of congealed fluid lie in depressions in the floor, having drained from several rotting giant spider carcasses that have been pushed up against the northwest wall.

WAND LOCATIONS

The eight wands of control water are hidden in the following locations in the Kopru Ruins:

- One wand is carried by Skaven in area K24.
- One wand is hidden in area K25.
- One wand is kept by the harpoon spider in area K32.
- Triel carries three of the wands in area K36.
- One wand is hidden in the water of the trap in area K41.
- One wand is kept by Gutterrut the quasit in area K56.

Creatures: The Ebon Triad once counted two ogres amongst their minions, but after a tragic incident in which the ogres lost their temper and attacked the Ebon Triad cultists, they were put down. Tarkilar used his *wand of animate dead* (which has long since run out of charges) to animate the dead ogres as zombies, leaving them in this room as additional undead guardians.

Ogre Zombies (2): hp 55; see Appendix 4.

K51. GLYPHS OF WARDING (EL 6)

Trap: Triel recently purchased two scrolls of *glyph of warding* and used them to ward the exits to this cavern. Each glyph is identical, and triggers when an intruder passes over it.

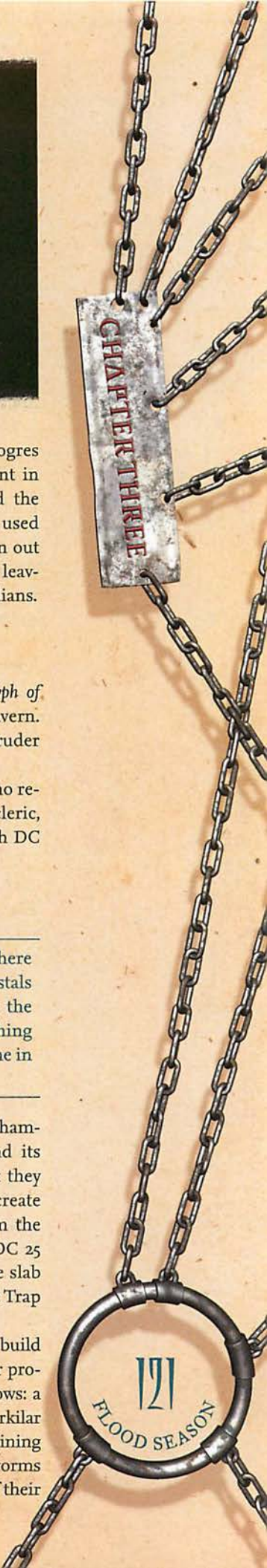
***Glyphs of Warding*:** CR 4; spell; spell trigger; no reset; spell effect (*glyph of warding* [blast], 5th level cleric, Reflex save, DC 14, half damage, 2d8 sonic); Search DC 28; Disable Device DC 28.

K52. CULT TREASURY (EL 8)

This cave glitters and glows; the volcanic rock here has formed millions of tiny black and red crystals that catch the light from a *continual flame* near the door and reflect it back a millionfold. The one thing that doesn't glitter is a large slab of dull black stone in the center of the room.

The slab of hardened lava in the middle of the chamber was naturally formed, but the cultists found its remote location and size intriguing enough that they hired a pair of dwarves (who were later used to create the Creatures that guard this place) to transform the block of stone into a clever chest. A successful DC 25 Search check determines that the top of the stone slab is hinged and can be opened. Doing so triggers the Trap and reveals the cult's Treasure.

Creatures: The two dwarves the cultists hired to build the chest were rewarded with two rare gifts Tarkilar procured after he snuck into the Spire of Long Shadows: a pair of worms harvested from a spawn of Kyuss. Tarkilar implanted the worms into the two dwarves after chaining them to the chest, and then watched in glee as the worms transformed the dwarves into undead mockeries of their



former selves. Tarkilar then used his ability to command undead to force the new spawn to serve as guardians.

Unfortunately, when Tarkilar accidentally transformed himself into a huecuva, he lost control of the spawn. Neither Skaven nor Triel could command them, and since that fateful day three months ago, none of them has been able to safely approach the treasury.

In the meantime, the two spawn of Kyuss are content to lurk here, attacking anything that has the misfortune of entering.

Spawn of Kyuss (2): hp 29 each; see Appendix 4.

Trap: The chest is coated with a thin layer of nitharit poison.

Poisoned Chest: CR 5; mechanical; touch trigger; manual reset; poison (nitharit, Fortitude save, DC 13, resists, 0/3d6 Con); Search DC 25; Disable Device DC 19.

Treasure: The chest contains several leather sacks filled with coins: 15,500 cp, 8,000 sp, 4,500 gp, and 200 pp.

K53. RUBBLE-FILLED ROOM

The floor of this large cavern is nearly completely covered by a partial cave-in that created a huge mound of loose debris in the center of the room. A few hands and legs protrude from the rubble.

This cave-in happened about the time Tarkilar was transformed into a huecuva. The resulting shockwave of energy triggered a collapse in the already weak ceiling of this cavern, destroying several zombies and skeletons Tarkilar had stationed here to prevent interruptions to his ritual.

Clambering over the rubble is possible with a successful DC 15 Climb or Balance check.

K54. GLYPH TRAP (EL 4)

Trap: Tarkilar warded the narrow passageway between areas **K54** and **K55** with a single *glyph of warding* before he was transformed.

Glyph of Warding: CR 4; spell; spell trigger; no reset; spell effect (*glyph of warding* [blindness], Fortitude save, DC 16, negates); Search DC 28; Disable Device DC 28.

K55. UNDEAD MINIONS (EL 4)

Once Tarkilar became a huecuva, he lost control of many of his undead. He quickly relocated these former minions to this chamber, where they await intruders.

Creatures: The eight human zombies in here lurch into life when intruders enter this room.

Human Zombies (8): hp 16 each; *Monster Manual* 266.

K56. TARKILAR'S CAVERN (EL 7)

This cavern has seen better days. It was probably once a fairly well-appointed room, complete with carpets, a laboratory, a small altar, and a bed, but some recent terrific explosion has scattered the furnishings of the room into piles of twisted rubble along the edges of the cave.

This room is the lair of the third cultist, Tarkilar.

Creatures: Tarkilar spends most of his time worrying at the wires that bind his chainmail to his bones and arguing with what he thinks are the voices in his head. In truth, these voices are real and come from an invisible quasit named Gutterrut who once served Tarkilar as a minion but is now only a tormentor.

Until recently, Tarkilar was the most powerful of the three cultists. As a 7th-level cleric, he commanded the most defensible lair in the complex and served as the leader of the group for a time after Grehlia left to join the Cagewrights. This all ended a few months ago. Flush with money from the completion of the *soulcages*, Tarkilar was finally able to afford a costly component to a ritual he believed would transform him into a vampire. Unfortunately, the ritual was botched and caused a great explosion in this room (which also partially collapsed the ceiling of area **K53**); Tarkilar was slain by the explosion, but at the same time, the necromantic ritual partially worked. He rose from the ashes of his failure as a huecuva, but drained of several levels of experience and left a raving lunatic. Since the failure, he has lurked in his cavern with only Gutterrut, a quasit he once befriended with the aid of a *lesser planar ally* spell, as company.

Tarkilar is an intimidating sight: an undead gnoll with a suit of chainmail and a spiked chain wired directly onto his rotting flesh. He's nearly skeletal, and his dry skin is stretched tight over his bones. Clumps of his fur have torn free, leaving several bald patches in his once-thick pelt. His eyes glow with a nasty yellow light, as does his saliva. His fangs are jagged, sharp, and broken.

Gutterrut takes great glee in watching his one-time pal grow more and more insane. A few weeks ago, Tarkilar's friendship with the quasit finally faded and he attacked Gutterrut, who escaped by turning invisible and flying away. Since then, Gutterrut has entertained himself by tormenting the huecuva by pretending to be a set of different personalities arguing in its head.

Tarkilar, male gnoll huecuva cleric 4: hp 42; see Appendix 4.

Gutterrut, Quasit: hp 13; *Monster Manual* 46.

Tactics: Upon seeing living creatures enter his lair, Tarkilar flies into a kill-crazy rampage, casting spells until an enemy comes within range of his spiked chain, then resorting to melee attacks. Gutterrut watches quietly from a vantage point on the northern wall, waiting to see who wins the battle. If the PCs win, the quasit follows them around invisibly and waits for a good chance to cause some mischief.

Treasure: Gutterrut recently stole the eighth *wand of control water* from Triel, who has yet to notice the theft. Gutterrut isn't quite sure what to do with the wand, but he knows Triel wants it. Eventually, he plans to use it as a bargaining chip with the beautiful cleric to gain her as an ally.

BEHIND THE SCENES: FLOOD SEASON

The PCs learn about the Ebon Triad in this chapter. They'll tangle with the remaining two members of the Triad in Chapters Five and Ten. They may start to think that the Ebon Triad is the primary villain group they'll be fighting against by the time they finish this chapter; don't do anything to discourage this perception.

The PCs' actions during this adventure represent the first time they'll really be in the public eye. As the next chapter starts, they'll find themselves more and more often recognized on the streets by Cauldron's citizens.

Although the Cagewrights still haven't really noticed the PCs by this time, the PCs have definatley caught the attention of the Last Laugh and Vhalantru. The latter has realized that they may soon develop into a liability and a threat, and in Chapter Four he takes his steps to try to engineer their dooms.

FIGHTING THE FLOOD

Once the party manages to recover all eight *wands of control water*, they should return to the surface and report the good news to Jenya. Their return couldn't happen at a better time. The rains have been hitting Cauldron hard, and the central lake has started to seep into the closest buildings. If the waters aren't controlled soon, the flood damage could be extensive. Jenya takes one of the wands and calls upon the aid of the fellow clerics in her church, as well as those of Kord, Pelor, and Wee Jas, although none of the clerics of Wee Jas respond to her call. She might also call upon any PCs who can use the wands to help. Over the next few miserable hours, Jenya, the PCs, and the other clerics can force back the waters until the rains falter. The whole ordeal takes 1d4+4 hours, –1 hour for each two *wands of control water* recovered; the night drains a total of 80 charges from the wands (split evenly among all the wands recovered). After the night is over, though, the PCs have saved several businesses from suffering great damage, and they find their popularity in the city rising.

The rains continue on and off throughout the rest of the winter, but it's nothing that the newly recovered wands can't handle. Eventually, the winter passes, and the churches of Cauldron prepare for the year with a newfound respect for the Flood Festival. Jenya gladly pays the PCs their reward of 5,000 gp, even if the PCs were good-hearted enough not to ask for one in the first place.

CHAPTER FOUR

CHAPTER FOUR

ZENITH TRAJECTORY

BY DAVID NOONAN

Dark plots are afoot in the town of Cauldron, despite the best efforts of adventurers, who've already foiled a kidnapping conspiracy and averted a citywide flood. Vhalantru the beholder is still the city's puppet master, ruling from behind the scenes. The Cagewrights have but one task left before they can turn Cauldron into a massive gateway for an army of fiends from the Outer Planes. They need to find one more Shackleborn. And Vhalantru believes he has found their final Shackleborn in Zenith Splintershield.

Once a righteous dwarven defender, Zenith disappeared into the Underdark a decade ago. Vhalantru has discovered that Zenith yet lives, but is now a prisoner of a kuo-toan cult deep underground.

Zenith marched into the Underdark with a small army of dwarves, steadfast in his determination to save the vast caverns from evil. But the Underdark didn't want to be saved, and Zenith's men faced countless grim battles against mind flayers, derro, and worse. As he buried friend after friend, Zenith despaired of his quest. Somewhere in the dark, he grew insane—or had his first revelatory vision from the Smoking Eye, as he would later put it. With the surviving dwarves, Zenith marched into the kuo-toan temple-fortress of Bhal-Hamatugn, as bid by his vision. The kuo-toas easily captured the dwarves, then mercilessly slaughtered all but Zenith in a horrid ritual. As he was being led to the sacrificial dais, Zenith began babbling wildly in Kuo-toan, prophesying the bloody death of the kuo-toan sorcerer-chieftain.

Intrigued, the kuo-toas spared Zenith's life. The following day, the kuo-toa chieftain was indeed dead, slain by a demon when its *planar binding* spell went awry. The kuo-toas unshackled Zenith and listened closely to his raving prophecies. Years later, Zenith is the de facto leader of the kuo-toas, goading them to greater atrocities in the name of the presence he knows only as the Smoking Eye. His dread ferocity in battle and his uncanny visions have amazed the kuo-toas, who venerate him with a passion that borders on worship. What neither the kuo-toas nor Zenith realize, however, is that the source of his visions, the Smoking Eye, is in fact the insane dreaming of the imprisoned demon prince Adimarchus.

Vhalantru doesn't know any of this, but he needs Zenith in his clutches just the same. He hopes that by presenting the final Shackleborn to the Cagewrights, he'll gain even more favor with the cultists and be given special privileges once they open the gate to Carceri. He's not sure how dangerous the mission to rescue Zenith is, so he decides to kill two birds with one stone by manipulating the PCs into attempting the rescue. If they succeed, he'll gain a potent bargaining chip with the Cagewrights. If they fail, well, that's one less group of do-gooders he has to worry about eventually discovering his true nature.

But first, Vhalantru wants to test the characters, and the lord mayor has had difficulty lately collecting taxes from a merchant named Maavu. When an errand takes the PCs to northwest Magma Avenue, Vhalantru's agents release a fiendish umber hulk to rampage through the city—conveniently near many of Maavu's shops, offices, and warehouses. When the characters vanquish the marauding umber hulk, they get an invitation to the Cusp of Sunrise, an invitation-only club for nobles.

After dinner at the Cusp, an alluring woman named Celeste leads them into a private meeting room where they meet a dwarf so decrepit that he looks dead. The dwarf, Ironlord Davked Splintershield, explains that he has been cursed by a terrible wasting disease because he disowned his three sons. The only way for the curse to be lifted, Davked relates, is to make peace with each of his three sons. He's done so with two of them, but he can't find the third son, Zenith Splintershield.

Celeste offers the PCs a reward if they can find Zenith and return him to Cauldron. The characters head north from Cauldron into the mountains, eventually reaching an entrance to the Underdark near the hut of an old hermit named Crazy Jared. They climb down

STARTING THE CHAPTER: ZENITH TRAJECTORY

Many weeks should pass between the events of chapter three and this one. Winter is over and spring is beginning. The characters should have had time to recover and to do any shopping, item creation, or other long-term tasks. Before running Event 11, inform spellcasters that they should prepare spells for a day spent running errands in town, keeping in mind that Cauldron hasn't been the safest city in the world lately. Also, if any of the characters take the Leadership feat at this time, you should take some time before starting this chapter to work new cohorts and followers into the campaign as appropriate.

into the Underdark and reach the kuo-toan temple of Bhal-Hamatugn. There the PCs learn that Zenith is the leader of the kuo-toas, not a prisoner. They must contend with Zenith and the kuo-toas before returning to Cauldron to claim their reward.

EVENT 11: UMBER HULK SMASH (EL 9)

The chapter starts with the characters minding their own business on Magma Avenue Northwest when a fiendish umber hulk begins its rampage through the city. The timing of the attack is no accident, of course—Vhalantru has had the characters under sporadic and discreet surveillance, and he's decided the time is right to test their mettle.

Magma Avenue Northwest is a mix of small shops and larger mercantile warehouses, so the characters might go there for any number of reasons: replenishing the contents of a spell component pouch, repairing a loose pommel on a sword, or fencing some of the loot from their previous adventures. Even if they don't have specific business on Magma Avenue, it's one of the four main thoroughfares encircling Cauldron, so they might just be passing through.

This encounter should play like a big set-piece action sequence from a movie, with lots of property damage, civilians caught in the crossfire, and other distractions. Because the characters begin completely rested and may eventually get help from the city watch, they have a better chance than the Encounter Level would otherwise indicate.

Have each PC make a DC 20 Listen check to get a moment's forewarning of the umber hulk attack. Those who succeed get a surprise round when they hear the low rumble. Have these characters roll initiative, and then take their surprise round actions. On the fiendish umber hulk's turn, it erupts from the ground with a roar at the corner of a nearby warehouse, which collapses immediately.

The map of the Umber Hulk Attack indicates where the umber hulk emerges from Maavu's warehouse. The characters immediately have to deal with the umber hulk and the crowd. At the end of every round, assess how the battle is going, and introduce encounter elements to help or hinder the PCs if you need to. The Development section below provides a suggested schedule for reinforcements and complications, but let your own sense of pacing guide your decisions.

There's a lot going on in this encounter. The terrain is complex, there are a number of NPCs to keep track of, and a bunch of characters are probably going to behave randomly because of the umber hulk's confusing gaze. Make sure you've read the stat blocks and keep your notes organized.

Magma Avenue is well-maintained cobblestone except where the umber hulk crashed through the wall, where the terrain is dense rubble, adding 5 to the DC of Balance and Tumble checks, and adding 2 to the DC of Move Silently checks. Warehouse and shop walls are 6-inch-thick wood (Hardness 5, 60 hp, Climb DC 21). Exterior doors are strong wooden doors (Hardness 5, 20 hp), and they're all unlocked because the shop proprietors flee in such haste.

Creatures: The most important creature in this encounter is the fiendish umber hulk, which is desperate to destroy as much of the city as possible. The characters must also deal with crowds of Cauldron residents who were just in the wrong place at the wrong time. As the battle goes on, they may have to deal with the city watch (a help or hindrance, depending on the confusion rolls) and three Cauldron residents in particular danger (Beppo, Kyria, and Mergala). The characters may get some useful assistance from agents of the city's Magical Threats Agency, who rush to Magma Avenue as soon as they can. The tactics for each character or group are discussed separately below.

- **Fiendish Umber Hulk:** hp 71; see Appendix 4.
- **Town Guards, male and female half-orc fighter 2 (4):** hp 15; see Appendix 4
- **Kyria, female human expert 2:** hp 7; see Appendix 4.
- **Beppo, male human commoner 3:** hp 8; see Appendix 4.
- **Mergala, female elf rogue 3:** hp 11; see Appendix 4.
- **MTA Agent, male and female gnome wizard (illusionist) 3:** hp 17; see Appendix 4.

Umber Hulk Tactics: The umber hulk's mission is to destroy the city, so it focuses on property damage at first, relying on its confusing gaze to keep the city's protectors at bay. It won't completely ignore the city's residents; it might take a swipe at anyone who comes within reach. Once an attack deals the umber hulk 10 points of damage or a spell somehow hampers its ability to rampage, it attacks any obvious foe.

The umber hulk's most important ability is its confusing gaze. It's too busy trashing the city of Cauldron to actively try to meet the eyes of PCs, so characters only have to make Will saves at the beginning of their turns. If a PC is within 30 feet of the umber hulk at the beginning of his turn, ask how they handle the confusing gaze (their options are described in the Gaze Attacks section in Chapter 8 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide*).

If reduced to 35 hit points, the umber hulk burrows into the ground, leaving no tunnel behind it, then emerges 1d4 rounds later by digging up into the middle of a building. It then trashes the interior before moving out into the street again. It repeats this tactic when it reaches 15 hit points.

The umber hulk saves its smite good ability for a bite attack against an enemy wearing the holy symbol of a good deity, unless it's about to die anyway, in which case it smites anyone nearby, hoping the target is good. It reserves use of its Power Attack feat for unarmored foes and buildings. If it misses an unarmored foe by 5 points or more, it won't use Power Attack against that character again.

When the umber hulk attacks a building, just skip right to damage, rolling 2d4+12 for each claw and 2d8+9 for the bite. A building wall has hardness 5 and 60 hp. If you don't want to keep track of hit points for wall

sections, just assume that six attacks (or 2 full-round actions) are sufficient to tear a 5-foot hole in a building. Two adjacent 5-foot holes are enough damage to cause the entire wall to collapse.

Crowd Tactics: The passersby marked on the map of the umber hulk attack function as crowds (described in the City Streets section in Chapter 3 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide*). As the DM, you have enough to keep track of without worrying about the exact composition of the crowd. Every round at initiative point 0, the crowds move 30 feet away from the umber hulk. If the crowd falls within range of the umber hulk's confusing gaze, however, the entire crowd doesn't move that round (those fleeing are hindered by those attacking, babbling, and so on). Characters can use Diplomacy or Intimidate to direct the crowds, as described in the *Dungeon Master's Guide*. Even a confused crowd can be directed, although it moves at only half speed because not everyone willingly responds.

City Watch Tactics: Unless the PCs warn the city watch ahead of time, 1d4+4 soldiers of the city watch rush into melee with the umber hulk, exposing themselves to its confusing gaze. Those who make their save—which won't be many of them—avert their eyes each round and attack as best they can with their halberds. Once they realize they're out of their league, they attempt to retreat (read: flee) or desperately cry for help.

Kyria Tactics: Kyria is a seamstress who lives in the third-story apartment marked "K" on the map. The round she appears, she screams for help from the apartment window, holding a baby in her arms. On the following round, the umber hulk passes within 30 feet of her window. Once that happens, Kyria sets her swaddled baby on the windowsill on her next action, twitches, and flees back into the apartment. The baby works its way free of the swaddling with a DC 10 Strength check (the baby has Str 1), making one check each time Kyria's initiative point comes up. Once the baby gets free, it wavers precariously on the windowsill for one round, then falls to the street at Kyria's initiative point in the round after that.

Beppo Tactics: Beppo is a fruit merchant who frequents Magma Avenue in the spot marked "B." His cart is overladen with fruit and other comestibles. Beppo has a Strength of 8, so he can only move the cart 5 feet as a full-round action. Beppo is stubborn enough to have a good chance of resisting the umber hulk's confusing gaze (and he keeps his eyes closed after the first round anyway), but also stubborn enough to refuse to leave his fruit cart.

The cart weighs 800 pounds, but its wheels make it effectively weigh 400 pounds for the purposes of movement. As a full-round action, each character helping Beppo applies his Strength separately to the cart, using the heavy load listed on Table 9–1: Carrying Capacity in the *Player's Handbook*. Beppo, for example, has a heavy load of up to 80 pounds. If the sum of everyone's heavy load reaches or exceeds 400 pounds, the cart moves 20 feet with each of Beppo's move actions. Otherwise, it moves at only 5 feet per round during Beppo's turn.

Mergala Tactics: Disasters sometimes bring out the worst in people, and one of them is Mergala (marked "M"), a common criminal who tries to take advantage of the disorder by sneaking into the warehouses and shops of Magma Avenue and helping herself. She uses the Hide skill, moving 15 feet with each move action, until she reaches one of the following three buildings: Udoo the Silkmonger, Maavu's Imports, or Garlock's Auctions. She enters, spends a round casing the joint, then takes 2 rounds to grab all the valuables she can. She then runs away (60 feet as a full-round action because she's got 100 pounds of loot).

MTA Force Tactics: The lord mayor recently created a special section within the City Watch, the Magical Threats Agency, in response to recent events. Their precinct station happens to be nearby, so they come to face the umber hulk. A group of four gnome wizards arrives with *mage armor* already cast, then casts *shield* and *blur* while they assess the scene. The gnomes then attack from outside the range of the umber hulk's confusing gaze with their *wands of magic missile*. The MTA agents try to coordinate their efforts with the PCs if it looks like the PCs are being effective, offering to cast *haste* or *fly* from their scrolls, for example. They're also eager to lure the umber hulk into an alley, where they can cover it with *web* spells.

The MTA agents have decent Will saves, so they risk the umber hulk's confusing gaze if they must.

Development: This encounter includes a lot of NPCs, but you don't have to deal with them all at once. The umber hulk's confusing gaze ability means that fights against it probably last longer than normal, so you can introduce other NPCs gradually. The following schedule indicates when the characters have a chance of noticing each NPC. Adjust it depending on how the pacing of the battle goes. In particular, strive to give the characters one or two things to worry about beside the umber hulk. They should be somewhat distracted, but don't overwhelm them—or yourself.

Round 1: Umber hulk and crowds.
Round 2: Beppo.
Round 3: City Watch.
Round 5: Kyria.
Round 7: Mergala.
Round 10: MTA agents.

EVENT 12: INVESTIGATING THE RAMPAGE

As Magma Avenue returns to normal, squads of the City Watch swarm the area, directing crowds, securing the crime scene (Maavu's warehouse), and otherwise urging everyone to move along, nothing to see here. A kindly sergeant takes a statement from the PCs, thanks them for their efforts, and says, "A representative of the lord mayor's office will be in touch with you, probably tomorrow, if there's anything else."

If the PCs want to do some investigating themselves, let them. The City Watch is willing to let them cross barri-

cades and ask the occasional question of a witness, as long as they don't make a nuisance of themselves, but the Watch doesn't have time to escort them from place to place or get them interviews with people who aren't present.

The inside of Maavu's warehouse is completely trashed; the umber hulk's burrowing has even buckled the floor and covered everything with heavy rubble. A DC 20 Search check reveals some sigils that may have formed part of a summoning circle, but it's impossible to know for certain. Any member of the City Watch and anyone who works on Magma Avenue Northwest knows that the warehouse belongs to a rich merchant named Maavu. But Maavu is nowhere to be found. Some of his employees helpfully suggest that Maavu might be at his office, but the domestic staff there says they don't know where he is. Gather Information checks are likewise unhelpful.

More information becomes available later that evening. Shortly after sundown, a rumor spreads through the city about Maavu, and a DC 10 Gather Information check reveals that Maavu was seen fleeing the city at dawn on a black horse with clouds where its hooves should be. This is, of course, a false rumor seeded by Vhalantru's agents, who are already at work discrediting the merchant.

EVENT 13: A DINNER INVITATION

Later the same evening, a strikingly beautiful woman who identifies herself only as Celeste approaches one of the PCs and presents him with a small white card. She says, "I'd like to arrange a business dinner with you and your comrades for tomorrow sundown. You'll find it profitable. Dress appropriately." She demurs on further questions, saying over and over again, "We'll discuss it tomorrow night." If pressed, she hints that the invitation has something to do with the umber hulk rampage.

The white card is written with fine calligraphy, and it reads: "Cusp of Sunrise/Obsidian Avenue Northeast."

A DC 10 Knowledge (local) or Gather Information check reveals that the Cusp of Sunrise is a well-known dinner club and inn for nobles. Access is by invitation from a member only, and the membership list is reputed to be quite exclusive. The Cusp is owned by one of Cauldron's nobles, an elven woman named Ophellha Knowlern who lives in Hollowsky. A trip along Obsidian Avenue Northeast reveals an ivy-covered, cross-shaped building with a circular tower that stretches as tall as the city walls. An engraved sign on the ironbound door says "C.o.S.—Members Only." Soft laughter and music can be heard from within.

EVENT 14: DINNER AT THE CUSP

When the PCs arrive the next day, a knock on the door is met by an immense bald man in light blue robes. "You're the umber hulk people. I'm Renjin—welcome to the Cusp of Sunrise."

He doesn't move from the doorway until the characters produce the white card Celeste gave them. He'd

rather not ask for it directly, and coughs politely and acts ever more pleasant and nonchalant until the PCs get the idea to give him the invitation. He then smiles broadly and ushers them inside with a grand bow.

Once inside, he looks the PCs over from his mahogany desk. Any character who isn't wearing a noble's outfit or masterwork (or better) light armor and at least 100 gp in visible jewelry won't get beyond the antechamber. Renjin hints about clothing without actually saying the PCs are underdressed, repeatedly complimenting the outfit of everyone he sees who is dressed nicely. If a PC asks about a dress code, Renjin smiles broadly and mentions a clothier and jeweler he knows on Lava Avenue Northeast who's "ever so tasteful."

Melee weapons and light armor are perfectly acceptable accessories in the Cusp of Sunrise, but shields or medium or heavy armor are considered a dress code violation. Ranged weapons are likewise frowned upon, and Renjin mentions that "there are no stags to be hunted in the Grand Library, good sir" to anyone carrying a bow or crossbow.

Once everyone is ready, Renjin says, "Celeste will join you shortly. Until then, make yourselves at home. As invited guests, you have access to all areas except for the east wing. You'll find the Grand Library through the door behind me. Good evening."

The encounter with Renjin should last only as long as everyone at the gaming table is having a good time—there's no sense in dragging this out longer than necessary. What you're trying to get across is the exclusive, high-society nature of the club. If you can have a little fun watching the PCs deal with a world that's more foreign to them than the most dangerous dungeon, so much the better.

The doors behind Renjin lead northeast to the biggest room in the club: the Grand Library.

The center of the Cusp of Sunrise is a room some 100 feet across—a circular tower whose inside surface is covered with bookshelves and iron ladders on sliding rails. A score of nobles are present, but only a few are reading. Most are clustered in conversation as they sip wine from slender flutes. Others play a dice game at a series of circular tables. A few eat, using fine cutlery while ensconced in plush leather chairs. A harpsichord stands on a small stage to one side, but no one is playing it at present. Blue-robed servants scurry from noble to noble, appearing and disappearing through swinging doors to the north, south, east, and west.

The PCs can explore beyond the Grand Library if they like. The doors behind them lead past Renjin's desk and outside. The other doors lead to the rest of the club.

North Door: Stables. Nobles who fancy horses make a show of arriving via this door. Stabling and grooming is free for members, and servants are always present grooming horses and repairing tack.

West Door: An engraved sign above the door says, "Dueling in West Courtyard Only." Passing through the door, the PCs find themselves in a glass-enclosed courtyard with finely manicured topiaries and flowering plants. No one is dueling at present, but blue-robed servants are cleaning the glass and trimming the bushes.

South Door: The hallway beyond this door leads to a succession of nicely appointed studio apartments (for out-of-town noble guests and philandering nobles whose spouses have kicked them out of the manor). Members can stay as long as they like for free. About half of the dozen apartments are occupied and thus locked.

East Door: An engraved sign above the door is marked "Offices." Despite Renjin's warning, no one stops the PCs if they walk through this door. Two spiral staircases lead up from and down to the underground kitchen; observant characters soon realize that the servants always ascend on one staircase and descend on the other. The rest of the east wing is given over to six conference rooms of varying sizes. Characters who scan the area magically see moderate auras on three of the conference rooms, and a DC 20 Spellcraft check reveals that they're guarded by an abjuration effect (*Mordenkainen's private sanctum*, specifically). Those three doors are locked.

While they wait for Celeste, the PCs can amuse themselves in any number of ways.

Order Drinks: A bar just past the harpsichord in the Grand Library serves dozens of different libations, each costing from 1 gp (house wine) to 100 gp (vintage fey-mead).

Order Food: Any servant can provide a menu or bring a meal to a PC who asks. Each day's menu features at least a half-dozen complete meals ranging in price from 1 gp (slow-roasted mutton with spiced potatoes and leafy greens) to 10 gp (rare venison, saffron-infused grain medley, and druid-tended vegetables). Meals arrive 10 minutes after a character orders one.

Play Dice: The nobles play a dice game called gemsnatcher that uses strange-shaped dice (conveniently, the same dice you play D&D with). Any number of characters can play gemsnatcher, although the tables seat only six. The game begins with each player simultaneously rolling a 4-sided die. Characters who roll a 1 have "snatched the gem" and trade their 4-sided die for a 6-sided die. Then everyone rolls simultaneously again, and anyone who rolls a 1 gets to "snatch the gem" and upgrade their die to the next larger one.

This continues until the round where one or more players are rolling the d20 for the first time (by virtue of rolling a 1 on the 12-sided die in the previous round). Everyone rolls the die one last time. Every player who doesn't roll a 1 in the final round must pay a number of coins equal to the d20 roll to the players who rolled the 20-sided die. For example, if you're the first player to upgrade to the 20-sided die, your first roll is also the final round of the game. You roll a 14, so every player who didn't roll a 1 in the final round must pay you 14 coins.

At the Cusp of Sunrise, tables are designated "gold," "platinum," or "ingot." The kind of table tells you what kind of coin the winner gets paid in. Ingots are small platinum bars worth 100 gp, and they're available from the bartender. Gemsnatcher is played conversationally. A player typically regales the others with an anecdote, then everyone rolls the dice as they laugh. Someone might then ask a pointed question, and everyone rolls the dice while someone thinks of a witty answer.

Chat with Nobles: Most of the nobles engaged in conversation don't particularly welcome newcomers; they're considered to have an unfriendly attitude, although they are outwardly polite. Characters can use Diplomacy to improve a noble's attitude. Mentioning that they defeated the umber hulk immediately changes the nobles' attitude to friendly, although they insist that the PCs tell them about the battle rather than discuss anything else.

Several of the guests at the Cusp of Sunrise this night are prominent local nobles. The following in particular might catch the party's interest. Note that with the exception of Vhalantru, none of these nobles make the first move and approach the PCs, although all of them keep an eye on the party throughout the evening. A successful DC 20 Spot check followed by a DC 20 Sense Motive check is enough for a character to notice one of these NPCs watching them. A DC 15 Knowledge (nobility and royalty) check is good enough to identify any of these prominent locals.

Vhalantru: Vhalantru got wind that the PCs were invited to the Cusp of Sunrise, and made sure he'd be present so he could observe them. He would like to see how they present themselves and interact with the others for a short time before he approaches them. He thanks the PCs in person for all the services they've provided to Cauldron, and commends them for their heroics in fighting floods and umber hulks. Strive to present Vhalantru as an important but complimentary noble. He might even invite the PCs to visit his house at a later date, to take part in a dinner to celebrate their accomplishments.

Ankhin Taskerhill: One of Cauldron's wealthiest nobles, Lord Ankhin Taskerhill has little time or interest in the PCs. He's constantly surrounded by a crowd of about a dozen minor and petty nobles, all of whom vie for his attention and approval. If the PCs can impress him with a DC 25 Diplomacy check, he'll publicly recognize their good deeds and offer the PCs a pouch of 10 pp as his personal thanks. While this causes his adoring fans to grumble and eye the PCs with jealousy, the PCs should realize his "award" for what it is, a thinly veiled attempt to brush them off as his inferiors. A male PC who puts on at least a memorable performance at the Cusp (with a DC 29 Perform check) also attracts his attention, but in a different way. Ankhin introduces himself, compliments the PC on his skill, and then offers to introduce the PC to his daughter Annah. In this scenario, Ankhin tries to win that character's loyalty with compliments, financial support (including loans of up to 2,000 gp), and advice. He secretly disapproves of Annah's adventuring lifestyle, and hopes to use such a talented and obviously well-cultured adventurer as a way to wean her away from leading the Stormblades. Conversely, if the PCs have already tangled with the Stormblades and caused Annah harm, Ankhin recognizes them and becomes flustered. He demands that the "thugs" be removed from the Cusp, but Vhalantru intervenes at this point to overrule Ankhin. The spurned noble gathers his things and storms out of the Cusp without another word.

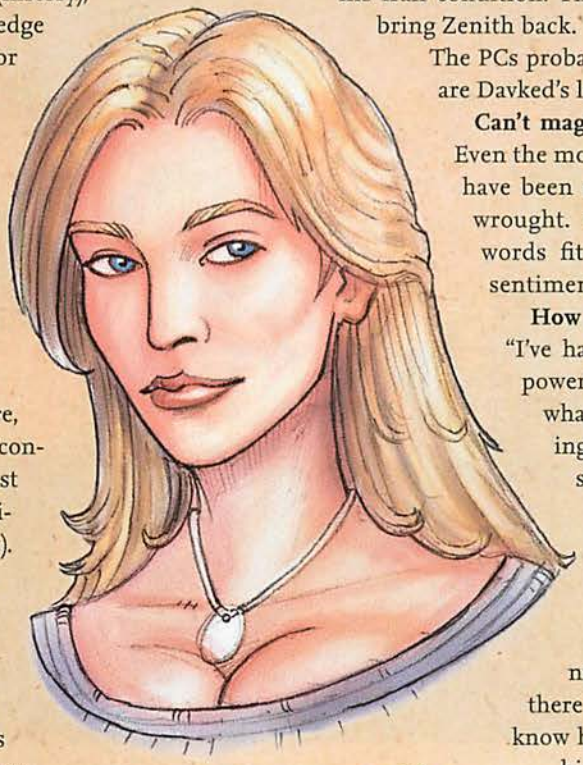
Beswink and Liorial Lathenmire: Husband and wife, these two nobles are dressed in matching suits of exquisite elven chain. Although not technically members of Cauldron's nobility, the Lathenmires are as close as one can possibly get without actually being aristocrats. They are Cauldron's most successful weapons traders and importers, and before the evening is over, Beswink and a fair number of other patrons retire to the west courtyard to observe a demonstration of an adamantine spiked chain he recently procured from an unnamed master weaponsmith from the distant north. The Lathenmires agree to speak with the PCs if they can impress them with a DC 25 Diplomacy check, at which point they are invited to join their other friends in the west wing for the chain demonstration. They are both secretly quite proud of their daughter Cora for choosing the adventuring lifestyle, and if the PCs have caused her distress or harm, the Lathenmires avoid the PCs, giving them icy glares throughout the evening.

Adrick Garthûn: Perhaps the most distinctive person at the Cusp tonight is Adrick Garthûn, a gregarious dwarf with snowy hair and a black leather half-mask with a translucent black gem set in the eyehole. All of his teeth are gold, a trait he enjoys showing off by smiling. Attended at all times by his two dwarven bodyguards Daxavalt and Kerg, Adrick is a common sight at the Cusp. The owner of a successful importing agency, Adrick also happens to be the one providing the Last Laugh with the gold and silver they need to mint their own coins. Adrick has little to say to the PCs, and the PCs likely have little reason to speak with him. Nevertheless, if the PCs approach the dwarf, they find him friendly and welcoming, and quite eager to talk business or local politics. The PCs are destined to meet Adrick at least once more, in Chapter Eight.

Perform: The unattended harpsichord should be a magnet for any PC who has ranks in Perform (keyboard instruments). The nobles are a jaded audience, however, especially when confronted with a musician they don't know. Unless the PCs have already identified themselves as the vanquishers of the umber hulk, the DCs for a Perform check (described in the Perform skill description in Chapter 4 of the *Player's Handbook*) are 4 higher than they'd otherwise be. The harpsichord is of masterwork quality, so it grants a +2 bonus on Perform checks.

Browse the Library: Most of the books cover Cauldron's history, and there's a treasure trove of genealogical data as well (the Cagewrights have secretly been researching the family history of those born with the

Carcerian Sign in case it's an inherited trait). Characters able to spend 4 hours researching a question here gain a +2 circumstance bonus on a Knowledge (geography), Knowledge (history), Knowledge (local), Knowledge (nobility and royalty), or bardic knowledge check.



Celeste

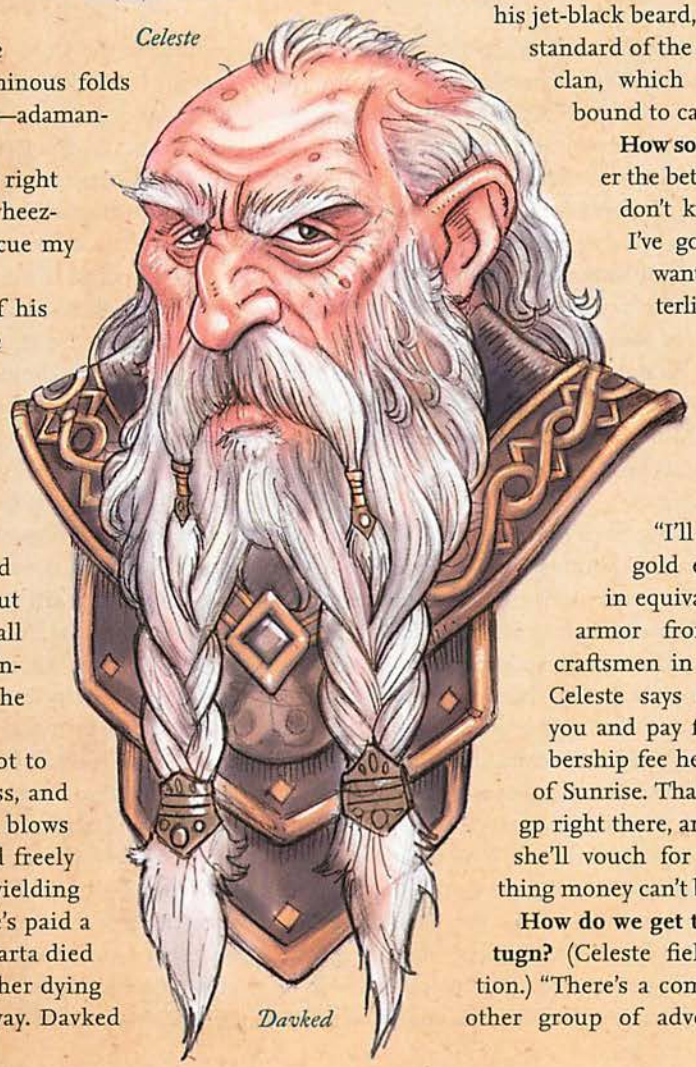
EVENT 15: A PRIVATE MEETING

Eventually, as the evening winds down, Celeste arrives at the Cusp. She makes sure the PCs have whatever food and drink they desire, then ushers them into a conference room in the East Wing (not one of the magically warded, locked ones). Awaiting her there is Davked Splintershield, a dwarf so old and emaciated that he'd almost pass for a skeleton. Even his snow-white beard looks ragged and thin, as if it were about to fall out. He wears fine robes, and beneath their voluminous folds the PCs can see a hint of chain—adamantine, perhaps?

"You're the heroes of the city right now, and it's heroes I need," he wheezes. "I'll pay you well if you rescue my son from the Underdark."

Davked then tells the tale of his son, Zenith, although Celeste takes over for part of the story when Davked gets too winded to keep speaking. Zenith was a righteous dwarven defender and the lord of the Malachite Fortress that guarded the underground approaches to Cauldron. About a decade ago he recruited a small army for a crusade to rid the Underdark of evil, marched into the darkness, and never returned.

Davked pleaded with him not to abandon the Malachite Fortress, and father and son nearly came to blows over the disagreement. Davked freely admits that he was a harsh, unyielding father to his three sons. But he's paid a terrible price: when his wife Marta died last year, she cursed him with her dying breath for driving her sons away. Davked will waste away to nothing unless he makes peace with each of his three sons. He's done so with two of them, but he can't possibly travel the Underdark in his frail condition. That's why he wants the PCs to bring Zenith back.



Davked

The PCs probably have some questions. Here are Davked's likely answers:

Can't magic cure you? "I wish it could. Even the most powerful clerics of my faith have been unable to reverse what Marta wrought. Perhaps the gods found her words fitting—I can't argue with her sentiment."

How do you know Zenith's alive? "I've had cleric and wizard alike cast powerful divinations, and here's what they've revealed: Zenith is being held prisoner in a kuo-toan shrine in the Underdark north of here. The shrine is called Bhal-Hamatugn."

How will we find him? "Find Bhal-Hamatugn and you'll find my son Zenith—how many dwarves could there be in a kuo-toan shrine? You'll know him by his great righteousness, his jet-black beard, and the battle standard of the Splintershield clan, which he is honor-bound to carry."

How soon? "The sooner the better, obviously. I don't know how long I've got, and I don't want to face the afterlife with a curse hanging over my head from this world."

How much money? "I'll pay you 4,000 gold each, or 6,000 in equivalent arms and armor from the finest craftsmen in my clan. Plus Celeste says she'll sponsor you and pay for your membership fee here at the Cusp of Sunrise. That's worth 1,000 gp right there, and the fact that she'll vouch for you is something money can't buy."

How do we get to Bhal-Hamatugn? (Celeste fields this question.) "There's a complication. Another group of adventurers—they

call themselves the Stormblades, perhaps you've heard of them—caved in all the passageways beneath Jzadirune and the Malachite Fortress about a month ago. So there's no easy access to the Underdark from Cauldron anymore. However, there's reputed to be a fissure that leads to the Underdark in the mountains north of the city. Specifically, a hermit named Crazy Jared mentioned it to some of Davked's clansmen. I've got a map that'll get you to Crazy Jared's place. It's about two days north by horse, or four days on foot."

What do we do once we rescue him? (Celeste fields this question as well.) "Bring him back here to the Cusp of Sunrise, and I'll take over from there. Poor Davked will likely be at his home—it's taken a lot out of him to do this much, in fact."

Davked is willing to pay more for the PCs' services, but he won't exactly volunteer that information. If the characters ask for more money, he instead offers them an advance (he'll go as high as 50% paid in advance) or up to 7,000 gp in dwarven weapons and armor. His true limit is 6,000 gp or 9,000 gp in dwarven weapons and armor. If he reaches that point, he angrily wheezes that he should have hired the Stormblades all along instead and tells Celeste that the meeting is over.

Development: This entire interview is riddled with falsehoods. Zenith does indeed have a father named Davked, but this isn't him. This is Gortio, a dangerous doppelganger rogue who works for Vhalantru. Gortio is smart enough to lie effectively, coming up with believable but unverifiable details in the answers he gives. He used a charge from his *wand of glibness* before coming to the Cusp of Sunrise in case the characters employ truth-detecting magic; as a result, his current Bluff check is at +54. He says whatever the characters want to hear—all he cares about is that they accept the mission. Gortio doesn't know the real reason Vhalantru wants Zenith back in Cauldron. "Vhalantru wants Zenith back in Cauldron," is all the reason Gortio needs.

At this point, Gortio is still a normal doppelganger rogue. His stat block in Appendix 4 applies to him after he is transformed into a tarterian creature in Chapter Eight. His stats shouldn't become important for this encounter, but if they do, make sure to back out the adjustments made from the application of this template.

Gortio/Davked also doesn't quite lie when he tells the PCs that powerful divinations revealed Zenith's location, but he comes close. Spells did reveal the general whereabouts of the missing Shackleborn, but Gortio also knows that his master received the specific location and the name of Bhal-Hamatugn from an informant within the kuo-toan stronghold. A Sense Motive check opposed by Davked's Bluff check (when the PCs ask about how they know Zenith is alive) here reveals that the dwarf isn't quite revealing everything he knows about how Zenith's whereabouts were determined.

Celeste is also more than she appears. She is, in fact, an agent for a powerful good-aligned archmage who lives far to the north. This archmage has learned something of the Cagewrights' activities in this region, and sent Celeste south to investigate. Celeste is actually a ghaele eladrin, although she uses *disguise self* to appear as a beautiful human woman. She's uncovered

a fair amount about the various conspiracies in Cauldron—and suspects that Vhalantru is dirty. Her goal here is to goad the conspirators into revealing themselves, most likely by their abducting Zenith once the PCs bring him back. She also wants to test the PCs—if they prove able and powerful, she hopes to use them as tools against this corruption.

For now, Celeste keeps her cards close to her chest. She doesn't want to blow her cover yet. Unfortunately for her, she's about to get in over her head.

EVENT 16. CRAZY JARED (EL 7)

Celeste provides a map showing the way to Crazy Jared's hut, which is some forty miles north of Cauldron along trails that wind through alpine meadows and rugged mountains. Consult the Introduction for appropriate wandering monster encounters along this journey.

Once the characters reach the spot on the map marked "Crazy Jared's Hut," they'll still need to search a fairly large area of mountainside to find the hermit's abode. Fortunately for them, someone's already found it.

As this chapter begins, a red dragon named Gotrrod (son of the legendary dragon Hookface) has started to expand his claim on the surrounding region. Only a few hours before the PCs arrive in the area, Gotrrod had a run-in with another local dragon, the notoriously fecund black dragon Dhorlot. The two dragons had crossed paths many times before, and each time their encounters ended in a fight. Gotrrod won this most recent fight, forcing Dhorlot to retreat to his lair in Bhal-Hamatugn, but not before the black dragon scored a lucky hit with his breath weapon. Gotrrod knows that Dhorlot has a secret lair far underground, and has been spending the last few hours scouring the mountains looking for this entrance.

Creatures: As the PCs arrive in the area, allow them to make DC 12 Spot checks. Success indicates that they see a flash of fiery light over a hill. Failure indicates they automatically notice plumes of smoke rising from this area a few minutes later.

If the PCs notice the flash of light early and make haste to the source, they'll arrive at Crazy Jared's hut as Gotrrod has just started to vent his frustrations on the area. In the center of the meadow stands a thatch hut surrounded by a low wooden fence crudely painted to look as if it were made of brick and mortar. Four thick posts have been driven into the ground at each corner of the fence, and a mixture of wood and fabric between the posts forms an unconvincing simulation of a stone tower. Gotrrod wheels in the air above the now flaming hut, having just blasted it with his breath weapon. Crazy Jared scrambles away from the conflagration, a wild-eyed old man gripping a silver rod in his hands.

Otherwise, the PCs arrive after Jared's hut has been burnt to cinders. In this case, Gotrrod has landed in the ruins and has cornered Jared against two large rocks. The dragon is interrogating the old man in Draconic, trying to find the entrance to Dhorlot's lair and growing increasingly frustrated with the old man's nonsensical answers.

Gotrrod's father is a much older dragon, Hookface, who lairs on a mountain peak about 60 miles north of Crazy Jared's hut. Hookface has been slumbering for the past several years, but is due to awaken soon (see Chapter Nine).

Jared is a loon, but he could be a useful loon if the PCs befriend him. He happily casts any spell he knows—including *legend lore*—on their behalf, and he knows a great deal about the history of Cauldron and the region. Jared's madness is beyond the power of *remove curse*, *greater restoration*, or *heal* to fix.

Gotrrod, male young red dragon: hp 121 (currently 98); see Appendix 4. Gotrrod has already cast 3 of his 1st-level spells.

Jared, male human bard 10: hp 33; see Appendix 4.

Gotrrod's Tactics: Gotrrod prefers to stay aloft, bombarding Jared's hut and any foes with blasts from his breath weapon. He commonly flies directly overhead at an altitude of 30 feet and breathes straight down, creating a 25-foot-radius circular breath-weapon pattern on the ground. He only lands if it looks like there's no opposition or if he's taking more damage from ranged attacks and spells than his breath weapon is dealing.

Jared's Tactics: Jared is, quite frankly, as nutty as a fruitcake. He's ill-equipped for combat, but if the PCs can keep him safe, he can be helpful indeed.

Once Jared sees the PCs, he yells, "Onward, my knights! For Anduria!" and uses his *rod of splendor* to garb himself in robes fit for a king. On the second round, he begins to use his inspire courage ability, composing a new verse in an epic poem every round. His epic tends to be equal parts flowery language and play-by-play, but even a round that goes badly for the PCs gets a very sympathetic treatment in Jared's epic. If one PC does particularly well against Gotrrod, Jared switches to inspire greatness, targeting that character.

Jared's hut and the fences that surround it are made of wood and straw, so they immediately go up in flames if Gotrrod breathes on them. They deal 2d4 points of fire damage to any character standing next to them (within 5 feet) until they burn themselves out in about 20 minutes.

Development: Once the fight is over, Jared thanks the PCs in an imperious voice and says, "Behold the peaceable realm of Anduria! Have you seen a land more beauteous?" He then casts *hallucinatory terrain* to cover the immediate vicinity in an illusion of verdant, sun-dappled rolling hills covered with ready-for-harvest vineyards and dotted with stands of flowering trees.

Jared isn't trying to fool the PCs; he openly casts the spell, and anyone who succeeds at a DC 19 Spellcraft check knows exactly what he did. But he *is* fooling himself. Jared lives his life under the delusion that he is King Jared IV, ruler of the (nonexistent) realm of Anduria. In reality, his illusion and enchantment spells keep him safe from the dangers of the mountains, and he's just a hermit in a thatched hut. But in his mind, he's a head of state, serving the brave and doughty yeomen of his realm.

Here are some questions PCs might ask, and his answers:

Are you crazy? "What a bold question to ask of your liege! But I'll indulge it, for you are not the first citizen to make such a query. I'm as sane as any ruler, and saner than the demon-queen of Kheltos, who threatens my realm from north and south." (There's no such place as Kheltos.)

Is there an entrance to the Underdark near here? "Indeed, a foul place known as the Pit of the Seven Jaws. If some servant will fetch me pen and parchment, I can easily sketch you a map of the place. Just last week I sent five hundred of Anduria's finest there to guard against an incursion by the mind flayers."

We come from Cauldron. "How is that town, certainly one of the finer in my realm? Are the residents carefree under the gentle hand of the lord mayor? I am cheered to see the city rebuilt after the long siege by the army of Kheltos."

Have you heard of Bhal-Hamatugn? (Jared immediately casts *comprehend languages.*) "It sounds Kuo-Toan, this phrase that trips ill from my tongue. In the third declension, it means "lucky blackness." Or perhaps "black fish"—my Kuo-Toan is somewhat rusty."

This isn't a castle. "It is in need of repair, 'tis true. I'm considering a competition where the finest artisans in the realm will offer designs of grandeur for a new palace whose towers will scrape the sky itself."

If the characters confront Jared with proof of his delusion, he chuckles and says: "It is said that the royal blood of my family is tainted with a touch of madness. Too much inbreeding in a bygone age, I suppose. We'll just have to get along, knowing that our perceptions differ in certain minor ways."

The PCs can banter with Jared as long as they wish; he's a font of information, even if obviously imaginary details surround the useful answers Jared provides. Once Jared scrawls a map on a tattered bit of parchment for the PCs, they can head further into the mountains. Another twenty miles on reasonably clear mountain trails leads to the Pit of the Seven Jaws.

PIT OF THE SEVEN JAWS (EL 8)

This entrance to the Underdark would be used more, except that it's remote and guarded by a dangerous cryohydra. Hydras are complicated monsters, so it's a good idea to study their entry in the *Monster Manual* before running this encounter.

This forty-foot-wide pit scars an otherwise unremarkable alpine meadow, surrounded by low mounds of the dirt and rock that once filled the hole. A metal-grate stairway spirals counter-clockwise down the interior surface of the pit. The pit bottom is dimly visible some sixty feet below. With the stairway in the way, the walls of the pit near the bottom are hidden from view.

The stairs are gradual, so it poses no particular difficulties to movement. However, the stairs are also ex-

tremely creaky, imposing a –10 penalty on Move Silently checks. Each flight of stairs descends 15 feet vertically, so the landings at the corners are 45 feet high (northeast), 30 feet high (northwest), and 15 feet high (southwest).

The PCs can't initially see it, but a rough fissure in the south wall near the pit floor leads into the Underdark.

Creatures: In the fissure is a seven-headed cryohydra. It listens (Listen +7) for the approach of intruders, hoping that the stairs will bring it another meal.

Seven-Headed Cryohydra: hp 75; *Monster Manual* 155.

Tactics: The cryohydra waits in the fissure until the PCs reach the northwest landing, then attacks the lead PC or PCs with its breath weapon. It can't reach higher than the landing, so any PCs farther up the stairs are safe. Then it ducks back into the fissure while its breath weapon recharges. Because the stairs are a metal grate, not solid iron, they provide less cover to those standing on them (+2 bonus to AC and +1 bonus on Reflex saves). Once PCs reach the southwest landing, the cryohydra makes bite attacks with its heads between breath weapon attacks.

Treasure: In an alcove in the northeast corner of the pit bottom is the flash-frozen corpse of a drow. He wears a +1 *mithral shirt* and carries two masterwork scimitars, a masterwork composite longbow (+3 Str), five arrows, and 25 gp.

BHAL-HAMATUGN

The fissure at the bottom of the Pit of Seven Jaws leads downward gradually, descending about 100 vertical feet over the course of a quarter-mile. A stalactite-studded ceiling is 20 feet to 50 feet (1d4+1 × 10) overhead, and the fissure itself is 10 feet to 40 feet wide (1d4 × 10) at any given point. For purposes of overland movement, the fissure counts as trackless mountains (1/2 movement). It's ten miles to the cavern containing Bhal-Hamatugn.

Random Encounters: There is a 10% chance per hour of an encounter as the characters travel to Bhal-Hamatugn. If an encounter is warranted, roll on the following table:

UNDERDARK ENCOUNTER TABLE

D%	Encounter	Average EL
01–03	1 behir	8
04–08	1 drider	7
09–13	1d3+1 minotaurs	7
14–19	1d3+1 centipede swarms	7
20–24	1 gauth (beholder)	6
25–34	1d3+1 derro	6
35–42	1 ettin	6
43–49	1d3 gargoyles	6
50–58	1d3+1 ghasts (ghoul)	6
59–66	1d3+1 gricks	6
67–74	1d4+1 shadows	6
75–79	1d4+2 giant bombardier beetles (vermin)	6
80–84	1d3+1 bugbears	5
85–87	1d4+4 dire bats	5
88–91	1d4+2 drow elves	5
92–95	1d3 ogres	5
96–100	1 troll	5

Several short dead-end passageways branch off of the main fissure along the way, but no significant side-tunnels present themselves before the PCs eventually reach the kuo-toan shrine of Bhal-Hamatugn. Here they face the kuo-toan religious fanatics who have fallen under Zenith Splintershield's sway, and learn the chilling truth: Zenith is the leader, not the prisoner, of the kuo-toas.

The kuo-toas have killed or frightened away most of the other nearby denizens of the Underdark, so they don't fear an attack on Bhal-Hamatugn. A few guards watch the entrance, but the other kuo-toas are busy worshiping, monitoring the breeding program, and preparing for their next major battle. They respond quickly to a cry of alarm or other sign of trouble, but they go back to their usual routine after 12 hours. The kuo-toas of Bhal-Hamatugn are convinced of their invulnerability and the oracular wisdom of Zenith; their leader would surely have foreseen any serious invasion.

It may take the characters several forays into Bhal-Hamatugn before they reach Zenith Splintershield. After the first attack, the kuo-toas send the spearmaster Hlanamm and four kuo-toa soldiers to pursue the characters, discover where they're camping, and perhaps pick off any stragglers. The whips prepare new spells every midnight; although they're underground, the water clock in area 7 tells them when to meditate about Blipdoolpoolp's slimy majesty. If the PCs employ *daylight* spells to force the kuo-toas to suffer light blindness, every whip prepares *darkness* or *deeper darkness* the following midnight. Thereafter, in every encounter, one whip always readies *darkness* as a counterspell against *daylight* (assuming a whip is present).

When the PCs first reach Bhal-Hamatugn, read them the following description.

The Underdark passage opens out into an immense rift cavern at least a half-mile across and several hundred feet deep. Faintly glowing with phosphorescence at the bottom of the rift is a massive stone structure shaped like a prehistoric spined fish. A wide stairway can be dimly seen leading up into the fish's mouth. A narrow ledge slopes down, hugging the side of the cavern as it descends in a series of switchbacks.

Characters who succeed at a DC 20 Spot check note that water covers the floor of the cavern. From this distance, they can't tell how deep the water is.

The ledge heading downward is fairly smooth and well-traveled, although there aren't any discernable tracks on it. The characters can easily walk down to the shore, where they encounter the ferry-keeper.

THE FERRY (EL 7)

The water begins about a hundred yards from the base of the stairway that leads into the structure. It's murky, silty water—obviously only a few inches deep at first, but it's impossible to tell by looking how deep

it gets. A thin mist floats a few feet over the surface of the water.

Creature: A few moments after the PCs arrive, a long canoe emerges from the mist, drifting slowly toward them. Crouched in the stern is a froglike creature the size of a human, holding a paddle in one hand and a shortspear in the other. The canoe stops about 20 feet from the water's edge, and the creature looks in their direction.

Many PCs will start a fight here. Those who don't may learn something about the nature of the kuo-toas, although the nature of the ferry-keeper may leave them more puzzled than ever.

This is Aabhaca, the ferry-keeper. His kuo-toan keen sight is good enough to see even invisible PCs, as long as they're moving.

Aabhaca, kuo-toa monk 5: hp 47; see Appendix 4.

Tactics: Aabhaca waits a moment for the characters to speak.

If the PCs attack right away, Aabhaca throws his shortspear at the nearest PC, then dives into the water. The following rounds, he swims for the stairway, which he reaches in 2 rounds. If he gets inside Bhal-Hamatugn, he sounds the alarm, then joins the soldiers in area **15** after getting another spear from area **16**.

If the PCs don't say anything, he croaks (in Kuo-Toan), "Seek ye the Smoking Eye? I'll guide you through the maw." Slowly putting his spear down, he beckons the characters into the canoe.

If the PCs speak to him, Aabhaca behaves in a friendly manner but speaks only cryptically. Many players will attempt some sort of ruse or false pretense to get Aabhaca to take them into Bhal-Hamatugn. Let them, and have them make Bluff checks as appropriate as you roll Aabhaca's Sense Motive check. Aabhaca's initial response is the same, no matter how well or badly the ruse goes. He beckons them into the canoe, then slowly paddles toward the stairway. Even if the PCs are completely honest ("We're here to bring Zenith Splintershield back to the surface"), Aabhaca paddles them across the surface of the lake.

But it matters whether Aabhaca believes them or not. If Aabhaca senses danger or falsehood from the PCs, he attempts to flip the canoe when the stern passes near the stalagmite by the stairway, 40 feet from the base of the stairs. The splash alerts the guards in area **15**, who immediately begin shooting into the water. It takes a DC 10 Strength check to flip the canoe, and each PC in the canoe adds +2 to the DC. Whether Aabhaca succeeds or not, he dives under the surface of the water, then attacks whichever PC appears to have the most trouble swimming.

If Aabhaca believes the PCs, he drops them off at the stairway, then paddles off into the mist. Along the way, the PCs can pump Aabhaca for information about Zenith and Bhal-Hamatugn. This is your chance to be as cryptic as possible without lying outright or seeming deliberately evasive. Like many of the residents of Bhal-Hamatugn, Aabhaca has a poor grasp of reality. His responses to the PCs' questions tend to wander and circle back on themselves, and he speaks as if the characters are fellow kuo-toan worshipers of the Sea Mother, even though they obviously aren't. For example, if the characters say, "Have you seen a dwarf named Zenith Splintershield?" Aabhaca responds, "I glimpse Zenith amid the great darkness, but he glimpses things beyond the dark, where it is darker still. Darker than dark, yes. And I see dimly what Zenith sees, in the dark. The cold, wet dark. It's dark, dark where I see Zenith. Are you from the dark?" And so on.

Ad-hoc XP Award: Because the characters are on a specific mission—recovering Zenith Splintershield—they earn full experience for Aabhaca whether they defeat him in combat or trick him into delivering them to Bhal-Hamatugn.

BHAL-HAMATUGN FEATURES

Once the characters get to the stairs, they've reached their goal: the kuo-toan fortress-shrine of Bhal-Hama-

tugn. Unless stated otherwise, dungeon features have the following characteristics.

Walls: Bhal-Hamatugn's walls are made of 1-foot-thick superior masonry (hardness 8, 90 hp, Climb DC 25, break DC 35) covering the solid stone that the giant fish is made out of. They're covered with tiny droplets of condensation and trickles of water run down them, which is why the Climb DC is higher than it otherwise would be. Ceilings are 15 feet high.

Floors: Well-fitted flagstone floors are the rule, although they're uniformly wet, with large puddles collecting water in the center of most rooms. This makes them slippery and increases the DC of Balance and Tumble checks by 5. Some places are marked on the map as shallow pools. It costs 2 squares of movement to move into a square with a shallow pool, and the DC of Tumble checks in such squares increases by 2. The pools also impose a –2 penalty on Move Silently checks.

Doors: All the interior doors in Bhal-Hamatugn are carved from solid blocks of granite (hardness 8, 60 hp, break DC 28) and have nested hinges (described in Chapter 3 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide*). The doors all have locks (DC 25), but they'll only be locked if the alarm has been sounded and it makes tactical sense to do so. Mangh-Mictho, Saagogoi, and Zenith each have a key for the doors—the same key opens every door in Bhal-Hamatugn. The doors lock from either side, and a locked door won't open from either side without a key.

Stairs: The steep staircases in Bhal-Hamatugn require 2 squares of movement to enter each square when ascending. They're also slippery, so characters running or charging down them must succeed at a DC 15 Balance check or stumble and perhaps fall, as described in the Miscellaneous Features section in Chapter 3 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide*. The stairs have railings wherever they don't have a wall next to them.

1. STAIRWAY INTO THE MAW (EL 7)

When the characters approach Bhal-Hamatugn, they may come under fire from the kuo-toa soldiers keeping watch from the structure's "eyes."

An immense structure of rough, wet stone in the shape of a fishlike creature stands here. Its eye sockets are empty, revealing darkness beyond, and its slick surface is dotted with patches of faintly phosphorescent moss, giving the entire structure a faint purple glow. A steep but wide stone stairway emerges from the water and leads to the open mouth of the fish, and from within sound faint, sporadic, froglike croaks.

The PCs can try to sneak past the four kuo-toans in the eye sockets (area **15**) above, but it'll be tricky because the kuo-toans have good Spot bonuses and can see moving invisible creatures.

Creatures: Four kuo-toan soldiers watch this area. They're actually hiding in area **15**, but they probably fight characters in area **1**.

Kuo-toa Soldier (4): hp 19 each; see Appendix 4.

Tactics: The kuo-toas are watching from the rough crenellations that form the lower eyelid of each eye socket. As the PCs approach, check whether the kuo-toa soldiers see the PCs and whether the PCs see them; the kuo-toas have a Hide bonus of +6 and a Spot bonus of +10. If possible, the kuo-toas wait until a PC is within 30 feet of the eye sockets before firing their hand crossbows, because then they deal sneak attack damage. They focus their attacks on whichever PC is closest to the entrance. They have cover (+4 to AC, +2 to Reflex saves) from the sockets.

If the kuo-toan soldiers have a chance, they draw their rapiers and leap out of the eye-socket balconies and onto a nearby PC. They take 2d6 points of damage and deal 1d6 points of damage to whomever they land on—if they make a DC 15 Tumble check they only take 1d6 points of damage from the fall. The impact automatically bounces them into a random adjacent square.

Development: The sounds of battle may awaken the off-duty soldiers in area 3. Check at the end of each round; it's a DC 0 Listen check to hear the battle, but they have a –10 penalty because they're sleeping for a net penalty of –7. Don't forget to account for distance as well. If the kuo-toas from area 3 don't arrive on their own, one of the kuo-toas in area 15 rouses them if a protracted ranged battle develops.

2. ENTRY CHAMBER (EL 7)

Whether Bhal-Hamatugn has been alerted or not, this area is usually empty, but the battles in other rooms could spill into this chamber. The double doors leading deeper into the kuo-toan shrine are trapped.

Red and green-tinted frescos cover the walls in this largely empty chamber. A set of carved stone doors stands opposite the main entrance, flanked on the left by a fresco of a frog-creature carrying a strange staff with two-tined forks on both ends, and on the right by a squat male humanoid in plate armor with a black sphere where his head should be. Frescos to either side depict hundreds of red, spear-wielding kuo-toas marching through Underdark caverns. Curved shards of what look like thin, fragile porcelain cover the floor. Passageways lead east and west from here.

A DC 15 Search check reveals that the paint on the humanoid fresco is much fresher than the other frescos, which are starting to crack and peel. The new fresco is an "artistic" representation of Zenith himself. A DC 10 Knowledge (nature) check reveals that the porcelain shards are actually broken eggshells, and a DC 20 Knowledge (nature) check reveals that they're from kuo-toa eggs. Spreading eggshells on the floor is a measure of hospitality among the kuo-toa.

Trap: The doors are carved with an abstract zig-zag pattern. They're also trapped with a *glyph of warding* that goes off when any non-kuo-toa opens the door, whether it was locked or not. The kuo-toas are careful to take any legitimate non-kuo-toa guest through the prison (area 3) and the torture chamber (area 8) rather than through this door.

Greater glyph of warding: CR 7; spell; spell trigger; no reset; spell effect (*greater glyph of warding* [blast], 16th-level cleric, 8d8 sonic, DC 19 Reflex save half damage); multiple targets (all targets within 5 ft.); Search DC 32; Disable Device DC 32.

3. SOLDIER BARRACKS (EL 7)

Behind a ratty tapestry is a room faintly lit by purplish patches of phosphorescence on the floor. A midden heap sits in the center of the room, and the walls have primitive stick-figure carvings of bipeds with spears on them. Four slight depressions in the floor hold an inch or two of water.

A DC 15 Knowledge (nature) check or the scent ability reveals that the phosphorescent patches are actually kuo-toa excrement—the glow is a byproduct of the glowing mushrooms in area 17.

Creatures: A few kuo-toa soldiers rest here. If the complex is on alert, they're no longer asleep.

Kuo-toa Soldier (4): hp 19 each; see Appendix 4.

Tactics: Unlike their counterparts in area 15, these soldiers are likely to engage in melee combat as soon as they make contact with the PCs. They use the Tumble skill to set themselves up in flanking positions so that they can deal sneak attack damage with their rapiers. They have only one attack per round anyway, so they don't give up anything if they move into new positions every round. They fight to the death, although they aren't above feigning unconsciousness if they think they can get a sneak attack from the deception later.

4. PRISON (EL 8)

Beyond the iron portcullis is a hallway running north and south. Along its east wall is a series of cells, divided by walls of solid masonry and enclosed by portcullises of their own. The bars are set only a few inches apart. Inset in the wall to the north is an iron lever pointing straight up.

First the characters have to contend with a loud portcullis. Once the PCs get into area 4 itself, two prisoners of the kuo-toas beg the PCs to release them.

The iron portcullis that bars the way into area 4 is easy to operate. Swinging the inset lever clockwise from the 12-o'clock to the 6-o'clock position sets into motion the mechanism in motion that opens the portcullis. But the portcullis makes a shrieking, grinding racket when it opens or closes. If the PC who pulled the lever immediately reverses the course of the lever, the mechanism emits only a brief shriek. Otherwise the cacophony of the portcullis lasts for a full round.

Brief Noise: The kuo-toas in area 5 don't hear the brief shriek of metal on metal, but Garekk the mummy in area 8 might hear it and hide underwater.

Sustained Sound: Garekk automatically hears the portcullis open fully and hides underwater, waiting patiently for the PCs.

Silencing the Portcullis: Most of the mechanism is behind the wall, so it's impossible to manually lubricate and repair the portcullis mechanism to be quieter. A *grease* spell is likewise problematic because the spellcaster can't target the relevant parts. A *silence* spell does the trick, however, and a DC 25 Disable Device check lets the PCs manually lift the portcullis without engaging the noisy mechanism.

Each of the metal plates is a cover that swings outward to reveal a lever in the 12-o'clock position. Unlike the portcullis between area 2 and area 4, these levers make only a faint squeaking sound when pulled, but they're locked in place with big iron padlocks (Open Lock DC 25). The PCs can bash these locks open (hardness 15, 30 hp), but if they do so, there's a 50% chance that the blows also knock the gears out of alignment, sticking the portcullis in place.

Creatures: Two of the cells are empty. The northernmost cell holds White-Eye, a wererat thief apprehended by the kuo-toas. The southernmost cell is occupied by Cherrit, an evil halfling sorcerer from Cauldron who knows part of the Cagewrights' plan. They've been locked up together for weeks, and each hates the other intensely.

As soon as either prisoner sees that the intruders aren't kuo-toas, he begs to be freed. The other prisoner immediately replies, "Don't free him! He's working with the kuo-toas!" The first prisoner replies, "Liar! You love the frog people, not I!" They both begin jabbering at once, accusing the other of perfidy and inventing very specific stories about how the other one is a kuo-toan thrall.

White-Eye, wererat human fighter 4: hp 37; see Appendix 4.

Cherrit, male halfling sorcerer 6: hp 21; see Appendix 4.

Tactics: White-Eye knows that Cherrit is a spellcaster of some sort (he's seen Cherrit cast *light* occasionally) although he's not sure what kind. He claims that Cherrit tried to get White-Eye to talk one day, then relayed the conversation to the kuo-toan jailers while White-Eye was pretending to sleep. White-Eye was captured by the kuo-toas about three weeks ago as he tried to sneak into Bhal-Hamatugn, intending to rob it of its riches.

Cherrit knows that White-Eye talks to a rat, so he believes that White-Eye has a rat familiar (making him an arcanist) or is a druid. Cherrit was captured about five weeks ago, and claims that White-Eye is a mercenary magician working for the kuo-toas who locked himself in a cell moments before the PCs arrived.

Cherrit, a Cauldron native, is here looking for Zenith Splintershield too. He happened to see Zenith's strange birthmark a decade ago when the duo were fighting duergar beneath Cauldron. Cherrit didn't think anything of it at the time, but recently he heard a rumor that invisible birthmarks had immense arcane power and used a *legend lore* scroll to locate Bhal-Hamatugn. At first, he claims to be "in the wrong place at the wrong time" and admits his interest in Zenith only after a successful Bluff, Diplomacy, or Intimidate check on the part of the PCs. Even then, he claims to be checking on his old comrade's well-being and won't mention the birthmark unless charmed or otherwise compelled to do so.

The PCs can simply leave both White-Eye and Cherrit locked up, although if they announce their intention to do so, both try to bargain for freedom with detailed but completely fictitious descriptions of the kuo-toa defenses deeper in the temple (neither of them have been beyond the torture chamber in area 8). If one prisoner starts describing the rest of the temple, the other loudly exclaims, "He's lying! He's leading you into a trap!"

Both prisoners try to conceal their true power from the PCs (White-Eye's lycanthropy and Cherrit's spellcasting). White-Eye takes hybrid form only if he's about to fight.

Development: If PCs are obviously badly wounded, either prisoner immediately attacks if freed. Otherwise, a freed prisoner promises to leave Bhal-Hamatugn and never return. They keep half their promise, returning a few hours later. White-Eye figures that the PCs might disrupt the kuo-toas enough to make temple-looting easier, while Cherrit figures he can still find Zenith. The PCs probably meet the former prisoners on a later foray into Bhal-Hamatugn—when it's least convenient for them.

The characters earn no experience for setting the prisoners free, nor do they earn experience for leaving them in their cells, because neither is a challenge. They earn experience only if they defeat the prisoners in a reasonably fair fight. But if the PCs set either prisoner free, they will undoubtedly have that chance in a later encounter, and they earn experience points then.

Ad-hoc XP Award: As they are when initially encountered, both prisoners are worth 20% less experience than normal because they have no equipment.

5. SHRINE TO THE SEA MOTHER (EL 9; SEE TEXT)

A seventy-foot-high statue of a lobster-headed and lobster-clawed woman dominates this chamber. Its eyes glow with a bright crimson that illuminates the room. An iron-railed balcony rings the room at a height of thirty feet, above a pool of water. A stairway leads up to a platform directly across the chamber that encircles the midsection of the statue, a few feet below its massive crustacean claws. The balcony follows the walls three-quarters of the way around the chamber. To the east and west are stairs leading both up and down. About thirty feet above this balcony is another balcony, which extends only halfway along

the left and right walls. Frescos of bloody sacrifices—mostly stylized kuo-toas carrying dismembered body parts—cover the walls. Every single kuo-toa depicted is facing the lobster statue.

Drawbridges on the upper landing are generally kept retracted, to prevent easy access to areas **17–19**; these bridges can be raised or lowered via wall-set winches in the hallway south of area **5A**.

The statue of Blibdoolpoolp is made of pure obsidian, and is essentially a massive, stationary magic item. It has the following effects, all functioning at caster level 15th:

- Permanent widened *unhallow* that covers all of area **5**. This blocks all mental charm and compulsion effects, makes rebuking easier and turning harder, and gives all creatures a +2 deflection bonus to AC and a +2 resistance bonus on saves against attacks made or effects created by good creatures.
- The statue counts as three additional whips for the purpose of the kuo-toas' lightning bolts, and the whips generating the lightning bolt need only be in the same room as the statue, not necessarily touching it. Four whips can generate a lightning bolt that deals 7d6 points of damage in area **5**, and even a solo whip can generate a 4d6 lightning bolt.
- Whenever a nonevil character enters area **5**, the statue uses a variant of a *planar ally* spell to call a specific erinyes devil, Aushanna, 2 minutes later. Aushanna returns to the Nine Hells after 10 minutes, and won't return for another hour. If Aushanna is killed, the statue can't call another outsider until a cleric of Blibdoolpoolp of at least 15th level learns the name of another demon or devil and makes a deal with it through the statue to serve as this area's guardian. Once the cleric learns the outsider's name, the process of establishing the new link requires a ritual that takes 12 hours of prayer and meditation. For the sake of this adventure, slaying Aushanna effectively ends this particular threat even if the PCs leave the kuo-toan stronghold and return later.

Creatures: The kuo-toa whips in area **5C** are engaged in rhythmic croaking if they haven't been alerted yet. If they've had at least a few rounds warning, they have prepared enough electricity for a lightning bolt.

The characters immediately must contend with two groups of kuo-toas: the whips at the base of the stairs and the soldiers on the upper balcony, who aren't initially visible to the PCs. Two minutes after the PCs enter this chamber, Aushanna the erinyes arrives, called from the Nine Hells by the power of Blipdoolpoolp's statue. Because the PCs won't necessarily face all these creatures at once, they're dealt with separately below.

- **Kuo-toa Whips (4):** hp 29 each; see Appendix 4.
- **Kuo-toa Soldier (4):** hp 19 each; see Appendix 4.
- **Aushanna, advanced erinyes:** hp 114; see Appendix 4.

Kuo-toa Tactics: Both sets of kuo-toas are more than willing to engage in ranged combat because they know that if they can survive for a few minutes, Aushanna will arrive to reinforce them. The whips stay together in a group, casting their defensive spells (*entropic shield*, then *shield of faith*) and generating lightning bolts as often as they can. They only draw their morningstars and attack if they've already cast their defensive spells and the characters have moved down to engage them in melee. The soldiers spread out to the balconies on the east and west walls and fire their hand crossbows at the PCs.

If a kuo-toa is close enough to charge a PC on a balcony, it tries to bull rush the PC off the balcony, going with the PC if necessary—these are religious fanatics, after all. It's a 30-foot drop from the balconies and platforms in area **5b** and a 60-foot drop from the upper balcony in area **5a**. The presence of the rail gives a character resisting a bull rush attempt a +2 circumstance bonus on the Strength check.

Aushanna Tactics: Unlike the kuo-toas, Aushanna has to work quickly because she returns to the Nine Hells after 10 minutes. She flies up near the ceiling and peppers the PCs with arrows, using Rapid Shot to make four attacks. If the PCs deal her significant damage (more than 15 points in a single attack), she *teleports* away for a round or two, then *teleports* back. She takes advantage of her speed and maneuverability, using Flyby Attack and Shot on the Run to flit back and forth between squares with cover from the PCs.

If Aushanna arrives to find an empty chamber, she flies through Bhal-Hamatugn looking for intruders. With her *true sight* ability, she's likely to find them, but the search uses up some of the 10 minutes she's allotted on the Material Plane.

Treasure: If Aushanna is slain, the PCs can claim her bow and other equipment. As a called outsider, her body and possessions don't disappear when she dies.

6. PRIEST'S CHAMBER (EL 6; SEE TEXT)

A stone cistern about six feet long and four feet across dominates this room. Shelves cover the walls. Most are empty, but a few hold moldy scrolls or rotting books. A lidded clay pot some four feet tall sits in the northern corner. An obviously magical flame burns in a brazier hanging from the ceiling.

These two rooms differ only in minor details. The personal quarters of the high-ranking whips, the chambers are notable only for their Trap and Treasure.

The scrolls and books are mostly religious texts about Blibdoolpoolp, although they occasionally reference other faiths—mostly those of Wee Jas and Vecna. A PC who reads Kuo-toan that spends at least 20 minutes scanning them, however, spots a passing reference to the "dark wisdom of the dwarf Zee'niht Shpehn-trah-shad." The text provides no further details.

The cistern is filled with clean water.

Trap: A *greater glyph of warding* guards the clay pot, triggering if anyone who isn't a kuo-toa wearing a holy symbol of Blibdoolpoolp breaks the pot or lifts the lid.

Greater Glyph of Warding: CR 7; spell; spell trigger; no reset; spell effect (*glyph of warding* [blast], 16th-level cleric, 8d8 sonic, DC 19 Reflex save half damage); multiple targets (all targets within 5 ft.); Search DC 32, Disable Device DC 32.

Treasure: The contents of the pot are different in each priest's chamber.

East Chamber: 500 gp, malachite-handled mirror (100 gp), pearl necklace (300 gp), garnet ring (100 gp).

West Chamber: 1,200 sp, 200 gp, embroidered mantle (400 gp), ebony chess pieces (200 gp).

7. MEDITATION CHAMBER (EL 9)

Murky water laps just a few inches below the threshold to this room. The room is empty of furniture, but the walls are covered with crab claws, mandibles, and other crustacean appendages carved in bas-relief. The warm light of a fire streams from doorways to the left and right.

This room is almost devoid of features, but one of the most powerful kuo-toas in Bhal-Hamatugn spends most of his time here.

The meditation chamber is where the whips come to prepare spells each day. Some of the claws on the north wall form shallow bowls that spill over into each other; the fountains form a water clock so the kuo-toas know when to pray to Blibdoolpoolp again. But the characters must get through Mangh-Mictho, the head whip, before they can examine the water clock.

There's a chance the PCs have to engage in underwater combat here. It's a good idea to reread the Underwater Combat section in Chapter 3 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide* before running this encounter.

Creatures: Mangh-Mictho, the head whip, spends most of his waking hours here, tending the shrine and notifying the other whips when it's time for them to return to the chamber and pray. He is waited upon by a duergar slave.

Mangh-Mictho, male kuo-toa cleric 8: hp 75; see Appendix 4.

Duergar Slave: hp 9; *Monster Manual* 91.

Tactics: When he hears trouble, Mangh-Mictho first locks the door, then has his duergar slave help him put on his armor (4 minutes). Once armored, he casts preparatory spells in the following order: *bear's endurance*, *bull's strength*, *owl's wisdom*, *entropic shield*, *shield of faith*, *magic weapon*, *divine favor*, and *divine power*. He moves to the door and listens for 1 round, then unlocks the door to face the intruders in area **5**.

When Mangh-Mictho has all the spells cast, his stats improve as follows: hp 103; AC 29; Full Atk +19/+14/+9 melee (1d10+10, *+1 pincer staff*); Fort +11, Will +16; Concentration +17, Jump –5, Listen +9, Spot +13, Swim +11; save DC 17 + spell level, 18 + spell level for evocation and necromancy spells.

By stepping into area 5, Mangh-Mictho can generate a lightning bolt every 1d4 rounds that deals 4d6 points of electricity damage. But Mangh-Mictho can also try to entice at least some of the PCs into entering area 7, so he might step back a square or two so he threatens an open door with his pincer staff, which has a reach of 10 feet. Once one or more PCs step into the room, Mangh-Mictho moves to the door himself and closes and locks it. He's willing to suffer attacks of opportunity for this action. If Mangh-Mictho gets PCs inside area 7 when the door is locked, he casts the raise water version of *control water*, filling areas 6 and 7 to the ceiling. Then the PCs must contend with the dangers and difficulties of underwater combat, as described in Chapter 3 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide*. Those outside the locked door see only a slowly growing puddle of water, unless they can open the door before their comrades drown.

8. TORTURE CHAMBER (EL 5)

The passageway leading to this room slopes down slightly, and the omnipresent puddles eventually grow to the point where you're knee-deep in murky water. The room, lit by a floating brazier in the northwest corner containing an obviously magical flame, has all manner of torture implements: shelves with scalpels, thumbscrews, a large jar of salt, and a well-oiled stretching rack. Manacles hang from the ceiling and the eastern wall.

Creatures: Lurking in this room is the kuo-toas' torturer, a mummy named Garekk. If he heard the PCs approach, he's hiding underwater. Garekk rarely leaves this room, except to gather torture victims from the cells in area 4 or deliver "ritual components" to area 5. Garekk doesn't remember what race he used to be, and he's so twisted and decrepit that it's impossible to tell by looking at him.

Garekk, Mummy: hp 55; *Monster Manual* 190 except Hide +7, Intimidate +13, Listen +8, Spot +4.

Tactics: If Garekk hears the portcullis in area 4 open or hears conversation in the southern hallway, he crouches underwater in the northeast corner of the room. When he first rises from the water—or when the PCs otherwise first see him—they must succeed at a DC 16 Will save or be paralyzed with fear for 1d4 rounds. He attacks a paralyzed foe first if possible and the nearest enemy if not. (Kuo-toas are naturally immune to paralysis, so Garekk's despair ability doesn't get in the way.)

The room is filled with waist-high water to Medium creatures. Medium or larger creatures get cover from the water, but it costs 4 squares of movement to move into any square in the room (or they can swim if they wish). Small PCs have to swim, but they gain improved cover (+8 bonus to AC, +4 bonus on Reflex saves). Tumbling is impossible unless the character has a swim speed, and the DCs of Move Silently checks are increased by 2.

9A. ARMORER'S WORKSHOP

Down a long hallway is an alcove, partially covered with a bright red tapestry hanging from pegs in the ceiling. Beyond it is a primitive forge and a table with woodworking and leathercrafting tools.

This vacant room is where one of the kuo-toas makes shields and armor for the rest of the tribe.

9B. PAINTER'S WORKSHOP

Beyond the second red curtain is another alcove, dominated by a wooden table covered with mixing bowls, mud-pots, and ceramic jars of paint.

One of the kuo-toas prepares the paints that become the frescos elsewhere in Bhal-Hamatugn in this room.

Treasure: The fresco paints are worth 500 gp (Appraise DC 25 to discern their value).

9C. STONEMASON'S WORKSHOP

This alcove has a pedal-operated grinder and a table covered with chisels, picks, and shards of flint, some crudely fashioned into spearpoints.

This alcove is for the stonemason, who does everything from repairs to the walls of Bhal-Hamatugn to arrowheads and spearpoints for Hlanamm in area 9e.

9D. WEAVER'S WORKSHOP

A big loom covers most of the available floor space in this alcove. A half-completed tapestry on the loom depicts the green and black legs of what is apparently a kuo-toa, and the swirling black tail of something else. Another tapestry is rolled up and leaning in a corner.

The kuo-toa weaver responsible for the tapestries in Bhal-Hamatugn plies his trade here.

The PCs should be glad the tapestry isn't completed. It depicts Dhorlot (who lives in area 14) impregnating a kuo-toa female.

Treasure: The tapestry in the corner, an abstract zigzag design, is worth 400 gp. It weighs 75 pounds.

9E. WEAPONSMITH'S WORKSHOP (EL 7)

The final alcove holds a round table with a bag of feathers, wooden shafts of various lengths and thicknesses, and a stitched-together padded mannequin with several crossbow bolts sticking out of its head.

Creatures: A kuo-toa rogue waits in ambush in this room, and provides some insight into how the kuo-toa tribe works.

Hlanamm the Spearmaster, male kuo-toa rogue 5: hp 41; see Appendix 4.

Tactics: Hlanamm listens carefully, hoping to get warning of the PCs' approach. Then he hides at the entrance to his workshop. Ideally, he throws his spear when only one PC remains in the hallway, but he also throws if he gets too worried that he will lose the element of surprise. Hlanamm does whatever he can to deal sneak attack damage. If taken below half his hit points, he flees to area **12**, although the portcullis may keep him in area **11**.

10. HALL OF HEROES (EL 7)

This chamber is mostly empty, but attached to the walls are about two dozen motionless kuo-toas. Those on the east wall have shields and weapons, usually spears or rapiers. Some have large slashes in them—wounds that certainly look fatal. Those on the west wall all have grisly holes in their bellies and carry no weapons. A basalt altar with a single carved-stone crustacean claw is built into the south wall.

This room has a pit trap and a resident wraith who eagerly takes advantage of PCs who fall down the pit.

The PCs likely assume the worst—that the kuo-toas on the walls are zombies or some other undead. But the truth is far simpler: the kuo-toas honor their heroes by stuffing their bodies and mounting them here so that they can inspire others even after death. The east wall is for war heroes, and the west wall is for kuo-toan females who've died giving birth to the fingerlings in area **11**.

Creature: A wraith haunts this room. It doesn't attack the kuo-toas because it's learned that doing so invites Mangh-Mictho's wrath.

Wraith: hp 32; *Monster Manual* 258.

Tactics: The wraith lurks near the altar, hiding with only its head sticking out of the wall. If someone falls into the pit, the wraith swoops down through the floor and attacks the trap victim, hoping to drain him completely and create a spawn before the other PCs can help. Otherwise, the wraith waits until one PC stands apart from the others before attacking, if it can.

Trap: A deep, spike-filled pit lies just inside the room through the double doors.

Spiked Pit Trap: CR 5; mechanical; location trigger; manual reset; DC 25 Reflex save avoids; 40 ft. deep (4d6, fall); multiple targets (anyone standing in the marked area after a one-second delay); pit spikes (Atk +10 melee, 1d4 spikes per target for 1d4+4 each); Search DC 21; Disable Device DC 20.

Treasure: Golden incense burners (1,000 gp) sit on the altar.

11. FINGERLING POOL (EL 8)

This octagonal room has a stone staircase ascending into an alcove in the northwest corner and an iron portcullis in the south wall. It looks like a net has been woven through the bars of the portcullis, but the net only reaches halfway up the bars. Most of the western half of the room is covered with standing water. The water is murky, so it's hard to

tell how deep it gets, but if the floor is mostly level, it shouldn't be more than a foot deep. The walls are covered with frescos of young kuo-toas emerging from eggs and being handed spears by other kuo-toas.

In this room, the PCs come into contact with the product of the kuo-toa's crossbreeding program: half-dragon kuo-toa fingerlings.

The water is indeed shallow, except as marked on the map near the stairway. There it's 4 feet deep, providing cover for the guards in this room.

The lever that opens and closes the portcullis is inset into the west wall on the south side of the portcullis. It functions like the portcullises in area 4, except that it makes only a faint rattling noise. The net keeps the draconic fingerlings from swimming into area 12.

Creatures: Two kuo-toa soldiers crouch on either side of the staircase, and under the surface of the water lurk two draconic fingerling swarms (described in the appendix).

Kuo-toa Soldier (2): hp 19 each; see Appendix 4.

Draconic Fingerlings (2): hp 65 each; see Appendix 1.

Tactics: The kuo-toa soldiers hide underwater if they know the PCs are coming, then raise their heads and hand crossbows above the surface hoping to surprise (and sneak attack) the PCs when they enter the room. Crouching in the deep water, the kuo-toa soldiers have improved cover (+8 bonus to AC, +4 bonus on Reflex saves) from PCs who aren't also in the deep water. The fingerling swarms simply attack any PC that sets foot in the water or comes within a vertical jump of the water's surface.

12. LIVING QUARTERS (EL 8)

A pool of murky water lies in the center of this room. The walls are covered with primitive stick-figure drawings of bipeds with spears. Some carry oval-shaped objects.

This is where the rank-and-file kuo-toas sleep, bathe, and eat.

A straightforward fight is in store here, the only complication being the shallow water that covers much of the room.

Creatures: Three of the kuo-toas are whips, and the others are Bhal-Hamatugn's remaining females (the others died after giving birth to the fingerlings and are now stuffed in area 10).

Kuo-toa Whips (3): hp 29 each; see Appendix 4.

Kuo-toa Females (6): hp 11 each; *Monster Manual* 163.

Tactics: The kuo-toa whips cast protective spells on themselves if they are forewarned of the PCs' approach. The females engage the PCs in melee, while the whips cast spells and generate lightning bolts. The kuo-toas fight to the death unless they can slip past the PCs and run away, in which case they head toward area 5.

13. DHORLOT'S ANTECHAMBER (EL 6)

This empty room has wall frescos in a zig-zag pattern so busy it's almost dizzying to look at. Another carved stone door is in the center of the north wall.

Traps: This empty room has two traps: one on the carved stone doors between this room and area 12, and one inside the room itself. Deal with the door trap first, then read the boxed text above when the PCs get the door open.

Characters who cross the room face the second trap, which triggers 6 seconds after the first PC steps beyond the threshold. Anyone in the room at that point gets targeted by the trap, unless they're Small or crawling, in which case the spears fly harmlessly overhead.

***Lightning Bolt* Trap:** CR 6; magic device; touch trigger; automatic reset; spell effect (*lightning bolt*, 10th-level caster 10d6 electricity, DC 14 Reflex save half damage); Search DC 28; Disable Device DC 28. The *lightning bolt* is wide enough to encompass the entire stairway.

Poison Wall Spears: CR 5; mechanical; location trigger; manual reset; Atk +16 ranged (1d8+4 plus poison, spear); multiple targets (anyone Medium or larger in room); poison (Medium monstrous spider venom, DC 12 Fortitude save resists, 1d4 Str/1d4 Str); Search DC 17; Disable Device DC 21.

14. DHORLOT THE DRAGON-FATHER (EL 9)

This plain chamber features a stone altar on its north wall and clay pots lining the east and west walls.

Creature: One of the most powerful allies of Zenith and kuo-toas, a black dragon named Dhorlot, hides here. Dhorlot fathered the draconic fingerlings in area 12. The dragon has recently retreated to this chamber after a fight with Gotrrod over a territory dispute. After retreating here, several of the kuo-toa clerics healed Dhorlot of his wounds, and for the next several weeks he hides here in this tiny room, waiting for Gotrrod to lose interest in the area and move on.

Dhorlot the Dragon-Father, male young adult black dragon: hp 150; see Appendix 4.

Tactics: Dhorlot applies typical dragon tactics—breath weapon or full attack every round—against intruders. He casts *shield* if he hears intruders at his door. But unlike the fanatical kuo-toas, Dhorlot isn't willing to die to protect Bhal-Hamatugn. If reduced below 60 hp, he flees, bull-rushing PCs out of the way if he has to and using *obscuring mist* at an intersection to slow pursuit. If the PCs drive him off, he never returns to Bhal-Hamatugn, although he may return at a later date in the campaign to seek revenge.

Treasure: Most of the clay pots are empty, but some hold the dragon's hoard: 60 pp, 800 gp, 1,100 sp, 400 cp, finely wrought electrum bracers (500 gp for the set), four sets of silver flatware (50 gp each), three rubies (300 gp each), two emeralds (200 gp each), 1 cut zirconium

(10 gp, but it takes a DC 15 Appraise check to avoid mistaking it for a 2,000 gp diamond), a scroll of *dismissal*, a scroll of *cloudkill*, a scroll of *wall of fire*, a *wand of see invisibility* (11 charges remaining), a *potion of cure moderate wounds*, a *potion of darkvision*, a *potion of displacement*, and a dose of *oil of keen edge*.

Ad-hoc XP Award: Because Dhorlot readily flees, and because the close-quarters terrain favors the PCs, award 10% less experience for this encounter.

15. GUARD POSTS (EL 7)

A narrow passageway connects these two small chambers. Neither has any furniture or features beyond the large openings in the south wall, which afford a view of the lake Bhal-Hamatugn sits in and the larger Underdark cavern. A stone door in the north wall of the passageway connects the two eye-chambers.

Creatures: It's likely that the PCs fought the kuo-toas here when they entered Bhal-Hamatugn. If they didn't, or if this is a later foray, four kuo-toa soldiers watch the entrance from these rooms, the eyes of the giant fish that is Bhal-Hamatugn.

Kuo-toa Soldier (4): hp 19 each; see Appendix 4.

Tactics: Because the kuo-toas guard Bhal-Hamatugn from exterior attack, they don't pay attention to the stairway that leads from area 3 to here. Accordingly, they suffer a –5 penalty on Spot and Listen checks against PCs coming up the stairs. Once engaged, they rush into melee, trying to make as much noise as possible to warn the rest of Bhal-Hamatugn.

16. ARMORY

This small room has shields stacked on the floor and dozens of spears in racks on the wall.

This room is simply weapon and armor storage.

Treasure: The room holds 40 heavy wooden shields, 120 shortspears, 10 pincer staffs, and 200 hand crossbow bolts. Five of the shields have had kuo-toa adhesive applied to them.

17. MUSHROOM GROTTO (EL 7)

The floor of this large, T-shaped room is covered with bell-capped purple mushrooms standing a foot or two high. Two massive pillars are the room's only other visible feature. The southern pillar has partially collapsed and no longer reaches the ceiling. The northern pillar is cracked but otherwise intact.

The northern pillar is all that's holding up the roof. If it takes 30 points of damage, it collapses, caving in all of area 17 (everything west of the double doors). The cave-in functions as described in the Cave-Ins and Collapses section of the *Dungeon Master's Guide*.

The mushrooms that cover the floor count as light undergrowth, providing concealment and costing 2 squares of movement to enter each square. The DC of Tumble and Move Silently checks increases by 2.

Creatures: Four violet fungi live among the mushrooms. The kuo-toas don't mind because they're immune to poison.

Violet Fungus (4): 15 hp each; *Monster Manual* 112.

Tactics: The violet fungi lurk near the interior corners of the room. Until they move and extend their tentacles, they're indistinguishable from the rest of the mushrooms. They scuttle forward and attack as soon as they have a living target that doesn't look like a kuo-toa. They aren't intelligent, so they mindlessly fight until slain.

Experience: If the PCs get caught in area 17 as it collapses, they earn experience as if it was a CR 8 trap.

18. ANTECHAMBER OF THE FINAL BREATH (EL 8)

This lozenge-shaped chamber has more frescoes, this time of kuo-toas emerging from the sea and marching into holes in the ground. The floor is covered with the same porcelain shards found near the entrance. The eastern corner of the north wall features a set of double stone doors.

Creatures: If Bhal-Hamatugn has been alerted, or the PCs have made any noise opening the door, Saagogoi is perched directly above the door's threshold, using his *slippers of spider climbing* to cling to the wall where it meets the ceiling. Otherwise he's standing at attention at the doors to area 19.

Saagogoi, male kuo-toa monk 3/Assassin 3: hp 49; see Appendix 4.

Tactics: Saagogoi is confident enough in his ability to hide in the ceiling shadows that he studies a foe for 3 rounds, then leaps from the wall and attacks a PC. He chooses whichever PC looks most like a wizard or sorcerer, because he knows they're less able to resist his death attack. Then Saagogoi runs from the chamber, trying to lure the PCs away from area 19. If possible, he hides again, then makes another death attack or sneak attack.

19. ZENITH'S CHAMBER (EL 10)

Against the north wall sits a throne made of what looks like stitched-together skin. Four slender pillars surround a faintly luminescent circle about five feet across, carved into the stone of the floor. To either side of the throne hang banners depicting a dwarf in blue and white armor holding a waraxe aloft. Both banners are apparently upside-down. Hanging by their feet from nooses attached to the 30-foot ceiling are dozens of rotting corpses, each with the top of its head removed. The corpses mutter and twitch in a pale mockery of life.

The throne is made from the scalps of the corpses, all foes that Zenith vanquished during his time in the Underdark. A unique necromantic effect (equivalent to a 3rd-level spell) makes the corpses mutter nonsense and flex their limbs from time to time, but the corpses aren't undead—they're just corpses. The tapestries are the Splintershield clan's battle standards. A successful DC 18 Knowledge (nobility and royalty) check reveals this, as well as the information that hanging them upside-down is a grave insult to anyone of that clan. The circle in the floor is a permanent *teleportation* circle. Anyone who steps into the circle is teleported to the platform in area **5b** between the pincers of the massive statue.

Creature: A tired-looking dwarf slumps in the throne, a glowing sphere in his hand and an axe across his lap. "I prophesy your doom!" he whispers harshly as he takes note of intruders. This is none other than Zenith Splintershield. He won't willingly leave his throne, but he's willing to listen to any entreaties from the PCs.

Zenith Splintershield, male dwarf fighter 7/ dwarven defender 3: hp 88; see Appendix 4.

Tactics: Zenith's first action is to hurl his *sphere of the unseen* at the south wall. This summons an invisible stalker that attacks any PC who hangs back rather than meeting Zenith in melee.

Zenith then adopts a defensive stance and tries to kill any PC who comes within reach. Each round, he utters another prophecy, pointing to a random character. Here are some sample prophecies, but feel to make up your own.

- "A man in blue will slay you before the year is done."
- "You'll be buried alive, but you won't be alone."
- "Your heart harbors two ships: betrayal and joy."
- "The Smoking Eye will set your city aflame."

When possible, the prophecies should involve death or destruction and include a specific detail, even if they're otherwise maddeningly vague.

When Zenith reaches 20 hp or less, he breaks out of the defensive stance and uses the teleportation circle to go to area **5b**. As soon as he can, he readies an action to attack anyone who follows him. He goes into a second defensive stance there and makes his last stand before the red eyes of the Sea Mother.

If a PC uses magic such as a *see invisibility* or *invisibility purge* spell to fight the invisible stalker, describe Zenith's birthmark: the sign of Carceri like a big tattoo across his face. If the characters examine it later, they may discover that it's naturally invisible.

BACK TO CAULDRON

Once the characters defeat Zenith and get him out of Bhal-Hamatugn (provided he still lives), he becomes eerily docile. He follows the PCs wherever they go, but he won't speak or otherwise interact with them, other than taking offered food and water. If he's involved in a fight, he adopts a defensive stance and readies an action to attack anyone who comes within reach.

Cauldron is several days away. You can either use the random encounter tables from the introduction to liven up the return, or just declare that the trip back to town was uneventful. When the PCs return to the Cusp of Sunrise with Zenith, though, they'll be told

that Celeste had to leave town to tend to an emergency elsewhere. They'll be met by Vhalantru himself, who claims Celeste is a close friend and that she asked him to take over custody of Zenith Splintershield and ensure he gets to meet his father.

This is all a lie, of course. In truth, while the PCs were rescuing Zenith, Celeste did a little more research into the corruption within Cauldron. She hoped to find a lead and have this information available for the PCs upon their return, planning to ally with them to take care of whatever she uncovered. Unfortunately, she found out a little more than she bargained for, and was captured by Vhalantru. The beholder managed to charm her with his charm monster eye ray before she could escape. He has since bound her into a magical painting with a variant form of *binding*. Vhalantru isn't sure what to do with her yet, but figures she might make a good gift to the Cagewrights in case he ever needs to win back their favor. For the next several chapters, Celeste remains his prisoner in Oblivion—as long as she is bound into the painting, divination spells cannot track her down. In Chapter Eight the PCs have a chance to rescue her, but until then, she remains out of the picture.

If the PCs hand Zenith over, Vhalantru sees that they are rewarded with whatever Celeste promised to give them, and leaves with the dwarf for his estate. From there, the beholder hands him over to the Cagewrights, and the PCs won't see or hear from him again until the end of Chapter Ten. It should be difficult for the PCs to see through Vhalantru's lies, since he drinks a *potion of glibness* before meeting them. Still, if they say they'd rather deliver Zenith to his father themselves, Vhalantru looks impatient and does his best to convince them their part of the job is done. If the PCs continue to refuse to hand him over, or demand to come along on the journey, Vhalantru eventually relents. He has no intention of letting the PCs interact with Gortio the doppelganger again, but tells them anyway that it'll take a day or two to arrange the meeting with Zenith's father, since the dwarf is currently at an undisclosed location with several priests who are making one final attempt to cure his illness.

Later that night, after the PCs are presumably asleep, agents of the Cagewrights teleport in to take Zenith away. The poor dwarf doesn't say a word as he's abducted. If the PCs post guards around him, they may have to contend with the agents the Cagewrights send. The initial abduction attempt is made by the half-mad derro Kravichak Riolgh, who uses *scrying* to scout out Zenith's location. Before attempting the abduction, Kravichak uses *greater invisibility*, *haste*, and *shield* on himself to increase his odds of success. The derro grabs Zenith and *teleports* away as soon as he can—Zenith, strangely compliant as always, willingly goes with the derro. It's likely that the relatively low-level PCs won't have a chance to stop this plan, but if they do pose a threat to Kravichak, the derro *teleports* away to safety at the first opportunity.

If informed of this abduction attempt later, Vhalantru seems shocked and appalled, and promises to bring all his resources to bear on tracking the strange derro down. Of course, he does no such thing. He does inform the PCs at this time that Davkid has passed on. He tries to use guilt against the PCs at this point, insinuating that if they had just let him take Zenith to meet his father, things would have turned out so much better. In any case, he no longer has a need for Zenith and is content to let the PCs do with him what they will. He returns to his manor, and the Cagewrights continue to watch the dwarf, striking at an opportune moment to whisk him away to his destiny.

BEHIND THE SCENES: ZENITH TRAJECTORY

The PCs could learn about the shackleborn in this chapter. If they discover the strange birthmark on Zenith's face, they can research it as detailed in the introduction to this book. They also meet Vhalantru for the first time (in human form) and Celeste, a ghaele eladrin who could become a powerful ally later in the campaign. By the end of this adventure, they should be starting to suspect that there's some sort of corruption in Cauldron, although they shouldn't yet know where to start looking. It's okay if they start to suspect Vhalantru at this time.

The PCs have, by now, fully caught the attention of the Cagewrights. Once the cultists have Zenith, they have all the shackleborn they need to start the final stages of their ritual. They'll need to put all 13 of the shackleborn through a complex and lengthy purificaiton ritual first—a ritual that lasts until Chapter Nine. As this ritual begins, they retreat into the Fiery Sanctum deep below Cauldron, and task Vhalantru with the job of keeping his eyes on the PCs. If they start to unravel the truth, they are to be killed.

As one of the leaders of the group, Embril Aloustani joins the Cagewrights in the Fiery Sanctum as this chapter ends, leaving Ike Iverson compeltely in charge of the cathedral of Wee Jas. Those who ask for her at the cathedral are told simply that she is away on church business.

Finally, while the PCs were in the Underdark, Alek Tercival discovered proof of corruption in Cauldron's city guard. Unfortunately, this proof came at the cost of his sanity. The results (and cause) of his insanity provide much of the driving force for the next chapter.

CHAPTER FIVE

CHAPTER FIVE

THE DEMONSKAR LEGACY

BY TITO LEATI

Despite the onset of spring, unrest has spread through Cauldron. Taxes have been raised numerous times to help the city cope with damage caused by recent emergencies and to take precautions against further accidents during an eventful year. Since the last fiscal decree issued by Lord Mayor Navalant, taxes in Cauldron have become higher than those in the much larger neighboring city, Sasserine.

Protests and tax evasion are spreading. Visible benefits of the high taxes have yet to appear, and many Cauldronites grumble that the taxes are simply lining the pockets of the nobility. Lord Orbius Vhalantru embezzles much of the collected money and uses it to fuel his wicked work. Cauldron's wealthiest citizens, whose taxes are collected first, are the first to suffer from the increases. Among these unhappy citizens is Maavu, the merchant whose warehouse was smashed by a fiendish umber hulk at the start of Chapter Four.

Now, dour tax collectors walk the city streets, invariably accompanied by patrols of heavily armed and ruthless half-orc mercenaries. Rumors circulate of special squads of the town guard that break into private houses, workshops, and stores to search for hidden goods, money, or other valuables. The captain of the town guard, Terseon Skellerang, recently announced special security measures against a sect of dangerous anarchists believed to be plotting to overthrow the city government. The lord mayor, for his part, has been quite absent lately, rarely showing up in public and leaving most matters to his collaborators.

While chaos advances, a champion of good has been chosen by fate to play an important role in Cauldron's future. Heir to one of the region's noble families, Alek Tercival became a paladin after his father's death left him destitute. With the assistance of his childhood friend Jenya Urikas (now the high priestess of Cauldron's Temple of St. Cuthbert), Alek joined the church of St. Cuthbert with a strong (if rather flamboyant) passion. Alek's advancement in the church has been painfully slow, but throughout it all his devotion has remained strong.

Three years ago Alek slew an incredibly old ogre near the village of Redgorge. In the monster's lair, he found a thin silver plate etched with odd drawings and characters. On the back of the plate the ogre had scratched a crude map to an underground ruin called "Vaprak's Voice," set on the rim of a geological rift called the Demonskar. Intrigued, Alek set out from the village of Redgorge and rode westward across the dense jungle, heedless of the terrible rumors about his destination. After a dangerous journey to the Demonskar's rim, Alek discovered a pair or enormous, truncated tubes jutting from the surface. When wind swept the area, a tremendous, echoing bellow issued from the tubes, earning the place its name. After a bit of exploration, he found a passage leading into ancient subterranean ruins, built ages ago by a cabal of evil spell weavers.

Alek Tercival was not the only recent visitor to Vaprak's Voice. A covey of three half-fey greenhags have inhabited the place for months, spending their nights unraveling many of the ruin's ancient secrets. Shortly after their arrival, they received a visit from the Demonskar's master, a glabrezu named Nabthatoron. The hags recognized the demon's superiority and swore to serve him as vassals.

Nabthatoron has long known that the Cagewrights have been operating in the region, since one of their leaders, Thearynn Louvel, often visited the Demonskar to speak to the glabrezu of matters Abyssal. Nabthatoron knows that the Cagewrights plan something devastating for Cauldron, and although he still lacks details on this plan, he knows this disaster would surely affect Redgorge as well, making his revenge against the town all the easier. For the first time in centuries, the demon feels his exile on the Material Plane may be drawing to a close.

When Alek arrived at Vaprak's Voice, Nabthatoron was present. The demon saw an opportunity in Alek's visit, and ordered the hags to spare the paladin's life if they could take control of him in some way. Obedient to the demon's will, the hags used their *mind blank*, *mirage arcana*, and *veil* abilities to assume the appearance of a trio of trumpet archons. Fooled by the covey's powerful deception, the paladin fell on his knees before them, overcome with awe.

From these false archons, Alek learned of an apocalyptic event that would soon devastate the region. Although the "trumpet archons" knew about the forthcoming disaster, they did not say exactly what would happen. Pressed by Alek on the matter, they led him to an artifact called the *Starry Mirror*, informing him that it was an ancient oracular device which could give great insights to anyone bold enough to discover its secrets. In reality, the hags just wanted someone to take the risk of testing the ancient artifact. They lied to Alek, telling him that the *Starry Mirror's* divinatory powers would

STARTING THE CHAPTER: THE DEMONSKAR LEGACY

The average party level should be 8 when you start this chapter. You should allow some down time for characters with item creation feats to use their skills. During this down time, you should start to highlight the changes that are beginning to affect Cauldron. Merchants and citizens alike complain more and more about the increasing taxes, and the PCs should be noticing more and more half-orcs in city guard uniforms on the streets.

function only for someone who had proven his purity, and that they had for him a set of tasks to do just that.

At the end of the visit, the false archons gave Alek a chalice filled with *Amaranth Elixir*, a strength-enhancing draught used by the spell weavers who built Vaprak's Voice. After drinking it, Alek became much more physically powerful and reckless. As the *Amaranth Elixir* dimmed his wisdom, the "archons" told him that he had been chosen to play the role of savior of the land. They warned him to keep this meeting a secret from everyone until the right moment, so the forces of evil could not strike against him. With this last recommendation, the "archons" gave Alek a *cloak of resistance* +1 with the covey's *hag eye* set in the clasp, allowing the hags to monitor his actions.

This final step complete, the hags sent Alek back into the world as their unwitting agent.

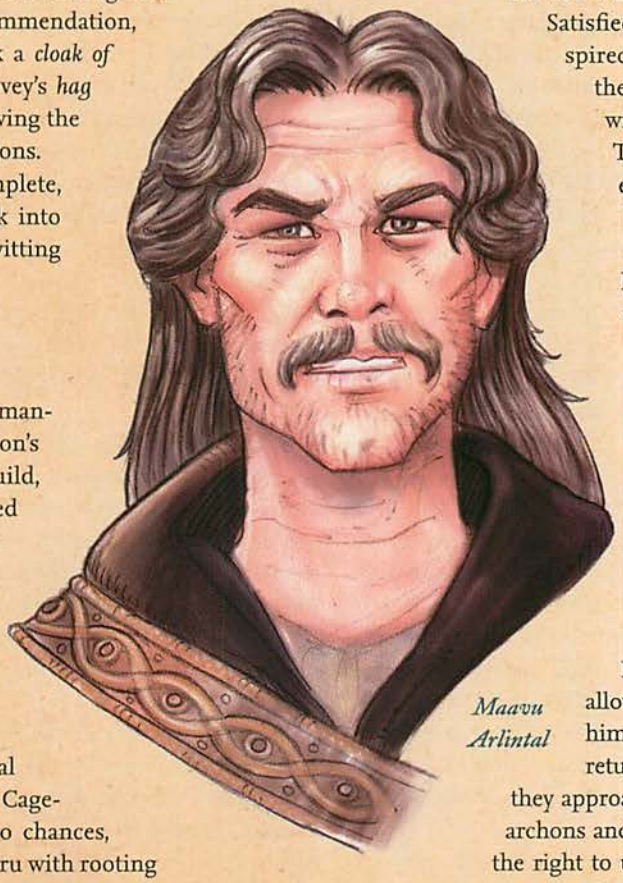
TERCIVAL'S CHALLENGE

While Vhalantru has managed to subvert Cauldron's Last Laugh thieves' guild, the Chisel has resisted such corruption. Their presence has always been a thorn in the Cagewrights' side, forcing them to take additional care in hiding their actions. With the final Shackleborn caged, the Cagewrights want to take no chances, and have tasked Vhalantru with rooting out and destroying the secret society.

Vhalantru has determined that the Chisel's base of operations is in the town of Redgorge, south of Cauldron, and has been rallying the lord mayor and Terseon Skellerang against Maavu and his associates. When the adventure begins, Skellerang is already planning a large-scale police operation in Redgorge, in which he hopes to crush the Chisel once and for all.

After his warehouses were damaged by the fiendish umber hulk in Chapter Four, Maavu snuck out to Redgorge. There, he met with two leaders of the Chisel, the Foreman and the Honest Minstrel, to deliberate on the situation. On this occasion, the conspirators had a special guest: Alek Tercival, sent by dreams from the hags to infiltrate the Chisel. With his magically acquired might and pride, Alek impressed the others so much that they agreed to help him in his "battle against evil" in Cauldron, although his story of an impending catastrophe left them puzzled and skeptical.

In Maavu's opinion, a good start to restoring a righteous government in Cauldron would be to replace the town administrators with trusted people (that is, members of the Chisel). To this end, using his knowledge of the city legalities, Maavu devised a plan to remove the current captain of the town guard and put Alek in his place. According to an ancient law known as the Old Law of Peers, descendants of the five founding noble families of Cauldron (after the lord mayor) have the right to challenge the captain of the town guard if they believe his behavior to be unworthy or immoral. Thanks to his ancestry, Alek happens to be among the few who can issue such a challenge.



Maavu Arlintal

Satisfied with Maavu's plan, and inspired further by dreams sent by the hags, the impatient Alek wrote a letter of challenge to Terseon Skellerang. At the end of the meeting, the members of the Chisel, including Maavu, set out to deliver the letter and organize the plan, while Alek returned in secret to Vaprak's Voice to prepare for the duel by drinking again from the *Amaranth Elixir*, since the effects had worn off that night.

Unfortunately for Alek, now that he has played his part in planting this seed of chaos, he is of no more use to Nabthatoron. The glabrezu allowed the hags to dispose of him as they wished. When Alek returned to prepare for the duel, they approached him in the guise of the archons and told him that he had earned the right to use the *Starry Mirror* to divine the future of Cauldron. They took back their *hag eye* and led Alek to the *Starry Mirror*. Alek eagerly stepped into the *Starry Mirror*, hoping to arm himself with knowledge on how to stave off Cauldron's doom, but found himself instead trapped in a maze of mirrors. For the next several days he wandered the mirror maze

aimlessly, searching for the divinatory powers the "archons" had promised him. As the days wore on, madness began to worm its way into his mind. The thought that his "archon" allies had abandoned him to this endless maze soon consumed his every thought. When, through pure luck, he stumbled out of the maze and into an ancient spell weaver vault from which there was no apparent escape, his mind finally snapped.

And 500 miles away, in Cauldron, the challenge he issued is blossoming into chaos...

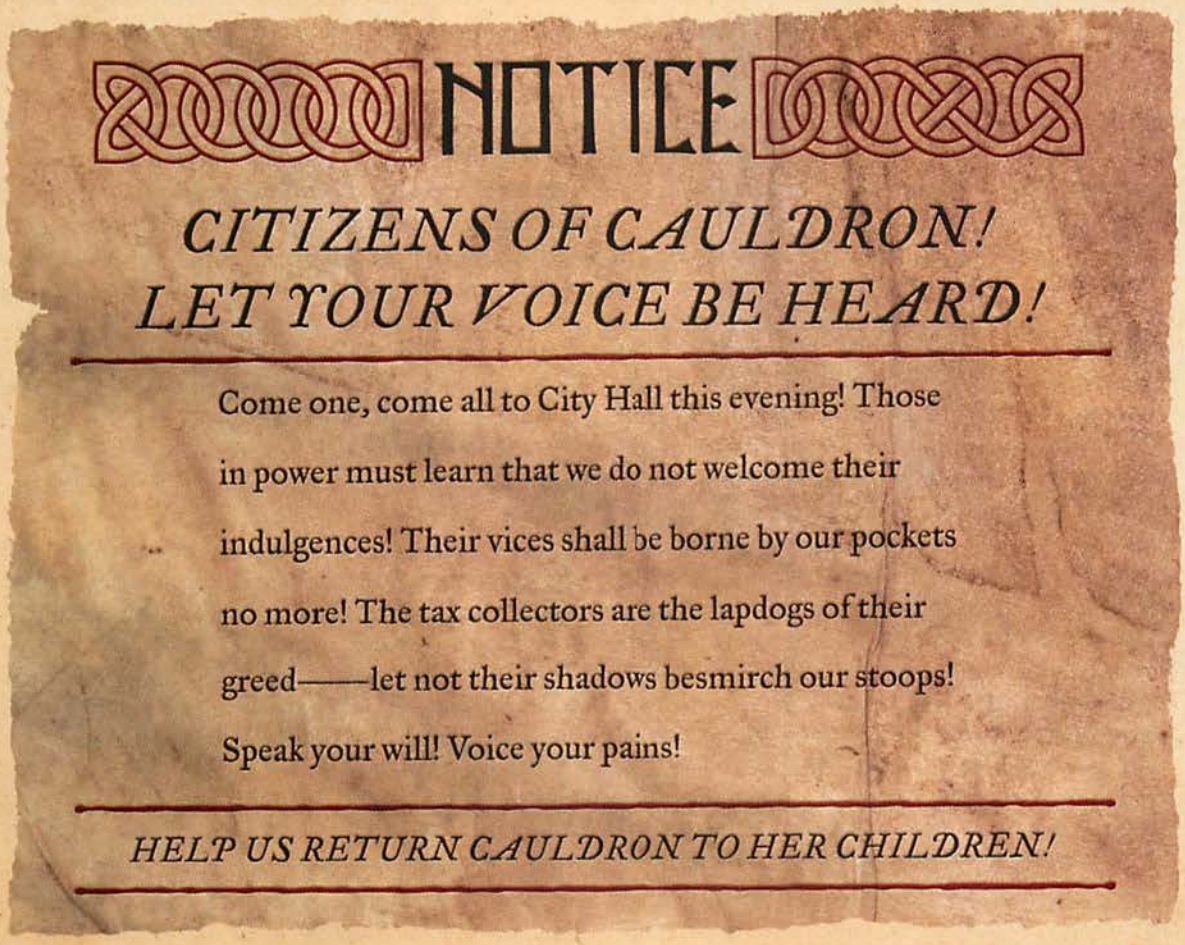
EVENT 17: THE CAULDRON TAX RIOT (EL 8)

A huge demonstration is scheduled to take place around City Hall on the morning this adventure begins. More than 700 citizens (most of them merchants) gather in the streets near City Hall to protest against the tax increases. Try to encourage the PCs to attend the demonstration; if they don't, the chapter can continue but they'll have to piece together what happened during the riot from second-hand sources. Some possible hooks to get the PCs to attend are listed below.

- Jenya Urikas heard that Alek Tercival is going to be at the demonstration, and since she won't be able to make it she asks the PCs to go in her place, contact Alek, and ask him to come visit her at the Church of St. Cuthbert. Alek's been out of contact for some time, and Jenya is growing worried for her friend.
- The Striders of Fharlanghn have been keeping tabs on the Cagewrights, and Meerthan Eliothlorn fears that they might take advantage of the demonstration to further their agenda somehow. He sends Shensen Tesseril to the event to keep an eye on things; if she is allied with the party or has been developing a deeper relationship with one of the PCs, she asks them to come with her to the demonstration for companionship and support.
- As the PCs relax at the Tipped Tankard (or anywhere else, for that matter) a large mob of loud and angry people passes by. Mention of "taxes" and "thugs" and other topics can be heard in the din. One of the members of the mob recognizes the PCs and asks them if they're going to the demonstration as well.

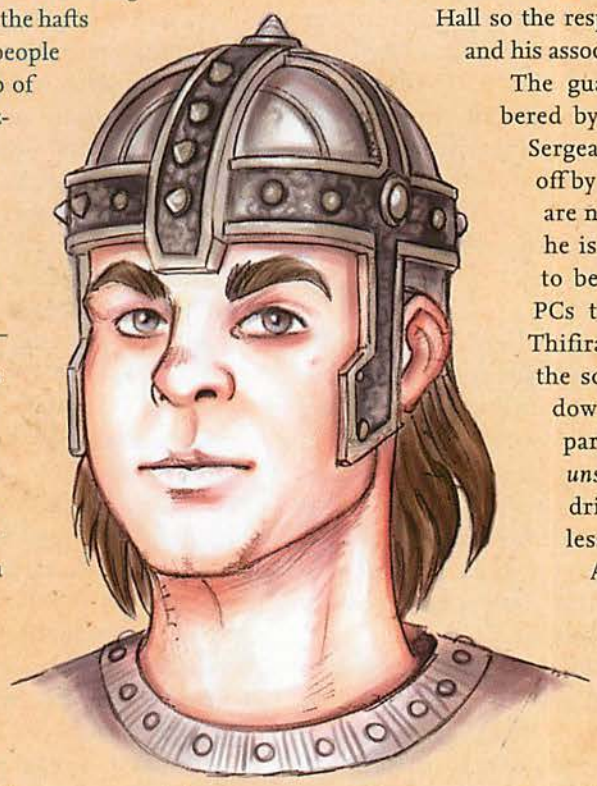
The demonstration against the tax increases, although somewhat spontaneous, was largely inspired by the Chisel, which has several affiliates among the crowd (including Maavu). The Chisel intends to make it clear that Cauldron's population is not going to tolerate further abuses from the authorities. The Last Laugh, however, has learned about the programs of the Chisel from an informant, and at Vhalantru's urging has prepared a countermove against them.

The streets around City Hall are packed tight with loud citizens rallying against the recent tax increases



in Cauldron. Several guards stand in a ring around the building and use the hafts of their halberds to keep people out. Presently, a small group of dignitaries, easily recognizable as the town tax collectors, make their way to the entrance. The citizens boo and scream insults at the tax collectors as they scuttle inside the building.

After the tax collectors have gone inside, Maavu climbs a prominent dais to speak. The merchant raises a hand and the demonstrators calm down a bit. After a moment of silence, Maavu addresses the audience resolutely. The merchant says that the lord mayor has received a letter of challenge, in which the noble Alek Tercival, paladin of St. Cuthbert, challenges the captain of the town guard, Terseon Skellerang, to prove his valor in a duel according to the Old Law of Peers. Maavu points out that the challenge has not been publicized by the City Council, which is itself illegal by the laws of the city and proof of the ill will the lord mayor's advisors bear the citizens. Maavu is a skilled orator, and the crowd becomes more and more angry as he speaks. When his words became too bold, a watch sergeant named Skylar Krewis rushes out of the City Hall to stop him. Read the following:



Skylar Krewis

The words of the fervor-filled merchant continue to imbue the citizens with a mounting rage. The people's anger culminates when Maavu points out the fact that a group of armed half-orcs is already harassing the town: "Skellerang is feeding a band of filthy half-orc thugs a large share of our bread!" he screams. Then, wading in the crowd of people, a human watch sergeant escorted by several half-orc mercenaries approaches the dais to arrest the merchant. "In the name of Terseon Skellerang, Captain of the Town Guard, I must arrest you!" he declares, addressing Maavu. Suddenly, from within the angered crowd, an unassuming youth draws a hidden dagger and screams out, "Let's kill these half-orc brigands!" As his voice is drowned out by the roar of a hundred other people, the lad lunges at the nearest half-orc. In seconds, the mob erupts into a full-fledged riot.

The boy is a skilled provocateur of the Last Laugh, one of many in the crowd. These provocateurs have been ordered to stir up a riot before the City Hall so the responsibility falls on Maavu and his associates.

The guards are badly outnumbered by the demonstrators, and Sergeant Krewis is rapidly cut off by the mob. Reinforcements are not likely to appear before he is beaten to death. If he is to be rescued, it is up to the PCs to save him. Meanwhile, Thifirane has been observing the scene from an upper window of City Hall, and is preparing to use a *sphere of the unseen* to summon a breathdrinker to teach Maavu a lesson (see below).

As with the umber hulk attack in Chapter Four, this encounter is quite complex. As usual, the actual outcome of the events depends on the party's actions. A round-by-round breakdown of the riot's progress appears below in Tactics.

Creatures: The most prominent NPCs involved in the riot are Maavu, Sergeant Krewis, and the breathdrinker. The supporting cast comprises several city guards, minor agents of the Last Laugh and the Chisel, and dozens and dozens of demonstrators.

Maavu figures among the highest-ranking members of the Chisel. In addition to being a skilled merchant, he is also a wizard in the tradition of Surabar Spellmason, the legendary leader of the first human settlers of the region. Maavu is tall, handsome, and intelligent. He has a heroic streak in his personality, inspired by the Chisel's early history, and is unusually generous with the destitute. He despises "illiberal" laws, and constantly tries to outflank them to his own advantage. Although more than 50 years old, he still has the voice and manners of a young, energetic man. Maavu's familiar (a rat named Ollie) died during the umber hulk attack.

Krewis is a loyal and brave young man, and although he serves under Terseon Skellerang, he is a fair-minded and understanding soldier. After a brief but fruitful adventuring experience, he started his new career to settle down and marry in Cauldron. Like all soldiers, Krewis must follow orders, but if the heroes save him, he could become a useful ally among Cauldron's enforcers.

The breathdrinker is an ordinary member of its species, summoned by Thifirane within City Hall and enhanced with wizard spells (see below). Its orders are simply to track Maavu and make short work of him.

While the majority of the crowd is simply surly and indignant, a fair number band together to form an

angry mob as combat begins. This mob forms in the square directly north of the Speaker's Dais and acts as detailed below in Tactics. Rules for mobs of rioters and other creatures can be found in Appendix 1.

- **Riot, Mob of Humans:** hp 135; see Appendix 1.
- **Maavu Arlintal, Male Human expert 5/wizard 4/high handcrafter 1:** hp 43; see Appendix 4.
- **Skylar Krewis, male human fighter 4:** hp 30; see Appendix 4.
- **Breathdrinker:** hp 64; see Appendix 4.

Tactics: The tactics listed here assume that the PCs do nothing to affect the outcome of the riot. Their actions can cause significant changes to the events listed here, in which case you can use these tactics as a guide to determine how things work out.

The rioting crowds make it extremely difficult to move around or cast spells. Even in squares not occupied by the actual mob of rioters, the crowd remains thick and surly. Movement in a crowd is halved (it costs 2 squares of movement to enter a square with a crowd). The crowd provides cover for anyone within it, enabling a Hide check and providing a bonus to Armor Class and on Reflex saves.

A character in a crowd during the riot can take a full-round action to defend himself (and stand motionless) or move with the crowd (moving a distance equal to his normal speed in a random direction). If the character takes any other action, he must make a successful DC 15 Reflex save to avoid suffering 1d8 points of nonlethal damage from various bruises and bumps. A character who tries to cast a spell in the crowd must make a successful DC 15 Concentration check or lose the spell.

Characters can attempt to direct the non-mob crowd by making a DC 25 Diplomacy check or a DC 30 Intimidate check; the character making the check must be obvious to the rioters. Attempting to direct the rioters is a full-round action for Diplomacy, but a free action for Intimidate. Success indicates that a 20-foot square of rioters cease their destructive activity for a number of rounds equal to 1 + the character's Charisma modifier. Since there are nearly 30 groups of rioters this size, chances are that the PCs won't be able to calm the entire mob down before the security platoon arrives on round 9 of the riot, but they may be able to protect Sergeant Krewis with this tactic.

Round 0 (Surprise round): The riot begins in the surprise round; at this time, several members of the Last Laugh catch the half-orc guards flat-footed and kill them with a merciless barrage of sneak attacks.

Any PC who makes a successful DC 25 Sense Motive check realizes that things are about to turn ugly and may take a standard action on his initiative check.

Round 1 (Riot begins): Sergeant Krewis tries to drink his *potion of sanctuary*; this provokes attacks of opportunity from the crowd. Since Krewis is surrounded, eight rioters attack him (+2 melee, 1d6 damage). Four of the attacks of opportunity attempt to sunder his potion before he can drink it.

Maavu casts *shield* on himself but takes no other action. Since he is still on the speaker's dais, the rioters gain no attack of opportunity on him, but he does not receive the benefit of cover from the crowd.

The mob surges about haphazardly, damaging buildings and raising a din. The eight rioters surrounding Sergeant Krewis attack him. Archers in the windows of City Hall move into position. The Last Laugh provocateurs fade into the crowd (Hide check +8), their work done.

Inside city hall, Thifirane uses a *sphere of the unseen* to summon a breathdrinker.

Round 2 (Riot escalates): Sergeant Krewis realizes that fighting back against the crowd could only further enrage them, so he spends his round defending himself from harm.

Maavu casts *expeditious retreat* on himself and retrieves his *potion of gaseous form* from his belt pouch.

The rioters continue to attack Sergeant Krewis. If he managed to drink his *potion of sanctuary*, each of the eight rioters must make DC 12 Will saves (they have Will +0) to be able to attack him. The four archers in City Hall fire upon Maavu with their longbows (+3 ranged attack, 1d8/×3 damage). Remember that the archers have a –2 penalty to hit Maavu due to range.

Thifirane casts *haste* on the breathdrinker and commands it to kill Maavu. She then retreats, adding no further chaos to the riot. The breathdrinker turns invisible as a free action and flies toward Maavu. Its hasted speed of 110 ft. allows it to reach Maavu this round by taking two move actions, but there are too many buildings in the way for it to charge.

Round 3 (Breathdrinker attack): Sergeant Krewis continues to defend himself.

If Maavu goes before the breathdrinker, he tries to drink his *potion of gaseous form*; this provokes an attack of opportunity from the breathdrinker. If the breathdrinker goes first or its presence is revealed to Maavu, he instead tries to cast *glitterdust* over the entire area (with himself at the center) in a desperate attempt to make the breathdrinker visible.

The rioters continue attacking Sergeant Krewis. If the breathdrinker has already attacked, the archers spend the round unsure of what to do; otherwise they continue firing arrows at Maavu.

On its turn, the breathdrinker becomes visible and uses its fear gaze on Maavu; if it paralyzes Maavu, it uses its steal breath ability on him. Otherwise, it attacks with its wind scythe twice (thanks to *haste*) and turns *invisible* at the end of the round. Once the breathdrinker becomes visible, the rioters in a 30-foot radius around the speaker's dais flee in terror.

The mob moves north toward the town hall.

Round 4: Sergeant Krewis continues to defend himself.

If he remains unparalyzed, Maavu tries to escape the breathdrinker by fleeing. Unfortunately, the creature is fast enough that it should be able to keep up with him with ease.

The rioters continue attacking Sergeant Krewis. The archers resume their attacks on Maavu.

The breathdrinker continues to try to paralyze Maavu, attacking with its wind scythe each round Maavu remains mobile.

The mob continues to move toward town hall, reaching it at the end of its turn.

Rounds 5–8: Sergeant Krewis, the rioters, and the archers continue to perform their same actions from round four on the fifth and succeeding rounds as long as conditions don't change. Maavu puts all of his resources into an attempt to flee the area, and the breathdrinker continues its attack on Maavu until round 14, when it returns to the elemental plane of air in a blast of vapor. The mob begins to attack town hall, breaking windows and damaging walls and doors.

Round 9: Cauldron's security platoon arrives on the scene. The platoon wastes no time in attempts to talk the crowd down and begins firing arrows into the mob, killing many people. The citizens, however, still outnumber the soldiers ten to one, and drive them off with an intense barrage of rocks, lit torches and coins. For the following hour, chaos reigns supreme near City Hall.

Development: If saved from certain death, Krewis and Maavu become the PCs' friends (although with different perspectives), and grant them two interesting opportunities. Krewis thanks the PCs heartily and gives them one of his *potions of cure moderate wounds* (if one remains). In future chapters, his intercession could allow the heroes to meet Terseon Skellerang without too many problems.

If the heroes save Maavu from the breathdrinker, the merchant owes them his life, and he realizes it. As the riot distracts the guards and citizens, Maavu does his best to get the PCs' attention. He is wracked with guilt and worry about the riot, and thinks it was largely his fault that things got so out of hand. He pointedly asks the PCs if they believe that some evil is at work within the government and if they want to help to expose and defeat this hidden evil.

Maavu wants to leave town before some other enemy or law enforcer takes notice of him. Before he does, though, he invites the PCs to a meeting in Redgorge. He tells them that he has certain allies who may wish to speak with them, and that Alek Tercival should be there to answer questions as well. If the PCs agree to the visit, Maavu informs them that they must go to the Redhead Miner's Inn in Redgorge and answer "mortar" to the appropriate question. Maavu imbibes his second *potion of gaseous form* to escape the city.

If the PCs don't trust Maavu and threaten to arrest him, Maavu does his best to escape and contact the characters at some later date to renew his offer.

Not long after the riot begins, the entire town guard breaks up the primary mob and restores order around City Hall by arresting and beating many citizens. Isolated pockets of rioters and looters continue to plague the city until Vhalantru and the lord mayor appear on the City Hall's balcony late in the afternoon, where they promise that taxes will not be levied for three full months. Criers move quickly through the streets to spread the word, and by evening the chaos has ended. Squads of the town watch (sans half-orcs) again patrol the streets, but tensions remain high.

Ad Hoc XP: Award the heroes a CR 8 experience point award if they manage to help control the riot and save Krewis.

EVENT 18: A FIRE IN THE NIGHT (EL 9)

Later that night, agents of the Last Laugh call a pair of Huge fire elementals. The Last Laugh sends the elementals to ravage Minuta's Board, a cheap inn that boards any half-orc mercenaries who couldn't find space in the town guard barracks. The Last Laugh hopes that this elemental attack casts further shadow on the Chisel's name.

A few hours after sunset, the City Hall bell begins to ring, warning the population of the fire. The orange glow of the flames makes it easy to spot the burning building. If the heroes intervene, they find that the inn's occupants have evacuated the building and started a bucket brigade to douse the flames, which already wreath the entire building. Several burly half-orcs begin chopping down the outlying wooden structures near the inn with their double axes in an attempt to prevent the fire from spreading to nearby houses.

As the PCs approach Minuta's Board, in the red light of the fire, they overhear whispers and screams against the half-orcs ("Go back to the hell you come from, mongrels!", "Have a taste of fire, spawn of the Unwinking Eye!", "Let's burn away the rot from your human half, freak!"). These voices, of course, come from racist and irresponsible Cauldronites who simply despise the latest tenants at Minuta's Board. Other citizens, however, have rushed to help the half-orcs fight the fire.

In front of the flaming inn, its innkeeper Pilok Minuta (male human commoner 3) and a mercenary sergeant Rokewko (male half-orc fighter 4) argue. The innkeeper pulls at his hair, crying and yelling to the big half-orc. "Your thugs are demolishing my inn! Stop them!" Rokewko ignores the innkeeper, and turns away to tell his axemen in Orc to continue. Pilok grabs at Rokewko's arm in an attempt to get the sergeant's attention. Bewildered, sweaty, and visibly scorched by fire, Rokewko loses his temper and throws the innkeeper to the ground. The half-orc grabs Pilok's neck with a single hand, puts his foaming mouth at just one inch from the man's face, and yells, "You tiny idiot! You don't get it! Flame-demons inside kill us! Fire unstoppable! Blades useless!" As Pilok whines incoherently, the half-orc puts his scimitar before the innkeeper's face, showing its twisted and melted blade.

Characters who make a successful DC 20 Listen check hear faint cries for help coming from somewhere inside the burning building.

Creatures: As the PCs take in the scene, a gout of fire suddenly explodes through the doorway of the inn, en-

veloping and incinerating a screaming half-orc axeman. The two Huge fire elementals have burst out of the inn and into the street to seek further things to burn.

The Last Laugh developed the plan of setting fire to Minutia's Board to further infuse unrest in the city, and did so at great expense. Last Laugh guildmaster Velior Thazo utilized a scroll of *gate* to call two Huge fire elementals and set them loose on the building before retreating back to the Last Laugh guild house. He chose Minuta's Board for two reasons. First, since the commanders of the half-orc mercenaries have been staying here, he hopes to make the act of arson look like the work of rebels or dissidents, further straining the relationship between the government and the populace. Second, he's long known that Minuta's Board is the guildhouse for the rival Alleybasher gang, and hopes to put an end to the competition with the fire. The elementals are uncontrolled but quite excited with the opportunity to burn so many buildings, and until they are dealt with they continue to burn things with glee.

Huge Fire Elementals (2): hp 136 each, *Monster Manual* 99.

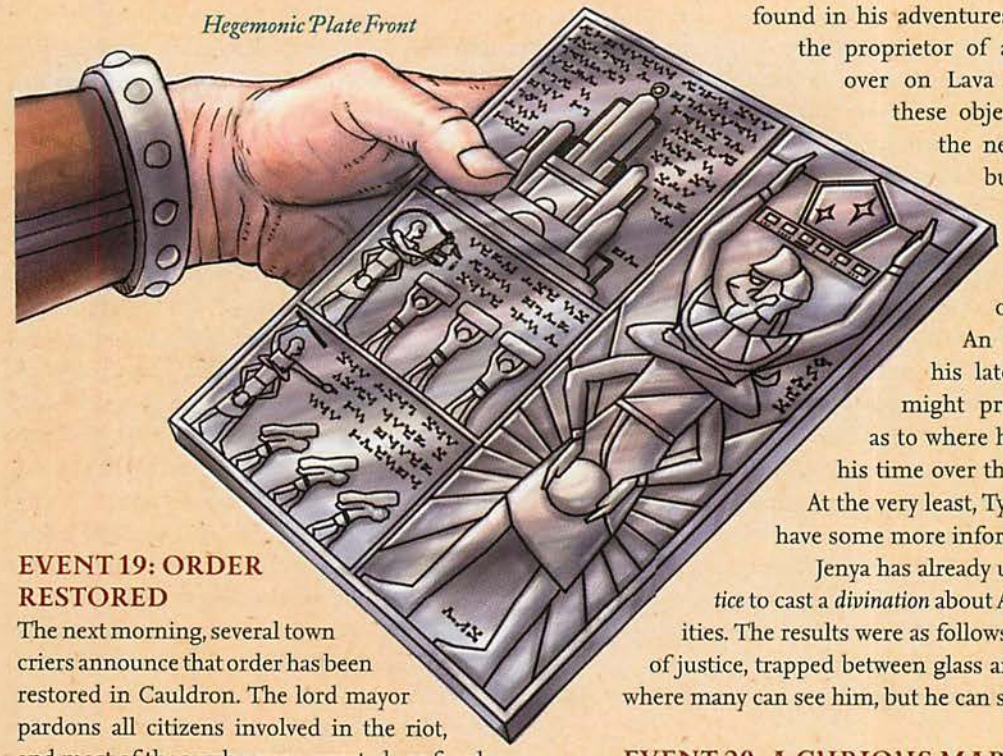
Development: One of Pilok's scullery-boys (commoner 1, perhaps a party's acquaintance from the Lantern Street Orphanage) stumbled down the stairs during the evacuation of the upper floor and is stuck under a fallen timber. Inside the first floor of Minuta's Board, characters are exposed to extreme heat and smoke (*Dungeon Master's Guide* 303–304). There is a 10% chance each round that flaming debris falls upon a character inside the burning building (1d6 bludgeoning and 1d6 fire damage, DC 15 Reflex negates). Freeing the scullery-boy requires a Strength check (DC 21, up to two other characters can assist).

Ten rounds after the fire elementals burst from the building, the commander of the half-orc mercenaries arrives on the scene, fresh from a meeting with the city watch on increasing the mercenary presence in town. This is Zarn Kyass, the "Blue Duke." Although in reality an ogre mage, he uses his *polymorph* ability to assume the form of a towering blue-haired human man dressed in blue robes. If the elementals have not yet been defeated, he joins the PCs in fighting them. Once the elementals are slain, Zarn uses multiple *cones of cold* to put out the fires if they still rage, taking care to not catch any civilians in the area of effect. The local cleric of Pelor, Kristof Jurgensen, also comes to help the wounded and those intoxicated by the smoke. When all is finished, and silence falls again on the streets, Kristof screams out at Cauldron: "Fools! The flames of discord will raise hell in our town!"

Zarn is enraged at the attack on his mercenaries, but if the PCs helped save the building and some of his men, he thanks them gruffly for their aid. He doesn't stay long to talk, since he wants to return to the town hall to complain to his allies there about the event and demand restitution.

Ad Hoc XP Award: If the PCs save the scullery-boy, award them experience points for a CR 4 encounter.

Hegemonic Plate Front



EVENT 19: ORDER RESTORED

The next morning, several town criers announce that order has been restored in Cauldron. The lord mayor pardons all citizens involved in the riot, and most of those who were arrested are freed before sunset. There is no pardon, however, for the "evil merchant" Maavu. His properties have been confiscated and he is sentenced to death in absentia. Town criers publicize Alek Tercival's letter of challenge, but also cite reliable sources that the paladin of St. Cuthbert has been possessed by demons. Thus, the lord mayor declares the challenge null and void. The government offers a reward of 5,000 gp to whomever finds and saves the possessed paladin. The crier also announces that after the destruction of Minuta's Board, all half-orc mercenaries in the lord mayor's service are to be transferred to an encampment outside the city walls.

These recent events probably leave the PCs puzzled about two NPCs: Maavu Arlintal and Alek Tercival. Maavu can be found at the Redhead Miner's Inn in Redgorge. Finding Alek's Tercival, on the other hand, is a bit more complicated; no one seems to have seen him recently.

Jenya Urikas has grown worried about Alek, and if the PCs don't visit her soon this day, she'll seek them out herself. Alek Tercival and Jenya Urikas have been friends since childhood, although they drifted apart for a time during the paladin's "dissolute" years.

If asked about him, Jenya admits that she's very worried about Alek. She supports Alek's challenge to Skellerang since she suspects he is the primary source of the corruption in the government, but greatly fears this rumor about Alek being the victim of demonic possession. She adds that although Alek has not been back to the church for two months, he has been seen in several areas to the west, including Redgorge. Jenya tells the heroes about Alek's background and his conversion to St. Cuthbert and pleads with them to help him.

Jenya Urikas gives the PCs one other important piece of information about Alek. He often sold art objects he found in his adventures to Tygot Mispas, the proprietor of an antiquity shop over on Lava Avenue. He sold these objects to accumulate the necessary money to buy back his ancestral manor, which his father sold to pay off some debts. An investigation of his latest sales to Tygot might provide some clues as to where he's been spending his time over the last few months. At the very least, Tygot himself might have some more information on Alek.

Jenya has already used the *Star of Justice* to cast a *divination* about Alek's current activities. The results were as follows: "Late on the path of justice, trapped between glass and stone, he weeps where many can see him, but he can see only himself."

EVENT 20: A CURIOUS MAP

See the introduction for details on Tygot's shop.

When the PCs arrive, Tygot recognizes them as the heroes who saved his shop from the floods and greets them warmly. His blink dog companion Lepook *dimension doors* over to the most charismatic PC and sniffs his hands. Tygot respects the PCs enough to skip his usual attempt to palm off the first piece of junk at hand, and invites them inside for a cup of tea and a private chat. His office is neatly fitted out with fine, human-sized mahogany furnishings.

Tygot is content with idle chit-chat, but if the PCs ask him about Alek Tercival, Tygot becomes more animated. He says that the paladin is an interesting supplier of his shop, and a good friend to boot. As far as he knows, the paladin tithes one tenth of his treasure to the church of St. Cuthbert and puts the rest aside for some purpose. Whenever he found art objects on his journeys, he invariably came here to sell them for cash. Tygot keeps a meticulous register of his acquisitions, and can easily track down all of the objects that Alek brought in over the last month. He knows Alek found them in the Cauldron region, but Tygot has no idea where any of them originally came from.

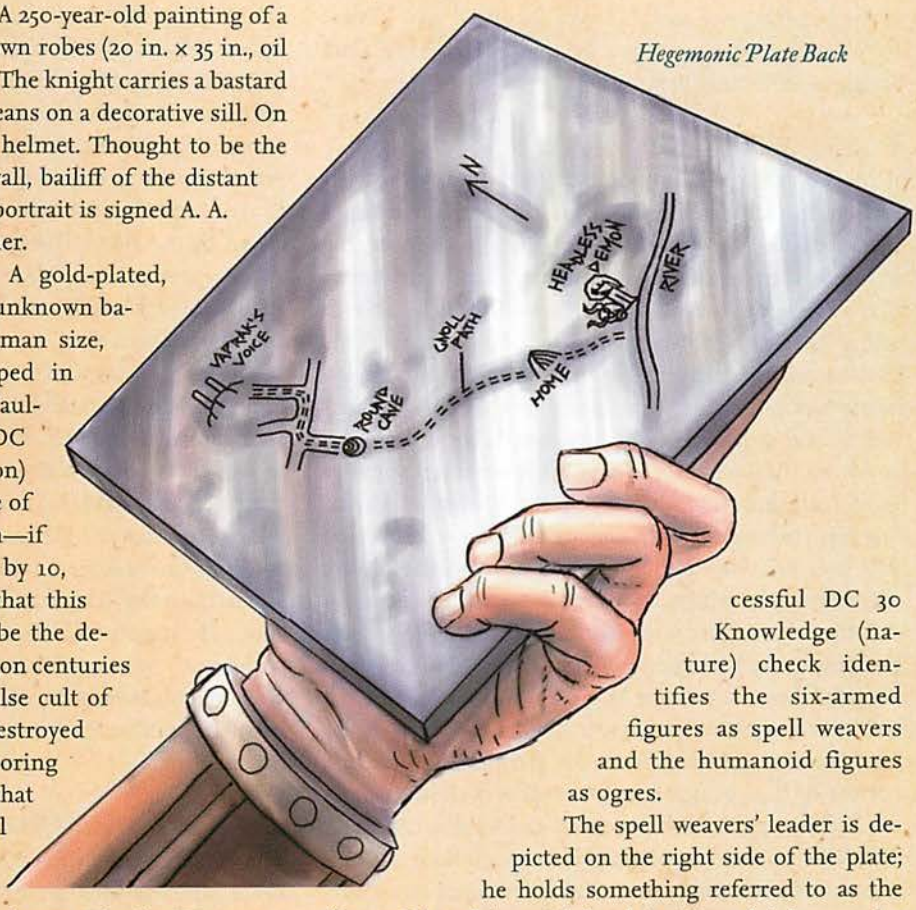
The items are listed below:

- **The Volcanic Gosling**: A life-size statuette of a small goose carved in deep gray, polished basalt (8 lbs. weight, 250 gp value). One of twelve created by the heroine Tlimida about eight centuries before, on Midsummer's Day. According to legend, Tlimida also set the foundation stone of Caludron's City Hall. Tlimida, a descendant of the legendary Surabar Spellmason, was deeply moved by the sudden flight of a flock of ducks over the lake, and chose to immortalize the moment with these carvings.

- **The Knight in Brown:** A 250-year-old painting of a standing knight in brown robes (20 in. × 35 in., oil on wood, 150 gp value). The knight carries a bastard sword at his side and leans on a decorative sill. On the sill sits a horned helmet. Thought to be the portrait of Axel Herewall, bailiff of the distant town of Gradsul. The portrait is signed A. A. on the lower right corner.
- **The Baboon Mask:** A gold-plated, darkwood mask of an unknown baboon-like divinity (human size, 350 gp) once worshiped in the jungles west of Cauldron. A successful DC 20 Knowledge (religion) check reveals the name of this deity as Saraslan—if the check is exceeded by 10, the PC also realizes that this deity was revealed to be the demon prince Demogorgon centuries ago, after which the false cult of Saraslan was quickly destroyed by enraged neighboring tribes. Legend holds that scions of Saraslan still haunt the region, and that they have been cursed with lycanthropy. Whether Tongueater was one such scion is left to you to decide.
- **The God of the Lake:** A bust of a fish-like monster's head (a morkoth), finely carved in pink marble (20 lbs., 300 gp value). The neck bears signs of damage, and was probably severed from an actual statue of a morkoth. Its eye sockets are hollow, for the statue's gemstone eyes were stolen long ago. The head dates back to a time well before the first settlers reached Cauldron. A DC 25 Knowledge (history) or bardic knowledge check notes the fact that the bust looks quite similar to pictures of the supposed Crater Lake monster that are so prominent at the Drunken Morkoth inn.
- **The Hegemonic Plate:** A rectangular plate of silver etched with odd figures and ciphers (6 in. × 8 in., 400 gp value). A crude map and a few notes in Giant are scratched into the opposite side of the plate, which would be smooth otherwise. These scratched notes seem to be quite recent, but the plate itself has a definite aura of ancient weight about it.

While the other objects are unimportant to the current situation with Alek, the hegemonic plate (which Alek found in an old ogre's lair) summarizes the terrible experiment of the spell weavers before the disaster that produced the Demonskar. A successful DC 30 Decipher Script check, *comprehend languages*, *legend lore*, or *vision* spell allows a PC to decipher the runes and reveals that the plate is from an ancient society of powerful spell-casting creatures. A successful DC 30 Knowledge (nature) check identifies the six-armed figures as spell weavers and the humanoid figures as ogres.

Hegemonic Plate Back



The spell weavers' leader is depicted on the right side of the plate; he holds something referred to as the "Starry Mirror" above his head. A string of ciphers under the depiction of the Starry Mirror represent numbers. These numbers are, in order, 3, 4, 5, 1, 2, and 3. These six numbers are the numeric combination that provides the key for properly using the mirror jump property of the *Starry Mirror* (see area **V15** at Vaprak's Voice), although this is not indicated anywhere on the plate and is not revealed by spells such as *legend lore* or *vision*.

On the left side of the plate, three scenes are depicted. These three scenes should be read from bottom to top. The bottom scene depicts the ogre slaves of the spell weavers toiling to build the planar travel installation that malfunctioned and created the Demonskar. The next scene up depicts the same ogres, empowered by the *Amaranth Elixir* and granted great strength to aid in their work. The plate does not indicate the *elixir's* less desirable quality of eroding the will and sense of self. The topmost scene shows the planar travel installation in its completed glory.

The map on the opposite side was carved by the old ogre himself not long after he discovered Vaprak's Voice in his wanderings, and shows the way from his lair to the spell weaver ruins. The ogre was slain by Alek before he could explore the site further. A successful DC 25 Knowledge (local) check allows a character to note that a statue of a headless demon is said to stand on the banks of the Red River to the southwest of Cauldron.

If the PCs want to purchase one of these objects, Tygot asks for double the listed value at first. When he does so, Lepook howls loudly, and continues to do so

as long as the price remains over the listed value. Tygot looks embarrassed, smiles a lot, and quickly lowers his asking price to that listed above.

EVENT 21: TO REDGORGE

If Maavu extended an invitation to the heroes to visit him and his allies, the PCs should eventually take up his invitation and travel to Redgorge. Once there, the heroes can easily find shelter in any abandoned house if they're short on cash. Otherwise, they'll be able to afford to rent a room at the Redhead Miner's. This two-story inn, which can accommodate up to 30 guests, contains a large shop that caters specifically to adventurers and explorers. The inn has a large common room on the first floor, where villagers often come to have a drink before sunset. The innkeeper, Mikimax, is a big, smiling man who keeps his long red hair tied in a ponytail. He's also a member of the Chisel. Every evening, when drinks are served, he puts dozens of delicious, free snacks on the bar and provocatively invites his tipsy customers to help themselves: "Come on over, beggars! You won't starve as long as Mikimax lives!"

When the heroes arrive, a handsome man in his mid-thirties quietly plucks the strings of a lute in a corner of the common room, heedless of Mikimax's call. This man, dark-haired and rather short, wears a fine blue robe and polished knee-high boots. When he sees the heroes before the bar he calls out a riddle to them: "What can bind with water, sand, and lime?" The heroes should know the answer to this riddle ("mortar") from Maavu.

The musician is **Ekaym Smallcask** (human male fighter 3/bard 4/high handcrafter 3, Decipher Script +14). Also known as Honest Minstrel, Ekaym is a high-ranking member of the Chisel. Honest Minstrel is an adventurer based in Redgorge and a close friend of the Foreman, the mysterious leader of the organization. Ekaym is an exceptionally skilled linguist, and is often called by the rulers throughout the region to work as an interpreter. If the PCs were not able to decipher the spell weaver writings on the hegemonic plate, Ekaym could help them out.

The Chisel knows the heroes from their growing fame, and the Foreman asked him to invite them to a private meeting. Honest Minstrel sings the riddle to test their wits, unaware that Maavu may have told them the answer already. In any case, after some small talk he invites the party to follow him to a private room in the basement of the Redhead Miner's, where a meeting of his "colleagues" is scheduled to take place soon. He simply says that the Foreman wants to talk with them. Maavu (if still alive) and Alek Tercival are also invited; Honest Minstrel tells the PCs this as well in an attempt to further intrigue them into attending the meeting.

EVENT 22: TALKING WITH THE CHISEL

The leaders of the Chisel meet the heroes in a private room under the Redhead Miner's Inn. The room is silent and comfortable, with a great oak table in the middle. On the chamber's walls, beautiful frescoes depict the glorious moments of Surabar Spellmason's life:

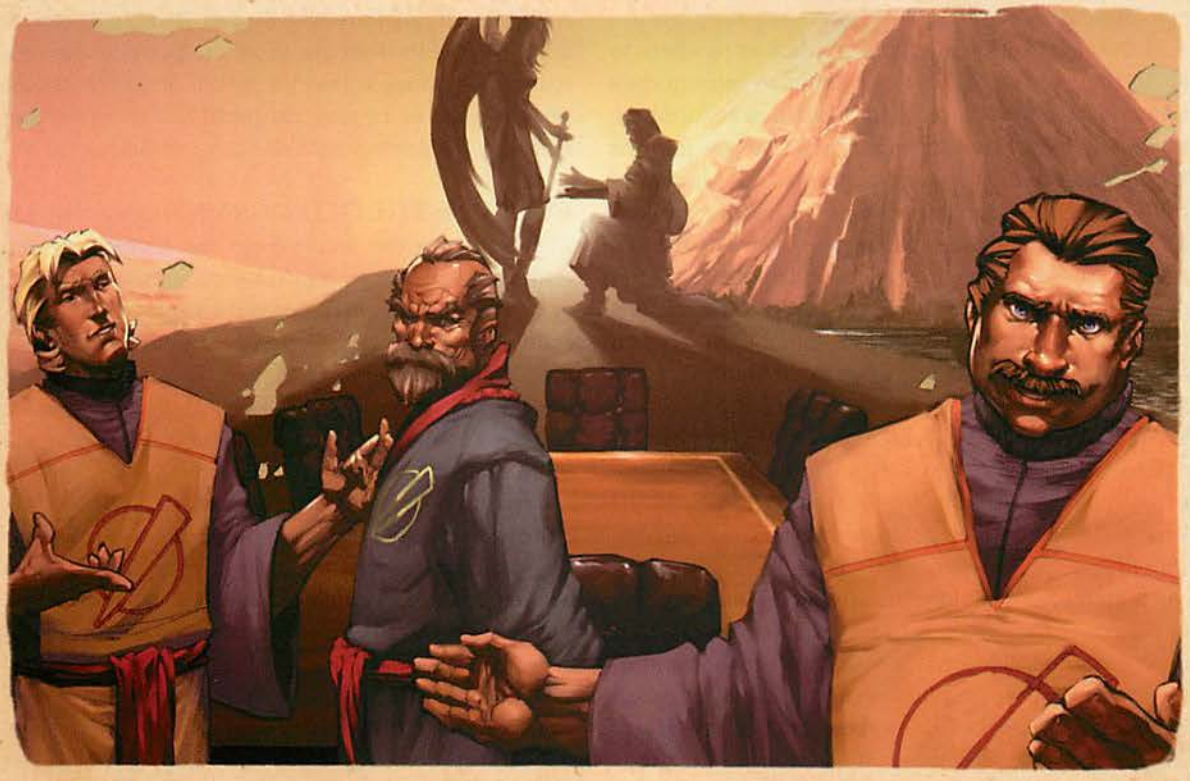
- Surabar's arrival near at the foot of a dormant volcano, recognizable as Cauldron.
- An encounter between Surabar and a sword-wielding angel, in which the angel gives Surabar a glowing quarterstaff. A member of the Chisel, or a successful DC 25 Knowledge (history) or bardic knowledge check, identifies the angel as Nidrama, a movanic deva said to watch over the region. The same source identifies the glowing quarterstaff as *Alakast*, a magic weapon said to be particularly potent against evil outsiders.
- The foundation of Redgorge.
- Surabar's magical construction of the Basalt Bastions that protect Redgorge.
- The battle of Redgorge against the demonic denizens of the Demonskar; Surabar leads Redgorge's forces and a towering hyena-headed glabrezu leads the Demonskar forces.
- The transformation of Surabar into a mountain, symbolizing his death.

When the PCs arrive in the room, Oliron Masht, Foreman of the Chisel, is already sitting at the table's head. He is a tall human dressed in brown, with gray hair and a short, well-trimmed goatee. He greets the PCs and offers them a drink from a cask of vintage wine. Oliron is a powerful and fearless individual who has tempered the tradition of his organization with years of adventuring. Originally from Sasserine, where he worked as an architect, his return to Redgorge a few months ago was prompted by rumors of evil afoot in the region. At first, he asks a few questions about the heroes' interests and goals, but doesn't say much about the Chisel or the matter at hand. If the PCs press for more details he asks them to wait for the other invitees to arrive.

Mikimax and Maavu (if he still lives) arrive after a few minutes, but Alek Tercival does not. Alek's absence worries the Foreman, but he admits that he did not expect the paladin to show up and starts the meeting without him.

During the meeting, the Foreman tries to persuade the heroes to cooperate with him. He and his colleagues discuss the following points. If Maavu is dead, substitute him with Mikimax (who helped him) when he is mentioned.

- The Foreman begins by raising a point of contention with the organization's current situation. The selfish interests of many of its members have violated the philosophy of the Chisel, which is to protect the region and support artisans and craftsmen. Most of the violators are Cauldronites who have shifted toward neutrality and no longer care about the wellness of society as a whole.
- The Foreman reveals his fears that some great force of chaos and evil is at work in Cauldron's government, and that the lord mayor may be under its influence. All sources of divination magic indicate some great disaster on the horizon. The Chisel's greatest prophet, an earth weird, has not answered the Forman's calls, so details on this disaster remain vague.
- The Foreman mentions Maavu at this point and notes that although his actions were well-intended, they nonetheless caused more harm than good. He now fears that the Chisel is becoming a scapegoat for the current troubles, and that forces from Cauldron may soon take drastic measures against the organization. Maavu justifies himself by claiming he meant to organize a peaceful demonstration, but that "some villain stirred up the riot to discredit any opposition." Honest Minstrel rightly



suspects the Last Laugh, and takes Maavu for a ride: "They suckered you, nothing else!" At this point, a squabble breaks out between Maavu and Honest Minstrel (Maavu: "Better dead than slaves! A wandering strummer like you should know!" Honest Minstrel: "Peddler! You count lives like money! No difference to you, eh?"). The Foreman grows tired of the argument and demands silence.

- At this point, Honest Minstrel notes that his informants in Cauldron warned him that Terseon Skellerang plans to invade and search Redgorge, using the half-orc mercenaries now encamped outside the city walls. The members agree that the Hall of Carvings would survive such an invasion intact, but that such an event would be disastrous nonetheless. The villagers would oppose such actions and would fight against the invaders. The Foreman muses that Skellerang must be persuaded to renounce this plan. Alek Tercival's public renouncement of his challenge should do just the thing, but unfortunately, no one knows where he is.
- Alek's absence worries the Foreman above everything else, and at this point he turns to the heroes. If they have already started to search for the missing paladin, the Foreman commends them for their insight. If they have not started yet, he asks them to do so while the Chisel keeps several eyes on Skellerang's actions. He has no reward to offer but the Chisel's friendship. The Foreman concludes the meeting by leading the PCs and the others on a short night walk along the Basalt Bastions. He looks intently west toward the Demonskar at one point, then sighs and says philosophically, "Surabar's spells raised this wall in seven days, but his guidance has failed to build a righteous society in as many centuries."

If the characters seem to be at a loss as to where to begin their search for Alek, the Foreman recommends they speak to Jenya Urikas at the Church of St. Cuthbert; the two of them have long been friends. He also informs the PCs that Alek had been spending a fair amount of time recently exploring the jungles near Redgorge, and he often used a rowboat to enter the jungle via the Red River. If he is told about the map scratched into the hegemonic plate from Tygot's shop, he can tell the PCs that a beheaded statue of a demon does indeed stand on the jungle banks of the Red River to the southwest.

EVENT 23: THE HEADLESS DEMON (EL 9)

After speaking with Jenya, Tygot, and the Chisel, the PCs should be ready to head into the jungle via the Red River to try to track down the missing paladin. The jungles near Redgorge are fairly wild, with a few winding hunter's trails within. The most efficient way to penetrate the jungle is to take the Red River. Mikimax gladly supplies the PCs with plenty of food and all the mundane gear they may request, including a small but stable rowboat. The rowboat trip to the Headless Demon takes about four hours, during which the heroes should be impressed with the overwhelming presence of life around them. Eventually, they'll reach the grim landmark.

A large beach runs along the northern bank of the Red River here. A badly weathered stone statue of some sort of humanoid creature stands at the edge of the jungle, overlooking the beach. The statue's neck ends in a stump, and its expressive canine head lies in the sand a few feet away. Patches of mold and moss grow on the statue, but the vegetation around it seems to have been cleared away recently. A narrow trail winds off to the northwest and into the jungle just beyond the statue.

The mold-encrusted idol is little more than a carved pillar. If a character examines the sculpture closely and makes a DC 15 Knowledge (the planes) check, he notices that the statue depicts a glabrezu. The statue itself was built ages ago by gnolls in an attempt to curry Nabthatoron's favor. The glabrezu has little interest in the gnolls or this statue, but that hasn't kept the gnoll natives from viewing it as a sacred relic. Various local gnoll tribes often engage in short, brutal wars in order to lay claim to this land; it was during one of these battles nearly two centuries ago that the statue's head was knocked off.

Creatures: A band of gnoll rangers lies in wait in the jungles surrounding this beach. Their tribe recently gained control of this area, and these gnolls plan to ambush the next tribe of gnolls to arrive here. Unfortunately for the PCs, the gnolls take just as much offense at their arrival in the area.

Gnoll Hunters, male gnoll ranger 3 (6): hp 37 each; see Appendix 4.

Tactics: The gnolls remain hidden in the foliage on the north bank of the river and shoot the PCs with arrows as soon as they come within 300 feet of the beach. On the wooded banks of the river, the gnolls have cover and concealment. They engage in melee only as a last resort.

EVENT 24: THE OLD OGRE'S HOME (EL 11)

The path into the jungle from the headless demon leads to the old ogre's home; a shallow cave in the side of a low hill. Here, Alek Tercival recently killed a venerable but vicious ogre. A horrible odor of decay emanates from the interior of the cave. Inside, the PCs find the ogre's skeleton along with the carcasses of a pair of devoured baboons. A Creature has also moved into the recently abandoned cavern.

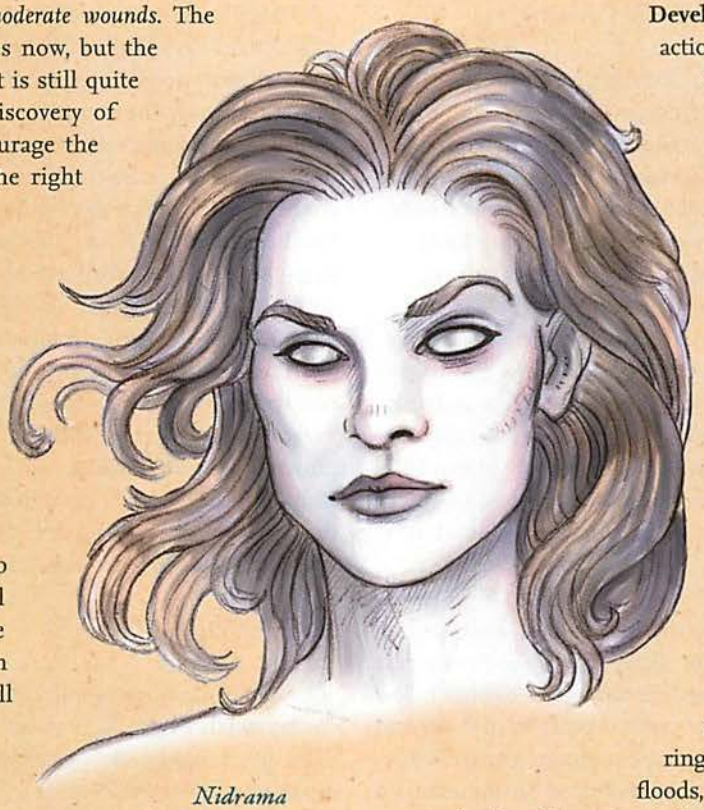
Creature: A forest sloth now lives in this cave. It is quite protective of its new lair and fights to the death as long as intruders stay inside the cave or attack it from outside. If the party includes any Small characters, the sloth attacks them before the others, trying to swallow a Small character whole.

Forest Sloth: hp 147; see Appendix 4.

Treasure: A successful Search check (DC 25) made in the old ogre's cave uncovers what was once Alek Ter-

cival's *wand of cure moderate wounds*. The wand is out of charges now, but the symbol of St. Cuthbert is still quite visible on its butt. Discovery of this clue should encourage the PCs that they're on the right track.

Development: From the Old Ogre's Home, the PCs face a 15-mile hike along a gnoll hunting trail in order to reach the entrance to the Round Cavern. Although most animals have learned to avoid this hunting trail and the gnolls that use it, the trail is far from safe to travel. Gnoll hunters can be found often on the trail as they seek out food for their tribes. Worse, larger creatures have learned that the trail serves as a great place to hunt gnolls. The jungle track reduces overland movement to 3/4 its normal speed, and there's an 8% chance each hour that those traveling on the trail have a jungle encounter. If an encounter occurs, consult the introduction to roll on the Jungle encounter table.



Nidrama

EVENT 25: WINGS OF JUSTICE (EL 16)

At some point after the PCs leave the Old Ogre's Cave but before they reach the entrance to the Round Cavern (most likely after they have settled down for the evening to rest but before they fall asleep), they have a brush with history. A PC that makes a DC 14 Listen check hears a sudden flutter of large wings, and all wildlife falls suddenly silent. One round later, a beautiful woman emerges from the dense foliage and stands at the edge of the PCs' encampment. She has perfectly white skin and stern, sparkling eyes of silver. A pair of feathered wings spread out behind the woman's back and she raises a flaming sword, which emits myriad flickering beams of light.

Creature: This angelic creature is a movanic deva named Nidrama. She is the same angel encountered by Surabar Spellmason centuries before (as shown in the frescoes in the Redhead Miner's Inn) and has long been a guardian against evil in the region. She has taken note of the PCs' actions and accomplishments, and has decided to make herself known to them just as she did to Surabar so many years ago.

Nidrama, female movanic deva: hp 108; see Appendix 4. Note that at this point, Nidrama has not yet fallen from grace, and her statistics (should they become needed) should be adjusted appropriately.

Development: Nidrama's first action after she reveals herself to the PCs is to invoke her protective aura and use *detect evil* to determine if anyone in the group is evil. If she detects any evil, her expression grows horribly sad and she *plane shifts* away. If she doesn't detect any evil and the PCs don't attack or insult her, she introduces herself and thanks the heroes for any good deeds they have accomplished in the recent past (such as putting a stop to the kidnapping ring, saving Cauldron from floods, protecting citizens from rampaging fiendish umber hulks, and saving Krewis from the mob). She then speaks the following to them:

> "Powerful forces of chaos and evil are afoot. I dare not remain here long lest my presence attract the attention of those forces. Yet I could not sit by and watch you march into danger without warning you. The Lord of the Demonskar knows of your approach, and even now his minions prepare for your arrival. They shall use deceit and treachery against you, just as they have done with Alek Tercival before you. You must remain resolute; Alek Tercival must be saved. I have no aid to offer you but knowledge. In ages past, I provided to Surabar Spellmason a powerful weapon to assist him in his conflict with the Lord of the Demonskar. This was *Alakast*, a quarterstaff infused with an undying hatred of the fiends of the outer rifts. Unfortunately, *Alakast* was stolen centuries ago, ripped from Spellmason's tomb by a grave robber. Yet do not despair, for it is fated that *Alakast* should be wielded again against the Lord of the Demonskar. It has found its way to you, and all that needs be done is for you to claim it. Seek *Alakast* in the lair of my false sisters, beyond the watchful eyes of the north. That is all I am at liberty to say...I wish you well in your travails, heroes, and never lose sight of your goals."

Although she rails against the restrictive edicts of nonintervention, Nidrama has not yet worked up the courage to fully go against her superiors. She has little else to say to the PCs, and unless they attack her she returns to the outer planes via a *plane shift*. Her advice to look "beyond the watchful eyes of the north" is a clue to the location of the magic quarterstaff, which is hidden in area **V14**.

EVENT 26: THE ROUND CAVERN

The hunting trail ends abruptly and the trees thin out considerably, granting a clear view of the sky. To the north, roiling yellow and brown clouds boil above a jagged, barren horizon. The jagged line of the Demonskar's rim broods at the base of these clouds. The ground itself between here and the rim is strewn with razor-sharp ridges of volcanic glass and jagged stone. Ruined strips of what can only be the metal framework of ancient structures protrude from the ground like broken fingers from a shallow grave. One particularly large structure juts from the ground only twenty feet from the end of the trail. The ruin appears like nothing more than a massive pipe protruding from the ground, its twenty-foot-wide, two-foot-thick frame sloping down into the tortured ground at a gentle slope.

This is the entrance to the "round cave" indicated on the back of the hegemonic plate. This pipe allows access to the ancient sewer network that once existed below the spell weaver city. The ruined pipes branch off and change direction many times, forming a maze. Characters who follow the route indicated on the map for about five miles emerge at area **V1** of Vaprak's Voice. If the PCs decide to explore other routes, they find most of them to be collapsed. A few lead to other exits in the area, either opening back into the jungle or protruding from the walls of the Demonskar itself.

VOICE OF THE DESTROYER

The last mile of the ancient sewer pipe is dark and almost completely intact. As the PCs proceed down its length, a rhythmic rumbling moan grows until it is nearly deafening. When the heroes finally emerge into the open air, the assault on the senses is all but overwhelming. The heroes have come at last to the ruins of Vaprak's Voice, perched on the rim of the Demonskar itself.

VAPRAK'S VOICE FEATURES

The place known as Vaprak's Voice has two entrances, both set into the west wall of a deep fracture radiating from the rim of the vast Demonskar. Both entrances provide access to the ruins of a spell weaver laboratory that partially survived the eldritch blast that formed the Demonskar. For a time, a large tribe of ogres lived here. They gave the place its peculiar name, inspired by the thundering bellow issued from a pair of immense pipes near the entrance when the wind blew. Inside the complex, the areas of Vaprak's Voice can be divided into two distinct categories: rooms built by the spell weavers, which have an odd angular structure, and caverns dug by ogres, which are irregular and roughly hewn. The entire complex is rather dirty and foul smelling due to the sulfuric pollutants in the air about the Demonskar.

The spell weaver rooms are lit by magical plates, sort of still-active emergency lights, and have high ceilings, proportionate to the surface of the floor. The magical plates also heat the room to a comfortable temperature. The corridors can be 10 or 20 feet wide, with 15 or 30-foot-high ceilings. Usually, the smaller corridors connect with rooms through perfectly smooth, still functional sliding doors. Like the lights, the doors are magic (caster level 12th), and open automatically when an intelligent being (Int 6 or higher) approaches within 5 feet. The doors slide up into the ceiling, and remain open for one minute or as long as an intelligent being remains in range. A creature in a doorway that closes must make a DC 12 Reflex save or be crushed and then pinned by the door, taking 3d6 points of damage. If the magic on the doors is dispelled when they are closed, the doors must be forced or battered open.

Stone Doors: Hardness 8, hp 60, Lift DC 28.

V1. LANDING

Out of the dark passage, sharp and jagged rocks hang over a small ledge in the southeast part of a wide pit. The pit, roughly one hundred and fifty feet in diameter, is set at the bottom of a large fissure among the arid, crystalline hills that border the Demonskar. Puffs of eye-watering smoke seep from a pool at the bottom of the chasm, about fifty feet below. On the other side of the chasm, a pair of gigantic metal tubes protrudes from the rock, extending nearly fifty feet and out of the fissure. The burning stink of sulfur and acid is everywhere, and the ground and walls are wet with foul-smelling condensation. A ramp of roughly hewn stone steps winds down into the pit. As the wind rises and sweeps through the fissure, the two looming metal chimneys issue a thundering, deep bellow that echoes across the landscape.

The PCs can descend to area **V2** via the slippery stairway as long as they make DC 12 Balance checks. Failure indicates a rough fall into the pit 50 feet below. Characters who wish to explore the northern reaches of the fissure can do so, although without flight, numerous DC 15 Climb checks are required to reach the opposite side of the pit. PCs who fly up and out of the fissure to survey the area are struck by the disturbing geographic illusion of a pair of black eyes and a gaping mouth formed by the chimneys and the pit. Characters who persist in flying above the fissure eventually draw the attention of flying demons from the Demonskar itself.

The horrendous stink of the foul vapor in the air here forces characters to make a DC 12 Fortitude save each round to avoid becoming sickened for 1d6 minutes. Success indicates that the character becomes accustomed to the smell.

The deafening moan of the twin chimneys lasts for 1d10 rounds, activating once every 1d6 minutes. While the chimneys roar, Listen checks are made at a –10 penalty.

V2. MEPHITIC POOL (EL 5)

The water in the shallow pool at the bottom of the chasm bubbles constantly, stirred by acrid vapors escaping from deep underground. A whistling puff of smoke erupts sporadically from the water's surface, spraying the surrounding rocks with warm, whitish droplets. On the west wall of the chasm, a twenty-foot-tall, massive iron gate blocks the way to a passage dug into the rock. Over the blocked passage, a second cave mouth opens on the rocky wall, much like the balcony of a giant gatehouse.

The horrendous stink of the foul vapor in the air here forces characters to make a DC 14 Fortitude save to avoid becoming sickened for 1d6 minutes. Success indicates that the character becomes accustomed to the smell.

The deafening moan of the twin chimneys lasts for 1d10 rounds, activating once every 1d6 minutes. While the chimneys roar, Listen checks are made at a –10 penalty.

Creature: An ancient and wicked mephit named Kymzo, once part of Nabthatoron's retinue, enjoys bathing in the bubbling pool. Kymzo serves the hags now, often acting as a contact between them and his prior demonic master. Kymzo has orders to let Alek Tercival pass by undisturbed, but no other humanoids are welcome in Vaprak's Voice.

Kymzo, advanced steam mephit: hp 36; see Appendix 4.

Tactics: If Kymzo notices anyone else descending into this area, Kymzo uses his breath weapon to issue a special warning whistle (slightly different from the usual geyser sound from the pool, DC 25 Listen check to notice it) and flies up through the small opening above the gate in area **V3** to warn the hags of the intrusion.

V3. STEEL GATE

The end of this narrow canyon contains a large cave opening in the side of the rift. A massive fifteen-foot-wide, twenty-foot-tall, spiked iron portcullis blocks this entrance. About fifteen feet above the gate is a much smaller cave mouth; this one barely two feet in diameter.

This entrance, created by the ogres decades ago, allows access to the surviving part of the ancient spell weaver complex. The portcullis is manned by a hill giant in area **V4** who has been instructed to open the gates only for Alek Tercival or Nabthatoron. The balcony has a 6-foot-tall parapet that offers protection and concealment to the giant. When the portcullis is raised, the bars slide up into the ceiling and block off the smaller entrance above.

This smaller entrance is narrow enough that a Small creature can wriggle through with a successful DC 15 Escape Artist check; for Medium creatures the check is more difficult (DC 30). Creatures larger than that cannot pass through it at all. Tiny or smaller creatures can move through it with ease.

Huge Iron Portcullis: 6 in. thick; Hardness 10; hp 180; break DC 40; lift DC 37.

V4. BALCONY (EL 7)

A wide balcony looms over the north face of this passageway. An enormous winch system on the balcony above connects to a pair of chains and pulleys attached to the portcullis. A giant-sized stool sits behind a three-foot-tall wooden platform that runs along the balcony. Several spherical rocks are heaped near the balcony's edge.

The winch can be used to raise the portcullis in area **V2** with a successful DC 20 Strength check.

Creatures: A hill giant named Muggo normally watches this area from the balcony above, although not very attentively. If the giant makes a successful DC 20 Spot check he notices characters passing by below; he relies mostly on the portcullis itself and his hearing to alert him to intruders. If he knows the PCs are in the area (either because the mephit from area **V2** warned him or he heard the sounds of battle or portcullis smashing), he lies in wait and begins hurling stones down on the intruders as soon as they pass below the balcony. The balcony and parapet grant cover from attacks initiated from below.

Muggo is under the effects of *Amaranth Elixir*, so his stats are somewhat different than those of the typical hill giant.

Muggo, male hill giant: hp 111; see Appendix 4.

Development: If the heroes retreat from Vaprak's Voice and return later but haven't defeated the giants, they find all of the hill giants from area **V4** and **V6** waiting for them on the balcony above.

V5. GIANT ENTRANCE

A fifteen-foot-wide, fifteen-foot-tall cave mouth opens on the rocky wall here, obstructed by a crude wall of logs and boards bound together with rope and huge iron nails. From the cave, a winding path leads downhill toward the misty, blighted heart of the Demonskar itself.

The wall of wood is a makeshift "doorway" built by the hill giants to keep out intruders. The wall weighs 1,500 lbs., so the average hill giant has little problem hefting it aside when necessary.

The path from the cave mouth allows a safe walk through the large crack on the Demonskar's rim.

Wood Wall: 1 ft. thick; Hardness 5; hp 120; break DC 26.

V6. MEETING HALL

The walls of this circular, domed chamber are carved and polished with exceptional precision and skill to look like cascades of petrified liquid.

Several metal disks on the ceiling sixty feet above provide a pearly illumination as bright as torchlight. The center of the room is occupied by a bizarre, thirty-foot-wide, seven-foot-tall metal and stone sculpture made of truncated pillars, short ramps, suspended slabs of stone, and a total of twenty chairs with triple arm-rests.

This hall was originally used as a meeting place for the spell weavers; the object in the center of the room is analogous to a meeting table. The spell weaver meeting table featured many mobile parts, but is now totally inert.

The door to the north is locked; its key is kept by the fire giant in area **V10**.

Giant Door (strong, ironbound wood): 8 in. thick; Hardness 6; hp 80; break DC 30, good lock (Open Lock DC 30).

Development: If the complex is on alert, the five ettins from area **V9** are found here. The ettins fight any intruders to the death. A few rounds after the ettins are defeated, the three fey hags approach the PCs from area **V11**, disguised as trumpet archons (via *veil*); they also use *mirage arcana* to generate a heavenly choir and wisps of pleasing floral scents to accompany their entrance into the chamber. They smile heavenly at the PCs and thank them for cleansing "this ancient and sacred site" from the taint of those terrible giants. One of the false archons carries a chalice filled with *Amaranth Elixir* and offers it to the most charismatic PC, saying that his heroism against the giants has earned him the right to drink the nectar of the Gods. The hags, however, have laced the liquid in the chalice with dark reaver powder (Fortitude save DC 20, primary damage 2d6 Con, secondary damage 1d6 Con plus 1d6 Str). If a PC drinks the liquid the effect of the poison and the *Amaranth Elixir* stack together. If the character succumbs to the poison, the hags recoil in horror and exclaim, "Only one who had been tainted with evil would react so to the nectar! You must destroy this hidden agent of evil at once!" The hags hope to trick the PCs into arguing or fighting amongst themselves so they can divide and conquer the group. Once their ruse is uncovered, they turn invisible and attempt to retreat to area **V13**.

V7. HILL GIANT CAVE (EL 10)

This place reeks of sweaty, unwashed brutes and scorched meat. Four twelve-foot-long stone beds covered with filthy animal skins lie near the walls. A huge firepit dominates the middle of the cave, under a chimney hole in the forty-foot-high ceiling above. The charred, dismembered skeleton of a huge ape lies over the bed of ashes. A pile of one-foot-diameter polished rock spheres is stacked neatly against the south wall, with a hammer, a chisel, and an emery nearby. Four large burlap sacks sit against the west wall.

Creatures: The four hill giants the hags recruited sleep, feast, and carouse in this room. Three of them can be found here while the fourth guards area **V4**.

Golot, Pogus, and Tibor, hill giants: hp 102 each, *Monster Manual* 123.

Treasure: The four burlap sacks contain the personal belongings of the hill giants. Aside from the usual mundane items, they contain a total of 2,100 sp, 950 gp, a silver ring worth 400 gp, and a gold-plated halfling skull worth 250 gp.

V8. HALLWAY

This huge, twenty-foot-wide, twenty-five-foot-high corridor is blocked by a cave-in at its northern end. Several magic plates on the ceiling fill the corridor with a soft, gray light.

The arcade to area **V10** emanates the bluish gleam of flames from the furnace there. The crude, dark passage on the east wall, dug by the giants, leads to the barracks of the hag covey's ogres.

V9. ETTIN BARRACKS (EL 11)

Five nasty-looking piles of animal skins occupy this filthy cave. Several sacks, clay lamps and vases, cookware, and crude tools are scattered here and there, and six torches have been jammed into cracks in the walls.

Creatures: The five ettins at the covey's service sleep here. They are only encountered here if the characters manage to make it this far without alerting the complex. The ettins don't have their own treasure; the fire giant from area **V10** has promised them payment if they agree to serve as guardians. Whenever the ettins try to collect on their payment, though, the fire giant confuses them with double-talk and sends them away empty-handed.

Ettins (5): hp 65 each, *Monster Manual* 106.

V10. SMITHY (EL 12)

This huge rectangular room has a prism-shaped, fifty-foot-high ceiling. A shiny, metal furnace stands against the north wall, with rumbling, vertical blue flames inside. A large mound of broken anvils is stacked against the side of the furnace, and several more anvil fragments lie heaped inside the furnace, glowing red-hot. An enormous hammer lies on a big iron anvil in the middle of the room, beyond which several more anvils are stacked haphazardly. A great chair sits in the southwestern corner aside a huge metal chest. A seven-foot-wide cubic cage of silver and platinum, its bars etched with mystical symbols, lies nearby, propped up against a pile of metal scrap.

The flames in the spell weaver furnace are supernaturally hot. Any creature touching them takes 4d6 point of fire damage and must succeed at a DC 15 Reflex save or catch fire (see *Dungeon Master's Guide* 86). A creature placed completely inside the furnace takes 16d6 points of fire damage per round. The anvils in the furnace are kept ready for throwing. The magic fire in the furnace is permanent, but can be dispelled normally (caster level 20th).

The chest, which weighs just over a ton, can be opened with a combination lock. The combination lock has four wheels with numbers from 0 to 9, and only Dugobras knows the key (which is 9-3-8-3). The combination lock can also be opened with a successful Open Locks check (DC 35). The chest is protected by a Trap.

Iron Chest: Hardness 10; hp 60; break DC 28.

Creatures: An unusually intelligent fire giant named Dugobras, once a member of the Ebon Triad, lives here now. After the local Triad cell fell apart when Grehlia joined the Cagewrights, Dugobras abandoned Triel, Skaven, and Tarkilar so he could follow up on rumors he'd heard of a powerful magic forge located on the rim of the Demonskar. Upon arriving at Vaprak's Voice, Dugobras impressed the hags with his eloquence and strength and they agreed to let him take up residence in this room. He now toils to build himself a set of masterwork full plate armor. The cage leaning against his stack of spare anvils is a prototype soulcage the giant keeps as a memento of his time working for the Triad. His smithwork is so intense that he breaks an average of one anvil per week. More of an artisan than a warrior-type, Dugobras fights only if absolutely necessary. He prefers to face the heroes in area **V10** to make good use of his hot projectiles.

Dugobras does not make use of *Amaranth Elixir*, as he finds its side effects distasteful.

Dugobras, male fire giant expert 5: hp 258; see Appendix 4.

Tactics: Dugobras's first action in combat is to use his *wand of displacement* on himself; if he fails to activate the wand with a DC 20 Use Magic Device check on this first round he abandons that tactic and starts hurling red-hot anvils at the heroes until they engage him in melee.

Trap: The large metal chest actually consists of two metal chests, the second of which is slightly smaller and encased inside the first. The space between the inner and outer chest is full of pressurized alchemist's fire. If the chest is broken, punctured, or forced open, the stuff explodes in a blast of fire and shrapnel. This explosion destroys the potions and scrolls in the chest but does not harm the other contents.

Alchemist's Fire Trap: CR 7; mechanical; touch trigger; no reset; chest explodes (6d6 fire damage, Reflex half DC 20); multiple targets (all targets within 10 ft. of the chest); Search DC 30, Disable Device DC 30.

Treasure: The prototype soulcage is not magic, but the precious metals (silver and platinum) used to forge it have a value of 2,000 gp. It weighs 300 pounds. A character who studies the mystical symbols etched on the prototype's surface and makes a DC 24 Knowledge (arcana) check can tell that conjuration, abjuration, and necromancy magic were part of its creation. A successful DC 15 Search check made while examining the pile of metal scrap nearby uncovers a small unlocked metal crate. Dugobras keeps two crystal jugs filled with ten doses of alchemist's fire apiece in the crate. Near the metal crate sits a half-full pot of hardened, sticky resin (used to set the trap in area **V12**).

The large metal chest contains 280 gp, 4,350 sp, a pouch containing 12 pieces of amber (100 gp each), a golden water boiler (worth 120 gp), a +1 *arrow deflection light metal shield* (emblazoned with the face of a wolf biting the shaft of an arrow), a *wand of lightning bolt* (CL 7, 17 charges left), three *potions of cat's grace*, three *potions of protection from elements (electricity)*, and a divine scroll with *magic fang*, *hold animal*, and *remove disease*.

V11. FOUNTAIN

Four white pillars with capitals shaped like slender hands support a twenty-foot-tall ceiling in this rectangular room. A three-foot-diameter crystal globe is embedded ten feet up on each pillar. These hollow globes are half-filled with bubbling, transparent liquid that seems to replenish itself as quickly as it drains out of a hole in each globe's base. At the base of each pillar, a silver spigot allows this liquid to drain out of the pillar and down a narrow gutter to collect in a basin in the floor in the room's center. There, the liquid turns a deep purple color and evaporates as quickly as it is filled. A golden chalice sits on the basin's rim near the southeastern pillar.

This alchemical fountain is the source of the *Amaranth Elixir*. The crystal globes that generate the elixir are fairly difficult to destroy, but if one is wrecked all four globes explode. The resulting spray of crystal shards and boiling liquid fills the room, inflicting 6d6 slashing damage and 3d6 fire damage on all creatures in the room. A successful DC 20 Reflex saving throw halves the damage. The apparatus no longer produces the elixir if it is ruined.

Treasure: The *Amaranth Elixir* increases the drinker's physical strength, but causes terrible strain on the drinker's sanity. Its exact effects depend on the imbiber's size (see Appendix 2).

The golden chalice on the basin's rim is of dwarven manufacture (value 350 gp). The hags use it as a prop when they offer the *Amaranth Elixir* to Alek Tercival or the PCs.

V12. EXPLOSIVE VAPORS (EL 8)

The areas beyond this door have collapsed, leaving only a small pocket of space beyond the door. A vent in the

floor allows flammable vapor to seep into this remaining space.

Trap: The crafty Dugobras smeared an alchemical resin of his own design into the guides of the door so that when it closes, the resin fills the gaps in the door's frame. Once the resin dries it forms an airtight seal. This allows the small space beyond to become pressurized with the flammable gas. Like the other spell weaver doors, this one opens when an intelligent being (Int 6+) comes within 5 feet. The resin contains tiny bits of flint and steel, so that when the door opens it generates a cascade of sparks that instantly ignites the pressurized gas beyond.

Explosive Vapor Trap: CR 8; mechanical; proximity trigger; manual reset; gas (explosive, 10d6 fire, DC 18 Reflex save half damage); multiple targets (all targets within 30 feet of the trap); Search DC 25; Disable Device DC 30.

V13. THRONE ROOM (EL 12)

The north portion of this square room contains a seven-foot-high platform connected to an L-shaped ramp. A strip of bas-reliefs depicting gaunt, magic-wielding, six-armed creatures decorates the base of the platform. Each creature holds a disk in its lowest set of arms, which is represented like a shining sun. The rays emanating from the disks, engraved in the stone as straight lines, form the background of the composition. A white marble throne with triple armrests sits on the platform itself.

Once the seat of a spell weaver leader, this room is now used by the hag covey to meet with important visitors. When the heroes enter the complex, the three hags are here speaking with a nerra varoot named Gaflon about Alek Tercival's fate.

Creatures: Tribata, Sminelpa, and Olomasta are triplets born of an unholy union between fey and green hag. They look similar to most green hags but sport hairy cricket legs and a pair of elongated, sickly-brown moth-like wings on their backs. When folded, the wings look much like dirty, ragged cloaks.

Gaflon looks like a hairless humanoid with mirror-like skin. He wears only a pair of soft boots and a loincloth with a leather belt, but carries a wicked-looking shard of mirrored glass the size of a longsword.

Tribata, Sminelpa, and Olomasta, half-fey green hags rogue 2 (3): hp 49 each; see Appendix 4.

Gaflon, nerra varoot rogue 4: hp 24; see Appendix 4.

Tactics: The three hags try to perform different actions during a combat round (i.e. one makes claw attacks, one uses her weakness touch, and one uses a spell-like ability) in an attempt to make coordinated defenses against their tactics more difficult. If two hags are killed, the third tries to escape and seek Nabthatoron's help.

Gaflon tries to slip away to the *Starry Mirror*, where he can call a group of nerra kalareem for help (area **V15**).

NERRA WEAPONS

Nerras employ swords and daggers made of the substance of the Plane of Mirrors. They resemble shards of broken mirror set with a shiny hilt. A shard weapon is a *+2 wounding weapon* that requires an Exotic Weapon Proficiency feat to wield. Without this feat, the weapon's wounding quality cannot be utilized. Nerra can utilize shard weapons with the Weapon Finesse feat if they have it. The magic qualities of nerra weapons in this adventure are maintained by contact with a living nerra; if the weapon is stolen or its owner slain, the weapon shatters into thousands of fragments. A nerra can rebuild its weapon only on the Plane of Mirrors.

Development: If the PCs arrive here without alerting the complex, they find the hags and the nerra in their normal forms. Otherwise, the heroes likely meet the hags after their battle with the ettins (area **V6**) and Gaflon at the *Starry Mirror* (area **V15**).

V14. HAG COVEY'S LAIR (EL 9)

Three large beds sit in this room. Along the north wall hangs a set of golden baboon masks. The smooth stone walls and the floor are covered by colorful and bizarre tapestries and carpets. An elaborate weaver's loom occupies the southwest corner. Various skeins of wool of many different colors are piled near the loom, next to a basket of sewing tools. A wooden chest sits in the southeast corner.

Creatures: The hags found four spell weaver skeletons in the surrounding ruins and animated them to serve as guardians. The skeletons still carry their spell weaver chromatic disks (see *Monster Manual II* 118), although in their new undead states they can't make use of the devices. If any PC tries to activate one of these disks with Use Magical Device, the disk explodes, dealing 4d10 points of damage within a 30-foot radius.

The skeletons have been commanded by the hags to defend the chamber from any non-hag intruders.

Spell Weaver Skeletons (4): hp 78 each; see Appendix 4.

Treasure: The five baboon masks on the north wall are very similar to the one in Tygot's shop in Cauldron (see "Tygot's Old Things"). The carpets on the walls and floor (24 in total, each weighing 20 lbs.) are worth 200 gp each. The skeins of wool are high quality, well-dyed stuff (15 bales worth 20 gp and weighing 10 lbs. each). The chest in the southeast corner is unlocked, and contains the hag covey's treasure.

The chest contains 130 gp in a large purse, 12 pieces of assorted silverware (jugs, plates, bowls) worth a total of 450 gp, a golden armband (worth 120 gp), a wizard scroll (*prying eyes, greater dispel magic, sequester*, caster level 14th),

a *necklace of fireballs* (type III, with just one 5D6 and two 3d6 spheres left), two *potions of cure serious wounds*, four *potions of cure moderate wounds*, and a *+1 light mace*.

A successful Search check (DC 25) made while searching the wall behind the baboon masks uncovers a hidden switch built into the wall. If the switch is triggered, a shallow drawer slides out of the wall. Wrapped in silk inside this drawer is *Alakast*, a *+1 bane vs. evil outsiders quarterstaff*. Both heads of the quarterstaff bear identical magic qualities. Attacks made by *Alakast* penetrate damage reduction as if it were a good aligned weapon; this additional magic enhancement increases *Alakast's* market value to a total of 20,000 gp. The hags sent some of their minions out to steal this staff from Surabar's tomb some time ago; they originally intended to present the staff to Nabthatoron as a trophy to aid in securing his friendship, but the glabrezu approached the hags on his own. Now, the hags keep *Alakast* hidden here as a "secret weapon" against the demon, should he ever betray them.

V15. STARRY MIRROR (EL 8)

The ceiling in this room forms a four-sided dome. The apex of the dome is thirty feet off the ground. An odd, ten-foot-wide pentagonal mirror hangs on the west wall, from where it casts a dark reflection of the room. This reflection is distorted in an unsettling way, and dotted with shimmering, star-like pinpoints of white light. A single chair of white stone with triple armrests sits in the middle of the room, facing the mirror. A colorful hexagonal diagram is engraved in the floor surrounding the mirror.

Centuries ago, the nerra of the Plane of Mirrors allowed the spell weavers to build and use the *Starry Mirror* for a high price. The mirror has lain dormant for centuries, and when Alek Tercival passed through the mirror at the urging of the three hags, the nerra sent Gaflon back through to discuss the matter.

The *Starry Mirror* was originally linked to four other portals at distant points across the Material Plane, of which only one other remains functional today. The *Starry Mirror* also allows intelligent creatures to use the mirror jump ability of the nerra. The diagram on the floor represents a scheme of the primary and secondary colors. This scheme, together with the string of numbers on the hegemonic plate, can give the PCs clues to successfully navigate the maze beyond the *Starry Mirror*.

Any PC who touches the *Starry Mirror* finds that it is actually a vertical surface of cold, reflective liquid, which can be passed through with ease. Whoever does so finds himself in one of the pentagonal rooms of the mirror maze.

A PC who looks intently into the *Starry Mirror* sees five pentagonal windows floating under its dark surface. Four of them show nothing but dull white light. The fifth shows an indistinct image of Alek Tercival sitting next to a large metal door in a stone wall, his expression filled with despair.

Creatures: If Gaflon escaped from any conflicts in area **V13**, the characters find him sitting on the spell weaver throne. He has used his *disguise self* spell-like ability to appear as Alek Tercival. In this guise, the varoot tries to distract and flank the heroes as other nerra silently emerge from the *Starry Mirror*. Gaflon knows

Alek Tercival's appearance, having spied on him often through the *Starry Mirror*. When the PCs enter the room, Gaflon pretends to wake up from a magical sleep. He warns the PCs that something terrible is going to happen in Cauldron very soon, and that the mirror on the wall reflects future events. He claims that he is not intelligent enough to discern the truth in the mirror's reflections and asks the heroes to help.

A group of three nerra kalareem observes this room from the Plane of Mirrors. They intend to discourage further trespassers from entering the *Starry Mirror*, and are also observing Alek Tercival in the ancient vault, content with the fact that the paladin seems to be doomed. They wait for Gaflon's signal (he drops his dagger on the floor) before attacking.

Kalareem Nerra (4): hp 19 each; see Appendix 4.

Development: If the heroes kill at least two nerra, the survivors try to retreat to the Plane of Mirrors to report what happened to their superiors. This can eventually lead to further involvement with the nerra in the campaign.

THROUGH THE SPECTRUM

In order to reach or contact Alek, the characters must travel through the *Starry Mirror* to his side. Long-range communication with Alek (such as with a *sending* spell) is useless, since he is mad with despair and in no condition to form intelligent replies.

Once they pass through the *Starry Mirror*, the PCs find themselves in an extra-dimensional maze made up of an indefinite number of identical, pentagon-shaped, 15-foot-high rooms. The only differences between rooms are the colors of the ambient light: blue, yellow, red, violet, orange, and green (the primary and secondary colors, shown in the floor diagram of area **V15**). Each wall has a pentagonal portal the same size as the *Starry Mirror*. The semi-transparent surface of the portals reflects the room around it but with a tint of the appropriate hue.

The extra-dimensional space duplicates separately for all who enter, so the heroes always find themselves alone inside the rooms, no matter how many are inside at the same time. Sound carries across these duplicate rooms as a metallic echo, so characters can communicate with each other. Exit from the *Starry Mirror* back into area **V15** is impossible; the only way to escape this maze is through the one surviving exit point into the ancient vault.

To arrive at the exit mirror, the heroes must interpret the string of numbers from the hegemonic plate (3, 4, 5, 1, 2, 3) and turn it into a combination of colors. To do this, they must compare the numbers with the color diagram on the floor of area **V15**. For example, if a PC is in a yellow room and the next number of the sequence is 4, he must enter in the room with the fourth color in a clockwise order from yellow, which is red. When a PC enters the *Starry Mirror*, the color of the first room is determined randomly with a six-sided die. Characters grow hungry and thirsty normally in the mirror maze, so if they don't stumble on the exit, starvation eventually sets in. Time passes normally in the mirror maze as well, and although the environs are alien, there is no danger of

Starry Mirror

Area V15

1 square = 5 feet

Beyond the Starry Mirror

Although the *Starry Mirror* contains an indefinite number of small chambers, there are only six varieties, each with a distinct tint (red, orange, yellow, green, blue, and violet). Each room has five portals that lead to virtually identical chambers tinted to correspond to the portal used to access them (walking through a blue portal, for example, leads an adventurer to the blue-tinted chamber). Cracking the puzzle's code to reach Alek Tercival requires decoding the numeric instructions on the Hegemonic Plate, which correspond to the colored hexagonal floor diagram in area **V15**.

Keep the following points in mind when running this potentially confusing puzzle:

1) A PC who enters the *Starry Mirror* appears in a random color room (roll 1d6).
2) All PCs appear alone in the color room, even if two PCs appear in a room of the same color.
3) When a PC enters a portal in a color room, he appears in the middle of the color room of the corresponding color.
4) To reach the final exit chamber (a gray-tinted pentagonal chamber with a single mirror leading to area **A1**), a PC must follow the combination on the Hegemonic Plate, extrapolating the combination numbers (3, 4, 5, 1, 2, 3) into a series of combination colors. To do this, the PC must find the right successive color in the floor diagram in area **V15**, counting the colors in clockwise order from the appearance room color.

Sequence Example

1) Random entrance color (1d6): "5" = "blue" (the PC appears in the blue room).
2) First combination color: "3" (first combination number on the Hegemonic Plate) = "orange" (third color from blue in a clockwise order).
3) Second combination color: "4" (second number on the Hegemonic Plate) = "violet" (fourth color from orange in a clockwise order).
4) Third combination color: "5" = "blue".
5) Fourth combination color: "1" = "violet".
6) Fifth combination color: "2" = "orange".
7) Sixth combination color: "3" = "blue".
8) At this point, upon entering the blue portal, the character appears in the exit room instead of the blue room.

Notes

- No matter how many PCs are inside the *Starry Mirror*, PCs always appear alone in the color rooms. Their voices, however, can be heard by other party members in the *Starry Mirror*.
- Objects abandoned in the rooms disappear when when the PC leaves the room, reappearing in area **V15** as soon as the PCs exit the *Starry Mirror*.
- A nerra can mirror jump through the pentagonal mirror in area **V15** and the destination mirror in area **A1**, but may not mirror jump into the color rooms inside the Starry Mirror itself.

ALEK'S PROPHECIES

Alek's insanity has granted him the gift of prophecy. Although the vast majority of his prophecies are little more than insane ravings, a few of them are actually legitimate. Listed here are eight sample prophecies he can cry out during the climactic battle with Nabthatoron; you can use them as guides if you need to invent more prophecies.

d8	Prophecy
1	"When the final cage is shackled the burning doom shall rise."
2	"The baboons watch and wait, patient and potent, for their empire to reign anew."
3	"When thrice by thrice the ancient judgment falls, thunder strikes anew from Jarl Khurok's halls."
4	"Seven blackbirds have ye, yet death is not deceived."
5	"The Striders wander, their history true, yet with each step they grow more cruel."
6	"Chant a dirge of gold coins, your pockets fill with lies."
7	"Magic and death soon play their hand from windows on high above the land."
8	"Beware the unseen mark! Beware the eyes that kill! By treachery and deceit shall the true Lord fall and the false Lord rule!"

encountering dangerous natives in this maze since each room duplicates for every creature in the maze. The portals between chambers should be treated as solid barriers for determining line of effect; spells cannot be cast through a portal as a result.

Certain divination spells can also aid in navigating the mirror maze. *Augury* can indicate if a portal choice is the correct one (weal) or an incorrect one (woe). *Commune* and *contact other plane* can provide the caster with the exact pattern required to exit the mirrors, providing the right questions are asked. *Divination* causes the image from the front of the hegemonic plate to appear in the caster's mind, with the six numbers glowing in the appropriate colors needed to navigate the maze. *Locate creature* and *locate object* both fail if used to locate Alek or any of his equipment, since they are 500 miles away from Vaprak's Voice. *Find the path*, although likely beyond the reach of most characters of this level, is the best spell for the situation since it gives the exact route through the mirrors to reach Alek.

Once a PC traverses the six portals in the correct order, the final room grows dark, illuminated only by dim light streaming in from the five portals on the walls. All five portals now show one scene; area **A1** of the ancient vault. Characters who look through the portals at this time see Alek Tercival sitting on the ground of a dark, windowless room lit only by the faint light of his glowing sword. An iron door blocks an archway nearby, and Alek looks sunk in despair.

THE ANCIENT VAULT

The spell weavers of Vaprak's Voice used the *Starry Mirror* to mirror jump between five fixed destinations in their ancient empire. Each of these destination points contained a mirror that served as a focus; travel via the *Starry Mirror* provides a one-way trip. Currently, only one of these destination mirrors remains active, and even then, it is only partly functional. This mirror is located in an ancient spell weaver vault. The vault survived the ages mostly intact due to its exceptionally sturdy construction, and is located in a desert 500 miles west of Cauldron, half buried in a windswept dune of sand.

A1. UNDERGROUND CHAMBER (EL 6)

A pentagonal, five-foot-wide mirror is set into a wall of this square room. Twelve seven-foot-tall clay urns stand against the walls to either side, and an iron door, its face covered with countless scratches and chips, blocks an eight-foot-tall archway in the wall opposite the mirror.

This room was once a vault used to store magic items. These items have long since been looted, and even the clay urns are completely empty. The magic that once provided light to this room and allowed the door to open at the approach of an intelligent creature have both failed. The pentagonal mirror on the south wall is a one-way portal; while it radiates magic, it cannot be used to reenter the mirror maze or return to Vaprak's Voice.

The scratches on the iron door are from Alek's hopeless attempt to hack down the door with his sword. The door itself does not form an air-tight seal; creatures that can assume gaseous form can pass through the cracks around the door with ease.

Large Iron Door: 2 in. thick; Hardness 10; hp 60; Break DC 28.

Creature: When the heroes arrive, Alek Tercival slumps near the iron door he's been trying to batter down and force open for the past few days. Now that the effects of the *Amaranth Elixir* have left him, he simply isn't strong enough to force open or batter down the door. His *ring of sustenance* keeps him alive, but frustration and fear have started to take their toll and erode at his already unstable sanity.

Alek believes that the powers of good (the "trumpet archons" and their "heavenly potion") have abandoned him for failing to save Cauldron. His red eyes show that he has been weeping for a while, and the bleeding blisters on his hands testify to his frantic attempts to escape the chamber. Alek's despair is so great that when the characters arrive in his chamber, he barely acknowledges their arrival. Alek's insanity causes him a –2 penalty on all attack rolls, skill checks, and saving throws. Worse, he has come to believe that the insane thoughts that now race through his fractured mind are in fact prophecies granted to

him from his days spent wandering in the depths of the *Starry Mirror*. This insanity also confers a –6 penalty to his Wisdom score as long as it persists. Spells like *bless* or *prayer* can offset this penalty, but actually curing his insanity (and Wisdom penalty) requires a *heal* or *greater restoration* spell.

Alek Tercival, male human aristocrat 5/paladin 4: hp 58; see Appendix 4.

Development: Alek's current attitude toward the PCs is effectively indifferent; he remains non-responsive until his attitude is adjusted to helpful. Until he's coaxed out of his depression (with Diplomacy checks, Intimidate checks, or magic), he remains despondent, muttering prophecy #1 (see the "Alek's Prophecies" sidebar) over and over under his breath. A successful DC 15 Listen check allows a character to hear this whispered prophecy. If he is brought to his senses, he stops muttering and provides what assistance he can. He is willing to relate the events of his past few months if asked, but he still believes that the fey hags were trumpet archons and that he has somehow failed the cause of good. If the PCs update Alek on the recent events in Cauldron and reveal that the "archons" were in fact half-fey greenhags, he becomes very ashamed and very angry. He asks the PCs a lot of questions to learn as much as possible about what he missed. He agrees that his challenge to Terseon Skellerang must be withdrawn publicly to avoid what would be a disastrous conflict between Cauldron and Redgorge. Despite this, his despair and shame is such that he refuses to return to Cauldron and face the results of his actions, despite arguments to the contrary.

A2. ENTRANCE ROOM

Four pillars support the ceiling of this square room. Along one wall an arcade allows access to the outside, its opening partially choked by sand. The sand has spread into the room, covering half of the floor. A human skeleton juts out of the heap of sand in the middle of the room, an iron pickaxe lying on the ground near its outstretched arm.

The arcade opens out into a massive desert some 500 miles to the west of Cauldron. The skeleton on the ground is human, all of its valuable gear having long since been looted. The pickaxe is unremarkable.

EVENT 27: NABTHATORON'S RAGE (EL 14)

At some point after the PCs arrive in the ancient vault, Nabthatoron takes matters into his own hands. The glabrezu isn't about to let the heroes save Alek and possibly undo all the work he's done to get Skellerang to march on Cauldron. He's been scrying on Alek for some time, using a *crystal ball* back in his lair in the Demonskar, and happens to be watching when the PCs arrive on the scene. He quickly gathers his resources, and then at an opportune moment, he uses *greater teleport* to travel to Alek's side.

You should time Nabthatoron's arrival to be as dramatic as possible at some point before the heroes leave the ancient deposit but after they have had a chance to speak with Alek. The glabrezu appears from nothingness with a roar, crying out, "You shall not save your friend, mortals! This time of peace is at an end!"

Creature: Nabthatoron poses a terrible threat to the party, and it is very likely that Alek (and possibly some of the PCs) will be slain in this encounter. Ideally, the PCs shouldn't be faced with this encounter unless they are fully healed and rested, with all of their spells prepared for the day. If this isn't the case, you can have Nidrama appear to aid the PCs in their battle against the glabrezu. Since this takes some of the glory away from the players, though, you should avoid introducing this *deus ex machina* until the last possible moment.

Since Nabthatoron is a huge creature, he may have to *teleport* into the desert just outside of the Ancient Vault—his size is one of the few advantages the PCs may be able to use against him.

Nabthatoron, male glabrezu: hp 174; see Appendix 4.

Tactics: When Nabthatoron appears, Alek's insanity intensifies. Filled with rage at the sight of the demon, he draws his weapon and fights with a primal frenzy. As he does, he spews out prophecy after prophecy at the top of his lungs. The "Alek's Prophecies" sidebar lists numerous sample prophecies he can utter during this combat. If the glabrezu teleported into the area just outside of the Ancient Vault, Alek abandons sound tactics and races up to meet the demon in melee, likely provoking attacks of opportunity as he passes through his reach.

Nabthatoron focuses his initial attacks on Alek Tercival, and tries to slaughter the paladin with his melee attacks as quickly as possible. If the PCs manage to cause the demon significant harm (more than 15 points of damage with a single attack), he takes the time to use *power word stun*, *confusion*, or *reverse gravity* to take them out of the combat so he can return to savaging Alek. If a PC seems to be getting through his damage reduction with ease, Nabthatoron uses *mirror image* and switches his full attention to that character. He has no real interest in the PCs, and if they don't seem to be able to hurt him, he teleports back to his lair with mocking laughter after he has slain the paladin, content that the PCs won't be able to stop the invasion of Redgorge now that Alek's dead. If seriously threatened (brought down to less than 30 hit points), he teleports back to his lair in the Demonskar to plot later revenge against the PCs. If prevented from teleporting (with a *dimensional anchor*, for example) and brought down to less than 30 hit points, Nabthatoron tries to bargain for his life, offering a *wish* to the PCs if they spare him. Of course, if they do so and let him leave, the demon makes their murder his number one priority.

If the PCs manage to flee with Alek, Nabthatoron teleports back to his lair and attempts to scry on him again using his *crystal ball*. He continues to do so until he's successful, at which point he resumes his attack, even if Alek is "safely" in the Church of St. Cuthbert at the time.

Development: Nabthatoron's destruction may have unforeseen consequences. He was not the only demonic inhabitant of the Demonskar—he was merely the most powerful. As ruthless and cruel as he was, Nabthatoron was also quite wise and intelligent. He knew that humanity was now the dominant force in the region. As much as he may have wanted to lead his demonic forces out into the world to ravage and pillage, he realized that such actions would only bring swift retribution from Cauldron's heroes and defenders. Much better, the glabrezu reasoned, to wait for an opportune moment to strike, with precision rather than force. Such was the genesis of his plans for Alek Tercival and the invasion of Redgorge.

With Nabthatoron gone, the remaining fiends in the Demonskar are without leadership. Worse, they are without fear of reprisal. For some time after his death, these demons squabble and fight amongst themselves. At some point, perhaps not until well after this campaign is over and you're ready to start something new, but perhaps as soon as Chapter Seven, when the PCs return to the Demonskar in search of Karran-Kural, a new leader emerges from these petty squabbles. Once Nabthatoron's favored sergeant, the hezrou Dreghakus proves to be the inheritor of the glabrezu's crown. Yet unlike Nabthatoron, Dreghakus has had enough of patience and subtlety.

The majority of the demons remaining in the Demonskar are relatively minor, but numerous. Two dozen bickering vrock dwell in the caves surrounding the crater's rim, and the crater basin is home to nearly a hundred babau demons. Rutterkins, bar-lguras, and several chasmes (all detailed in the *Book of Vile Darkness*) are present in number as well, and a poisonous river that pools in a tarry moat around Nabthatoron's palace is home to schools of skulvyn. It takes time for Dreghakus to bully these demons into serving him, but with the aid of several fiendish hill-giants once loyal to Nabthatoron (and now loyal to Dreghakus), the hezrou soon creates squads of demons to send out into the world to spread his rage. Each of these squads is an EL 13 encounter, consisting of a group of four babaus and six bar-lguras led by a single chasme. Feel free to have the PCs encounter one of theses groups of demonic raiders during Chapter Seven, or perhaps even during Chapter Nine, as they attempt to evacuate the city. Eventually, the PCs may need to confront Dreghakus within the walls of Nabthatoron's palace in order to finally bring an end to the Demonskar Legacy.

Concluding the Chapter

If he has not already been slain, Alek Tercival collapses to the ground as soon as the PCs defeat Nabthatoron. In any case, Alek frantically motions for the PCs to draw near, his eyes wild and blood frothing at his lips. Assuming he was slain by Nabthatoron, the PCs should

be shocked to see that the paladin still lives, despite wounds that should have left him quite dead.

As the PCs reach him, Alek grabs onto one of their arms or legs and looks deep into that character's eyes. He suddenly grows calm and a strange aura of peace settles over the characters as a voice, not his own, issues from his gaping jaw:

"There is naught left for you in Cauldron, heroes! To return is to enter your own graves and to bring doom upon all you love! Trust the sign of the Smoking Eye if you wish to save them all!"

Characters who spoke to Nidrama earlier in this chapter should recognize her voice issuing from Alek's mouth. She has been moved by their attempt to save the paladin and defeat Nabthatoron, and against the advice of her superiors provides the PCs with this clue. She knows that Kaurophon has been seeking them, and that, while evil, he can provide the PCs with a wealth of information and advantages over the Cagewrights if they only listen to what he has to say in Chapter Six.

With this cryptic and final prophecy, Alek dies if he had been dealt a mortal wound from Nabthatoron. If he had not suffered mortal wounds in the battle, he instead collapses into a coma. A *heal* or *greater restoration* is required to save him now.

The characters may well now be stranded in the middle of an unknown desert, 500 miles from their homes and without any way to stop Terseon Skellerang from marching upon Redgorge. If they do nothing, Skellerang gathers his troops the very next morning and does just that. When they arrive at Redgorge that evening, the town's citizens see it as an act of war and refuse to allow Skellerang's troops to enter the town. A tense standoff follows, and eventually, a frustrated Skellerang orders his troops to lay siege to the town. The siege lasts for some time—the people of Redgorge are well known for their practicality, and have stored a lot of food and water. They can hold out for several weeks, but if the PCs don't return eventually to explain what had happened to Alek and retract his challenge, the eventual result is Redgorge's conquest.

This campaign assumes that the PCs can somehow get the message of what happened to Alek to Cauldron. If they can't teleport back, they may be able to use spells like *sending* to contact Jenya, Maavu, or another of their allies. If the PCs have forged strong ties with the Striders, their friends in that organization may be able to convince their leader Meerthan to scry on the PCs and use *teleport* spells to return them home, at your discretion. Of course, if one of the PCs is a Strider, he can use his telepathic link with Meerthan to call for aid.

The PCs don't necessarily need to return with Alek to Cauldron to stop Skellerang. If they can contact an ally with *sending* or a similar spell and explain what has occurred, their allies can serve as their proxies and defuse the situation. Skellerang still itches for a fight, but with Tercival's challenge withdrawn, he has no excuse to march on Redgorge and begrudgingly stands down.

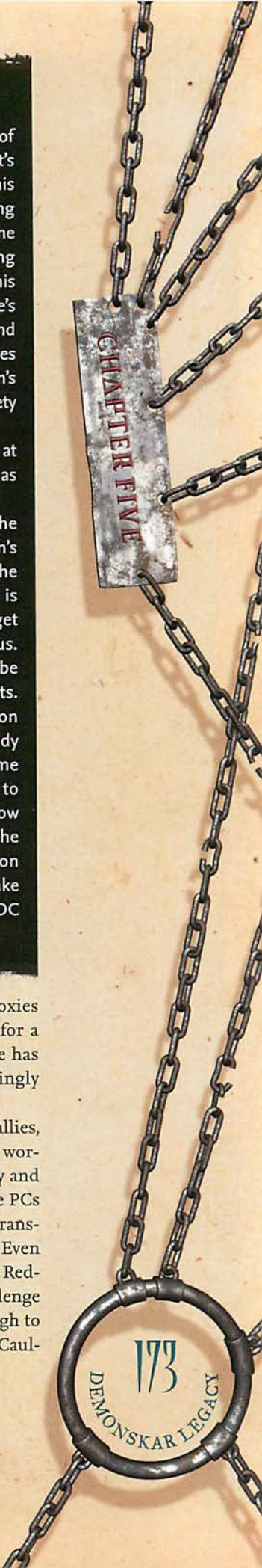
If none of the PCs can return home or contact allies, all is not lost. Jenya, Shensen, or another ally grows worried at the missing PCs by the end of the next day and contacts them with a *sending* spell on her own. The PCs can use their reply to inform their ally what has transpired, and perhaps ask for aid in returning home. Even if Skellerang has already marched and laid siege to Redgorge, the information that Alek issued his challenge while under the influence of the hags is still enough to get Skellerang to call off the siege and return to Cauldron with his troops.

BEHIND THE SCENES: THE DEMONSKAR LEGACY

Although the PCs may have started to catch hints of conspiracies in the government before this chapter, it's during "The Demonskar Legacy" that the reality of this conspiracy should hit home. The primary event going on behind the scenes during this adventure is the imminent invasion of Redgorge. Terseon Skellerang is the driving force behind this event, although his motivation is not connected to the Cagewrights. He's simply a powerful tool, driven by his corrupt nature and his devotion to Vhalantru. Terseon honestly believes that the Chisel is a legitimate threat to Cauldron's order, and he feels that wiping this subversive society out is the best way to prevent further civil unrest.

The Cagewrights themselves continue to work at purifying the Shackleborn during this chapter, and as a result continue to maintain a low profile.

The most important event going on behind the scenes in this chapter, though, is Kaurophon's interest in the PCs. He loses favor with the Cagewrights near the start of this chapter and is forced to go into hiding, but he doesn't let this get in the way of his plans to gain control of Occipitus. The half-demodand hopes that the PCs may be able to assist him, given their accomplishments. At several points during this chapter, Kaurophon attempts to scry on one of the PCs. He has already learned a fair amount about them during his time with the Cagewrights, so he knows which PCs to target (those with the magic combination of a low Will save and a low Intelligence, to cut down on the chances of them noticing the scrying). Kaurophon repeats this proceedure numerous times, so make sure to have the PCs he targets make periodic DC 19 Will saves to resist his attempts at watching.



CHAPTER SIX

CHAPTER SIX

TEST OF THE SMOKING EYE

BY DAVID NOONAN

Even to demons, Occipitus is a cursed place. The 507th layer of the Abyss was once Adimarchus's realm, but since his imprisonment 50 years ago it has lain dormant. Fiends who tarried there seemed to suffer all manner of misfortune, from madness to magical maladies to overly ambitious subordinates. To most demons, the cause seemed obvious—the chunk of Celestia that Occipitus absorbed long ago was somehow still influencing events there. That Adimarchus disappeared at a crucial moment was further proof that Occipitus's curse makes the layer more trouble than it's worth. It is only sparsely populated today, mostly by unlucky fiends with no place else to go.

About a decade ago, a half-demodand named Kaurophon grew curious about Occipitus and explored the plane. While there, he met Saureya, an imprisoned angel who was cast down with Celestia and survived Adimarchus's reign. Saureya told Kaurophon that Adimarchus built a test into the very fabric of Occipitus that prospects had to pass before becoming the new ruler of the layer. Kaurophon attempted this "Test of the Smoking Eye" but failed for reasons he doesn't fully understand (although Saureya knows why). Chastened, Kaurophon left Occipitus for Carceri.

But Kaurophon never forgot Occipitus's secret, and he bided his time. Eventually, he fell in with the Cagewrights. Dyr'ryd sensed his demodand heritage and sponsored Kaurophon's induction into the cult personally. Kaurophon, for his part, never really intended to stay with the Cagewrights long. He simply wanted access to their resources in order to research a way to pass the Test of the Smoking Eye. As he worked, he became intrigued at increasing evidence that the Cagewrights themselves may have some connection to Occipitus.

When the PCs came to the Cagewrights' attention, they also came to Kaurophon's. He began following their progress through rumor, scrying, and hearsay. He soon realized that the adventurers would make useful pawns. Perhaps they could pass the Test of the Smoking Eye to gain control of Occipitus, and then Kaurophon could either usurp their power directly or influence them from behind the scenes. As this chapter begins, Kaurophon has abandoned the Cagewrights and is prepared to make the PCs an offer for a strange, but possibly informative, alliance. And if the PCs are stranded in the middle of the desert, Kaurophon's offer for an alliance may just be the only way they'll be able to get back to Cauldron alive.

EVENT 28: AN UNLIKELY EMISSARY (EL 9)

Kaurophon has decided to use the PCs as proxies for the Test of the Smoking Eye. Yet he also realizes that convincing them to aid him in his quest will take a fair amount of work. Ultimately, he decides to set up the PCs with an attack, then arrives to "save the day" in an attempt to make himself seem like a helpful ally.

Kaurophon stages his introduction after scrying on the PCs, at some point soon after the end of Chapter Five. He casts *invisibility* on himself, then *disguise self* to appear in human form with a tunic emblazoned with a smoking eye shape. He continues scrying on the PCs, who undoubtedly discuss what they'll do next. Put yourself in Kaurophon's shoes—you want to learn more about the PCs, but you want to make sure they come with you to Occipitus. If the conversation breaks down or starts to head in a direction you don't like, it's time for Kaurophon to take action. If the players are getting frustrated with their predicament, that's also your cue to act. Kaurophon wants the PCs to undertake healing and other spellcasting, because it's in Kaurophon's interest for the PCs to be at their strongest.

Creatures: When Kaurophon is ready to make his appearance, he uses a scroll to *greater teleport* to someplace where the PCs won't be able to see him. To successfully use this scroll Kaurophon must make a DC 14 caster level check. Remember that as long as the scroll doesn't misfire (*Dungeon Master's Guide* 238), the scroll's spell is not consumed and Kaurophon can try to use it again the next round. Once he arrives, he uses a scroll of *summon monster IX* to summon 1d4+1 babau demons; to use this scroll he must make a successful DC 18 caster level check. Kaurophon briefs the babaus on his plans, then sends them in to attack the PCs. One round after this combat begins, Kaurophon appears nearby and attacks

STARTING THE CHAPTER: TEST OF THE SMOKING EYE

The average party level should be 10 when you start this chapter. Once this chapter begins, the PCs will likely be spending some time away from Cauldron, so before they go you should give them a chance to recover from the previous chapter's climax, use item creation feats, and scribe new spells into spellbooks as needed. When you are ready to begin, start the chapter with Event 28.

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the babaus he summoned. If this spell misfires, the babaus attack Kaurophon. Thinking quickly, he leads the demons to the PCs and the combat proceeds as detailed in Tactics below.

Babau demons (1d4+1): hp 68, 65, 61; *Monster Manual* 40.

Kaurophon, male half-fiend human sorcerer 11: hp 65; see Appendix 4.

Tactics: Because the babaus were summoned, they can't make the careful plans that their kind are known for. Instead they rush in and try to set up flanking positions so they can make sneak attacks. Kaurophon has ordered the babaus not to use their *darkness* spell-like ability, because he wants to make sure the PCs see him come to the rescue.

Kaurophon's tactics are simple: wait a round for the fight to start, then come to the PCs' aid by attacking a babau with *magic missile* or by casting a beneficial spell (such as *bear's endurance*) on a PC. He shouts "I'm here to help!" and "Die, demon!" frequently to make his intentions obvious.

Development: The characters should make short work of the babau demons, especially with help from Kaurophon. Only if the PCs are still gravely wounded from a previous encounter will this be a tough fight. If the babau demons start to get the upper hand, Kaurophon dismisses them as a standard action while pulling out a blank scroll and pretending to read a *dismissal* spell from it. Characters with *detect magic*, *arcane sight*, or similar magic might be able to tell that he didn't actually use the scroll, as can anyone who sees through his Bluff with a Sense Motive check.

Once the PCs defeat the babaus, Kaurophon has a sales pitch to make.

Ad-Hoc Experience Award: Although normally you wouldn't award experience points for monsters summoned by magic (since they are technically part of the summoner's CR), go ahead and award experience points for the three babaus encountered here; this award represents the defeat of the babaus as much as it does forging an alliance with Kaurophon.

EVENT 29: INVITATION TO OCCIPITUS

The PCs have a new ally, who introduces himself as Kaurophon and briefly explains that he was sent "by the power of the Smoking Eye" to guide the PCs to the outer plane of Occipitus. If the PCs can pass the Test of the Smoking Eye, Kaurophon says, they can cleanse Occipitus of evil and win a great victory for the forces of good.

Kaurophon should be pretty convincing. What he says matches Tercival's dying words, he's wearing a smoking eye symbol, and he just helped the PCs. Plus he offers an immediate way out for characters stranded in the desert by a one-way portal. But PCs are naturally suspicious, and they'll undoubtedly question Kaurophon further.

Kaurophon's whole plan relies on the PCs' trust—or at least the allaying of their immediate suspicions. He submits willingly to divination spells, relying on his +8 Will save bonus, his +19 Bluff bonus, and his ability to tell partial truths to defeat Sense Motive checks and such spells as *discern lies* and *zone of truth*. He also tries to steer away uncomfortable questions by tempting the PCs with his knowledge about the Cagewrights.

Kaurophon's likely answers to PC questions are listed below. They aren't necessarily intended to be read aloud verbatim. Adjust them so they make sense within the ongoing conversation—and add anything Kaurophon may have overheard before he teleported to the ancient vault. Choose your words with care—Kaurophon lies if he has to, but he can accomplish more by leaving out parts of the truth.

What's Occipitus? "Occipitus is another plane, once part of Celestia but now corrupted and consumed by evil. I've traveled its lands for years, and I think I've uncovered the secret of controlling the plane and cleansing it." (*True.*)

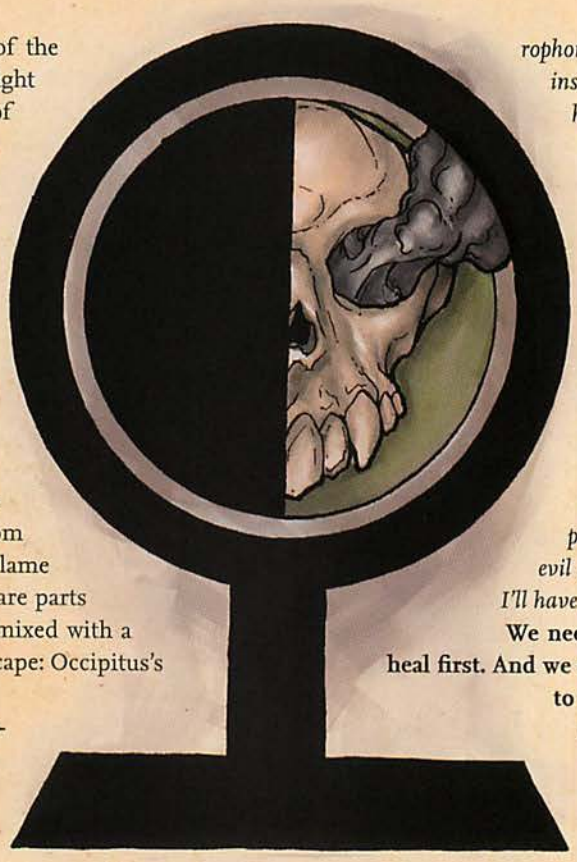
Who lives there? "Few creatures do. Even demons regard it as haunted, because the light of good still shines there. Yet the evil is so strong that the angels of Celestia count it as lost forever. Unfortunately, some demons and other creatures have moved there, trying to pass the Test of the Smoking Eye and expunge what good remains there." (*True.*)

Kaurophon

Where is it? "It is part of the Abyss right now. But if the right person passes the Test of the Smoking Eye, he could separate it from the Lower Planes. Perhaps it would become a demiplane, or perhaps it would again become part of Celestia." (*True, although Kaurophon isn't saying that the process might take centuries.*)

What is Occipitus like? "In the center of Occipitus is a half-buried skull the size of a mountain, and from its eye spews the perpetual flame that fills the sky. Around it are parts of what was once Celestia, mixed with a strange, almost living landscape: Occipitus's original evil." (*True.*)

What are you? "I'm a traveler, and I've wandered the planes for hundreds of years. Because I was born of an illicit dalliance between fiend and human, I'm welcome nowhere. Perhaps my heritage is the reason I want to help someone pass the Test of the Smoking Eye and purify Occipitus. But I'm not one for introspection." (*True.*)



Sign of the Smoking Eye

What is the Test of the Smoking Eye? "It's a test created by the former ruler of the plane, who disappeared years ago. Whoever passes the Test of the Smoking Eye becomes the new rightful ruler of Occipitus. I know the test has three parts, each hidden somewhere on Occipitus. Passing the first part of the test reveals the location of the second part, and so on. I stumbled upon the location of the first test, but I'm not powerful enough to pass it. The prophet's final words give me hope that you have sufficient power." (*True; Kaurophon doesn't know who Tercival is, so he refers to him only as "the prophet."*)

Who ruled Occipitus before? "A demon lord named Adimarchus, I believe. He vanished fifty years ago, likely slain by one of his countless enemies." (*True, as far as Kaurophon knows.*)

What's the first part of the test? "You must enter a hidden chamber within a ruined Celestial cathedral. There you must choose one of two doors: one with a bebilith demon behind it and one with an avoral guardinal." (*True. If pressed about what happened to him, Kaurophon lies: "I chose correctly and battled the bebilith, but it was too strong for me. I was lucky to escape with my life."*)

How'd you get here? "Much to my surprise, I found myself here just moments after I heard the prophet's words inside my head. I suppose that I'm the "sign of the Smoking Eye" he talked about. (*True, although Kaurophon is leaving out that the "words inside my head" were the result of his own* scrying *spell.*)

What's in it for you? "I want to see a new direction for Occipitus, and I have the sense that it has a crucial role to play in the battle between good and evil." (*True, although Kaurophon's idea of a "new direction" and a "crucial role" is unstated because it's probably at odds with the PCs' sensibilities. If pressed, Kaurophon lies, saying "I want to see evil expunged from Occipitus—then I'll have a place I can call home."*)

We need to buy more gear/rest and heal first. And we need to get back to Cauldron to stop an invasion! "If it's truly necessary, so be it, but beware! Rivals of unsurpassed evil lurk near the first part of the Test. If we wait too long, they'll gain a lead on us. Besides, I know of places on Occipitus where healing is easier, and a place I suspect holds Celestial weapons of great power. Unfortunately, I cannot help us return to your homes." (*True; Kaurophon is referring to the Cathedral of Feathers and the Plain of Cysts respectively.*)

Rivals? "Yes, some demons dream of ruling Occipitus themselves and remaking the place as a plane of pure evil. I know of at least two such groups—one led by a succubus and another led by a renegade rakshasa. They're close to finding the first part of the test." (*True.*)

What if we get stranded there? "I've prepared a few scrolls of *plane shift* for you. Simply read them, and you'll be transported back to the Material Plane." (*True, and a DC 26 Spellcraft check or* read magic *spell verifies that the scrolls are genuine.*)

Where'd those babaus come from? "If I had to guess, I'd say that your recent actions against the forces of evil got you noticed by someone, and that someone sent the babaus out to finish you off. In fact, I suspect the attack may have something to do with the true enemy you face." (*True; if Nabthatoron's body is present he suggests the possibility that slaying the glabrezu may have triggered some sort of conjuration spell to call the demons. He also tries to steer the PCs away from questioning the attack too closely by tantalizing them with hints about the Cagewrights.*)

You're evil! "You're detecting my unfortunate heritage—the fiendish blood that flows through my veins. Just as I'm trying to purify my own soul, so too am I trying to end the battle between good and evil on Occipitus. I hope that someday my aura will be as pure as yours. In any event, the evil that taints my soul is a pale

shadow to those who have risen against you in Cauldron." (*True, although Kaurophon is choosing his words with great care, and trying to shift the focus of the conversation to the Cagewrights.*)

You're using an illusion! "My true form isn't as pleasant as this one, and I wanted to make sure you'd hear my plea." (*True.*)

What do you know about Cauldron and our enemies there? "I know precious little, I'm afraid. The group that has been orchestrating the troubles in your town from behind the scenes is known as the Cagewrights. They are the source of the unrest in your city. Their agents were involved in the kidnappings and thefts that plagued Cauldron. Yet I fear their true goals for the region are much more sinister." (*True.*)

What do they intend to do? "Alas, I'm not sure. It has something to do with a planar ritual, but beyond that, I cannot say." (*True; the Cagewrights never entrusted him with the details of their goals.*)

How do you know so much about the Cagewrights? "My research into the nature of Occipitus drew their attention, and for a time they tried to convince me to join their organization. I went along with them for a time, hoping to use them to further my own goals. Yet soon, I came to realize the simple fact that they were all mad, and I left them to their lunacies." (*Mostly true—Kaurophon leaves out the fact that he fled the group out of fear. Kaurophon can tell the PCs little more about the Cagewrights as a result.*)

RESEARCHING KAUROPHON

The PCs might be stranded in the middle of the desert, but that doesn't mean they're without the ability to check up on what Kaurophon is saying.

Knowledge Checks: A DC 20 Knowledge (the planes) or bardic knowledge check is sufficient to know that Occipitus is indeed a layer of the Abyss that most demons regard as cursed or haunted. A DC 25 check reveals the layer's history in brief: after a great battle between good and evil, part of Celestia was pulled through a planar rift and landed in Occipitus. A DC 30 check reveals details of the battle, including the name of Adimarchus and the reason for the planar rift. It also provides a brief physical description of the plane that matches Kaurophon's description.

Divination Spells: *Divination*, *contact other plane*, and *commune* spells deliver accurate results, but the answers are colored somewhat by the desire of good and lawful deities to see Occipitus cleansed of evil. For example, answers might downplay the danger of going to Occipitus and emphasize the importance of the Test of the Smoking Eye. If a cleric uses one of these spells to inquire about Kaurophon, the answers are truthful, but include an extra clause that pushes the PCs toward Occipitus anyway. For example, if a cleric uses *commune* to ask "Is Kaurophon planning to betray us?" the answer might be "Yes, but ultimately he'll succeed only in betraying himself." If a cleric asks, "Is this a trap?" the answer might be "Yes, but beyond the trap lies your destiny and Cauldron's salvation."

Once the PCs have had their questions answered and made preparations, Kaurophon gives each of up to three spellcasting PCs a scroll of *plane shift*. Then he bids the PCs link hands and they plane shift to Occipitus. Kaurophon uses his *lesser amulet of the planes* to accomplish this, although he won't advertise the fact that he's carrying such a valuable item.

Kaurophon is in somewhat of a hurry, because he's worried about the rival test-takers and he wants the PCs on Occipitus before the Cagewrights put into motion other plans for them. He knows the PCs need to be at their best, though he'll encourage spell preparation, healing, and other reasonable preparations.

OCCIPITUS

After the opening chapter, the PCs probably spend the rest of the adventure in Occipitus, the 507th layer of the Abyss. While most of the Abyss is crawling with demons, Occipitus has areas where the power of good hasn't been completely expunged, so many fiends give the layer a wide berth.

Which isn't to say that Occipitus is a hospitable place to visit. When part of the celestial landscape fell into Occipitus, Adimarchus used the power of the layer itself to consume the wreckage. This had the side effect of twisting Occipitus into the vaguely organic layer it is today. And the consumption of the celestial landscape is neither complete nor a one-way process. Parts of Occipitus remain a testament to the enduring power of good.

Occipitus appears as a great basin surrounded by impossibly steep mountains that rise to the sky. Near the center of the basin is a low mountain that looks like a half-buried skull. Amoeba-like blobs of fire continually issue forth from the skull's exposed eye, rising to form the sky and streaming to the mountaintops that form the basin. The fiery blobs, known as plasms, bathe the entire landscape in a reddish light.

Despite its unusual nature, Occipitus is still a part of the Abyss, and the layer is mildly evil-aligned and mildly chaos-aligned. Lawful or good characters take a –2 circumstance penalty on all Charisma-based checks. Lawful good characters suffer a –4 penalty.

The Skull: While the mountain-sized skull appears to be made of bone from a distance, a close inspection reveals that it's made of a chalky, white rock. The DC for Climb checks up the skull is 30 because the rock is prone to crumbling without warning. While the mountain isn't hollow like a real skull would be, it does have a few interior chambers detailed later in this chapter. The few creatures who know about the chambers access them through an underground tube hidden just south of the skull.

The skull has no major features other than the eye socket from which the plasms issue. Because the plasms are exceptionally dangerous, few creatures venture into the eye socket. Because the skull is visible from almost

anywhere on Occipitus, it's a useful landmark for the layer's denizens.

Occipitus Sky: The sky has thousands of plasms full of fire and evil energy streaming to the far edges of the layer. The plasms aren't alive, but they do respond to life by moving nearer to it. Characters who fly too near the fiery sky find themselves trapped in a swarm of plasms drawn to their life energy. A plasm deals 8d6 points of fire damage and 8d6 points of unholy damage to anyone who touches it. Each plasm takes up four 5-foot squares, has a fly speed of 30 ft. (perfect), and has an Initiative of +0. Every round on its turn, a plasm moves toward the closest living creature within 120 feet. Like a swarm, a plasm takes up any four adjacent squares. They're not living creatures, though; they don't have hit points and can't be hurt by weapons or most magic. A plasm is dispersed if it takes 100 points each of cold and holy damage (in any combination) in a round.

The lowest plasms float 200 feet above the surface of the layer, but at a few points an eddy of plasms floats low enough to be attracted by creatures on the ground. Then the plasm descends, rising only when it no longer has living creatures within 120 feet. At 400 feet off the ground, there's an unbroken mass of plasms, all drifting toward the edge of the layer.

If you're running an aerial encounter on Occipitus, randomly scatter four-square plasms across roughly a quarter (between 200 and 300 feet) or half (between 300 and 400 feet) of the encounter map. Few creatures venture above 400 feet, where the plasms cover every square. During a plasm eddy, scatter four-square plasms across a quarter of the encounter map, no matter what the altitude. Such eddies are effectively CR 9 hazards.

Flying creatures on Occipitus notice another unusual aspect to the plane: there's no wind.

Flats: The "ground" on Occipitus is a fleshy, springy surface, warm and slightly damp to the touch. Nothing grows in the grayish-red substance. It can't be dug, only cut into chunks and removed. The thunder beasts that dwell here enjoy chewing on the ground, tearing up great chunks with their massive jaws. It's not alive, however.

The flats stretch unbroken for miles, but the traveler to Occipitus quickly notices variations in the flats that add to its skinlike quality. Some patches of flat have thick, hairlike fibers emerging from them, while others have surface variations reminiscent of scales and wrinkles.

Because the flats are spongy, characters gain a +2 bonus on Tumble and Move Silently checks there.

Characters walking the flats may notice some other features common to the terrain, including the following.

Ulcers: What the denizens of Occipitus call "ulcers" are 5-foot or 10-foot-wide holes in the flat surface. The ulcers generate caustic, bubbling red liquid—sometimes just a seepage, but other times what looks like a

RANDOM OCCIPITUS ENCOUNTERS

What the PCs encounter on Occipitus depends on the terrain.

FLATS ENCOUNTERS (EL 10)

D%	Encounter	Average EL
01–10	1d6 thunder beasts	12
11–30	1 hezrou demon	11
31–40	1d3 vrock demons	11
41–60	1 gray slaad	10
61–65	1d4+2 babau demons	10
66–75	1 green slaad	9
76–85	1d3 chaos beasts	9
86–90	1d3 fiendish dire lions	9
91–100	1 succubus and 1 half-fiend cleric	9

OSSAIC FOREST ENCOUNTERS (EL 10)

D%	Encounter	Average EL
01–10	1d6 thunder beasts	12
11–25	1 hezrou demon	11
26–50	1d3 vrock demons	11
51–70	1d4+3 babau demons	10
71–80	1d4+3 fiendish centaur ranger 2	10
81–95	1d3 chaos beasts	9
96–100	1d4+3 fiendish owlbears	9

FIBROUS FOREST ENCOUNTERS (EL 11)

D%	Encounter	Average EL
01–20	1d3 hezrou demons	13
21–35	1d3 fiendish dire bears	11
36–50	1d3 vrock demons	11
51–65	1d4+2 babau demons	10
66–85	1d4+2 fiendish girallons	10
86–100	1d3 greater shadows	10

AERIAL ENCOUNTERS (EL 11)

D%	Encounter	Average EL
01–10	1 nalfeshnee demon	14
11–35	1d4+2 vrock demons	13
36–50	1d4+2 fiendish wyverns	11
51–60	1d3 greater shadows	10
61–90	Plasm eddy	9
91–100	1d4+3 fiendish giant eagles	8

CELESTIAL RUBBLE ENCOUNTERS (EL 10)

D%	Encounter	Average EL
01–10	1 leonal guardinal	12
11–30	1d3+1 spectres	10
31–45	1 couatl	10
46–55	1 stone golem	10
56–70	1d3 green slaadi	9
71–100	1d3 ghost fighter 5	9

SKULL ENCOUNTERS (EL 12)

D%	Encounter	Average EL
01–10	1 nalfeshnee demon	14
11–25	1d4+2 vrock demons	13
26–45	1d3 hezrou demons	13
46–55	1d4+2 babau demons	10
56–65	1d3 greater shadows	10
66–80	1d3 succubus demons	9
81–100	Plasm eddy	9

fountain. The ulcer fluid isn't blood, but it looks and smells like it.

The seeping ulcers simply have a shallow pool of ulcer fluid around them. Such pools are usually about a foot deep and 20 to 30 feet across. It costs 2 squares of movement to move into a square with a shallow pool, and the DC of Tumble checks in such squares increases by 2. Fountain ulcers have a similar pool around them, but above the pool floats a pink mist—miniscule droplets of the ulcer fluid. The mist provides concealment and damages creatures within it. The fountain itself is usually 1d4 × 10 feet tall, with mist rising to half the fountain's height.

Regardless of whether it's a liquid or a mist, ulcer fluid deals 1d4 points of acid damage per round of contact.

Celestial Rubble: Part of Celestia has been subsumed into the pervasive evil of Occipitus, but some parts remain as a reminder of the layer's celestial origins. While some specific locations are detailed elsewhere in this chapter, the wreckage of Celestia has been scattered across Occipitus. Such areas have dense rubble in half of the available squares, and ruined structures—usually stone walls, partial statues, or intricately carved monoliths—scattered across another 10% of the encounter map.

A square of dense rubble costs 2 squares of movement to enter. Dense rubble adds 5 to the DC of Balance and Tumble checks, and it adds 2 to the DC of Move Silently checks.

Unlike the rest of Occipitus, areas of celestial rubble aren't evil- or chaos-aligned.

Tremor Zones: Parts of Occipitus—often but not always near celestial rubble—quiver continuously, as if a minor earthquake were always going on there. A typical tremor zone has a 100-foot radius. Within that range, the vibrations are enough to knock a character over. Every round at initiative point 0, every character within a tremor zone must resist a trip attempt from the tremors; the tremors have a +0 Strength bonus. Characters who fail the opposed check are knocked prone.

Ossaic Forests: Formed of a chalky, crumbling substance, the ossaic forests are collections of gently curving columns that pierce the spongy surface of the layer.

Visitors from the Material Plane often say they look like massive rib-bones thrust into the air. Within the ossaic forests, about a quarter of the squares on an encounter map have columns within them, and another 25% of the squares have rubble from toppled columns.

The columns take up an entire square and have AC 3, hardness 5, and 300 hp. They stretch (1d4+2) × 10 feet tall and take a DC 20 check to climb. The rubble doesn't slow movement, but it does add 2 to the DC of Balance and Tumble checks.

Fibrous Forests: Some parts of Occipitus have house-sized tangles of fleshy, ropelike plants that feed off the layer's surface. Although they aren't living creatures, these tangles of fibers slowly attempt to consume creatures who stay in one place too long. Creatures within 20 feet of a tangle who spend more than a round in the same square find that some of the tendrils attempt a grapple against them at initiative point 0. Individually, the tendrils aren't effective against foes who resist them; they have a total grapple bonus of +0. If a tendril succeeds at a grapple, it attempts to pin a foe during each successive round. The fiber tangles don't deal any damage. If they pin a helpless or dead foe, they'll slowly consume him at the rate of one point of Constitution drain per hour.

Even a 5-foot step each round is enough to keep the fiber tendrils at bay. Travelers can walk through the forest for hours without seeing a single tangle move.

To draw an encounter area in the fibrous forests, draw enough tangles on the map so that most but not all the squares are within reach of one or more tangles. Each tangle takes up four to nine adjacent squares. Tangles are 5 feet tall if they take up four to six squares and 10 feet tall if they take up seven or more squares.

ARRIVING ON OCCIPITUS

Kaurophon's *plane shift* isn't accurate enough to drop the PCs right at the Cathedral of Feathers. Because the PCs can't *teleport* to a place they've never been, they face an overland journey.

The sky seems to be made of flame, bathing everything in a reddish glow. Off in the distance looms a massive skull: a white monolith the size of a small mountain. Clouds of flame stream from the skull's single exposed eye socket and up into the sky. About a half-mile ahead stands a cluster of gently curving white pillars, almost as if giant rib bones had been stuck in the ground. In the distance looms a steep mountain ridge whose top seems to touch the fiery sky. It stretches around the entire horizon—as if you were standing inside a vast bowl with a fiery lid. The ground is spongy and wrinkled. It's more like skin than dirt.

Based on landmarks such as the Skull and the ridge mountains, Kaurophon estimates that the PCs are about 100 miles from the Cathedral of Feathers, the location of the first part of the test. He points out the direction of travel through the ossaic forest and lets the PCs handle the travel plans.

Kaurophon warns the PCs about the dangers of flying: "It's safe as long as you stay close to the ground. But fly too high and you'll attract the plasms, which will destroy you in a conflagration of fire and absolute evil."

If the PCs can fly over the ossaic forest, it's a 92-mile journey to the Cathedral. If they're traveling overland, it's 110 miles.

On the path from the *plane shift* point to the Cathedral of Feathers, there's an 8% chance per hour of an encounter, whether the PCs are traveling or have made camp. If an encounter occurs, use the relevant encounter table described in the Occipitus section above.

THE CATHEDRAL OF FEATHERS

Eventually the PCs' journey leads them to the Cathedral of Feathers, a ruined structure once part of Celestia. Shortly after the cathedral fell into Occipitus, Adimarchus installed the first part of the Test of the Smoking Eye underneath the cathedral. Mindful of the strange properties of the layer, Adimarchus ensured that his successors would have the necessary heritage to control an evil layer tinged with good. Specifically, he created an abjuration similar to *forbiddance* that prevents anyone born of the Lower Planes from entering the antechamber or either of the Test Rooms.

The abjuration has thus far stymied Liuvesh, a succubus who also seeks to pass the test. Frustrated at her inability to enter the antechamber, she's staked out the cathedral, hoping to capture other test-takers and wring the secret of the test from them.

CATHEDRAL FEATURES

Because the cathedral sits within an area of Celestial rubble, characters don't suffer the –2 or –4 penalties on Charisma-based checks due to the plane's evil- and chaos-aligned trait. The cathedral has areas of light and heavy rubble (mostly fallen stone and wrecked furniture) strewn across its floors. The cathedral itself is tilted because it sits on a slight slope. The angle is just enough to make Balance and Tumble checks more difficult (–2 circumstance penalty within the cathedral).

Unless stated otherwise, the ceilings are 20 feet tall, the floors are flagstone, and the walls are superior masonry. The rooms on the ground floor have great holes in their roofs, so flying or climbing PCs need not enter through the narthex.

Celestial Flashback: The interior of the cathedral is imbued with a phenomenon known as celestial flashback. Every round, there's a 10% chance that the ruined cathedral transforms back into the version of the cathedral that once graced the slopes of Mount Celestia. Such a transformation only lasts for a round, but it's a complete transformation. The cathedral temporarily becomes whole, it regains the magic traits it once had, and anyone inside is effectively standing in Celestia.

Celestial flashback has the following effects:

- All spells with the Good or Law descriptors and those from the Healing subschool are automatically empowered (as the metamagic feat), although such spells don't use up higher-level spell slots.
- All walls are undamaged, and there's no rubble on the floor. The furniture is magically whole, candles glow in wall sconces, and the air is filled with gentle breezes heavy with incense. The tilt of the floor disappears. Characters who can see out doors or windows see verdant alpine meadows, not the rubble-strewn landscape of Occipitus. Golden sunlight, not the red-tinged light of Occipitus, fills the cathedral.
- While the building truly changes, the views out the windows aren't real; it's more like the windows are remembering what they're supposed to show. Characters who leave the cathedral during a flashback find themselves standing in Occipitus, looking at a ruined cathedral.
- The entire cathedral is *consecrated* and *hallowed*. Attached to the *hallow* effect is a *bless* spell that affects all lawful or good creatures.
- The air is filled with downy feathers. They aren't numerous enough to provide concealment, and they don't have any game effect.
- No changes are evident from outside the cathedral.

When the characters are engaged in combat inside the cathedral, roll for celestial flashback at initiative point 0 each round. If there's a flashback, it lasts until the end of the following initiative point 0.

NARTHEX (EL 9)

To enter the narthex from outside the cathedral, the PCs must force open a stuck set of stone doors (Strength DC 28). Because they're double doors, up to three other PCs can assist the strongest PC. Remind the PCs that they can take 20 on this check, spending 2 minutes straining at the door. If they take 20, they succeed as long as the strongest character has a Strength score of 18 or higher.

This was once a beautiful cathedral. The remnants of tapestries hang on the cracked stone walls, and broken furniture and fallen stonework cover much of the floor. In the wall opposite is another set of stone doors.

Creatures: A pair of driders floats near the ceiling, directly above the doorway to the exterior. They cast spells as soon as they see anyone enter the room.

Driders (2): hp 45 each; *Monster Manual* 89.

Tactics: If the driders hear the PCs coming, one uses its *clairaudience/clairvoyance* spell-like ability to observe who's outside the door while the other one casts a *silent image* of an open pit in the floor. In the second round, they both cast *invisibility*. In the third round, they both cast *levitate* and rise to the roof, where they hang upside-down and await the PCs. In the fourth round, they cast *mage armor*.

When the PCs enter the narthex, one drider casts *web* to keep them there while the other fires a *lightning bolt* from the ceiling. They'll repeat in the second round, each drider casting the other spell. Then they'll use *magic missiles*, their *dispel magic* spell-like ability, and *rays of enfeeblement* (against heavily armored PCs, if possible) before gently floating downward to engage in melee.

SANCTUARY (EL 11)

This room has a vaulted ceiling some sixty feet high at the apex, supported with buttresses but showing several gaping holes in the roof. Most of the floor is a sea of debris—collapsed archways, shattered glass, and broken pews—but a clear path leads down the center of the room. Several large piles of debris still smolder and smoke. Where an altar undoubtedly once stood is now a rough-hewn statue, propped up on stones so it doesn't tilt like everything else in the cathedral. The statue depicts an obscenely fat biped with the head of a ram. Black silk hanging from nearby pillars gives the statue the appearance of bat wings.

The statue was left here by followers of Orcus who briefly contemplated taking over Occipitus after Adimarchus's disappearance. Orcus called them back to his home on the 113th layer of the Abyss after several months because he had higher-priority missions for them there.

Of more immediate concern are the two evil outsiders lying in wait for the PCs.

Creatures: This is where the celestials used to worship before the cathedral was cast down into the Abyss. Now a succubus and a noble salamander lurk in wait for the PCs.

Liuvash, Succubus: hp 36; *Monster Manual* 47.
Possessions: +1 wounding spear.

Arrokh, Noble Salamander: hp 110; *Monster Manual* 219.
Possessions: +3 longspear.

Tactics: If Liuvash and Arrokh hear the PCs fighting the driders, they move into ambush position: Liuvash perched high among the buttresses but within 50 feet of the door, and Arrokh behind the statue. Their preferred tactic is to wait until PCs enter the sanctuary (readying actions if they beat the PCs on an initiative check), then have Liuvash swoop down and kiss a PC while Arrokh uses his *wall of fire* to split the party and keep other PCs from interrupting Liuvash and the hopefully smitten PC. Then Arrokh will use more *walls of fire* and *fireballs* to harry the party, hoping to draw them into melee with him rather than with Liuvash. Liuvash relies on her fire resistance 10 and doesn't mind taking a little damage from Arrokh's spell-like abilities. Liuvash resorts to melee with her *+1 wounding spear* only as an act of desperation.

If things go poorly for Liuvash, she'll ask to parley while attempting to *charm* or make a *suggestion* to a PC.

Arrokh has a similar backup plan: grappling and constricting a PC, then using the hostage to bargain for his escape.

If Liuvash and Arrokh are surprised, Arrokh is idly moving a *flaming sphere* from debris pile to debris pile while Liuvash studies a book she found propping open the door to the meditation chambers. She's looking for clues, but she won't find any in the celestial hymnal she's studying.

Treasure: A set of four golden candelabras that are worth 250 gp each sits on a partially ruined shelf.

Development: Characters who reach the eastern end of the sanctuary find a set of stairs heading down; these stairs lead to the antechamber and the first part of the Test of the Smoking Eye. A DC 10 Craft (stonemason) check is sufficient to notice that the stairway wasn't put in by the same artisans who built the cathedral—in this case, Adimarchus had the lower level created after the Cathedral of Feathers fell into the Abyss.

LIBRARY (EL 10)

This is a ruined library, with broken shelves lining the walls and sheaves of parchment littering the floor. Strangely, the library's books float in midair, lazily circling the center of the room. Each book is open, and the pages flap like birds' wings as they orbit an unseen point.

Unlike the other rooms on the ground floor, the library has an intact ceiling and walls. Although the interior is wrecked, the library contains the remnant of a powerful trap left by the cathedral's celestial guardians.

Trap: The books are themselves a trap. If anyone enters the room or disturbs a book's flight, 2d6 books pull out of their orbit to fly toward the intruder. Each book attacks with a +10 melee touch attack and deals 2d8 points of holy damage on a hit. Books that miss land harmlessly on the ground and become normal books; books that successfully hit are destroyed in a flash of light. Characters who remain in the room or continue to disturb books face a barrage of 2d6 books per round until they retreat or the 200 floating books are destroyed or inert on the ground. Keep track of how many books activate each round.

Flying Book Trap: CR 10; magical; proximity trigger; special reset (trap is gone when no books remain); 2d6 +10 melee touch attacks (2d8 holy damage each); multiple targets (anyone in the room or disturbing the books from outside it); Search DC 31; Disable Device DC 31.

Treasure: Most of the books are celestial religious texts and hymnals. A few are old enough to be worth a great deal to book collectors; three of them are worth 1,000 gp each, but it takes a DC 25 Appraise check to discern which books are valuable.

MEDITATION CHAMBER

Frescoes of angels cover the walls of this large, open room, although most have been scraped from the wall or otherwise defaced. The rugs on the floor are stained and torn, and much of the furniture—mostly chairs and end tables—is missing legs or has ruined cushions. In neat rows across the room are a series of empty pedestals. Two piles contain broken statuary, ripped oil paintings, and a lot of wooden debris.

This room was once an art gallery where worshipers could engage in prayer amid objects of inspiring beauty. Most of the statues, oil paintings, and other great works are long gone, but persistent PCs can still glean treasure from the celestial ruins.

The room has been ransacked, but the looters weren't exactly art critics. Accordingly, some valuable items remain. Because the place is such a mess, it may take some time to find and identify some rich pieces of celestial art. Ten squares contain undamaged art, and an equal number contain just broken frames, defaced portraits, waterlogged books, and other detritus. It takes a PC a full-round action to search a square, and a minute to appraise a found item. If a PC takes 20 on both checks, it takes 22 minutes per square (and if the PCs have secured the rest of the building, you may want to suggest this option to the players). Each square has Search and Appraise DCs listed for the treasure it contains. All these art objects are rare, exotic items, so PCs who fail the Appraise checks don't realize that what they're holding is valuable.

Kaurophon complains that the PCs are taking too long searching for treasure—until the PCs pull something valuable out of the debris. As long as the rest of the cathedral is secure, Kaurophon's greed gets the better of him at this point and he offers to help search in exchange for a share of the treasure.

Treasure: The squares with treasure have the following DCs:

East Pile 1: Platinum and teak music box (1,000 gp), Search DC 15, Appraise DC 20.

East Pile 2: Rolled-up oil portrait of a lillend (100 gp), Search DC 20, Appraise DC 15.

East Pile 3: Masterwork ivory harp with golden strings (750 gp), Search DC 15, Appraise DC 25.

West Pile 1: Statuette of Kyurek, favored of Pelor (150 gp), Search DC 20, Appraise DC 20.

West Pile 2: Embroidered silk mantle (100 gp), Search DC 20, Appraise DC 20.

West Wall 1: Slightly torn oil portrait of Lake Empyrea (200 gp), Search DC 15, Appraise DC 25.

North Wall 1: Lightning-bolt amulet carved in ebony (150 gp), Search DC 20, Appraise DC 20.

North Wall 2: Blown-glass hurricane lamp (100 gp), Search DC 20, Appraise DC 15.

North Wall 3: Torn oil portrait of Sacrima the planetar (350 gp), Search DC 15, Appraise DC 20.

East Wall 1: Gold cup set with sapphires (2,500 gp), Search DC 20, Appraise DC 15.

ANTECHAMBER (EL 15)

The stone stairway descends about forty feet, ending in a landing that opens into a square room roughly hewn from the granite underneath the cathedral. The heady scent of spices—cloves and cinnamon, among others—fills the air. Sitting at an oak desk in the center of the room is a withered, desiccated corpse covered in a strange mix of funereal wrappings and golden-filigree armor. Both the north and south walls have iron doors in them.

As soon as the PCs make their presence known, the corpse at the desk rises to its feet. Any PC who sees the mummy lord must immediately make a successful DC 17 Will save or be paralyzed with fear for 1d4 rounds. The mummy lord, Adimarchus's proctor for the first part of the exam, explains the test.

The corpse lifts both hands, showing they're empty, then speaks: "Adimarchus, Most Potent Ruler of Occipitus, bids you welcome to the Test of the Smoking Eye. If you are here, then Occipitus lies fallow, without a strong hand to guide its development. Know then that you are a pretender to Adimarchus's throne. If you are worthy, step forward and undertake the Test of Judgment."

One withered hand points to the north door. "Behind that door lies Thathnak the bebilith." The corpse points in the other direction. "Behind that door lies Halalia the avoral guardinal. Choose one door, slay the occupant behind it, then pass through the door on the other side. I will meet you there."

Creature: The mummy lord prefers not to answer questions. It won't bother the PCs, who can make whatever preparations they like before entering the room. It only attacks if it is itself attacked first.

Mummy Lord: hp 95; *Monster Manual* 190. This mummy lord has the Travel domain rather than Protection, so it has *teleport*, *dimension door*, and *longstrider* prepared rather than *slay living*, *spell immunity*, and *sanctuary* respectively.

Tactics: The mummy lord fights cautiously because it is bound by an oath to Adimarchus to administer the test until Occipitus has a new ruler. The creature casts *spell resistance* and *divine power* before unleashing its offensive spells such as *dismissal* and *insect plague*. The mummy lord castigates PCs who attack it, saying "What student is so foolish as to attack the proctor of the test?" The mummy lord doesn't pursue PCs who retreat.

Development: Kaurophon can't pass further than the landing because he was born on a Lower Plane. He offers to stay behind and act as a guard. If the players insist, he'll angrily demonstrate that he physically can't enter the antechamber. Kaurophon claims that he doesn't know why he can't enter the antechamber, but he's lying. Kaurophon waits for the PCs just outside the cathedral, and he'll scry on their progress if he can.

NORTH CHAMBER (EL 10)

This chamber contains a series of wooden platforms that form a network of bridges, seemingly connected by fine silken cords. A door is at the far end of the chamber. The ceiling is thirty feet above, and the floor, covered in spikes, is thirty feet below.

Creature: As the mummy promised, this room contains a bebilith with murder on its mind. Immediately roll initiative, because Thathnak attacks anything that comes through the door—even Adimarchus himself.

Thathnak, Bebilith: hp 158; *Monster Manual* 42.

Tactics: At first, the bebilith is a straightforward combatant, using its web on the first PC it sees, then charging it. It makes full attacks as often as it can, hoping to poison foes and rend their armor.

Against foes who aren't immobilized by the bebilith's web, the demon has a few other tricks it can employ. It can bull rush a foe off the bridge; this provokes an attack of opportunity, but then the bebilith makes a +17 bull rush check (+19 if charging) opposed by the PC's Strength check. If the bebilith wins, it pushes the PC back 5 feet plus 5 more feet for every 5 points by which it won the opposed check. The bebilith can also grapple a foe (+29 bonus), then climb to the ceiling (at half speed with a successful grapple check) and drop the PC onto the spikes (6d6 falling damage, plus 1d4 spikes attack at +10 for 1d4+3 and 1 Con).

If the bridge comes apart as described in the Development section below, the bebilith uses its Climb speed to attack from the walls or ceiling if it can. With a Jump bonus of +28, it's also adept at leaping gaps in the bridge network.

Development: The silk cords that connect the bridge segments to one another cannot withstand much damage. If a bridge square takes 20 points of damage, it falls, sending anyone standing on it to the spikes below. The bebilith is Huge, so it won't fall unless five of the bridge squares beneath it fall. The bridge falls apart in segments because it is heavily tethered to the walls by a vast network of silken strands.

If a combatant is bull rushed off the bridge, or a bridge segment collapses, the creature takes 3d6 points of damage and lands on 1d4 spikes. Each spike attacks with a +10 bonus, dealing 1d4+3 points of damage, plus 1 point of temporary Constitution damage (courtesy of years of residue from the bebilith's toxic drool). If the bebilith falls, it doesn't take the Constitution damage because it's immune to its own toxins.

SOUTH CHAMBER (EL 9)

Hundreds of tin bird cages hang from the ceiling of this chamber. In the end of the otherwise featureless room is a circle of powdered silver. Inside is a forlorn-looking creature with a hawklike face, white bird wings, and taloned feet.

Creature: One of Adimarchus's minions trapped an avoral guardinal here with a *planar binding* spell and a calling diagram. If the characters disturb the diagram, the avoral guardian is freed. The avoral guardinal has been trapped here for decades, and he just wants to go home. He pleads with the PCs to free him by disturbing the circle of powdered silver that traps him.

The avoral guardinal's initial attitude is unfriendly because he deeply distrusts anyone he meets in the Abyss.

He doesn't know or care about the Test of the Smoking Eye, but he still helps any creature he feels he can trust. He addresses the PCs in Celestial first, then switches to Common if they don't understand. He uses *true seeing* to discern any subterfuge the PCs may employ.

Halalia, Avoral Guardinal: hp 66, *Monster Manual* 141.

Tactics: If the PCs attack the avoral, he fights back as best he can. If he's still trapped inside the circle, he uses *lightning bolt, hold person, dispel magic, magic missile,* and his *fear* aura against PCs. If a drawn-out melee develops, he protects himself as best he can with *blur* and *magic circle against evil* and heals himself with his lay on hands ability.

Development: After the PCs talk to the avoral guardinal for about a minute, all the PCs should make Diplomacy, Bluff, or Intimidate checks depending on the tenor of the conversation. The following circumstance modifiers apply: PCs demonstrate that they're good by speaking Celestial, casting good spells, or displaying holy symbols of good-aligned gods (+2); PCs free the guardinal (+4); PCs give the guardinal a way to get back to Elysium (+8); PCs display connection to evil gods or demons (–4); PCs describe their intention to rule Occipitus (–8). The PCs can aid another on this check, or they can each make their own rolls. If they chose to make their own rolls, only the highest result counts.

Hostile (result less than 5): The guardinal attacks as detailed in Tactics.

Unfriendly (result 5–14): The guardinal verbally challenges the PCs, referring to them repeatedly as "evildoers, or worse yet, the duped minions of evil." He'll urge them to turn from their evil ways, but he won't attack unless he's attacked first.

Indifferent (result 15–24): The guardinal remains aloof and distrustful. "Many a demon so deep in the Abyss wears a kind face, but it's all illusion and lies." If freed, he simply departs, seeking his own way home to Elysium.

Friendly (result 25–39): The guardinal uses his healing and other spell-like abilities on behalf of the PCs and aids them in any battles near the Cathedral of Feathers, but he won't go elsewhere on Occipitus, opting instead to wait in the cathedral until he can figure out a way to get home.

Helpful (result 40 or more): As above, but the guardinal joins the PCs' quest no matter where on Occipitus it takes them. Kaurophon is none too pleased when he finds out, naturally, but begrudgingly agrees to play along.

Ad-Hoc Experience Award: If the PCs free the guardinal, award them experience equal to what they would receive for defeating it in combat.

CHAMBER OF THE LANTERN

Frescoes depicting a black-feathered angel in battle with hordes of demons and devils cover the walls of this room. Where the wall meets the ceiling is a sentence carved into the granite, repeated over and over again as it encircles the room: "Know who made you." The room's only other feature is a tall stairway leading to a dais. On the dais is a lantern attached to a four-foot pole by a short length of chain. A string of red sigils glows in midair, surrounding the dais at a ten-foot distance.

The sigils are just a *permanent image* (caster level 20th) concocted by Adimarchus to look like a trap. They'll probably keep the PCs from grabbing the lantern before the mummy lord has a chance to enter the room.

This encounter proceeds in one of two ways.

If the PCs Have Defeated the Bebilith: They have passed the first part of the test, so the mummy lord appears in a flash of light, solemnly marches up the stairs, picks up the lantern, and hands it to the PCs. It ignores the PCs unless they attack it directly, and even then, it just protects itself and doesn't fight back until it's discharged its duty and delivered the lantern.

As it hands the lantern to the PCs (which one doesn't matter), read the following:

"Heed the words of Adimarchus," intones the mummy. "You have passed the Test of Judgment. Attend to the wisdom of Adimarchus! Always deal with rivals first, and enemies second. This lantern shall guide you to the second test: the Test of Resolve." There's a flash of light, and the mummy is gone.

The beam from the *lantern of guidance* points back out the chamber (either through the north or south chamber, whichever one the PCs entered through), then out of the cathedral.

If the PCs Haven't Defeated the Bebilith Yet: The mummy appears, but it tries to drive the PCs back from the Chamber of the Lantern. Read the following:

With a flash of light the mummy appears. "Fools! Don't seek a reward you don't deserve! Return and begin anew!"

Everyone should roll initiative at this point. The mummy uses spells or melee attacks to get the PCs to retreat, but it doesn't pursue them beyond this room, instead waiting here for them to finish. Every round, it repeats its desire that the PCs retreat.

Development: If the PCs reenter the cathedral after they have defeated the bebilith, and if there are more good PCs in the party than evil ones, they notice that the celestial flashbacks now happen 25% of the time. If they reenter the cathedral after they've completed the second part of the test, they notice that the celestial flashbacks happen 50% of the time. Occipitus is adapting to the possibility of a new, good-aligned ruler.

Ad-Hoc Experience Award: Award experience for the mummy lord only if the PCs defeat it in battle, not if it disappears at the conclusion of its message.

THE PLAIN OF CYSTS

The beam from the *lantern of guidance* takes the PCs across the surface of Occipitus again, leading them on another overland journey. The PCs won't realize it until they arrive, but their destination is the Plain of Cysts, one of the battlefields where demon fought angel until the entire plain was cast into the Abyss. It's an 80-mile journey.

On the path from the Cathedral of Feathers to the Plain of Cysts, there's an 8% chance per hour of an encounter, except in the celestial rubble, where the chance of an encounter is only 5%. If an encounter occurs, use the relevant encounter table described in the Occipitus section above.

CELESTIAL BATTLEFIELD

Dozens of broken weapons, shields, and the occasional bone litter the ground here. Every twenty feet or so, a translucent ovoid—like a cocoon of some kind—lies on the ground. Each has a black tube on one end that disappears into the ground at the other. Bipedal silhouettes are visible in some of the nearer ovoids.

Kaurophon explains that the essence of the slain demons was absorbed back into the Abyss almost immediately, but that Occipitus still struggles to absorb the fallen celestials. Hence the cysts, each of which contains the body of a celestial or a good-aligned object. "Some demons say that the more the cysts...'digest' is the word, I suppose...the angels, the more good is infused into Occipitus and the more dangerous it becomes for fiends here," he explains.

Most cysts take up two adjacent squares and are 5 feet tall, although some are "doubles" that are 10 feet square and 10 feet tall. To the touch, a cyst feels like it's made of gelatin, soft and slightly quivering whenever disturbed. Each cyst has 200 hit points, although 20 points of damage with a slashing weapon is sufficient to carve into them enough to get at whatever's inside.

THE TEST OF RESOLVE

Unlike the first part of the Test of the Smoking Eye, the second part doesn't involve defeating a particular enemy. Instead, the character bearing the lantern must walk the path outlined on the map without stopping overlong or diverging from it. Specifically, at the end of the lantern-bearer's turn, he or she must be at least 15 feet farther down the path than the lantern-bearer was at the start of the turn. If he isn't, the lantern-bearer and any other creature within 20 feet—friend or foe—is teleported back to the ridge where the test begins. The 15-foot-wide path isn't marked in any way, but the *lantern of guidance* shows the way clearly.

The PCs won't have any idea what's going on at first, and they might be teleported back to the start several times before they figure out what the test of resolve entails. That's OK, as long as the players are enjoying themselves as they wrestle with the mystery of the involuntary teleporting. The players will probably make incorrect assumptions about why they were teleported back to the beginning, such as "you aren't supposed to mess with the cysts" or "you aren't supposed to fight the demons." But the reality of the test is this: Adimarchus wants to make sure his successors can focus on the task at hand and aren't distracted by riches or pointless battles.

Accordingly, it's your job as DM to provide the distractions. Five encounters appear below, but they aren't keyed to specific locations on the path. Use your own judgment and sense of pacing to spring them on the PCs in whatever order you like.

If the PCs get hopelessly stuck or frustrated by the second part of the test, you can have Saureya (described in the Tube Entrance encounter) fly by and explain to the PCs how the test works. But bail the players out only if you're sure that they will never figure it out on their own.

ABYSSAL BASILISK (EL 12)

Creature: The basilisk wandered into the plain of cysts several weeks ago, and it's quite hungry. It attacks immediately.

Abyssal Greater Basilisk: hp 188; *Monster Manual* 24.

Tactics: The basilisk hopes to turn all but one of its foes to stone, then use its smite good bite on the remaining enemy, kill it, and eat it. It closes to within 30 feet as quickly as possible.

Because the basilisk has a gaze attack, make sure each PC within 30 feet states at the beginning of his or her turn whether he or she is looking at the basilisk (Fort save DC 21), averting eyes (the basilisk gets concealment from you, but there's a 50% chance you won't have to attempt the save), or closing eyes completely (giving the basilisk total concealment, but no save required).

EASY RICHES

A nearby cyst seems to contain a glowing, golden longsword. Deeper into the cyst, the glint of other metallic objects beckons.

The cysts aren't dense enough to block divination spells such as *detect magic*, so the PCs can examine the objects before they retrieve them. The PCs have found something all too rare in a D&D game: worthy treasure just lying around, theirs for the taking. But keep close track of where the lantern-bearer is standing. If the lantern-bearer steps off the path or pauses while others do, it's back to the beginning for anyone nearby.

Treasure: The contents of this cyst are a *+1 holy bastard sword*, a *cloak of resistance +3*, and a set of *lesser bracers of archery*. The body upon which these items once rested has been absorbed by Occipitus.

Development: After finding the treasure in this cyst, the PCs might attempt a more comprehensive search of every cyst, hoping to find other treasure troves. Kaurophon objects vehemently, even if the PCs offer him a share of the loot. He pleads with the characters to proceed with the Test: "These treasures have been here for years—certainly they can rest another day or two, can they not?" The avoral guardinal likewise finds opening the cysts distasteful—"even the demons respected the fallen better than that." The involuntary teleportation also thwarts dedicated grave-robbing, unless the PCs figure out why the teleportation is occurring.

But NPC objections and involuntary teleportation are both surmountable obstacles. It takes the PCs 80 hours of cyst-searching (divided by the number of PCs) to clean out the Field of Cysts. During this time there's a 15% chance per hour of a random encounter on the Fibrous Forests table. After eight hours, the PCs uncover a 4th-level treasure. A total of ten such treasures lie within the cysts (determine contents as described in Chapter Three of the *Dungeon Master's Guide*).

RETRIEVER (EL 11)

Start this encounter with Listen and Spot checks (DC 20 on both).

Creature: The retriever is busy excavating a ruined suit of full plate from the ground, so the PCs can potentially surprise it. The retriever has a Listen bonus of +0 and a Spot bonus of +0. It attacks the PCs as soon as it's aware of their presence.

Retriever: hp 135; *Monster Manual* 46.

Tactics: The retriever remains at range if it can, cycling through its eye rays in the following order: fire, cold, electricity, petrifaction. It prefers to move out from behind a cyst, fire an eye ray, then move back behind the cyst to gain cover. The first creature to damage the retriever becomes its focus for the rest of the fight. When it focuses its efforts on one PC, it hopes to render the PC unconscious or dead, then drag it back to its junk pile (marked on the map). Once the retriever is dragging someone away, it ignores attacks until it's reduced to one-quarter of its hit points or less. It then focuses on the PC who brought it below 34 hit points.

Treasure: Characters who examine the retriever's junk pile discover a *+1 unholy dagger*, a suit of masterwork full plate, 190 pp, 3,200 gp, and 5,950 sp.

NOT DEAD YET (EL 10)

Start this encounter with a DC 25 Spot check. Characters who succeed see the following.

A nearby cyst contains a brilliantly colored feathered serpent within it. Its wing makes a feeble twitch.

Rescuing the couatl from the cyst is simply a matter of carving in through the translucent goo. Even when removed from the cyst, the couatl remains unconscious. Several slashing wounds across its sinuous form bleed sluggishly.

Creature: The couatl is named Tiluklatl. He fell unconscious during the battle and suffered a trip through a planar rift into the Abyss, the formation of its cyst, and partial absorption into the fabric of Occipitus. He doesn't awaken until he receives a *remove curse* or *break enchantment* spell. Tiluklatl is otherwise stable at 0 hit points, so he can't do anything until he gets some healing.

Even if the PCs are able to restore him to consciousness, Tiluklatl is disoriented and prone to lashing out at anyone in sight. The PCs must do some fast talking to keep him from attacking them.

Tiluklatl, Male Couatl: hp 60 (currently 0), *Monster Manual* 37.

Development: Tiluklatl's starting attitude is unfriendly. The following circumstance modifiers apply to Diplomacy or Intimidate checks to adjust his attitude: PCs heal him so he has 30 or more hit points (+2 on Diplomacy); PCs ask for help getting the avoral guardinal home (+2 on Diplomacy); PCs explain what's happened since Tiluklatl was knocked out (+4 on Diplomacy); PCs display connection to evil gods or demons (–4 on Diplomacy, +2 on Intimidate); PCs describe their intention to rule Occipitus (–8 on Diplomacy, +4 on Intimidate).

Hostile (result less than 5): Tiluklatl attacks, either because he's completely disoriented or because he doesn't trust the PCs. He grabs a Small or light PC, grapples and constricts him or her, then flies into the sky before jettisoning his opponent. Tiluklatl doesn't know about the plasms, so he may attract them.

Unfriendly (result 5–14): Tiluklatl simply flees with his *plane shift* spell-like ability.

Indifferent (result 15–24): Tiluklatl scans the group with *detect evil* and *detect chaos*. If he finds no chaotic or evil creatures among the PCs, he thanks them briefly, questions them using *detect thoughts*, then leaves with *plane shift*. If chaotic or evil creatures are present, he *plane shifts* away.

Friendly (result 25–39): As above, but Tiluklatl is willing to accept a group with one or two chaotic members. If he trusts a group after the questioning, he uses his spells and spell-like abilities on their behalf before *plane shifting* away with the avoral guardinal.

Helpful (result 40 or more): As above, but Tiluklatl joins the PCs' quest. If the avoral guardinal needs to get back to Elysium, the couatl *plane shifts* there, then *plane shifts* back to Occipitus to try to find the PCs.

GRAVE ROBBERS (EL 11)

Have the characters make Listen checks at the start of this encounter. Those PCs who get a result of 10 or higher hear the following.

You hear a low muttering coming from ahead and to the right. Between two cysts you spot four human-shaped figures cloaked in black. One of them holds a skull aloft, while the others look around as they lean on their shovels.

Creatures: The cloaked figures are followers of Wee Jas on the trail of a powerful magic item known in lore as the *lens of the blacksun*. They've just completed a *speak with dead* spell cast on the skull of a celestial who died during the demon invasion of Celestia.

Wee Jas Assassins, male and female human rogue 5/assassin 2 (3): hp 31 each; see Appendix 4.

Velasia, Wee Jas Cleric, female human cleric 7: hp 40; see Appendix 4.

Tactics: Two of the assassins maneuver into flanking positions, preferably against front-line melee fighters, and then make sneak attacks with their poisoned blades. The third hides or turns invisible, makes a death attack after studying a PC for 3 rounds, then hides again. If

possible, the cleric casts *divine power* and *bear's endurance* before entering melee combat herself. Once the cleric enters the fray, the assassins tumble away from their targets and try to attack spellcasters instead.

END OF THE PATH (EL 15)

The end of the winding path across the Plain of Cysts is a well-hidden, permanent teleportation circle. Characters who step into it are teleported to a clearing in the middle of a fibrous forest (marked on the map), where another mummy lord proctor is present. It speaks as the PCs appear:

"Heed the words of Adimarchus. You have passed the Test of Resolve. Attend to the wisdom of Adimarchus! Let neither riches nor weaponry, neither allies nor enemies, tempt you from your course. Instead, spread such distractions before your rivals. The lantern shall guide you to the final test: the Test of Sacrifice. Your ascension to the throne draws nigh!"

Creature: If the PCs interrupt the mummy, it ignores them. If they attack the mummy, it fights back to the best of its ability, reciting the above text as it fights.

Mummy Lord: hp 95; *Monster Manual* 190. This mummy lord has the Travel domain rather than Protection, so it has *teleport*, *dimension door*, and *longstrider* prepared rather than *slay living*, *spell immunity*, and *sanctuary* respectively.

Ad-Hoc Experience Award: Award experience for the mummy lord only if the PCs defeat it in battle, not if it teleports away at the conclusion of its message.

SECRETS OF THE SKULL

Once the PCs arrive in the fibrous forest clearing, the *lantern of guidance* points directly at the Skull. Once again, the PCs have an overland journey ahead of them, although this one is only 50 miles long. Characters who correctly guess that the Skull is the destination can simply teleport there and avoid the rigors of the journey altogether.

On the path from the teleportation point to the Skull, there's a 15% chance per hour of an encounter. Once the PCs enter the Plain of Ulcers, though, they have no encounters except for the one detailed below with Vorkaire the dragon. If an encounter occurs, use the relevant encounter table described in the Occipitus section above.

PLAIN OF ULCERS (EL 11)

About a half-mile from the skull, the flat Occipitus plain on which the PCs have been traveling develops more frequent ulcers, described in the Occipitus section above. Most are of the seeping variety, but occasionally the PCs pass by a fountain ulcer.

Eventually the ulcers take up much of the terrain, and the PCs wind their way through them on their way to the Skull. That's when they draw the attention of Vorkaire, an adult black dragon hunting for fresh meat.

Creature: This is a straightforward fight—Vorkaire is looking for food because he's tired of thunder beast meat. The PCs are the first travelers he's seen in days, mostly because a lot of Occipitus's other denizens don't go into the ulcer field—they know the dragon hunts there.

Vorkaire, Adult Black Dragon: hp 194; see Appendix 4.

Tactics: Vorkaire is content to cast *mage armor* and *shield*, then circle overhead and launch his breath weapon at the PCs and cast *ray of enfeeblement* until they do something that necessitates a change in his tactics. If the PCs fly up to engage Vorkaire in melee or make strong ranged or spell attacks, he responds by diving into melee with whichever PC the dragon perceives as the most compelling threat. Vorkaire grapples spellcasters, uses his teeth and claws to tear into lightly armored foes, and tries to bull rush heavily armored foes into one of the ulcer pools.

If the PCs are traveling invisibly they still encounter Vorkaire, but they'll see him coming from a long way off. Vorkaire flies over the ulcer field at an altitude of 60 feet, so his blindsense picks up invisible creatures on the ground. The dragon doesn't bother hiding, so the PCs see him gliding over the landscape long before he flies directly overhead.

Vorkaire knows that the plasms are deadly, so he avoids flying too high. His breath weapon reaches only 80 feet, so he rarely flies above that altitude.

Development: The players can search for Vorkaire's lair if they can use magic to find it—or if they successfully interrogate a helpless Vorkaire. The dragon dwells in a hollow that was once a particularly large ulcer just northwest of the Skull. Kaurophon argues against a side trip at this juncture, pointing out that the Test of the Smoking Eye is nearly complete. In any case, a successful DC 25 Search check is required to find the concealed entrance to his lair if the PCs don't know its exact location.

Treasure: Vorkaire's lair is undefended in his absence, and contains a +2 *heavy mace*, 2,500 gp, and four opals worth 500 gp each.

TUBE ENTRANCE (EL 12)

As the ground slopes upward toward the base of the skull, the light from the *lantern of guidance* shines directly upon a perfectly round ulcer pool. A shadow at the bottom of the pool could be a trick of the light—or it could be a passageway under the caustic fluid.

A creature that looks like a raven-winged angel lies on the ground next to the entrance, flat on its back. It struggles weakly against several iron spears that have pinned its wings to the ground, then lies still.

If Kaurophon is still with the group, he gasps when he sees the angel and says, "It's Saureya! I met this pitiful creature many years ago—and he said he knew many secrets about the Test of the Smoking Eye!"

The dark shadow in the bottom of the pool is indeed a passageway, and the *lantern of guidance* indicates that the way onward is through it.

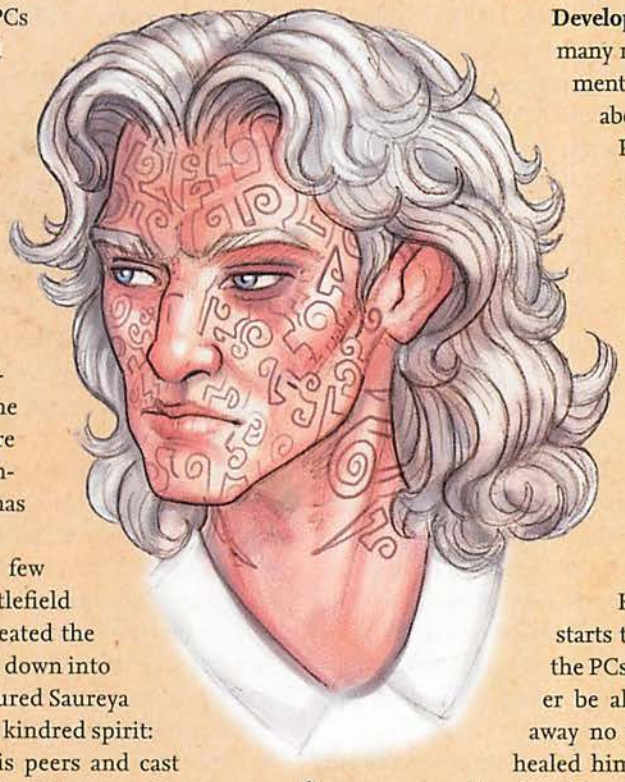
Creature: Saureya has been pinioned here by Zaur Sza and Motruk, a rakshasa and fire giant who also hope to pass the Test of the Smoking Eye. If the PCs aid him, Saureya may reveal more than Kaurophon wishes him to.

Saureya has a nearly 8-foot-tall, lithe frame. His long, feathery wings are jet black. Tattered robes cover very little of his body, but a mass of scars, welts, and rough black spiral tattoos cover almost every inch of skin. The wounds on his wings are bleeding profusely, streaming blood that seemingly has flecks of gold in it.

Saureya was one of the few angels who was on the battlefield when the Celestial army created the planar rift that cast the land down into the Abyss. Adimarchus captured Saureya shortly thereafter, sensing a kindred spirit: an angel alienated from his peers and cast out of heaven. Adimarchus kept Saureya prisoner for years, treating him as a "court jester" of sorts on Occipitus. Because they were the only two angels on the layer, an odd, strained friendship developed over the years. If only Saureya would completely cast off his old morality, Adimarchus often told him during their long conversations, there would be a place of power for him among Occipitus's demonic host.

Saureya never gave in to Adimarchus's temptations, although he's so disillusioned and poisoned by long-term exposure to Occipitus that his alignment has shifted to neutral. It was Saureya who planted the seed of worry in Adimarchus's mind about a worthy successor to his throne. Saureya is the true architect of the Test of the Smoking Eye, although he introduced his ideas so gradually that Adimarchus believed they were his own. Likewise, Saureya advocated a strong stand against Graz'zt—a battle that precipitated Adimarchus's disappearance from Occipitus.

Is Saureya an incredibly subtle puppet master, manipulating Adimarchus into death or exile, then manipulating Kaurophon into bringing the PCs to Occipitus? Or did he merely exact a petty revenge against Adimarchus by twisting his desire for a worthy successor? Saureya certainly isn't saying. He's quick to point out that he doesn't care about the plots and machinations of others. Whether that claim represents the truth of an exhausted soul or is itself a machination remains to be seen.



Saureya

Saureya, Fallen Astral Deva: hp 110 hp (currently 0 hp); *Monster Manual* 11.

Saureya doesn't have a *heavy mace of disruption*, nor does he have access to any spell-like ability with the Good descriptor. His natural weapons are not treated as good-aligned.

Development: Keep track of how many rounds pass from the moment you read the boxed text above. The struggle the PCs witnessed there was Saureya's final attempt to break free under his own power—an attempt that took him from 0 hp to –1 hp. He continues to lose 1 hp per round until he dies, stabilizes, or receives aid from the PCs.

If brought above 0 hp, Saureya regains consciousness. He thanks the PCs, greets Kaurophon by name, then starts to walk away. He'll talk to the PCs for a while, but he'd rather be alone and eventually flies away no matter what. If the PCs healed him, his starting attitude is friendly, although he's a gruff, weary sort who doesn't exude much warmth or friendship to anyone. If he recovers on his own and later encounters the PCs, his starting attitude is unfriendly.

Saureya's answers to questions the PCs are likely to ask are given below. Adapt the exact wording to follow the character of the conversation, emphasizing that Saureya just doesn't care about good vs. evil, the Test of the Smoking Eye, who rules Occipitus, or anything else.

What are you? "I was once an astral deva. But when this part of Celestia fell into the Abyss, I fell along with it. Now I don't know what I am."

Who did this to you? "The spikes, you mean? A rakshasa and his bodyguard—a giant. They're on their way inside the skull. Presumably they're trying to pass the Test, too."

What's with the scars/tattoos? "The former ruler of this layer, a fallen planetar named Adimarchus, found it amusing to keep me around as his prisoner. He found me a kindred spirit, I suppose—where else are you going to find an angel around here? Adimarchus also thought it would be amusing to torture me repeatedly and put these blasphemous sigils on my flesh."

Why don't you heal the scars with magic? "What's the point? Healing them wouldn't change the fact that they happened."

What happened to Adimarchus? "He disappeared on the eve of a great and pointless battle between his horde and that of Graz'zt, a particularly vicious demon lord.

Some say Graz'zt had him kidnapped and assassinated. Others say the battle was just a ruse for some other plan of Adimarchus's."

You know Kaurophon? "Of course. We met—was it a year ago, Kaurophon?—yes, about a year ago at the Cathedral of Feathers. He was wondering why he couldn't enter the antechamber, much less get to one of the doors. So I told him: Adimarchus wanted to keep anyone born of the Lower Planes from becoming the next ruler of Occipitus. Adimarchus was always hopeful that his successor would be another fallen angel or someone formerly of the light."

What do you know about the Test of the Smoking Eye? "Well, I helped Adimarchus create it—is that good enough for you? He confided in me throughout its construction; after all, I was exactly the kind of successor he wanted. I was able to introduce a flaw into the test, because Adimarchus wasn't always thinking clearly. Ruling a layer of the Abyss will do that to you."

A flaw? "Well, you don't need to complete all three parts of the test—just the last part. The first two parts simply point you in the direction of the final part, the part that really matters. The proctors—those mummies that Adimarchus created—can't tell who's passed previous parts of the test and who hasn't. I suspect that's what the rakshasa is doing. The flaw is a little subterfuge on my part, from back when I dreamed of rescue. I dreamed a powerful angel would come and rescue me, and together we'd come here and perform the third part of the test before Adimarchus knew what was going on. Then all of Occipitus would be borne anew, lifted right out of the Abyss and reconnected to its rightful place in Celestia. I'm no longer so naive."

Why are you here? "I was waiting for you, frankly. After all these years, I had a mild curiosity about the people who were going to pass the Test of the Smoking Eye. Now that curiosity is satisfied."

What's the third test? "I'm not telling—and before you start with the threats, I've had centuries of practice resisting torture from someone more ruthless and cruel than you. The rakshasa tried to force the same information from me. He failed."

Why keep the test a secret? "I'll say this—knowing in advance what the test is won't help you prepare in any meaningful way. You could succeed. You could fail. You could turn your back on the whole idea. I'm not going to meddle in your fate. My own fate is trouble enough."

What happens if we pass the test? "The very fabric of Occipitus's reality is yours to command—you do know how to control an entire layer of the Abyss, don't you? No? Well, I'd humbly suggest a line of academic inquiry, then. Like every other part of the Abyss, Occipitus responds to power, and the more powerful you are, the more Occipitus will bend to your will."

Do you know about Cauldron or the Cagewrights? "Affairs on other planes don't interest me. For that matter, affairs on this plane don't interest me either."

Any advice? "I'd catch that rakshasa, unless you want to grow whiskers when he recreates Occipitus in his image."

A DC 20 Sense Motive check reveals that Kaurophon gets a lot more interested whenever the topic turns to the specifics of the final test, and he gets visibly nervous whenever Saureya describes his previous meeting with Kaurophon. He's worried that the PCs will figure out the truth: the only reason Kaurophon brought them to Occipitus was to pass the first two tests and lead Kaurophon to the third.

PERISTALTIC TUBE (EL 12)

After a brief, unpleasant swim in the ulceric fluid, the PCs find fresh air and a tubelike tunnel. This round tunnel features a smoother, firmer "skin" than the surface of Occipitus. It descends steeply for about 20 feet, then levels out.

Assuming the PCs move through the tube, read the following:

Though it descends at first, the tube quickly changes course, rising and spiraling clockwise. After walking several hundred feet, it's apparent that you're somewhere inside the Skull itself. Every 50 to 100 feet, there's another curve to the right.

After the PCs have walked about 400 feet, have them make DC 10 Listen checks to hear the Creatures that lurk around the corner.

Creatures: Leaning against the wall of the tube are a bipedal tiger in an ornate girdle and loincloth and a heavily armored giant with black skin, red hair, and a massive greatsword.

Zaur Sza the rakshasa and Motruk the fire giant are taking a break from their climb. They attack the PCs on sight—especially if they see that the PCs also have a *lantern of guidance*.

Zaur Sza, Male Rakshasa: hp 55; *Monster Manual* 211. Zaur Sza has *bull's strength* as a 2nd-level spell, not *Melf's acid arrow*.

Motruk, Male Fire Giant: hp 140; *Monster Manual* 121.

Tactics: These two combatants know their roles when a fight starts.

Zaur Sza is confident that between his damage reduction of 15/good and piercing and spell resistance of 27, he's reasonably safe from the PCs' attacks, so he spends the first three rounds casting spells to make Motruk tougher: *bull's strength*, *bear's endurance*, and *haste*. On the fourth round (or earlier if he's badly hurt), Zaur Sza casts *invisibility*, then starts casting spells to protect himself: *bear's endurance*, *shield*, and *mage armor*. He then casts *bull's strength* on himself and sneaks around the edges of the fight, looking for enemy spellcasters to waylay, using the *lantern of guidance* as a heavy flail (+12 melee, 1d10+6 points of damage).

Motruk stays near Zaur Sza until he's received *bear's endurance* and *bull's strength*. Those two spells give him 30 extra hit points, +2 on Fortitude saves, and a greatsword attack of +22/+17/+12 melee (3d6+18). He then wades into melee. He has the feats to make a number of effective special attacks including the following (all of

which assume that Motruk gets a *bull's strength* from Zaur Sza).

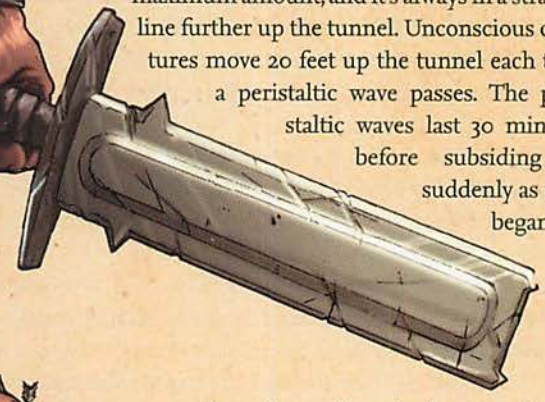
Overrun Attack: This provokes an attack of opportunity. Resolve that attack, and then compare Motruk's opposed attack roll at +20 (+22 if charging) against the foe's Strength or Dexterity check. Motruk's foe is prone if Motruk wins, and Motruk can keep moving. Motruk often uses overruns to get front-line fighters out of the way so he can reach the spellcasters hiding behind them.

Power Attack: Motruk sometimes uses the Power Attack feat to take a –7 penalty on the attack in exchange for +14 damage. That means his greatsword attack is +15/+10/+5 for 3d6+32 points of damage. Against stunned or helpless enemies, he uses the Power Attack feat as much as possible, attacking at +7/+2/–3 for 3d6+48 points of damage.

Sunder Attack: Motruk can damage a foe's weapon, dealing 3d6+18 points of damage against it, if he succeeds at an attack roll at +34, opposed by the foe's attack roll. If he uses the Power Attack feat in conjunction with a sunder attack, he still has a +19 on the opposed check, and his attack does 3d6+48 points of damage. Hit points for PC weapons are listed on page 166 of the *Player's Handbook*.

Development: If the tunnel surface, including the ceiling or walls, takes any damage, the passageway starts to constrict in rings that move upward, creating periodic waves on the surface of the tunnel that force upward any creature standing in the tunnel. The effect is similar to that of an esophagus pushing food toward the stomach. Any area spell that deals damage (such as *fireball*) is sufficient to start the peristaltic waves, as is any ranged weapon that misses its target cleanly (meaning that it would have missed if it were a ranged touch attack). Melee attacks that miss the target cleanly (missing even the target's touch AC) have a 10% chance per attack of striking a tunnel floor or wall, starting the peristaltic waves.

Everyone in the tunnel sees the waves forming as soon as the tunnel is damaged. Every round thereafter at initiative point 0, a wave passes through the area, making a bull rush attack against each creature with a +12 on the Strength check. The wave always pushes PCs the maximum amount, and it's always in a straight line further up the tunnel. Unconscious creatures move 20 feet up the tunnel each time a peristaltic wave passes. The peristaltic waves last 30 minutes before subsiding as suddenly as they began.



Zaur Sza makes checks at +1 (+3 after *bull's strength*) to resist the bull rush. Motruk makes checks at +14 (+16 after *bull's strength*).

Treasure: In addition to a second *lantern of guidance*, Zaur Sza and Motruk have 10 days of bland, dried food, 4 throwing rocks, and a scroll of *plane shift*.

THRONE ROOM (EL 10)

The tube's upward spiral ends in a round chamber with a doorway in the opposite end leading to a spiral staircase. Furniture in this room is limited to a massive iron throne festooned with spikes. Most of the back of the throne is missing, although the framework of the back remains. Before the throne lies a pile of wood—furniture debris from the looks of it.

There are ceramic shards on the floor; it looks as if someone smashed dozens of clay pots here.

Creature: Behind the throne lurks a 7-foot-tall human-shaped creature made of soft clay, with an oversized chest and thick arms that hang to its knees. It slowly slams its big fists into the walls, but stops and gazes toward the PCs. This is a berserk clay golem, and it attacks anything that enters the throne room.

The pottery debris is the remains of another clay golem guardian—these golems turn to hard ceramic and then shatter when they die. The presence of the bits of pottery makes Move Silently checks across the floor much more difficult, imposing a –10 penalty.

Berserk Clay Golem: hp 87; *Monster Manual* 134.

Tactics: The golem is an unsubtle opponent, and it lumbers up to any foe it sees and slams it until it falls. Originally, two clay golems were bound to the room as guardians, but now that the one surviving golem is berserk it can follow the PCs anywhere.

Development: In the likely event that Myaruk the lich in the nexus room upstairs hears the fight against the clay golem, he starts casting spells in the order described in his Tactics section. Two rounds after Myaruk starts casting, an invisible magic sensor from his *clairvoyance* spell appears in the throne room. A character that can see invisible objects can see this sensor.

NEXUS ROOM (EL 13)

A bonfire of utter blackness dominates the center of this room. It crackles as if it were normal flame, but it's a slick, glossy black rather than the orange-red of a fire. Surrounding the black flames is a pale yellow corona that casts light about the room. A sheaf of papers lies scattered near the base of the black-flame bonfire. More than a dozen passages originate in this room, with at least some of them doubling back on themselves.

This room contains a nexus of evil eldritch power. The flames improve the spellcasting and spell-like abilities of any evil creature who touches them.

For evil creatures, the nexus functions like a combination *prayer bead of karma* and *prayer bead of smiting*, granting +4 caster levels and the ability to cast *unholy blight* (Will DC 17 partial) once per day. The caster level bonus lasts for 1 hour, and it also improves spell-like abilities with caster levels. It deals 4d8 points of negative energy (which heals undead) per round to anyone who touches the flames, regardless of their alignment. The flames themselves grant concealment to anyone standing within them.

Nonevil creatures who touch the nexus don't receive the benefits, and instead take 2d4 negative levels (Fortitude DC 23 negates after 24 hours have passed).

Creature: A lich named Myaruk has traveled from a distant plane to study this nexus, hoping to duplicate it elsewhere. And Myaruk doesn't want to share his find with anyone else, evil or not.

Prior to this fight, the PCs have probably faced a rakshasa and a clay golem—two creatures with high damage reduction and either high spell resistance or outright spell immunity. These can be frustrating fights. This room is the PCs' chance to mow through piles of lower-level foes before facing the lich itself.

Don't be shy about flooding the PCs with summoned monsters they can easily beat—just keep them coming, and the players should have a good time watching the body count add up.

This encounter is also a good place to spend some time beforehand thinking carefully about which monsters Myaruk summons. This is a good time to pick monsters such as fiendish vermin, fiendish animals, and elementals if the PCs have had their fill of regular demons by this point. But consider carefully how complicated you want this fight to be on your side of the DM screen. There's nothing wrong with using straightforward monsters such as fiendish dire wolves, Medium earth elementals, and Large earth elementals so you keep all the NPCs straight.

Myaruk, Male Human Lich cleric (Vecna) 7/thaumaturgist 4: hp 71; see Appendix 4.

Tactics: If Myaruk hears a fight down in the throne room, he touches the nexus in the first round to gain +4 caster levels and an extra *unholy blight*. Each round thereafter, he casts these spells in order: *clairvoyance*, *desecrate*, *divine power*, *shield of faith*, *entropic shield*, and finally *true seeing* if he suspects there might be unseen PCs around.

Myaruk hides inside the vortex before the PCs arrive if possible; as long as he remains in the vortex he heals 4d8 points of damage per round. He then starts casting *summon monster* spells, sending waves of creatures against the PCs. Each summoned creature remains for 30 rounds and has +4 Strength and +4 Constitution due to Myaruk's Augment Summoning feat. Myaruk's plan is to let the monsters do the fighting for him, but he's flexible enough to take a round away from summoning to use *slay living*, *harm*, or *unholy blight* on a PC who gets too close. If pressed in melee, he starts converting his spells into the appropriate inflict spells and making touch attacks against a PC.

If reduced to less than a quarter of his hit points and forced out of the vortex—and it looks unlikely that he'll be able to cast *harm* or an inflict spell that'll cure him—Myaruk retrieves the scroll of *plane shift* and uses it to escape.

Development: The *lantern of guidance* points toward the far corner of the room, where a spiral staircase leads up for several hundred feet. Eventually the stairs emerge in the eye socket of the Skull, where the third part of the Test of the Smoking Eye takes place.

Ad-Hoc Experience Award: The PCs don't earn experience for summoned creatures they defeat, just for Myaruk himself. If Myaruk uses the nexus to boost his caster level and to gain healing each round, award 125% the normal experience points for this encounter.

TEST OF SACRIFICE (EL 14)

The spiral staircase emerges into what can only be the eye socket of the skull itself. The stairway ends in a shallow depression, with curving walls that eventually become the ceiling some sixty feet up. From the center of the eye socket—in midair—a gusher of blinding red light rushes outward and upward, eventually spreading to fill the sky with the fiery clouds above. The origin of the gusher isn't visible—it's as if the plasma is being vented from a rip in the fabric of the plane itself. At the opening of the eye socket float a multitude of fiery clouds. The clouds don't drift into the eye socket, however.

Another greater mummy waits here; the mummy is dressed in golden armor and remains silent for a few moments.

Any creature who enters one of the plasma gusher squares takes 15d6 points of fire damage and 15d6 points of unholy damage per round. If this damage kills the creature, its remains are consumed utterly. If someone the dead creature regarded as an ally bull-rushed or otherwise placed the creature into the plasma gusher, the ally gains the Smoking Eye template (see Appendix 1).

Creatures can move through the squares with the plasma gusher—it's a 2-foot-wide cylinder, suspended roughly 3 feet off the ground, so it's easy to duck under.

The PCs can't see it, but a *wall of force* (marked on the map) prevents the plasms from approaching any closer than they already are.

After the PCs have had a moment to adjust to their surroundings and ask you questions, the mummy lord speaks.

"Adimarchus, Most Potent Ruler of Occipitus, bids you welcome to the Final Test of the Smoking Eye. A worthy successor to the throne of Adimarchus must complete only one more task. To rule Occipitus—to grasp its power and use it for good or ill—means to sacrifice everything you hold dear. The final test is this: sacrifice an ally to the plasma, and Occipitus is yours!"

Creatures: This sets up the adventure's final fight: the PCs take on Kaurophon, who should be magically charged by the nexus from the previous room. Kaurophon fights to the death, trying his utmost to force a PC into the plasma gusher so he can claim his reward. Of course, if a PC pushes Kaurophon into the plasma gusher, they can claim the same reward—Kaurophon certainly regards the PCs as useful allies, even if he turned on them.

- **Kaurophon:** hp 65; see Appendix 4.
- **Mummy Lord:** hp 95; *Monster Manual* 190. This mummy lord has the Travel domain rather than Protection, so it has *teleport, dimension door,* and *longstrider* prepared rather than *slay living, spell immunity,* and *sanctuary* respectively.

Tactics: Except during the final fight, Kaurophon is exceedingly cautious. In combat, he spends several rounds casting defensive spells such as *greater invisibility, displacement, haste, bear's endurance, cat's grace, shield,*

mirror image, and *protection from evil* before using his offensive spells. He'll happily cast spells such as *bear's endurance*, *cat's grace*, and *haste* on the PCs, because Kaurophon realizes that such spellcasting is an effective way to ingratiate himself to the PCs and prove his "good" intentions.

Both of Kaurophon's 5th-level spells can benefit immensely from the +4 caster levels he may have gained from the nexus room, so he'll use *cone of cold* on as many PCs as possible. After he surveys the damage his initial attack does, he's got a lot of options. *Greater invisibility* can keep him out of harm's way, especially in conjunction with *dimension door*. *Telekinesis* can disarm the toughest fighter or take a spellcaster out with a grapple.

If there's one PC who was particularly friendly or distrustful toward Kaurophon up until this point, Kaurophon focuses his attacks on that PC. Otherwise, he takes out whatever he perceives as the biggest threats first. Kaurophon knows he has to keep at least one PC alive to pass the final test. But he has no need for additional survivors.

Kaurophon has observed the PCs in action in numerous fights by this time, so he's ready for any PC tactic he's seen before. By now he knows which characters have poor Fortitude saves, for example, so he targets those characters with his *disintegrate* scroll.

The mummy lord defends itself, but won't otherwise influence the battle.

Development: This adventure assumes that Kaurophon has remained with the PCs and has survived to this point. If he hasn't survived, you still have a few options.

If Kaurophon still lives but has been separated from the PCs, he should arrive in this room a few rounds after them; he's been following them for some time and is ready to take the final part of the Test himself.

If Kaurophon was killed, his force of will combined with the evil of this plane may transform him into a ghost, in which case his spirit waits here for the PCs and attacks them on sight. Kaurophon can no longer gain control of Occipitus now that he's undead, but his anger at the PCs for disrupting his plans still makes him a dangerous opponent.

Note that sacrificing an ally is an evil act. Even if Kaurophon betrays the party and tries to sacrifice one of the PCs, forcing him into the gusher can have serious consequences for characters like paladins or good-aligned clerics.

There is a way to successfully pass this final test without sacrificing an ally and thus without committing an evil act. If a character voluntarily enters the gusher with the full intention of sacrificing himself, he takes the full damage indicated above. If this damage is enough to kill the character, though, he is instead healed of all damage, forced gently but inexorably out of the gusher by invisible force, and granted the Smoking Eye as a reward for his selfless act. The forces of good have an interest in seeing Occipitus ruled by a non-evil being, and they are able to intervene in the Test once in this manner. A character who gains the Smoking Eye template in this manner knows that it was a one-time boon; further acts of self-sacrifice in the gusher bring only death.

Ad-Hoc Experience Award: If Kaurophon used the nexus prior to fighting the PCs, award 10% more experience for this encounter.

BEHIND THE SCENES: TEST OF THE SMOKING EYE

While the PCs are involved in this chapter, things move apace in Cauldron. With the ritual of planar junction drawing near, Vhalantru begins to make his bid for power. The mayor vanishes suddenly; wild speculation abounds as to the cause, but in truth, Vhalantru has assassinated and eaten him. The beholder siezes control of the city government, ostensibly as a temporary lord mayor, but now that he has the power he has little intention of letting it go. Powerful contingents of mercenaries provided to him by Zarn Kyass patrol the streets, and fear and suspicion grow with each passing week.

In a rare show of generosity, Vhalantru grants his Cagewright ally Thifirane a beholder eye graft at some point during this chapter. Thifirane spends the majority of this chapter and much of the next recovering from the proceedure; she wears complex wigs designed to hide the graft from this point on when she appears in public.

CONCLUDING THE CHAPTER

"Test of the Smoking Eye"—both the chapter and the Test itself—draws to a close when the PCs defeat Kaurophon. One of the PCs should now have the Smoking Eye himself, becoming an heir to the conflicted layer of Occipitus. More importantly, a character must have the Smoking Eye template to finally defeat Adimarchus in Chapter Twelve.

In any case, the characters have earned a respite. The entrance to the peristaltic tube is well-hidden and the plasms make the eye-socket unreachable, so nothing bothers the PCs for a time if they need to rest and heal. And the PCs have certainly done what Alek Tercival commanded with his dying breath; they not only sought the Sign of the Smoking Eye, but they might literally possess it. In any case, they've earned a trip back to the Material Plane—to revisit Cauldron and perhaps learn more about the lore behind Occipitus.

Unless the PCs take specific actions to prevent it, other pretenders to the throne of Adimarchus could also pass the test—and given enough time, some undoubtedly will. Anyone who does also receives the Sign of the Smoking Eye template. These rivals to the throne focus their efforts on establishing morphic and military control of Occipitus.

CHAPTER SEVEN
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CHAPTER SEVEN

SECRETS OF THE SOUL PILLARS

BY JESSE DECKER

One of Vhalantru's most successful ploys, both in terms of maintaining his hold on the city and in terms of aiding his Cagewright allies, has been the careful monitoring of any noteworthy adventuring groups resident in Cauldron. Knowing that the Cagewrights risk serious opposition from the forces of good should their plan come to light, Vhalantru has carefully manipulated the careers of most of the city's adventurers, including those of the PCs. Once these adventurers have proven themselves capable, but before they reach a level of personal power that might allow them to challenge the beholder himself, Vhalantru arranges one of two fates: recruitment or death.

When the PCs embarked on their journey to the Abyssal layer of Occipitus Vhalantru had already taken note of their achievements. Although he knew little of the group's destination or mission on the outer planes, his informants gave him enough information to let him assume that the group was headed on a doomed mission to the Abyss. When the PCs unexpectedly return victorious, Vhalantru knows that they must be dealt with immediately. Seldom one to dirty his own hands, he puts events into motion as soon as the PCs arrive, pitting some of the city's most powerful servants of Wee Jas against them. The Cathedral of Wee Jas itself has profited from its allegiance to Vhalantru, but of late has done little to aid his efforts. While the Cathedral's powerful high-priestess Embril is helping the Cagewrights prepare the Shackleborn, Vhalantru demands that her second in command, a cleric named Ike Iverson, destroy the adventurers.

WELCOME BACK

Vhalantru does not yet want to risk an open confrontation with the characters—he does not fear them (far from it), but his cover is too perfect to risk on the characters right now. Although he's confident that he and his minions could destroy them handily, the characters are powerful enough that one of them might escape with the news that the city's savior and current de facto leader is in fact a beholder. Such news would be enough to draw the attention of powerful forces from the larger city of Sasserine, forces that Vhalantru would rather not risk confronting before the successful completion of the Cagewrights' plan. And so he turns to the Cathedral of Wee Jas.

Embril Aloustinai, the high priestess of Wee Jas in Cauldron, is aiding the Cagewrights in preparing the Shackleborn for the ritual of planar junction, leaving Ike in charge of the temple and its dealings with Vhalantru and the Cagewrights. The Cathedral of Wee Jas has been part of the alliance from the beginning, providing divine magic when needed and undead workers to handle the most basic aspects of the Cagewrights' efforts to build the *soulcages* before they were handed over to the Ebon Triad. Despite these contributions, Vhalantru and the Cagewright leaders know that the Cathedral has held back much of its strength, gathering influence and wealth from its dealings with the Cagewrights while risking little. Unwilling to let this continue, Vhalantru bullies Ike Iverson into coordinating an assassination attempt against the characters.

Ike reluctantly commits the Cathedral's resources to the task, knowing that without Embril in town to back him he dare not gainsay Vhalantru's will. Although Ike would rather not tangle with a group as successful as the characters have become, once he begins the process he commits the full might of the Cathedral to the task, including his own considerable spellcasting abilities. Through Vhalantru's agents, Ike possesses a great deal of information about the characters, and Ike himself has likely met them in the past.

Allow the characters to spend a few days learning of the growing tensions within the city and renewing contact with old friends. During this time Ike uses *scrying* on the PC with the lowest Will save bonus to gain a thorough understanding of their lodging, their security measures while in town, and their habits. Once he's had a few days to observe the characters, his assassins strike.

EVENT 30: ASSASSINS (EL 14)

The assassins attack the characters wherever they stay in Cauldron, preferably when they are gathered for an evening meal. You can use the map of the Tipped Tan-

STARTING THE CHAPTER: SECRETS OF THE SOUL PILLARS

The average party level should be 12 when you start this chapter. You should give the PCs some time to recover from their ordeals in the Abyss before starting the chapter with event 30, but don't wait too long. Vhalantru wants the PCs dead now, and he won't wait forever to strike.

kard to stage this fight in such an event. If the characters are particularly vigilant, the assassins might have to cast their pre-combat spells further away from the group, reducing the amount of time that these crucial spells will be active (see the Tactics section below for more details on these spells).

None of the assassins know anything about the Cagewrights, Vhalantru's true nature, or the *soulcages*.

Creatures: Tulrak Gar-Hurk, Kennock Brage, and Zaenna Quespin have worked together for many years. Ike trusts their abilities and their discretion because of the trio's past dealings with the temple of Wee Jas. The three assassins are ruthless and efficient.

Ike Iverson casts several spells on the assassins before they make their attack. All spells are cast at 13th level, and their durations are long enough that none are in danger of expiring during the initial fight with the characters. If tracking the duration of the spells becomes an issue, assume that 2 minutes of each spell's duration has elapsed before the encounter begins.

Tulrak Gar-Hurk, male half-orc rogue 3/fighter 7: hp 96; see Appendix 4.

Kennock Brage, male human sorcerer 10: hp 76; see Appendix 4.

Zaenna Quespin, female human rogue 3/cleric 7 (Vecna): hp 84; see Appendix 4.

Tactics: Zaenna and Tulrak each cast *divine favor* before the fight begins, while Kennock casts *greater invisibility* on himself. Then Kennock casts *haste* on the group and Zaenna casts *silence* on a small pebble that Tulrak carries. The three burst in on the PCs, maneuvering to keep PC spellcasters within the radius of the *silence* spell. Kennock and Zaenna make liberal use of their *lesser metamagic rods of silent spell*. All three concentrate their attacks on the primary spellcasters among the characters, hoping to drop them quickly and discard the rock with the *silence* spell. This allows them to capitalize on the advantage of their metamagic rods, and then bring their spells to bear against the non-spellcasters in the adventuring group. In particular, the three strive to bring down any divine spellcasters quickly, knowing that if they cripple the character's access to healing magic the fight is much more likely to go in their favor.

Development: Although the assassins have been paid well, they refuse to throw their lives away foolishly. If one or more of their number drops, the remaining two flee unless they have a good chance or destroying the remaining characters quickly. If any assassins flee, they take refuge in the temple of Wee Jas and confront the characters there in the company of Ike Iverson.

Ad-Hoc Experience Award: Because the assassins have the advantage of being prepared for the fight against the players and the benefit of numerous spells from a powerful cleric, award 150% the normal amount of experience points for this fight.

INVESTIGATING THE ASSASSINS

After the assassination attempt, the characters should undertake a brief investigation to discover who ordered the attack on them. Ike Iverson was careful in selecting the best assassins he could buy and used his own spells to increase their chances of success. Despite his diligence, Ike succumbs to his own arrogance in one sense: he does little to cover his involvement with the assassins. Although they pose a serious threat to the characters, if the PCs survive it should be relatively easy to trace the attack to the temple of Wee Jas.

As the PCs get into their investigations, it's important that you make the players feel almost as if they have free run of Cauldron, and that their knowledge of the city proves useful. The information in this section describes the actions of the most prominent and trusted NPCs that the players are likely to contact, but assumes that the PCs already know who it is they need to talk to.

Because the characters are under little time pressure throughout the adventure and have the run of the city, encounters with these NPCs could occur at nearly any stage during the adventure, not merely after the assassination attack. In particular, they may be returning to some of the NPCs they spoke to earlier to learn more after they deal with Ike and his minions at the Cathedral of Wee Jas. Thus, general notes about the NPCs' attitudes and available information should prove more helpful than specific encounter descriptions.

THE CHISEL

Maavu is in Cauldron at this time, overseeing the repair and reconstruction of his warehouse on Magma Avenue. If he is dead, the information described below can be obtained from another member of the Chisel like Oliron Masht or Ekaym Smallcask, although to contact them the PCs must travel to the nearby village of Redgorge.

Maavu Arlintal: Maavu can offer the characters little in the way of magical aid, but he can give the characters an accurate view of the discontent that still grows within Cauldron, and can provide reasonable estimates of the changes that have been made to the town guard. Maavu also knows that many of Cauldron's residents have moved away and that a great deal more seem to be considering such a move. He has a keen understanding of the dangers that travel poses to common folk, and he can help the characters understand that conditions must be bad indeed within the city for anyone, much less large numbers of people, to consider a dangerous and expensive relocation. He can also tell them that although the city government has graciously pardoned him for his part in the Cauldron Tax Riot and is allowing him to rebuild his warehouse, he still suspects things aren't all as they seem with the rulers of the city. For now, however, he prefers to keep his theories to himself.

Maavu is at a loss to explain the assassination attempt, but rightly points out that the PCs have made a lot of enemies over the last year, any one of whom could be behind the attempt.

CHURCHES, SHRINES, AND CATHEDRALS

The PCs have probably already made contact with some of Cauldron's temples, especially with Jenya and the Church of St. Cuthbert.

Asfelkir Hranleurt (Kord): The high priest of the Temple of Kord's reaction to questions depends entirely upon his past dealings with the PCs. He can confirm that the Cathedral of Wee Jas has grown more powerful over the past several months, but he sees nothing to worry about in this. He's been in Cauldron for many years, and over those years he's seen the strength of all Cauldron's religious institutions wax and wane. He's quick to point out that the Temple of Lordly Might has remained a solid pillar of the community throughout, but has little more to add. He reacts to news of the assassination attempt with indignation and outrage, no matter what his prior relationship was with the PCs, but he has no actual insights into the source of the attempt.

Embril Aloustinai (Wee Jas): Embril is the high-priestess of the Cathedral of Wee Jas and one of the Cagewright leaders. She is secreted away in the Fiery Sanctum deep below Cauldron at this time, and cannot be contacted. Should the opportunity arise, hinting at Embril's power and spellcasting ability can help foreshadow events in later chapters.

In any case, if the PCs seek out the Cathedral of Wee Jas before the assassination attempt takes place, they find it to be "closed for renovation work." If they persist in attempts to enter the Cathedral, Ike simply moves up his plans a bit and defends the Cathedral from the PCs as detailed in Chapter Two.

Jenya Urikas (St. Cuthbert): When the characters return to Cauldron, Jenya sends them a note welcoming them back to the city. Should the characters wish to meet with her, she's more than willing to discuss conditions in Cauldron, their previous adventures, or whatever else the group might be interested in.

One thing she's heard that has been troubling her is the growing rivalry between the Cathedral of Wee Jas and the Shrine of Pelor. She's heard that father Kristof of Pelor believes that the Wee Jas worshipers plan to build their Cathedral high enough to block the sun's morning rays from reaching the Shrine of Pelor. While it's true that the Cathedral has recently undergone some additional construction, Jenya is more worried that the added friction between the two churches points to something more.

Should the characters require healing or other assistance after the assassins' attack, Jenya is happy to help them. Depending upon their participation in previous adventures, Jenya may even offer to only charge the PCs for expensive material components. She performs the spellcasting herself in most cases.

Kristof Jurgensen (Pelor): The last few months have not been kind to the sole resident priest of the Shrine of Pelor. Kristof is wild-eyed and paranoid these days, convinced that the Cathedral of Wee Jas is out to get him. He points to the new construction atop their central spire as proof; the higher reaches come close

to blocking the rays of the rising sun over his humble shrine. Although his attitude may seem extreme to the PCs, it is unfortunately justified. Embril has long hated Kristof, and over the past few years has been doing what she can to force him out of town. Unfortunately, Kristof has no proof apart from his paranoia. If told about the assassination attempt, he immediately blames the Cathedral of Wee Jas, if a bit too earnestly; he is not put off by the fact that nothing on the assassins' bodies indicated they were worshipers of Wee Jas.

Nidrama: Nidrama willingly aids any characters who have proven themselves in the defense of Cauldron. As a 12-Hit Die creature, she may be summoned via *planar binding* or *planar ally* spells. Nidrama begins any encounter with the characters with an attitude of friendly. A DC 20 Diplomacy check shifts her attitude to helpful. Although she can't take a direct hand in the intrigues of Cauldron, she is willing to help characters by casting *divination*, *commune*, or any other cleric spell (caster level 9th).

Nidrama's celestial overlords cannot give her direct information about Vhalantru's disguise or about the *soulcages*, but she can point the players toward the temple of Wee Jas once the assassination encounter has taken place.

CITY GOVERNMENT

Although Cauldron's government may seem like the last entity the PCs might want to consult, they may still attempt to do so.

Skylar Krewis: If he was rescued from the Cauldron Tax Riot by the PCs in "The Demonskar Legacy," Sergeant Krewis remains a strong ally. Lately, he's been patrolling the northeast quarter of the city; locating him during the day requires a successful DC 20 Gather Information check. Skylar can confirm that the Cathedral of Wee Jas has donated a large amount of money and magic resources to the government, but notes a little bitterly that few of these resources have trickled down to the guards themselves; they are more overworked than ever. If asked about possible corruption higher in the government, Skylar glances around nervously before admitting that, "Things have definitely been better in the Guard." He refuses to go into further detail, claiming that his suspicions are merely that, and until he can find proof of his fears he doesn't want to name any names. He does warn the PCs to avoid too much contact with more powerful members of the guard and government, and that if they get into too much trouble he'll do what he can to smooth things over. Just how much Skylar can help if the PCs run afoul of the guard or government is up to you; you can use him to keep the campaign from derailing too badly if the PCs get caught breaking into the Cathedral of Wee Jas, for example, and are thrown in jail.

If the PCs ask Skylar to aid in tracking down the source of the assassins, he agrees readily and asks that their bodies be turned over to the guard for *speak with dead* spells. If the PCs prefer not to do so (perhaps fearing government involvement), Skylar understands and tells them he'll do what he can to find out who ordered the assassination. If the PCs seem to be stuck in tracking them down, Skylar can inform them a few days later that it looks like the assassination attempt has links to the Cathedral of Wee Jas. You should only hand this info to the PCs in this manner if they're truly stumped, though; it's much more satisfying for them to figure it all out on their own.

THE SEEDY UNDERBELLY

The PCs may have made contacts with some of Cauldron's seedier citizens over the past several adventures. The local thieves' guild, the Last Laugh, has closed its doors and most of its direct agents are nowhere to be found. Characters who persist in trying to contact members of this group may find themselves receiving more and more threatening warnings to mind their own business. If one of the characters has developed a relationship with Jil, she cannot be contacted either. One sometime agent of the Last Laugh is a bit more approachable, however, if the price is right.

Artus Shemwick: The Last Laugh has recently cut ties with Artus as well, much to his distress, and as a result he's a bit more cautious about fencing goods or information. His initial attitude toward the PCs should vary, depending on how their last meeting went, but he shouldn't be friendly or helpful. If he can be made helpful, though, he agrees to look into any questions the PCs may have. His price is steep—2,500 gold pieces. You can use Artus to guide the PCs toward the next chapter of the adventure as you see fit; at the very least, his information should point them to an NPC who can help them more. If asked to find out who ordered the assassination attempt, he raises his price to 5,000 gp. Artus has a feeling that the Last Laugh is behind it, and wants the extra money to finance a quick getaway if he gets in over his head. As with Sergeant Krewis, you can use Artus to lead the PCs to the Cathedral if they're stuck for clues.

SHOPKEEPERS

Friendly shopkeepers are probably the best place to go hunting for rumors. The PCs can learn a rumor from them without having to make Gather Information checks.

Tygot Mispas: Tygot Mispas (and any other shopkeepers the PCs may have befriended) can tell the PCs that the newest set of taxes levied against his business have nearly bankrupted him, and although he's been in Cauldron for his entire life (well over 100 years), he's for the first time seriously considering moving somewhere less expensive. Tygot expresses concern and shock if told about the assassination, but has no further insights as to who may have arranged it.

THE STORMBLADES

The Stormblades have fallen on hard times as well. One member of the group is currently dead and lies in state at the temple of Wee Jas. While adventuring un-

der Cauldron, they were set upon by a powerful group of undead led by a human wizard. Unbeknownst to the Stormblades, this was Fetor Abradius (see area **K12**), a dangerous loremaster and member of the Cagewrights. Fetor's ambush was arranged by Ike Iverson, who was in turn acting under orders from Vhalantru.

Annah Taskerhill: Annah's group's recent defeat under Cauldron has rattled her, and she doesn't seem as cocky and self-assured as she may have in prior encounters with the PCs. If they ask to meet with her, she'll grant them a brief meeting at the Coy Nixie. Her initial attitude is unfriendly, but if she can be made friendly she tells them what happened deep under Cauldron, along with Todd Vanderboren's tragic fate. She confides that the wizard who ambushed them seemed to know all about their tactics, strengths, and weaknesses; it was no idle attack. If the characters can shift her attitude to helpful, she admits that they were on a mission to scout the lower caverns against a possible kuo-toa invasion, and that the mission was given to them by Ike Iverson of the temple of Wee Jas.

Cora Lathenmire: Cora is even less interested in talking with the characters than Annah is. If approached in person or through other social contacts, Cora replies that she is considering retiring from adventuring and suggests that the characters contact Annah Taskerhill if they wish to discuss the Stormblades' adventures.

Zachary Aslaxin II: Like Cora, Zachary has no interest in talking with the characters and directs them to Annah. If asked about Todd, he scowls but says nothing. He'd rather have seen Todd taken to the Temple of Kord for resurrection, but since none of the clerics there are powerful enough to perform such magic, he grudgingly went along with the plan to seek aid from the Cathedral of Wee Jas.

Todd Vanderboren: The ambush in the caverns beneath Cauldron claimed Todd's life. His companions escaped with his body, and he currently lies in state in the Cathedral of Wee Jas awaiting resurrection. See area **W4**.

STRIDERS OF FHARLANGHN

The Striders do not yet know the extent of the Cagewrights' plans, nor do they know about the existence of the *soulcages*. However, they do suspect that the Cagewrights have a contact very high in the Cauldron government (although they do not yet suspect Vhalantru).

Fario Ellegoth and Fellian Shard: Friends and adventurers, these two know a great deal about the changes to the city's guards, the growing tensions among the populace, and once the assassination attempt has taken place, they even know that the Cathedral of Wee Jas has a temporary high-priest whom they suspect of having spent a large amount of the temple's resources creating several powerful undead creatures. That the Cathedral of Wee Jas has donated a great deal of magical support to the town guard and to the new mercenaries the government hired to help protect the town has not escaped their notice; they worry that the Cathedral may be growing too powerful as a result and may threaten Cauldron's religious balance.

Fellian and Fario have information of great relevance to the characters, although it is up to the PCs to recognize this fact. Because they have been scouting Cauldron so thoroughly, Fario and Fellian are well aware of many of the unusual goings on in the city. In particular, they can describe the strange preparations of late at the Cathedral of Wee Jas. Several powerful mercenaries (including at least two stone giants) now guard the temple, and lesser priests and lay-worshipers have been denied access to the temple since the day of the assassination attempt. To the two Striders, it appears that the temple is readying itself against an attack. The characters might guess that it is themselves whom the temple's inhabitants are preparing to fight, but Fario and Fellian have no way of knowing this. If they are told about the assassination, they recommend that the PCs speak with Meerthan about the event immediately, and are willing to introduce them to him.

Shensen Tesseril: Unless things have progressed differently in your campaign, Shensen has taken up residence in the small copse of trees near the Lakeside Pavilion, at Meerthan's request. There, she has been keeping an eye on many aspects of Cauldron normally overlooked by others, and has recently become alarmed at the strange smells (stranger than usual, that is) that have been wafting in from the lake. Additionally, plants that live close to the lake shore are dying, and more and more dead fish are washing up on the shore. The locals seem to think nothing of it, but Shensen worries that these signs might point to some instability in the caverns deep below Cauldron. In fact, these developments are a subtle indication of the actions of Cagewrights deep below who have begun to stir the ancient heart of the volcano. As a result, plumes of noxious gasses have risen as far as the surface, creating the stranger than usual odors around the lake.

If told about the assassination attempt, Shensen is shocked and enraged. She volunteers any of her spells to aid the PCs if necessary, but since her investigations have been so focused on the more natural problems facing Cauldron, she can't provide any further information. She does recommend that the PCs speak with Meerthan about the event immediately, though, and is willing to introduce them to him.

Meerthan Eliothlorn: Meerthan knows about the current situation in the Cathedral of Wee Jas, and once he hears about the assassination he becomes sure that they are involved somehow. Meerthan willingly shares what he knows with the characters if they contact him, speaking to them in his dwarf disguise. He never takes it upon himself to contact them, though, since he prefers to work through his agents and remain impartial to current events.

MAGICAL INVESTIGATION

The PCs should have access to a large number of divination spells that can make their investigation much

easier. Even if none of them can cast these spells, they should have allies in Cauldron who can. Don't volunteer any of these spells to them; they should hit upon the idea of using magic themselves.

Divination: The *divination* spell can provide a great deal of information, albeit in cryptic form. Any casting of *divination* that successfully provides an answer gives the following cryptic clue.

"Cages above and bones below
Death the door and magic the key
Knives but dust and souls the prize."

Although the meaning of the first line of this riddle should not become apparent until the characters have been through the Cathedral of Wee Jas (and perhaps not even then), the second line has clear meaning to anyone who makes a successful DC 20 Knowledge (religion) check; "death" and "magic" appearing so close together seems to point toward the worship of Wee Jas. Clever players might figure out that the third line indicates that the assassins are ultimately unimportant and that instead it is the *Soul Pillars* in the ruins of Karran-Kural and the *soulcages* that hold Cauldron's fate.

Vision/Legend Lore: Either of these powerful spells proves incredibly useful should the characters take the time or expend the resources to cast them. If cast on one of the assassin's bodies, the caster learns a great deal about the assassin's life, including a glimpse of the meeting with Ike Iverson during which the assassins received their orders to kill the player characters.

Speak with Dead: Casting *speak with dead* on an assassin's body can prove quite informative, if the spell is cast successfully (remember that the body gets a Will save to resist this spell). The affected corpse gives short, cryptic answers, but given the right questions reveals the involvement of the temple of Wee Jas. Here are sample answers to questions the characters might put to the corpse:

- **Who sent you?** "The Veiled Lady." (DC 25 Knowledge [religion] check to recognize this as a little-known appellation for Wee Jas).
- **Why did you attack us?** "The pay was good."
- **Do you worship Wee Jas?** "No."
- **Why were you in Cauldron?** "Hired."
- **What were you hired to do?** "Kill you."

Commune/Contact Other Plane: Casting ether of these spells provides the characters with a quick way to bypass much of the legwork normally required for an investigation of this sort. A character's deity can answer questions about the assassination accurately, within the restrictions described under the description of the *commune* spell. If the PCs use *contact other plane* and try to contact an outer plane, there's a 10% chance that the power contacted is allied with the Cagewrights, and lies on all its answers.

EVENT 31: THE DRAGONSPAWN (EL 14)

Nearly 50 years ago, just after reaching young adulthood, the black dragon Dhorlot began an obsessive drive to create half-dragon progeny. One of his most bizarre couplings was with a female minotaur shaman who led a tribe far to the north. Dhorlot proved a cruel overlord to the minotaur tribe, but he did not stay long, viewing his time with the minotaurs as a waste because the progeny matured too slowly for his obsessive tastes and because none of them ever developed proper wings. Dhorlot later joined the organization known as the Cagewrights and continued his breeding experiments in the kuo-toan shrine of Bhal-Hamatugn. It is likely that the PCs met and even killed Dhorlot while exploring that shrine in search of Zenith Splintershield.

In this encounter, Dhorlot's most powerful progeny, a half-black-dragon minotaur named Zarik Dhor, comes looking for the characters. Unlike the other encoun-

ters in this adventure, there is no set time or place for the encounter with Zarik. It's up to you to decide when, if, and how the encounter occurs, based on the needs of your group. A complex character in his own right, Zarik's selfish nature and occasional bouts of cruelty are balanced by his disdain for his father's behavior. This conflict gives the characters at least some chance of negotiating with him rather than having the encounter default to a simple combat. When you start this event, read or paraphrase the following to the PCs.

As you move down the street, noting again the subtle signs of tension among the commonfolk of the city, a thundering cry echoes from behind you. Turning, you see a powerful draconic warrior in the center of the street about twenty yards away. Clad in light chain armor and holding a huge spiked chain, the warrior stands several feet above the head of the tallest human. Although he halts his advance, the commoners in the street rush to get out of the monster's way. His face, a rough mix of dragon and bull, seems to grind out a question: "Did you kill the Dragon Father?"

Interject Action: Should any of the investigation stages of the adventure bog down, a short but intense combat encounter with Zarik can offer a diversion. Because the encounter can come at any time, it grants you a great deal of control over the pace of the game session. Zarik might want to challenge the characters physically for any number of reasons. Perhaps he had plans to confront Dhorlot himself as a confirmation of his own might. Because the characters have robbed him of that chance (by killing or driving Dhorlot out of the region), Zarik instead wishes to measure his strength against them. On the other hand, Zarik could have vengeance itself in mind—he held no love for his draconic sire, yet his bond to his heritage compels him to take vengeance on the characters.

Interject Roleplaying: It's possible for the right mix of characters, particularly those with an abundance of divinatory magic, to proceed through the short investigative sections of this adventure quite quickly. If this happens in your group, you might wish to introduce Zarik not as a direct physical threat but rather as a powerful potential antagonist who's more interested in talking with the characters than smashing them into pulp. In this case, Zarik came to Cauldron to learn about those who killed his father, and he has immensely personal decisions to make regarding the fate of his draconic sire as well as those who killed him (or drove him out of his chosen home of Bhal-Hamatugn). If you choose to use Zarik in this way, he can provide an interesting opportunity for roleplaying in the midst of an otherwise combat-intensive adventure.

Provide Additional Experience: Many of the encounters in this adventure are quite challenging, especially if the characters aren't careful to rest and replenish their resources between encounters. In the event that one or two characters perish, or if they've found other adventures in the Adventure Path to be too lethal, there's some chance that the group could fall behind the suggested level. This interlude encounter, whether run as a combat- or roleplaying-focused encounter, provides an opportunity for the characters to gain a few extra experience points and bring them back to the adventure's stated level ranges.

Creature: Zarik Dhor, a powerful half-black dragon minotaur fighter/barbarian, sought out the characters because of their previous interactions with the dragon Dhorlot. He appears as a fearsome reptilian minotaur with the signature horns of a black dragon.

Zarik Dhor, male half-black dragon minotaur fighter 4/barbarian 4: hp 162; see Appendix 4.

Tactics: Should the characters decide to fight this powerful foe, Zarik uses the extra reach of his spiked chain to maintain reach superiority and take out spellcasters first. Beyond this simple approach, Zarik wastes no time with fancy tactics—he rages and starts laying about with his spiked chain. He saves his breath weapon until he can target more than one character, preferably after at least one of them has been severely wounded.

DEATH AND MAGIC

Eventually, the characters trace their assailants to the Cathedral of Wee Jas. This temple, now the most powerful in Cauldron, has been growing in power in recent years. Led by the potent spellcaster Embril Aloustinai, the Cathedral allied itself early with the Cagewrights and Vhalantru. The alliance has given the Cathedral a great advantage over the other temples in the city. Although much of the city's populace viewed the Cathedral of Wee Jas with a small amount of suspicion in years past, the clergy's prominent place in city affairs has paid off handsomely in terms of both financial resources and new worshipers. Each time that Vhalantru succeeded in gathering more power to himself or enacting a "city-saving" measure, the clerics of Wee Jas were on hand to lend their support. As it has grown in political might, so too has the temple grown in the eyes of the populace, and due to newly finished construction atop the already impressive central tower, the Cathedral is now one of the grandest buildings in all of Cauldron.

As soon as the assassins fail, Ike Iverson puts the Cathedral on a defensive footing. He places formidable guards in the Grand Hall and ensconces himself on the upper story with even more powerful minions. With the assassins gone, Ike knows that it's only a matter of time before the PCs find their way to him, and he prefers to meet them in the sheltered might of his Cathedral rather than in the open city. If the assassins fail, Ike must also tread carefully around Vhalantru. He quickly assures the beholder that when the characters come to the Cathedral, he'll deal with them personally. Vhalantru is willing to give Ike a second chance to dispose of the characters only because Ike is too powerful a minion to waste.

As the players enter the Cathedral, however, they know nothing of this behind-the-scenes maneuvering between

the evil powers in the city. Instead they find a grand temple protected by powerful mercenaries and curiously devoid of lesser priests and every-day worshipers.

The Cathedral of Wee Jas in Cauldron has a long and powerful reach, and Ike Iverson's defeat and probable death draws the attention of her most powerful servants. Good and neutral worshipers of Wee Jas who look into the affair quickly learn that Ike and Embril were straying beyond the bounds of Wee Jas's portfolio, and therefore let the issue rest. However, the characters might find themselves beset by vengeance-hungry servants of the death goddess for years to come. Many powerful necromancers and undead creatures in the region pay homage to Wee Jas. Although none are directly affiliated with the Cathedral, many stood to gain by the Cauldron sect's involvement with the Cagewrights. As the characters become a more and more visible force in Cauldron, they could well find themselves targeted by other powerful servants of Wee Jas.

CATHEDRAL OF WEE JAS FEATURES

The Cathedral itself is built primarily of stone created by hundreds of *wall of stone* and *stone shape* spells cunningly woven together. The result gives the impression that the entire structure was carved from a single immense block of volcanic stone, including the new addition atop the central dome. Internal walls are eight inches thick (consisting of two *walls of stone* side by side and joined with *stone shape* spells) and have been magically treated to increase their strength. Internal doors are of iron and covered with etchings and carvings of images sacred to Wee Jas. Each door is currently kept locked; Ike carries the master key for the doors, and has temporarily confiscated all the other keys until the current trouble is over.

The entire Cathedral is protected by an *unhallow* spell cast at 20th level. The *unhallow* effect also holds an *invisibility purge* spell (also cast at 20th level) that does not affect the faithful of Wee Jas. *Unhallow* provides evil creatures in the Cathedral with the following benefits. (These benefits have not been included in the stat blocks for evil creatures encountered in the Cathedral.)

- Turn undead checks suffer a –4 profane penalty.
- Rebuke undead checks gain a +4 profane bonus.
- All creatures are affected by a *protection from good* spell (+2 deflection bonus to AC and +2 resistance on saves vs. attacks and spells made by good creatures).
- *Invisibility purge* throughout the entire Cathedral (does not affect worshipers of Wee Jas).

Magically Treated Stone Wall: 8 in. thick; Hardness 16; hp 120; Climb DC 30; Break DC 56.

Iron Door: 2 in. thick; Hardness 10; hp 60; Break DC 28; Open Lock DC 40.

W1. THE GRAND HALL (EL 13)

The grand hall of the Cathedral of Wee Jas is a magnificent sight. The huge octagonal room measures one hundred fifty feet across and the vaulted ceiling rises to a height of fifty feet in the hall's center. Pillars engraved with images sacred to the faith of Wee Jas ring the massive chamber, and an exquisitely rendered symbol of the death goddess covers most of the chamber's otherwise bare

floor. Built to house huge gatherings and contain powerful magical ceremonies, the hall is as beautifully and sturdily built as any building in the city. Strangely, there are no pews or other items of furniture at all in the chamber. In addition to the grand doors leading into the main hall and a second set of even larger doors to the east, one small door in the southwest corner of the room hangs slightly ajar. A second normal-sized door opens onto a southern balcony about fifteen feet above the ground. The balcony provides access to a narrow set of stairs encased in an intricate iron lattice. These stairs wind upward along the inner surface of the chamber's walls to a third door high up near the ceiling.

Although normally the chamber holds spare but functional seating for the commonfolk, Ike has cleared the hall of everything but the torches that light the grand room. Knowing that the characters will bring force against the Cathedral soon, he warned the lesser priests to stay away and to keep the commonfolk out of the Cathedral until the conflict is resolved.

The lesser clerics and visitors are housed in outbuildings removed from the Cathedral itself, and pose no threat to the characters once Ike and the guardians in the main temple have been destroyed. If the characters investigate the outbuildings they encounter a few functionaries with minor spellcasting ability. These priests have served in Vhalantru's patrols at the orders of Ike and Embril, but they know nothing of the Cagewrights, Vhalantru's true nature, or the *soulcages*.

The stairway that winds up the inside of the upper reaches of this chamber provides access from the smaller outer tower (areas **W6–W8**) to the newly constructed Hall of Night's Rising (area **W9**). The iron lattice provides both support to the stairway and cover to anyone on the stairs.

Iron Lattice: 3 in. thick; Hardness 10; hp 90 per 5 ft. section; Climb DC 15; Break DC 28.

Creatures: An elite group of guards lingers in the Grand Hall, awaiting the arrival of the characters. The guards are all well aware of the characters' appearances, but not their tactics, strengths, or weaknesses. They attack on sight.

The guards react quickly and intelligently should they discover that the characters have infiltrated the temple.

None of the guards in this room know anything about the Cagewrights, Vhalantru's true nature, or the *soulcages*.

Stone Giants (2): hp 125, 118; *Monster Manual* 124.

Elite Half-Orc Guards, fighter 8 (3): hp 64 each; see Appendix 4.

Calmus Vel, male human cleric 8 (Wee Jas): hp 63; see Appendix 4.

Tactics: Unlike the assassins, the half-orcs and the stone giants know little of the characters' strengths, having been told only that adventurers are likely to show up and that they must be killed.

Once more than four of his fellow guards have fallen, Calmus Vel attempts to retreat through the door to the south and rush up the stairs to join Ike. Far from discouraging this tactic, Ike hopes that Calmus's retreat leads battle-weary characters his way just as he's finishing his own preparations for the conflict.

W2. THE HIGH ALTAR

A massive pair of double doors, if opened, would provide this area a commanding view of the area to the west. Two beautifully sculpted pillars frame a massive onyx altar encrusted with runes and elaborate magical glyphs. The jet-black walls have been painted with images sacred to Wee Jas: stylized sarcophagi, obscure magical symbols, and other religious imagery. Two massive tapestries cover the wall directly behind the altar, giving those standing to the west an impressive view of the altar and its imagery of the death goddess. A single door sits in the corner of the room to the southwest.

The high altar sits on a raised platform a few steps above the floor of the Grand Hall. The room itself exists entirely for ceremonial purposes and to impress gathered worshipers with the might and grandeur of Wee Jas. Normally, the huge doors are kept open into the Great Hall, but Ike has closed and locked the doors in anticipation of the PCs' arrival.

Massive Bronze Double Door: 4 in. thick; Hardness 10; hp 120; Break DC 34; Open Lock DC 40.

Treasure: Two of the wall hangings are small enough to be stolen, but they are still quite large and have relatively little resale value when compared with the magical equipment of Ike and the mercenaries guarding the temple. Each wall hanging weighs 120 pounds and sells for 100 gp in the appropriate marketplace. Unless the characters declare their actions in the Cathedral openly to the town guard, attempting to sell the wall hangings in Cauldron likely leads to trouble.

W3. PREPARATION CHAMBER

This well-appointed chamber houses several comfortable chairs. The walls are pleasantly decorated with hanging art, and a long polished wooden table rests against the northern wall. Two bookcases hold a few minor religious texts, writings of those devoted to the service of Wee Jas.

The priests of Wee Jas use this room to prepare themselves before addressing a gathering of followers or performing rituals at the high altar. The room has seen little use since Embril left the city.

Treasure: This sitting and reading room has comfortable enough furnishings, but little of real value. The texts that fill the bookcases grant a +1 circumstance bonus on Knowledge (religion) checks made while consulting them. These books are bulky and heavy, and must be stored in a reasonably orderly library to provide a researcher with this bonus. The full set of books is worth 500 gp.

W4. RITUAL CHAMBER

This long chamber is strikingly bare, its polished walls and floor a glossy black. Gilded sconces hang in each corner, and each holds a torch that glows with a silently flickering green flame. The austere room is divided by a thick velvet curtain about two thirds of the length of the room away, and the body of a young man lies on a long low table in the middle of the room. An elaborate holy symbol of Wee Jas covers most of the floor.

This clean and nearly bare room is used for minor rituals conducted by the temple's priests. It currently houses Todd Vanderboren's body, kept preserved with a *gentle repose* spell (caster level 13). Knowing that the Stormblades' growing exploits might provide them with enough fame to challenge him for control of the city, Vhalantru arranged for the group to be ambushed deep beneath Cauldron. The ambush nearly succeeded in destroying the group, and it left Todd dead and his companions demoralized and fragmented.

Todd's body lies here awaiting a *resurrection* spell. The body itself appears to be relatively intact, and although it bears numerous wounds, none of them seems mortal. Todd was actually slain by a *finger of death* spell cast by Fetor Abradius. Although the Stormblades quickly secured funds to pay for Todd's *resurrection*, they do not know that Ike Iverson, the priest retained to perform the powerful spell, is in league with Vhalantru and awaits the beholder's permission before performing the ceremony.

Treasure: Todd Vanderboren's body is richly appointed, and anyone who takes the time to search his corpse finds a gold ring studded with emeralds worth 300 gp, a fine silver necklace worth 100 gp, and a beautiful silk-lined cape worth 200 gp.

Development: Should the characters loot or harm the body, the rest of the Stormblades (and Todd himself, should he ever be brought back to life) seek restitution for the missing items. Alternately, if the PCs rescue Todd's body and aid in his *resurrection*, they may well be able to finally forge a lasting friendship with the rival adventurers.

W5. PRIEST'S QUARTERS

Single bedrooms fill the back of the temple, providing rooms for lesser clerics, visiting priests, or other guests too unimportant to house in richer quarters in the city. With Embril away and Ike's orders to vacate the building, the lesser clerics who usually occupy these rooms are not present, and the rooms are strikingly empty. Each holds a simple pallet, a small wooden dresser,

and a sconce sometimes used to house an everburning torch, but other than these simple furnishings the rooms are unremarkable.

W6. STORAGE CHAMBER

This small storage chamber is packed with dozens of boxes and lined with shelves. A musty smell fills the air, mixed with hints of exotic incense.

This room stores extra ceremonial gear, robes, and other mundane supplies used in the normal functioning of the Cathedral. Because most of the priests and staff have been ordered away from the building, the room remains full of supplies.

W7. IKE IVERSON'S CHAMBER

This bedroom is immaculately clean and perfectly ordered. The thick carpet is embroidered with hundreds of small designs of skulls and bones and arcane runes. The room's furnishings include a large, well-made bed, two large armoires filled with rich clothes and ceremonial robes, and a large desk.

This room is Ike Iverson's personal chamber. Papers cover the desk in orderly stacks, but they hold nothing but records of the Cathedral's day-to-day business for the last two months (corresponding to the time that Embril has been absent from the city).

Treasure: Ike's minor possessions fill the room, and some have considerable value. A successful DC 15 Search check reveals three gilded candlesticks worth 50 gp each, a small money pouch containing 102 platinum pieces, and two beautifully made wall hangings worth 150 gp each.

W8. EMBRIL ALOUSTINAI'S CHAMBER

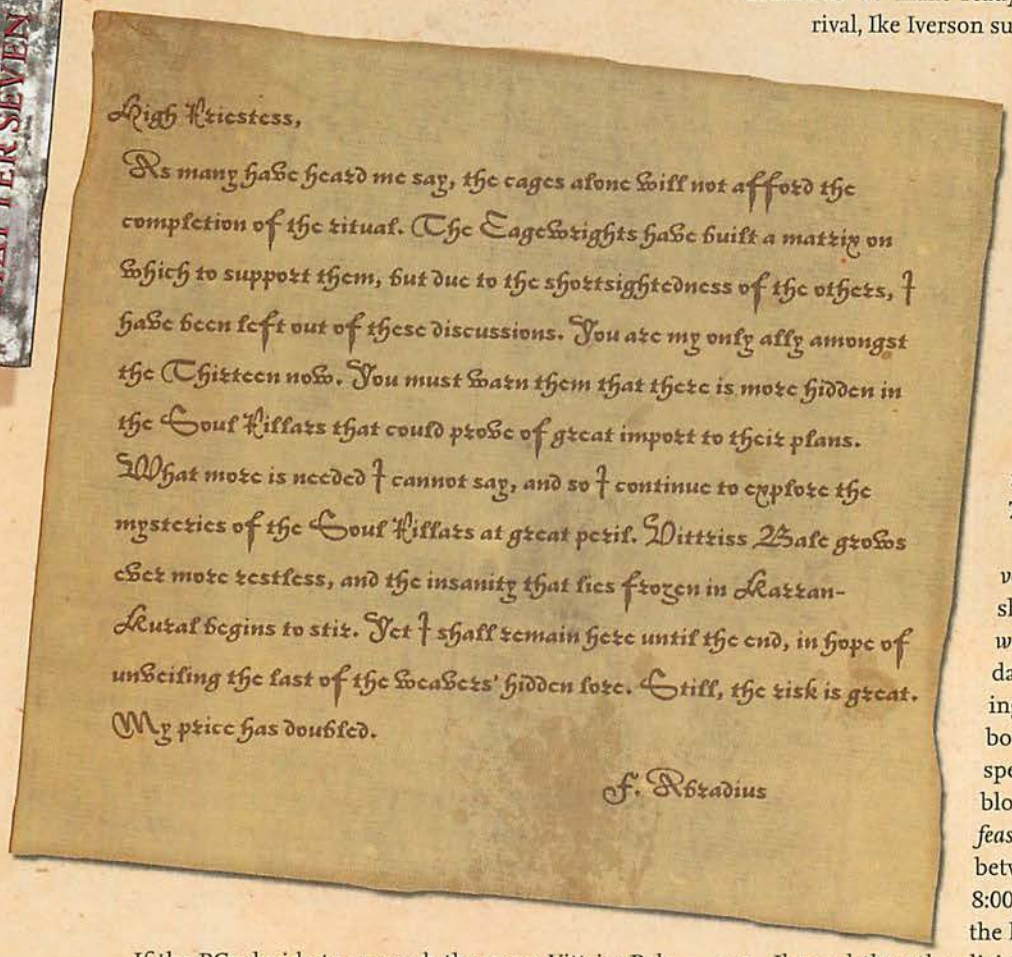
A thick red carpet, emblazoned with the holy symbol of Wee Jas, covers the entire floor. The circular chamber has no windows to the outside, but a large window, currently covered by a thick curtain, overlooks the Grand Hall. The furniture consists of a well-made bed, a beautiful wooden armoire, and a small but beautifully carved wooden desk.

This richly appointed room serves as Embril Aloustinai's private chamber when she's in Cauldron. Because she's been gone for some time, none of her important possessions remain in the chamber.

The desk contains a fair amount of paperwork that outlines the day-to-day activities of the Cathedral's faithful. A successful DC 25 Search check of the desk reveals a false bottom in one of the drawers. The hidden compartment underneath holds three *potions of cure*

moderate wounds and a small sheaf of letters exchanged between Embril and a Cagewright loremaster named Fetor Abradius (see area **K12** below). All but one of the letters are brief reports that allude to a continuing and taxing search for something unnamed. Each letter concludes that all remains on schedule, but that the final answers still elude the searcher.

One of the letters goes into far more detail than the others. Its contents read as follows:



High Priestess,

As many have heard me say, the cages alone will not afford the completion of the ritual. The CageWrights have built a matrix on which to support them, but due to the shortsightedness of the others, I have been left out of these discussions. You are my only ally amongst the Thirteen now. You must warn them that there is more hidden in the Soul Pillars that could prove of great import to their plans. What more is needed I cannot say, and so I continue to explore the mysteries of the Soul Pillars at great peril. Vittriss Bale grows ever more restless, and the insanity that lies frozen in Karran-Kural begins to stir. Yet I shall remain here until the end, in hope of unveiling the last of the wearers' hidden lore. Still, the risk is great. My price has doubled.

F. Abradius

If the PCs decide to research the name Vittriss Bale, they'll need to make a DC 30 Knowledge (arcana) check. If they have at least 5 ranks in Knowledge (history) they get a +2 bonus on this check. Success reveals that Vittriss Bale was an ancient and powerful green dragon who allied with the creators of Karran-Kural, who promised him eternal life in return for his service as a guardian. Vittriss Bale entered Karran-Kural and was never heard from again.

W9. THE HALL OF NIGHT'S RISING (EL 15)

The ceiling of this vaulted chamber rises over fifty feet. A low dais commands the center of the room, and a strange silvery-gray cage hangs down from the ceiling above.

The Hall of Night's Rising is the temple's most sacred chamber, used only for the Cathedral's most important rituals. Few creatures, even dedicated worshipers of the Death Goddess, ever see this chamber. Since the alliance with the Cagewrights was finalized, this hall has held a *soulcage*, one of the artifacts needed to bring about the Cagewrights' plans to turn Cauldron into a gate town. Although the *soulcage* hangs empty, its purpose is a secret that Ike Iverson cannot allow the characters to discover. The *soulcage's* presence and the potential wrath of both Vhalantru and Embril force Ike to stand here against the characters.

Creatures: To make ready for the PCs' eventual arrival, Ike Iverson surrounded himself with the Cathedral's most powerful undead guardians and cast *planar ally* to recruit the services of a bone devil.

- **Bone Devil:** hp 105, *Monster Manual* 52.
- **Gray Render Zombies (5):** hp 146, 133, 133, 125, 121, *Monster Manual* 267.
- **Dread Wraith:** hp 104, *Monster Manual* 258.
- **Ike Iverson, male human cleric 13 (Wee Jas):** hp 75; see Appendix 4.

Tactics: Ike casts *magic vestment* on his armor and shield and *greater magic weapon* on his sword twice a day each as long as he's waiting for the PCs to attack. The bonuses granted from these spells are included in the stat block above. He casts a *hero's feast* every morning as well between the hours of 7:00 and 8:00; if the PCs attack between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 8:00 p.m., Ike and the other living creatures in the temple gain 1d8+6 temporary hit points, a +1 morale bonus on attack rolls and Will saves, and immunity to fear effects and poison. These bonuses are not included in the stat blocks.

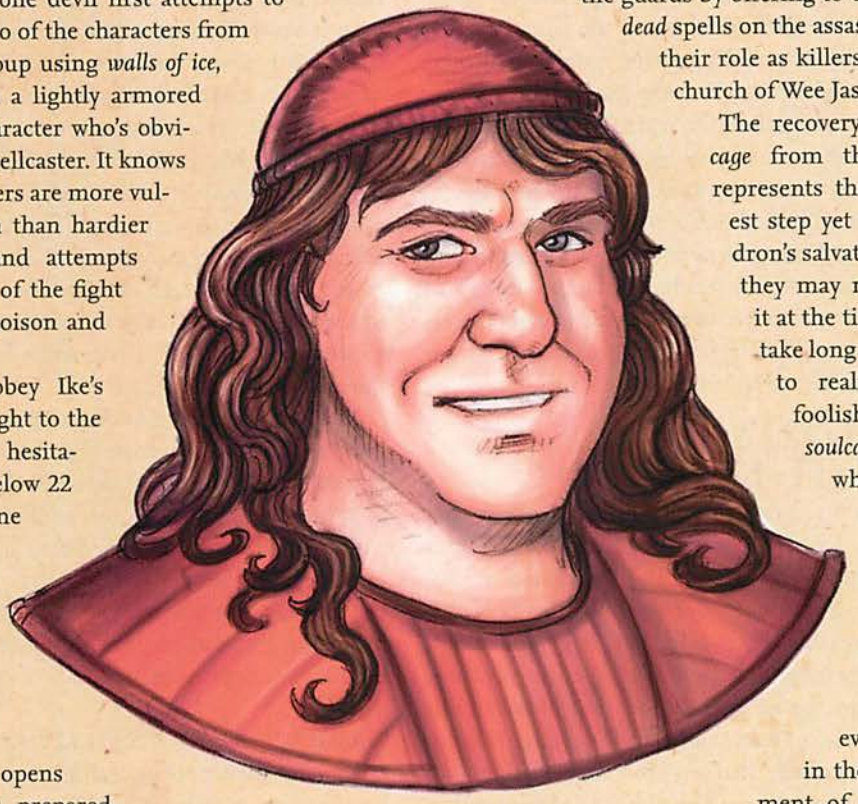
Once Ike or his minions hear the sound of combat in the Great Hall, Ike takes the following actions unless there is an obviously better course of action available to him.

- Round 1: Casts *air walk* on self and starts walking up near the ceiling of the room.
- Round 2: Casts *death ward* on self, continues air walking.
- Round 3: Casts *bull's strength* on self, reaches ceiling and takes up a defensive position above the *soulcage*.
- Round 4: Casts *bear's endurance* on self, retrieves scroll of *invisibility* from pack.
- Round 5: Casts *invisibility* on self, retrieves scroll of *mirror image* from pack.
- Round 6: Casts *mirror image* on self.

➪ Round 7: Readies an action to cast *flame strike* on the PCs as they enter the room.

Once combat starts, the dread wraith and gray render zombies simply advance on the closest character and attack. The bone devil first attempts to separate one or two of the characters from the rest of the group using *walls of ice*, then advances on a lightly armored character or a character who's obviously an arcane spellcaster. It knows that these characters are more vulnerable to poison than hardier melee fighters, and attempts to take them out of the fight quickly with its poison and fear abilities.

The undead obey Ike's commands and fight to the death without hesitation. If pushed below 22 hit points, the bone devil asks for quarter unless the fight is going extremely well for Ike and the undead.



Ike Iverson

Ike himself opens combat with his prepared *flame strike*. He casts his quickened *shield of faith* and *divine favor* over the first two rounds of combat while he approaches close enough to cast *destruction* on a PC. He saves his quickened *inflict serious wounds* to cast on himself if he's badly wounded. He can also swap out his higher-level spells to cast *mass inflict wounds* spells to heal himself and his undead minions while also damaging the PCs.

Development: The *soulcage* can yield a great deal of information to the PCs even though it has little value in its own right to anyone other than the Cagewrights. The *soulcage* is roughly the size of a coffin for a Medium humanoid and, despite the fact that it appears to be made of various kinds of rare metal, weighs only 50 pounds. Note that this is one of the backup *soulcages* the Cagewrights commissioned, and its destruction won't impact the timeline of their plans.

SECRETS REVEALED

In the aftermath of the battle in the Cathedral of Wee Jas, the PCs have two obvious options open to them. They can openly claim that they were responsible for the killings inside the temple (justified, of course, because of the assassination attempt against them), or they can be discrete and cover up their involvement. Perhaps surprisingly, there are few repercussions from the events in the Cathedral. Even if the characters have no physical evidence that the assassins were sent by agents of Wee Jas, Ike's monstrous guards and their violent reactions to the PCs' visit are enough to persuade the city's overworked guards that the PCs once again were working in the defense of the city. Jenya can help greatly in smoothing over the reactions of the guards by offering to cast *speak with dead* spells on the assassins to verify their role as killers hired by the church of Wee Jas.

The recovery of the *soulcage* from the Cathedral represents the PCs' greatest step yet toward Cauldron's salvation, although they may not recognize it at the time. It doesn't take long for Vhalantru to realize that Ike foolishly kept this *soulcage* in a place where the PCs could get to it, and when he does he sets into motion a series of events detailed in the next installment of the Shackled City Adventure Path, "Lords of Oblivion."

But Vhalantru's reaction should occur behind the scenes at this time. Until the start of the next chapter, the PCs are faced with an intriguing artifact with no apparent use. If they decide to ignore the *soulcage* (or worse, leave it hanging in the Cathedral), they may miss out on several important clues that could lead them to the ruins of Karran-Kural; in this case, you should consider introducing the location of the ruins in an alternate manner. Perhaps an agent of Wee Jas attacks to avenge Ike's death, and on his body the PCs discover a journal that contains oblique references to the *soulcage* and the ruins.

Researching the Soulcage: The *soulcage* radiates strong abjuration, conjuration, and necromancy magic and strong evil. The silver and gray bars of the cage twist in on themselves in strange and disturbing patterns. Anyone who examines the cage and makes a successful DC 25 Knowledge (the planes) check realizes that the cage is associated with Carceri. Since it's a minor artifact, *identify* and *analyze dweomer* do not reveal the *soulcage's* functions. *Legend lore* or *vision* is much more informative, and reveals that the cage is a powerful focus for a ritual to establish a permanent portal between the Material Plane and Carceri. The spell indicates that this particular *soulcage* was forged by a fire giant named Dugobras and created by a cleric named Grehlia Cairnis with the aid of three individuals named Triel Eldurast,

Skaven Umbermead, and Tarkilar. It also reveals the *soulcage* has ties to something called the "Soul Pillars of Karran-Kural," along with a short quote from an anonymous source: "An ancient hate stolen from the souls of the dead, the cage is but the key to a greater evil." Neither spell reveals further details of the ritual (such as the fact that this is actually a spare *soulcage*, that there are more *soulcages* needed to complete the ritual, or the role of the Shackleborn in the ritual).

If the characters are unwilling or unable to cast the divination spells necessary to examine the *soulcage*, Jenya and any other allied NPCs urge them to continue investigating it if the matter is brought to their attention. If necessary, Jenya offers to handle the expense of paying an NPC spellcaster to cast *legend lore* to fully examine the *soulcage*, although if she is forced to do so her opinion of the PCs turns a little sour.

THE RUINS OF KARRAN-KURAL

Once the PCs have dealt with Ike Iverson, they may feel that they have reached a dead end—this is not the case. If they've researched the *Soul Pillars* or discovered Fetor Abradius' letter to Embril in area **W8**, they should realize that while they might not know where the Cagewrights have hidden themselves away, they now know the name of a location of some import to their cause: Karran-Kural. If seeking this location out to explore it does not occur to them, an NPC ally who has been made privy to the information could suggest this course of action. Likewise, the PCs may have come across mention of Karran-Kural during other bits of research on the Cagewrights (see the Introduction) and may decide to seek out the ruins for other reasons.

Of course, exploration of Karran-Kural is not required to progress in the campaign. The PCs can continue without investigating this lead, but if they do they'll miss out on some important clues into the nature of their enemies. In this case, simply proceed with Chapter Eight; Karran-Kural has waited for centuries. It will still be there in a few weeks if the PCs decide to investigate the ruins at a later date.

The ruins of Karran-Kural are not common knowledge in Cauldron. A successful DC 30 Knowledge (history) check reveals that the ruins are part of an ancient spell weaver empire that dominated the area long ago. The Knowledge check also reveals that the ruins are believed to be near the Demonskar, but not their exact location. If none of the PCs makes this check, they can learn the same information by consulting the libraries of Bluecrater Academy, the holdings in the Hall of Carvings in Redgorge, or possibly by asking Meerthan Eliothlorn, Nidrama, or another knowledgeable NPC for aid.

Discovering Karran-Kural's location is difficult. A successful DC 35 Knowledge (geography) check is enough to pinpoint the ruins' location. As with Vaprak's Voice, Karran-Kural is a surviving remnant of the ancient spell weaver city that once sprawled in the location now dominated by the Demonskar. The ruins are located near the northern rim of the Demonskar, but are deep underground and can be accessed only by a series of natural passages and spell weaver sewer tunnels. These tunnels wind down into the earth below the Demonskar for an overall length of about four miles. Complicating matters is the fact that most of these tunnels are flooded with water, in many places water with fairly strong currents equivalent to rough water (Swim check DC 15). PCs who can't easily navigate these tunnels by swimming can walk along the bottom at half speed, providing they carry enough gear to weigh themselves down (see page 92 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide*). At a speed of 15 feet a character takes nearly two and a half hours to reach the entrance of the ruins.

Much of this information can also be gained via *legend lore* or *vision*. Alternately, *find the path* can lead the PCs directly to the ruins, although they'll likely need to cast the spell multiple times before they reach area **K1**.

Consult the introduction for details on the region's jungles and the perils that close proximity to the Demonskar may bring. If the PCs failed to slay Nabthatoron, the glabrezu may make another attempt on their lives as they draw near his lair.

KARRAN-KURAL'S HISTORY

Driven by alien desires and a great understanding of necromantic magic, a cabal of spell weaver necromancers built a tomb designed to garner ever more insight into frozen death. In the twisted spell weaver mind, the forces of cold and death held some mystical connection, the understanding of which promised ever greater arcane power. Deep below their sprawling city, these spell weavers built an insidious laboratory/tomb, where they blended the forces of necromantic magic, the magical essence of cold, and the undead flesh of members of their own race.

Had the spell weavers confined their experiments to nebulous arcane forces and their own willing dead, their sinister designs perhaps could have been excused, if not understood. But knowing neither conscience nor mercy, the spell weavers used dead slaves and captives of other races in their necromantic rites as well. When the construction of the planar travel installation failed and created the Demonskar, the spell weavers of Karran-Kural perished, and their legacy was forgotten.

The lore hidden in this tomb remains as vast as it is cruel, and it was here, nearly thirty years ago, that the Cagewrights laid their plans for Cauldron. In delving between the magical essences of ice and death, the spell weavers discovered a number of strange arcane formulae that dealt with the merging of worlds. From these secrets the Cagewrights extracted the genesis of the ritual to transform Cauldron into a gate town. And it is upon the enigmatic

principles and arcane formulae of the heartless spell weavers that the *soulcages* were built.

Although the bulk of the Cagewrights' efforts have long since shifted away from Karran-Kural, one powerful loremaster remains, plunging ever deeper into the dark and frozen secrets stored in the *Soul Pillars* of Karran-Kural. These *Soul Pillars* store the lore of the spell weavers and serve as the distant prototypes of the *soulcages* so essential to the Cagewrights' ritual. Should the characters succeed in exploring the ruins and thwarting the loremaster and the last deadly guardians left by the spell weavers, they gain their first direct victory against the Cagewright conspiracy, however unintentional that victory might be.

LORE OF KARRAN-KURAL

The spell weavers built this tomb complex to study the relationship between death and cold, and to turn this knowledge to their one passion—magical power. Although the true fruits of this research might well be lost, the malignant auras of the entombed spell weavers, the unwholesome lore that resides in the necrotic pillars, and the strange magical energies that suffuse the ruin itself still propagate a small fraction of their discoveries.

This lore comprises two feats (Death Frost Spell and Flesh of the Ice Tomb) and three spells (*rime*, *icefane corpse*, and *necrotic mist*), all of which are described in Appendix 2. Once a creature has spent at least a day in the ruins of Karran-Kural, the feats and spells become available options, provided the creature has the requisite levels and abilities.

KARRAN-KURAL FEATURES

The entire complex is lit by small panels set flush with the ceiling; these panels shed a pale blue light equivalent to torchlight. The panels also cool the complex to a frigid 10° F. Characters unprepared for such cold temperatures must make a Fortitude save every hour that they remain within the ruins of Karran-Kural (DC 15 + 1 per previous check) or suffer 1d6 points of nonlethal damage on each failed save. See page 302 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide* for more information on the effects of extreme cold. All of the creatures in the encounters below are either immune to the cold or wear sufficient clothing. The magic panels are part of the walls of the spell weaver tomb, and they lose all magical properties if removed. One panel is located in the ceiling of each five-foot square. The magic that powers the tiles functions at caster level 20th; if dispelled, the tile simply ceases to function for 1d4 rounds. Only by destroying the majority (at least 80%) of the tiles will the temperature and lighting return to more natural levels. The effects of such a development on Karran-Kural are up to you.

The corridors in Karran-Kural are as wide as they are tall. Ceiling height in smaller rooms is usually ten feet, but can be much higher in the larger chambers. Doors are made of iron and covered with ancient runes and strange depictions of six-armed humanoids working great magic—spell weavers.

One notable feature of the ruins is its ice lattices. The locations of these lattices are indicated on the maps of the ruins. An ice lattice consists of one-inch-thick strands of ice that crisscross from wall to wall at various angles. The spell weavers infused these lattices with the magical essences of cold and death, and the lattices carry these energies still. Anyone touching a strand of the lattice suffers 1d6 points of cold damage and 1d6 points of negative energy damage (no save). A character moving full speed through the lattice must make a DC 25 Escape Artist check to avoid contacting a strand. Moving at half speed lowers the DC to 15, and moving extremely carefully (five feet per round or less), lowers the DC to 5.

Evil outsiders and undead can move through ice lattice strands with no ill effect. The ancient spell weavers wore magic rings that also allowed them to pass through the lattices, but none of these rings remain in the ruins today. The lattices are an innate defense of Karran-Kural, and if destroyed they reform completely within a week's time.

Magic Ceiling Panel: 1 ft. square, 6 in. thick; Hardness 8; hp 45; Break DC 35.

Iron Doors: 2 in. thick; Hardness 10; hp 60, Break DC 28.

Ice Lattice: Hardness 5; hp 10 per five-foot square; Break DC 25.

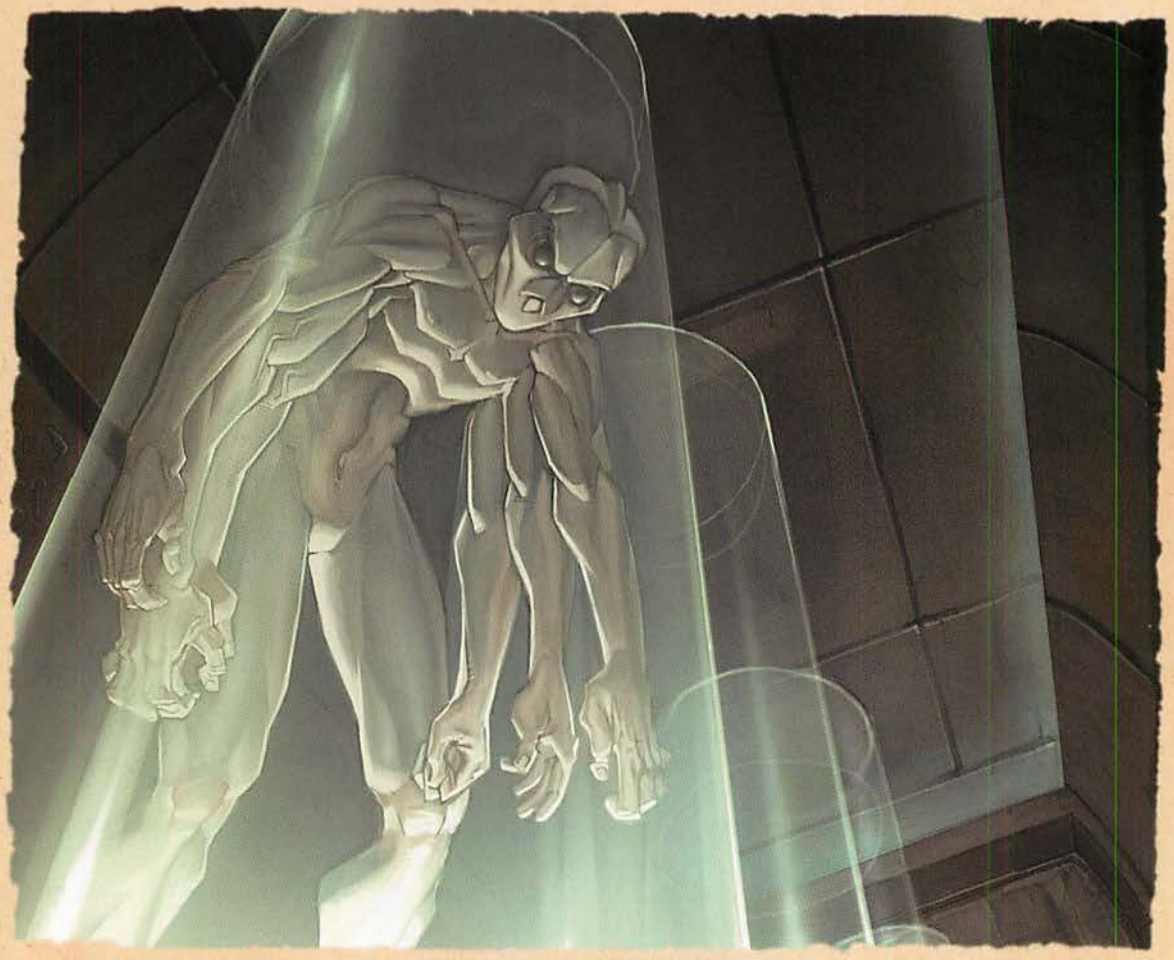
K1. ENTRANCE TO KARRAN-KURAL

The ancient flooded lava tubes open here into a pair of smaller, air-filled tubes that lead to the east. The temperature drops alarmingly to the east, and the two passageways merge just before they are blocked by an enormous wall of ice. A narrow tunnel has been hacked through the ice near its southern edge, allowing access into a larger area beyond.

The ice wall is part of the ancient protections the spell weavers created to secure Karran-Kural from invasion. The Cagewrights managed to bore a narrow passageway through the ice wall, at which point its magic properties faded and it became a normal (but quite thick) wall of ice. Medium creatures can pass through the tunnel with ease, but larger creatures must squeeze. The ice itself remains frozen only due to the proximity of Karran-Kural, and if melted does not reform.

Beyond the wall of ice, a second barrier once existed. Again, the Cagewrights ruined this warding, leaving the once-magic portcullis in a twisted heap that can be passed through with relative ease by creatures of up to Large size.

Beyond the ruined portcullis a large set of double doors is all that remains of the once formidable barriers that protected the ruins. These doors are not magic, nor are they locked.



K2. SPELL WEAVER COFFINS

Pale blue lights set flush in the ceiling light this hallway. The walls have a subtle curve, and the entire length is etched with disturbing images and symbols. Strange glassy circles, each roughly five feet in diameter, checker the length of the hallway's floor. Under each disc, a six-armed humanoid figure hangs motionless as if suspended in fluid or encased in glass. At each end of the hall, a pair of frost-rimed metal doors stands closed.

The circular panes in the floor are magic spell weaver coffins; each is actually a cylinder of magic ice that contains a frozen body of a spell weaver. Each cylinder weighs six tons and completely encases the spell weaver to a depth of 8 feet. The material loses much of its strength if taken beyond the magical energies that pervade the spell weaver ruins, reverting to normal ice in such a case.

The bodies in the coffins are not alive, nor are they dead. They are in a form of suspended animation, and remain so as long as the magic of the ruin persists. Every 1 to 6 minutes the characters spend within the ruin, one of the spell weaver corpses nearby jerks or moves in response to some strange twist in the magical energies of the complex. If the PCs aren't examining the coffin at this time, a successful DC 20 Spot check allows them to notice the movement. As long as the bodies remain frozen, they pose no threat to the players. The strange behavior should set the tone of characters' exploration and emphasize the alien power of the spell weavers.

Roll	Corpse Behavior
1	Jerk violently away from the top of the coffin, seemingly recoiling from the nearest PC.
2	Pound violently but silently on the underside of the coffin's top pane.
3	The corpse's mouth opens as if in a powerful scream, but silence remains.
4	A thin wail escapes a coffin (DC 15 Listen check to notice).
5	The corpse calmly runs its fingers along the underside of the coffin's top pane.
6	The corpse's arms move languidly in patterns resembling arcane spellcasting.
7	The corpse folds all six of its arms as if in prayer.
8	The corpse violently tears at its own flesh, without apparent effect.

Each coffin is essentially a minor artifact (caster level 20th). They can be destroyed with enough damage, at which point any remaining ice and dead flesh melts away into a foul-smelling but otherwise harmless black mist.

Spell Weaver Coffin: Hardness 12; hp 90; Break DC 36.

K3. THE ICE PRISON (EL 13)

This chamber is nearly circular, although two sides are made flat by thick walls of ice. The entire room is filled with a lattice of thin icy strands, each flickering with faint magical energies.

Two ice walls block two of the exits from this room. These walls are identical to the *wall of ice* spell (caster level 20th), save that they affect only the area shown on the map. When a wall is broken, a plane of frigid air remains where the wall stood. Creatures passing through this plane of air suffer 1d6+20 cold damage (no save, spell resistance applies). The zone of frigid air remains for 20 minutes.

The walls are an innate defense of Karran-Kural; if destroyed they reform completely within a week's time.

Walls of Ice: 3 ft. thick; Hardness 0; hp 36; Break DC 35.

Creature: This chamber houses an ancient and insane guardian, an ice devil bound to defend the ruins by the spell weavers. Having lived in isolation for ages, Izzaedruzz now lies in wait for any who might try to enter the compound. When the Cagewrights first entered the ruin, they lost several soldiers to the devil, and on further expeditions they used teleportation magic to bypass the room entirely.

Izzaedruzz, Male Ice Devil: hp 153, *Monster Manual* 56.

Tactics: Izzaedruzz attempts to split up intruders with *walls of ice* so he can fight them one at a time to take maximum advantage of the slowing effect of his icy spear.

Although Izzaedruzz has the full use of his abilities, he can only *teleport* within the confines of this room and the nearby corridors (both areas labeled **K2**). If overmatched, Izzaedruzz buys time by cowering behind *walls of ice* to regenerate.

Izzaedruzz can move at full speed without risking damage from the ice lattice.

K4. FROZEN STAIRS

The south end of the corridor ends in a staircase choked in rubble and ice. Determined characters could possibly dig their way through it down to a lower level, but the features of this area are beyond the scope of this adventure.

K5. SCRYING LATTICE

Six doors line the north and south walls of this passageway, three to a side. The hall itself ends at a tangled lattice of icy strands that flicker and writhe with cold blue tendrils of light.

The icy lattice at the end of the hallway is a powerful scrying device built ages ago by the spell weavers. If properly identified (using *identify* or *analyze dweomer*), the lattice can be used to cast *scrying* once per day (caster

level 13th). The lattice is bound to the structure of Karran-Kural, and it cannot be moved intact. However, the lattice regrows and repairs itself in one week's time if damaged. The Cagewrights have used this lattice often to scry upon their enemies.

Scrying Lattice: Hardness 5; hp 20; Break DC 25.

K6. CELLS OF DESPAIR

This chamber is empty, save for a set of four of the ubiquitous circular discs set into the floor.

Each of these rooms houses four spell weaver coffins put to special purpose. Unlike the other coffins, these contain corpses of elves. The spell weavers thought to plumb the nature of despair by entombing the elves in this way, binding the corpses with physical and magical restraints that tugged against the very souls of the dead elves. These horrid rites left the elven souls trapped in a state of eternal despair. Anyone in the chamber must make a successful DC 15 Will save each round or be so overcome by despair that they find it hard to summon the will to act. This effect is exactly like the *slow* spell cast by a 15th-level wizard, except that it is a supernatural mind-affecting enchantment effect. The *slow* effect lasts for 10 minutes.

A cleric who can channel positive energy can release these trapped souls with a successful Turn Undead check. Each trapped soul (one per coffin) effectively has 15 Hit Dice for purposes of determining success or failure for turning checks. Successfully releasing a trapped soul fills the room with a momentary pulse of powerful energy, and any creature in the room at this time gains the benefit of an empowered, maximized *aid* spell (caster level 15th). Multiple freed souls extend the duration of any existing *aid* effects by fifteen minutes, but the other effects of the spell do not stack.

K7. CELLS OF AGONY

This chamber is empty, save for a set of four of the ubiquitous circular discs set into the floor.

Each of these coffins contains the corpse of a sturdy dwarf. The spell weavers used their fearful magic to trap these dwarves in a state of constant pain, and like the elven souls trapped in area **K6**, they project these feelings even though they have been dead for centuries. Any living creature in the room must make a successful DC 15 Fortitude save each round or be overcome by agony and gain a –5 circumstance penalty on attack rolls, skill checks, and ability checks for the next minute. This is a supernatural necromantic effect.

The dwarven souls can be released in the same manner and with the same results as the elven souls in area **K6**.

K8. CELLS OF SOLITUDE

This chamber is empty, save for a single circular disc set into the floor.

These two rooms each house a single spell weaver coffin. Although the spell weaver bodies laid to rest here underwent significant magical treatment, the experiments performed here were failures in the eyes of the spell weavers (unlike those in areas **K6** and **K7**, which they deemed a success). Plunged into frigid and eternal isolation, the spell weaver soul imprisoned within the single coffin in each room was intended to illuminate the magical essence of solitude and bring the spell weaver arcanists even greater power. However, even after long years of study the spell weavers were unable to glean any useful knowledge from the trapped souls. Unlike the elven and dwarven souls in the prior areas, these souls are permanently bound to their coffins and can be released only through the destruction of the coffin itself, as detailed in area **K2**.

Spell Weaver Coffin: Hardness 12; hp 90; Break DC 36.

K9. PIT ROOM (EL 13)

This barren room contains only one unusual feature; a smooth-sided, five-foot-diameter pit descends into the floor against the west wall.

The pit in the floor leads 20 feet down to area **K10** on the second level of the Karran-Kural ruins. The pit was created with a pair of *disintegrate* spells by a Cagewright many years ago when they realized that the section of ruins they sought lay directly below this chamber. The walls of the pit are perfectly smooth.

Creature: An iron golem guards this room, and once a fight begins it pursues characters as far as area **K3**. The golem itself is an ice-rimed relic from the ancient dominion of the spell weavers, yet it continues to fulfill its duties as guardian.

Iron Golem: hp 135, *Monster Manual* 136.

Development: The ice devil imprisoned in area **K3** long ago learned to leave the golem alone, and should the characters manage to get both involved in the same encounter, the ice devil avoids the golem and uses its *cone of cold* ability to stay at range and harass the characters while they tangle with the construct.

K10. RUINED CHAMBER

The walls of this partially collapsed room are blasted and pitted from some ancient calamity. The room's collapse is total to the north, a solid wall of frozen stone. A smooth-sided pit rises up from the ceiling near the east wall.

The opening in the ceiling leads up twenty feet to area **K9**.

K11. CAGEWRIGHT GUARDIAN (EL 13)

This large room is filled with a tangled lattice of icy strands and beams that stretches from wall to wall, floor to ceiling, and everywhere in between.

This entire room is filled with a massive ice lattice similar to those found in other areas of the ruins.

Creature: The Cagewrights knew that it was extremely unlikely that an enemy would discover the ruins of Karran-Kural, but didn't want to trust the site's defense to the obscure location alone. Thearynn Louvel called up a denizen of Carceri to guard the ruin, and used a hedged prison from a *binding* spell to ensure that the kelubar demodand would remain a guardian of the ruins forever. The *binding* spell prevents the kelubar from leaving this room or any of the adjoining hallways. And since the kelubar is filled with rage over its predicament, anyone who enters the room is seen as an enemy. The other Cagewrights typically use *teleport* to travel directly to one of the nearby rooms, and so avoid confrontations with the kelubar entirely.

The kelubar demodands are the bureaucrats of a legion of self-appointed keepers of the Carcerian population. This kelubar, Olarithusk, is typical for his race; an obese 8-foot-tall humanoid with knobby skin coated with a pale green slime.

Olarithusk, male kelubar demodand: hp 104; see Appendix 4.

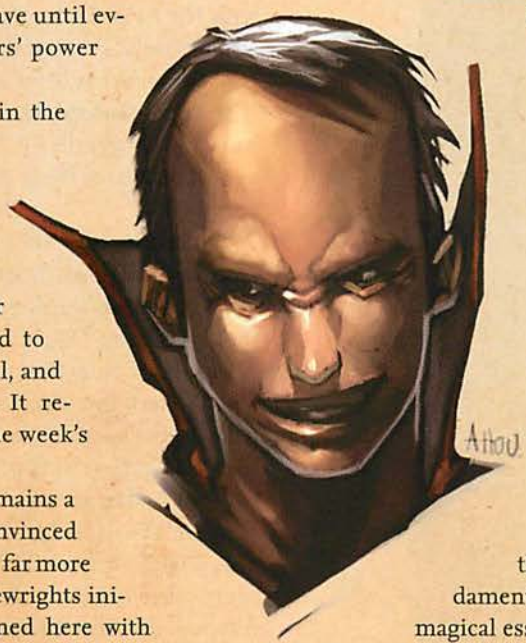
K12. SCRYING CHAMBER (EL 14)

This perfectly circular room is featureless save for an irregular smear of black ice that covers the center of the floor. Even from a distance the ice seems filled with distant and shadowy images.

The center of the room holds a potent magic device that allows the user to scry. A single Cagewright loremaster, a cruel and selfish man named Fetor Abradius, spends his days here scrying and contemplating the secrets of the spell weavers. He has already mastered much of the lore of the *Soul Pillars*, but has no plans to leave until every scrap of the spell weavers' power is his.

The inky black ice patch in the center of the room is a more powerful version of the scrying lattice found in area **K5**. It can be used to cast *scrying* three times per day (caster level 20th). The ice is bound to the structure of Karran-Kural, and it cannot be moved intact. It regrows and repairs itself in one week's time if damaged.

Creature: Fetor Abradius remains a Cagewright only in name. Convinced that the spell weaver lore offers far more potential power than the Cagewrights initially estimated, Fetor remained here with the few servants that his allies and masters allowed him, and continued to bargain with the dracolich in area **K18** for access to the soul pillars. Fetor uses the *scrying* ice to gather information about the outside world and report it to the mighty undead dragon. The dracolich in turn allows Fetor to study the *Soul Pillars*.



Fetor Abradius

Fetor Abradius, male human, wizard 7/loremaster 7: hp 64; see Appendix 4.

Tactics: Fetor has cast *alarm* and *mage armor* ahead of time. The mental alarm is centered on the mid-point of the passage leading to this room. In the likely event that the PCs trigger the alarm while approaching the room, Fetor employs the following tactics.

- Round 1: Casts *bear's endurance* and quickened *mirror image*.
- Round 2: Casts *see invisibility* and draws *metamagic rod of lesser empower*.
- Round 3: Opens the door and casts an empowered *lightning bolt* down the hallway. If foes are still alive he casts a quickened *lightning bolt* and takes a 5-foot step behind the door.
- Round 4: Casts an empowered *magic missile* on a divine spellcaster.
- Round 5: Casts *confusion*.
- Round 6: Attempts to pick off stragglers with *vampiric touch*.

Development: Gifted with remarkable intelligence and cruelty, Fetor Abradius is not about to let his work or his life fall to a band of adventurers. Should the PCs gain the advantage, Fetor does not hesitate to make use of his *greater teleport* spell to flee. Given time to animate undead servants, hire a bodyguard or two, and learn spells targeted at the characters' weaknesses, the evil loremaster could become a dangerous recurring foe.

K13. THE LIBRARY OF SOULS (EL 10)

Fifteen corpses stand frozen in place, equally spaced along the length of this rectangular room. From head to toe, the corpses are covered in faintly glowing blue runes.

The room holds fifteen corpses; five each of dwarves, elves, and humans. Each is covered with spell weaver runes and glyphs. Anyone who successfully reads the glyphs learns that the corpses record the history of Karran-Kural and its spell weaver creators. The history is brief, but it outlines the spell weaver belief that a fundamental connection exists between the magical essences of death and cold and that the tomb was built to explore that strange connection.

Trap: The door to this room is locked with an amazing lock (Open Lock DC 40), and trapped with a powerful energy-draining trap. The trap activates as soon as anyone tries to open the door.

***Energy Drain* Trap:** CR 10, magic device; visual trigger (*true seeing*); automatic reset; Atk +8 ranged touch; spell effect (*energy drain*, 17th-level wizard, 2d4 negative levels for 24 hours, DC 23 Fortitude save negates); Search DC 34; Disable Device DC 34.

K14. THE TWIN PILLARS (EL 13)

This room descends twenty feet below the level of the entry corridor and rises to a height of forty feet above it. A ten-foot-wide walkway runs around the outside. This rectangular chamber is dominated by two large pillars, each made of what looks like gray necrotic flesh. The chill in the room emanates from these pillars, and now and again a tortured visage forms and then fades on a pillar's surface with a faint whisper.

This rectangular room holds two *Soul Pillars*; horrid repositories of spell weaver lore. Unlike those in area **K18**, the *Soul Pillars* in this room hold only minor stores of knowledge. Activating one of the pillars requires 10 minutes of concentration and a successful DC 10 Intelligence check. Anyone successfully activating these pillars can ask a series of questions of the undead spirits trapped within. The tortured spirits impart knowledge in the form of answers to yes/no questions, just as if the character had cast *contact outer plane* to contact a demigod. The character using the pillar must make a second Intelligence check to avoid Intelligence and Charisma loss just as if he had cast *contact outer plane*.

Creatures: Two powerful creatures (brought here with the help of Wee Jas clerics) now serve the Cagewright loremaster Fetor. They stay in this room to study the soul pillars at Fetor's orders.

Orgo Blacksword, male fiendish half-orc fighter 9: hp 67; see Appendix 4.

Xail, Water Bone Naga sorcerer 3: hp 65; see Appendix 4.

Tactics: In the event that the bone naga becomes aware of the party before they become aware of it or Orgo, Xail casts *displacement* on itself and Orgo before the fight starts, following with *shield* and *icefane corpse* on itself. It then follows that the next round with *Evard's black tentacles*, attempting to trap most of the party in the corridor leading into the room. Xail then uses *wall of force* to contain the group within the area covered by the tentacles. If possible, it lays a *stinking cloud* on top of the tentacled area and then blasts the group with *shout* spells. If the tactic works, Xail uses *ray of enfeeblement* to ensure that the characters remain trapped by the tentacles. Xail uses multiple *Evard's black tentacles* if necessary. Orgo knows this strategy and how deadly it can be, so he works to engage char-

acters at the edge of the tentacle- and *stinking cloud*-covered area, hopefully preventing them from leaving the reach of the tentacles without exposing himself to their grasp.

K15. EMPTY COFFINS

This long hallway is lined with numerous iron doors, each of which is choked over with ice.

Each door opens into a small cell that houses an empty spell weaver coffin; an empty cylindrical hole in the floor about five feet in diameter and eight feet deep. Other than this, the rooms are bare and featureless. The Cagewrights used these rooms to store supplies, and there's a 10% chance per room that some mundane supplies (torches, dried food, frozen water, tools, etc.) remain in the empty coffin.

K16. FETOR'S BEDCHAMBER

The original purpose for this chamber is unclear, but someone has been using it recently as a campsite. A simple bed sits against the wall opposite a desk and chair. Large stacks of paper are piled on the desk.

Fetor sleeps and compiles notes in this chamber, but lately he's been spending the vast majority of his time in area **K12**. He moves back and forth between this room and area **K12** via *dimension door* to save time and avoid the demodand in area **K11**. He used a scroll of *permanency* to make an *alarm* spell permanent here; if his room is entered, the *alarm* is triggered and he quickly comes to investigate.

Although Fetor carries his material wealth and spellbooks on his person, the papers on his desk contain extensive and valuable notes on the nature of the ruins, the *Soul Pillars*, and the Cagewrights themselves. These notes are complex, disorganized, and hold the observations of a cruel and subtle mind. Little can be gleaned from the notes upon casual study, but a character who studies the notes and makes a successful DC 25 Decipher Script check can learn much.

If the notes are deciphered, they grant a +6 circumstance bonus on any Intelligence-based attempts made to retrieve knowledge from the *Soul Pillars*. Additionally, they contain much information about the Cagewrights, granting those who use them a +10 circumstance bonus on all Knowledge checks made to research this group (see the Introduction for more details).

K17. SUMMONING CHAMBER

This empty chamber contains an intricate pentagram carved into the stony floor and inlaid with some form of metal. The pentagram seems to be empty.

The pentagram is a permanent *magic circle against evil* (focused inward) that the spell weavers used for their summoning rituals and similar rites.

K18. TOMB OF THE BONE DRAGON (EL 16)

This room opens into a massive dome. A wide broken walkway circles about a third of the room's circumference, and a thick ice bridge extends away from the door into the center of the room. Five massive pillars, composed of gray necrotic flesh, stretch from the floor to the ceiling.

This huge chamber is the last great repository of spell weaver lore. It houses five massive *Soul Pillars* and is protected by a powerful dracolich, the most dangerous undead guardian the spell weavers ever created. The room itself has an almost spherical shape, excepting only its level floor. The only door to the chamber opens in the middle of the western wall onto a broken walkway that runs about a third of the circumference of the room. A dangerous ice bridge leads out to the central *Soul Pillar* and a solid platform.

The ice bridge is nearly 10 feet thick, and can easily support the weight of the characters and the dracolich. Characters can move across the bridge at half speed with no trouble, but moving at full speed requires a DC 15 Balance check or the creature falls prone.

A small ice lattice connects to the bridge and one of the *Soul Pillars*. The strands fill only a small area and are easily avoided, but characters touching one of the strands deliberately suffer the effects described at the start of this chapter.

Creature: Vittriss Bale is a powerful dracolich. Cruel and dangerous in life, centuries of boredom and imprisonment have made him even more so. Fetor, the Cagewright loremaster with whom the dracolich has formed a tenuous alliance, is careful never to enter the room without first declaring his presence and ensuring that the dracolich is willing to let him examine the *Soul Pillars* unharmed.

Vittriss Bale keeps an *alarm* spell cast on the corridor leading to this chamber, so assume that he has cast two of his 1st-level spells before he even begins prepping for the combat with the characters.

Vittriss Bale, male adult green dracolich: hp 130; see Appendix 4.

Tactics: Despite his long isolation and mental instability, Vittriss retains his cruelty and combat skill. When the dracolich becomes aware of the PCs, he readies himself with *mage armor*, *shield*, *mirror image*, and *spider climb*. He then clings to the wall above the door and waits to surprise the characters. Vittriss is careful to use the room's terrain to his advantage, capitalizing on his ability to fly and cling to the walls with the *spider climb* spell.

Treasure: The spell weavers saw fit to furnish their captive dracolich with a small hoard of treasure. At the bottom of the room, amid the ice and rubble, the char-

acters find 5,361 gp, 1,739 pp, 5 small diamonds (925 gp each), 5 large diamonds (1,500 gp each), three platinum rings set with diamonds (1,750 gp each), a platinum scepter set with emeralds (5,000 gp), and a matching platinum crown set with emeralds (7,000 gp). They also find three magic items: an *amulet of health +2*, a *+2 keen bastard sword*, and Vittriss Bale's phylactery.

Development: Having been created, bound, and isolated by the spell weavers, Vittriss Bale has never had the chance to stow a draconic corpse for possession should he be defeated. If killed, the dracolich's spirit retreats to its phylactery, a small jewel-inlaid silver box worth 2,500 gp. It remains trapped in the phylactery until a dragon corpse is brought within 90 feet, at which point he can possess the corpse and reform his true body in 2d4 days. If the phylactery is destroyed or rendered nonmagic, Vittriss Bale is forever destroyed.

Vittriss Bale's Phylactery: Hardness 20, hp 40, Break DC 40.

Concluding the Chapter

"Secrets of the Soul Pillars" ends when the PCs defeat Vittriss Bale and gain access to the *Soul Pillars* of Karran-Kural. They should have learned during the course of the adventure that the temple of Wee Jas is up to something sinister, but more importantly, they have learned more of the Cagewrights and their plans for Cauldron—Fetor's extensive notes should give them all the bonuses they really need to learn about the sinister group's plans and composition. If the PCs report this knowledge to their NPC friends, these allies become quite distraught. Many of them begin their own research into what's going on behind the scenes in Cauldron, and some of the information they uncover plays a major role in the next chapter. If the PCs' enemies learn of this information, nothing much changes. Vhalantru and the Cagewrights have already decided that something must be done now to stop the PCs, and are already taking actions to solve this situation once and for all. The PCs may or may not realize it, but they will soon come under the direct attack of the Cagewrights themselves.

Until then, the PCs should now have some time to rest, relax, create magic items, and otherwise recover from the trials they have endured in the Cathedral of Wee Jas and the ruins of Karran-Kural. They could even make a few trips back to Karran-Kural to study the *Soul Pillars*. The pillars hold vast stores of knowledge, and you can use them to impart a great deal of information to the players. Each use of the *Soul Pillars* requires a minute of concentration and an Intelligence check.

Long-term use of *Soul Pillars* exposes a character to dangerous necromantic energy, as befits the disturbing practice of learning from tortured undead souls.

Feel free to create strange and detrimental side effects for characters who work too long with the *Soul Pillars*; a gradual shift in alignment to evil might be one possible result. Gaining Tomb-Tainted Soul as a bonus feat is another possible result.

The *Soul Pillars* dispense their foul knowledge in small and erratic spurts. A successful activation allows the user to pull knowledge from the undead spirits trapped in the *Soul Pillar*. This works like the *contact outer plane* spell contacting a greater deity (caster level 20). Each use of a *Soul Pillar* requires a DC 16 Intelligence check to avoid having the user's Intelligence and Charisma reduced. This check follows the rules and restrictions of *contact outer plane*. Fetor's notes on the *Soul Pillars* provide a +6 competence bonus on this check.

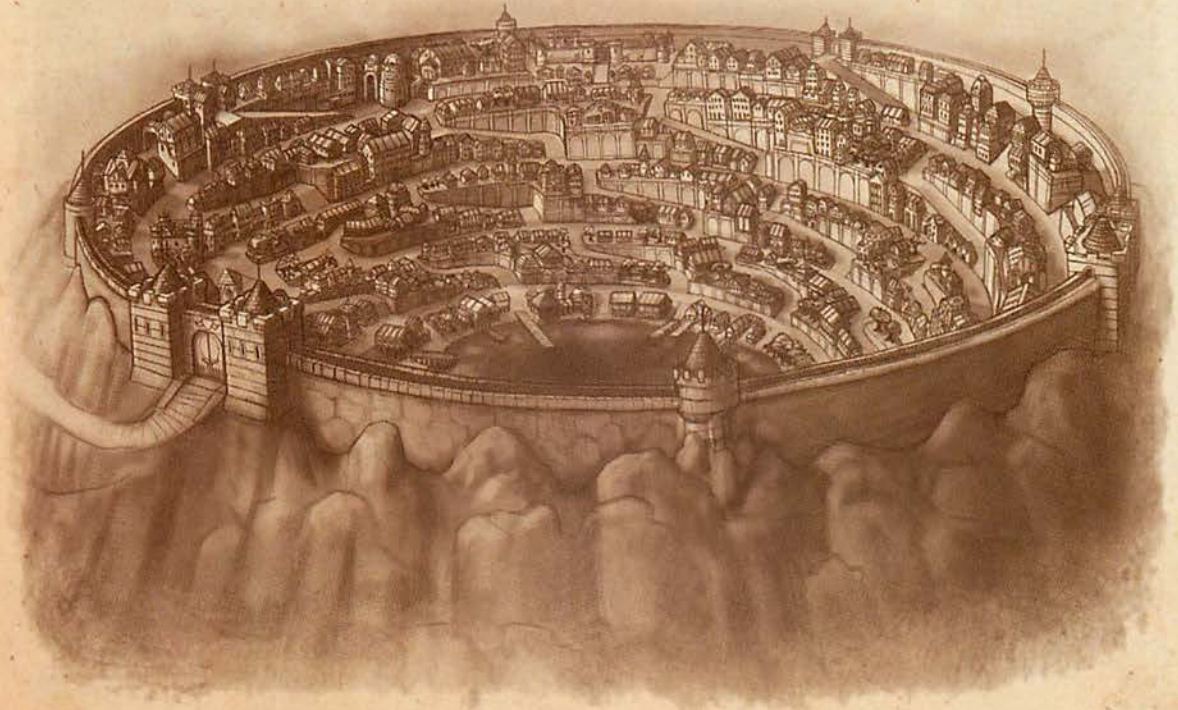
Unlike *contact outer plane*, a *Soul Pillar* is not limited to one-word answers. You should feel free to dispense cryptic phrases or even longer clues in addition to the one-word answers given to most questions. As an example, if a character asks a *Soul Pillar* about *soulcages*, the response might be:

"When cages of metal hold souls of pain the prison shall open."

BEHIND THE SCENES: SECRETS OF THE SOUL PILLARS

Once the PCs survive the assassin attack, Vhalantru grows nervous—the PCs have survived a fiendish umber hulk, treks to the Underdark, the Demonskar, and the Abyss itself, and now they've lived through the best that the Cathedral of Wee Jas has to offer. They've even captured a *soulcage* of their own to study and examine. For the first time in many decades, Vhalantru feels fear. Soon after the PCs defeat the assassins, the beholder retreats into the chambers below his mansion, to a place he calls Oblivion. There, aided by Cagewright allies, he steps up his experiments in augmenting his power with the spiritual essence of captured demodands, hoping to discover a way to assure his victory in the confrontation with the PCs he now fears.

As the Cagewright leaders near the completion of the Shackleborn purificaiton ritual, Thifirane Rhiavadi has been serving as their eyes and ears in Cauldron for some time. She has taken note of the PCs' accomplishments with alarm as well, and has sent invitations to several of the region's most notorious criminals and villains to attend a meeting at her manor in Cauldron. There, she plans on unveiling to them the plans the Cagewrights have for Cauldron, offering them a chance to serve important roles in the new world to come if they only promise one thing in return: they must prevent the PCs from interfering in the ritual to come.



CHAPTER EIGHT

CHAPTER EIGHT

LORDS OF OBLIVION

BY CHRISTOPHER PERKINS

Vhalantru's paranoia has reached new heights now that the PCs have proven themselves much more able than the beholder had estimated. As this chapter begins, he has sequestered himself in his manor, and frantically tries to perfect a vile ritual he learned from a set of scrolls he "borrowed" from the Cagewrights describing a ritual called the *Zar'ilkoth Tarteros*. The ritual enables one to absorb the spirit of a demodand and gain its powers, augmenting the body and soul with fiendish strength and magical energy. Alas, the *Zar'ilkoth Tarteros* is a dangerous ritual, and Vhalantru was loathe to try it on himself without first experimenting on some of his minions. Now, his manor and the chambers below are infested with malformed monstrosities bearing the taint of Tarterus, and soon Vhalantru himself shall join their wretched ranks.

In the meantime, Thifirane Rhiavadi has invited some of the worst criminal elements in the land—slavers, mercenaries, thieves, and even evil adventurers—to a secret meeting at her estate in Cauldron. There she informs them of the Cagewrights' plans, offers them a chance to help reshape the world, and guarantees them positions of power in exchange for their loyalty and complicity. Her only demand—that these villains aid her in destroying the PCs before they can strike a blow against her thirteen masters.

If they act swiftly, the heroes can storm House Rhiavadi and smash Thifirane's evil covenant before the villains have a chance to formulate a plan against them. They can also fight their way through Oblivion, Vhalantru's subterranean lair, and confront the beholder in a final showdown.

Cauldron's woes notwithstanding, the heroes might have good cause to suspect Lord Vhalantru of evildoing. He has so far remained an enigma, sequestering himself within his estate and rarely venturing into the public eye. The Striders of Fharlanghn, who seek to locate and eradicate the Cagewrights, suspect that Vhalantru knows something about the Cagewrights' activities. The Striders have been spying on Vhalantru ever since the lord mayor disappeared, but they have learned precious little.

STARTING THE CHAPTER: LORDS OF OBLIVION

The average party level should be 13 when you start this chapter, and the PCs should reach 14th level part-way through the chapter. You should allow the PCs to advance in level when they gain enough XP to do so, since the final encounters in this chapter are particularly rough.

AN AUDIENCE WITH MEERTHAN

The characters begin the adventure in Cauldron, enjoying some down time and catching up on rumors. At some opportune moment, the PCs are invited to meet with Meerthan Eliothlorn at the Drunken Morkoth Inn. Meerthan needs their help rescuing an agent who was captured while spying on House Rhiavadi from a Last Laugh safe house before he cracks under interrogation and reveals the extent of the Striders' activities in Cauldron.

The PCs have likely already met Meerthan's three agents—Fario Ellegoth, Fellian Shard, and Shensen Tesseril. One of these three has been captured by the Last Laugh—the adventure assumes that the captured Strider is Fario, but if the PCs have befriended Fellian or Shensen, consider having one of them captured instead to make things more personal for the PCs.

Once you have selected which Strider has been captured, have Meerthan quickly contact the PCs for aid. If one of the PCs has joined the Striders and has a telepathic link with Meerthan, he contacts that PC directly. Otherwise, he sends one of his other agents to find the PCs and bring them to meet with him.

However they are contacted, the PCs are to come to Meerthan's upstairs room at the Drunken Morkoth. Upon arriving, the PCs are met by any other Strider agents still alive and not captured. Meerthan's room is a cozy, well-appointed chamber with a desk, a bed, and walls hung with mounted hunting trophies. A dwarf wearing a rich vest and golden circlet sits in a padded leather chair facing the door, his hands clasped tightly under his chin in a contemplative manner.

Meerthan Eliothlorn uses a *hat of disguise* to appear as a dwarf, but he reveals his true form once he and the characters are alone; that of a cloaked, 45-year-old half-elf with hazel eyes and a small crescent-moon-shaped tattoo under his right eye. Meerthan cuts to the chase (adjust the following speech as necessary if Felian or Shensen was the agent captured):

"I have dire news, my friends. Fario has been captured while spying on House Rhiavadi. He's being detained and interrogated in a Last Laugh safe house as we

speak. He has resisted their torture so far, but he can't hold out much longer. Thanks to the telepathic bond he and I share, I've managed to remain in contact with him. The Last Laugh doesn't know this. Please forgive my presumption, but I've already told him that help is on the way. When you return, we can discuss what Fario has learned from his reconnaissance. The Brass Trumpet—an abandoned inn on Ash Avenue. That's where they're holding him."

Meerthan is willing to entertain questions—to a point. Every minute wasted is another minute Fario must endure the tortures of the Last Laugh's vaunted interrogators. Thanks to the telepathic bond with Fario, Meerthan knows everything of consequence concerning Fario's last mission. At this point, Meerthan is concerned that Fario might divulge information about the Striders and their activities in Cauldron.

Meerthan knows that Fario's captors didn't take the time to blindfold him, clearly because they intend to kill him once the interrogation is complete. The Last Laugh's carelessness has allowed Fario to pass along the location of the safe house, a general description of areas **B1**, **B2**, **B4**, **B5**, **B7**, **B8**, and **B9**, and an estimated number of Last Laugh members inside (he counted at least ten goons, and he saw fifteen beds in area **B5**). He can also describe the four Last Laugh villains who captured him (see the descriptions of Jil, Finch, Mokaius, and Xendro, below). All of the Last Laugh members paint their faces white and black to resemble a grinning harlequin's visage. The description of the lead captor (a rascal of a woman standing 5 feet, 3 inches tall with black hair and dark brown eyes) may be familiar to the PCs who participated in the events of Chapter One.

If the characters demand money for their services, Meerthan offers a payment of 2,000 gp but can be bargained up to 5,000 gp with a successful DC 25 Diplomacy check.

THE BRASS TRUMPET

The Last Laugh safe house is an abandoned inn called the Brass Trumpet. An iron sign set with a brass trumpet hangs outside the front doors, which appear newer than the rest of the building (the Last Laugh replaced the inn's original doors with fortified ones). The building's walls are made of mortared volcanic rock, and all of the windows on the ground floor have been bricked up. The windows on the second floor have solid wooden frames and panes of opaque, smoked glass. The second-story floor (first-story ceiling) is made of timber. Unless noted otherwise, all ground-floor ceilings are 10 feet high, and all second-floor areas have 15-foot-high ceilings with heavy rafters. Doors always open into rooms; a door connecting two rooms always opens into the smaller room.

The Last Laugh's safe house contains several encounters, none of them particularly dangerous to a group of well-equipped, high-level characters. The safe house's encounters have been designed to show just how powerful and effective the heroes have become. Furthermore, it's okay if the characters' success leads to overconfidence—an attitude that, if carried over into the next part of this chapter, could cost them dearly.

A Last Laugh thug stationed in area **B8** watches the front doors through a small triangular hole cut into the glass of one second-story window. If the characters approach the building without making any attempts at concealment, the sentry automatically spots them and quietly alerts Finch, his boss (see area **B8**), who in turn alerts the rest of the safe house.

Characters who knock on the front doors receive no response from within.

Strong Wooden Doors (locked): 2 in. thick; hardness 5; hp 20; break DC 25; superior lock (hardness 15; hp 30; Open Lock DC 40).

B1. ENTRY (EL 8)

This twenty-foot-wide, fifteen-foot-deep room contains no furnishings. Arrow slits perforate the western and eastern walls—three arrow slits per wall.

A successful DC 15 Search check made to notice unusual stonework reveals that the walls with the arrow slits are recent constructions. Behind each row of arrow slits lies a narrow passage with a wooden ladder at the north end. Each ladder leads up to an unlocked trap door in the ceiling that opens into area **B8** above.

Creatures: Six Last Laugh thugs lurk behind the arrow slits, three per side. The arrow slits provide a +10 cover bonus to the thugs' AC and grant a +4 cover bonus on Reflex saves.

Last Laugh Thugs, male human rogue 2/warrior 2 (6): hp 25 each; see Appendix 4.

B2. CROSSBOW BATTERY TRAP (EL 8)

This room contains a Trap that triggers when the north door is opened. Two heavy black curtains cover openings into areas **B3** and **B4**.

Trap: Last Laugh rogues have rigged five heavy crossbows to iron tripods in the middle of the room. Fishing lines have been strung from the crossbows' firing mechanisms to the northern door. Any creature that opens the door without first disabling the trap triggers it. The trap can be easily disabled from inside the room simply by cutting the fishing lines (no Disable Device check required).

Crossbow Battery Trap: CR 8; mechanical; location trigger; manual reset; Atk +15 ranged (1d10 plus poison/19–20, 5 heavy crossbows); poison (blue whinnis, Fortitude DC 14 negates, initial 1 Con, secondary unconsciousness for 1d3 hours); Search DC 25; Disable Device DC 23.

B3. SPIKED ROOMS

The Last Laugh guild has lined the floors of these rooms with grids of iron spikes as tall as short sword

blades—dozens of them. These blades are part of the traps in area **B6**.

B4. COMMON ROOM (EL 7)

This room used to be the inn's common room. The room still contains some wooden chairs and tables, but the fireplace that once stood against the south wall has been dismantled and removed from the premises. Four timber pillars support the ceiling, and curtained alcoves line the north wall. A creaky wooden staircase leads up to the second level, and anyone attempting to climb the stairs takes a –5 penalty on Move Silently checks.

Creatures: Four Last Laugh thugs hide in the shadows, two on either side of the western curtain and two under the stairs.

Last Laugh Thugs, male human rogue 2/warrior 2 (4): hp 25 each; see Appendix 4.

B5. LAST LAUGH HARLEQUINS (EL 12)

This room serves as barracks for the Last Laugh thugs assigned to guard the safe house. Fifteen wooden cots are spread around the room.

Characters who inspect the northwest corner of the room and succeed at a DC 25 Search check find a well-hidden secret door leading to area **B7**.

Creatures: This area contains four Last Laugh thugs and a pair of 24-year-old monk/assassins named Mokaius and Xendro. They are twins with shaved heads, faces painted half-white and half-black, and lithe builds.

Mokaius and Xendro, Last Laugh Harlequins, male human monk 6/assassin 2: hp 56 each; see Appendix 4.

Last Laugh Thugs, male human rogue 2/warrior 2 (4): hp 25 each; see Appendix 4.

Tactics: Mokaius and Xendro have orders from Jil not to allow intruders to find or pass through the secret door leading to area **B7**. They cartwheel and leap about the room like acrobats when closing in for the kill, counting on the thugs to help them flank foes.

If they hear sounds of combat in area **B4**, Mokaius and Xendro send the two thugs to investigate. They and two other thugs remain here to guard the secret door, hiding in the shadows until intruders move into the room. The twins' relatively low Intelligence makes them suboptimal assassins (they can't cast spells, and the DC to resist their death strike ability isn't particularly high), but they put their poisoned shuriken and Stunning Fist feats to good use in combat.

B6. EMPTY BEDROOM (EL 5)

All of the furniture has been removed from these rooms, and a fine layer of dust covers the wooden floor.

Members of the Last Laugh have skillfully weakened sections of the floor so that they collapse under any significant weight. These weakened sections are indicated on the map.

Trap: When one or more characters step on a weakened section of floor, the floor collapses underfoot, dropping the characters onto a bed of iron spikes 10 feet below (see area **B3** for details). Characters who enter the room through a window automatically step onto a weakened section of floor. A successful DC 18 Reflex save allows an affected character to avoid the fall (by grabbing hold of a sturdier section of the floor). The weakened floor can be detected with a successful DC 24 Search check, but not with mere prodding. Moving around the outside walls of the room without causing the floor to collapse requires a successful DC 15 Balance check.

Bed of Spikes: CR 5; mechanical; location trigger; no reset; 10 ft. deep (1d6, fall); multiple targets (first target in each of two adjacent 5-foot squares); spikes (Atk +10 melee, 1d6 spikes per target for 1d6+5 each); Search DC 24; Disable Device DC —.

B7. WARDED SECRET PASSAGE

Two well-made secret doors (Search DC 25) conceal this 5-foot-wide, 10-foot-long dark passage. The northern secret door makes a grinding noise when opened, loud enough to alert the denizens of area **B8**.

Trap: Finch (see area **B8**) has cast an *alarm* spell in this secret passage. Any creature that enters the passage not carrying one or more of the Last Laugh's "jester coins" triggers a gentle alarm bell that can be heard only in the interrogation room (area **B9**).

B8. CURTAINS (EL 12)

Five thick red curtains hang from the rafters of this fifteen-foot-by-thirty-foot chamber. The curtains divide the room into a maze of five-foot-wide passages and look thick enough to catch missile fire.

Tied across the top of each curtain are seven tiny bells that jingle madly if the curtain is disturbed; a character trying to quietly move a curtain takes a –10 penalty on his or her Move Silently check. Set into the northwest and northeast corners of the floor are two unlocked wooden trap doors that pull open to reveal a wooden ladder and narrow passage (area **B1**) below.

The southwest corner of the room holds a small table with a hooded lantern resting on it and a locked wooden chest (Open Lock DC 30). The chest's contents are described under Treasure, below.

An artfully hidden secret door in the south wall (Search DC 30) leads to area **B9**. Attempting to pass through it triggers a Trap (see area **B9** for details).

Creatures: Jil's trusted lieutenant, a halfling named Finch (so named because of his fidgety nature and golden-yellow hair), sits on the floor in the southwest corner, playing cards in the dim light of the lantern while his boss interrogates the half-elf prisoner in area **B9**. Finch does not paint his face like most Last Laugh rogues; instead, he has a four-pointed red star circling his left eye. He also wears a flashy red-and-gold cape. Standing by one of the north windows, watching the front entrance of the safe house, is a Last Laugh thug who answers to Finch. The thug has cut a tiny triangular hole in the

smoked glass window—large enough to see outside, but hard to notice from the ground (Spot DC 14).

Finch, male halfling rogue 5/sorcerer 6: hp 45; see Appendix 4.

Last Laugh Thug, male human rogue 2/warrior 2: hp 25; see Appendix 4.

Tactics: Given sufficient time to prepare, Finch casts *displacement* and *shield* (in that order) upon himself. He then uses his *slippers of spider climbing* to climb up to the rafters, where he moves quietly through the shadows and above the jingling red curtains. From this vantage point, Finch either uses his *wand of hold person* or his ranged spells. If seriously wounded, he uses the *dimension door* ability of his *cape of the mountebank* to flee to area **B9**. The nameless Last Laugh thug hides among the curtains, hoping to fell a held opponent.

Treasure: Finch carries the key to the locked chest, which contains Fario's gear and a sack of 300 gp (each coin minted with a jester's grinning visage).

Development: If captured or dominated, Finch can disclose Fario's location and point to the secret door leading to area **B9**. With enough coaxing, Finch reveals that he knows who's been helping the Last Laugh mint their coins; the merchant Adrick Garthûn. Finch can even be persuaded to give up the identity of the Last Laugh guildmaster—a half-fiend named Velior Thazo. Finch is quick to point out that Jil doesn't like Velior. She has spurned his sordid advances on multiple occasions. Finch does not know about the secret summit meeting at House Rhiavadi. Although Finch enjoys Jil's good humor and her company, his loyalty to her quickly evaporates if forced to choose between his life and hers.

B9. INTERROGATION CHAMBER (EL 16)

The secret door in the north wall is trapped (see Trap, below).

A male half-elf lies face down on a wooden torture rack in the middle of this windowless fifteen-foot-square, fifteen-foot-high room. Magical light from an unseen source above the rafters paints the walls and floor in dark shadows. The wooden rack is shaped like an "X" with iron manacles binding the half-elf's wrists and ankles. The half-elf's back is striped with crimson lacerations. Standing next to the prisoner is a young woman in black garb with half her face painted black, the other half painted white. She holds a dripping blade near the half-elf's throat with one gloved hand and the handle of a silvery whip in the other. Something about her stance suggests a catlike readiness, and she smiles triumphantly.

The black-clad figure is Jil, a respected member of the Last Laugh. She has whipped her helpless captive into near-unconsciousness. She has readied an action to coldly plunge her short sword into Fario's throat if

the PCs make any hostile move toward her. If forced to take this step, she says, "He's yours. I'm done with him." Jil hopes this brutal act will enrage the PCs enough to ignore the Trap on the secret door and give her a chance to escape.

Creatures: Fario is barely conscious (his current hit points are at 0) or dead, but Jil remains a threat to the PCs. Finch the halfling (see area **B8**) might also be here. The manacles binding Fario's wrists and ankles can be unclasped as a full-round action. Jil's readied action isn't a coup de grace, and she can still miss her target if she rolls a natural 1 on her attack roll. Likewise, she can inflict a critical hit if she rolls well. Chances are she only inflicts 1d6 points of damage (and possible poisoning) on him—not enough to kill him, but enough to deliver a mortal wound.

Jil, female human rogue 5/assassin 8: hp 66; see Appendix 4.

Tactics: Given time to prepare, Jil casts *magic circle against good* and *spider climb* on herself. If she doesn't have time to cast spells, she uses her ability to hide in plain sight to avoid detection until 3 rounds have passed and she can attempt a death attack with her poisoned short sword. While studying her victim, she can cast her silent *spider climb* and silent *true strike* spells. Jil uses her *+1 whip* to make disarm and trip attempts but prefers hit-and-run tactics to a straight fight. She saves her *dimension door* spell for a quick escape, fleeing from the safe house if reduced to half her hit points. If cornered and unable to escape, she surrenders, hoping to trade information for her life and waiting for any opportunity to escape her captors. Jil confesses that her mission was to determine Fario's affiliations, locate others like him, and dispose of all of them.

The characters might know Jil from their brush with her in Chapters One and Two. Treat her attitude as indifferent unless the characters have angered her in the past. If she has struck up a friendship with one of the characters, she avoids harming that character. Jil has no love for Jester Velior Thazo, one of the guildmasters of the Last Laugh, and a character toward whom she's favorably disposed can persuade her to betray the Last Laugh with a successful DC 25 Diplomacy check. Jil knows that Velior is attending a secret conference at House Rhiavadi, meeting with Lady Thifirane Rhiavadi and several others to discuss the future of Cauldron and the Last Laugh's role in "the new world order." She doesn't know where the Last Laugh is minting jester coins, or who runs the operation.

If he fled to this chamber, Finch the halfling casts *invisibility* on himself and uses the torture rack for cover as he targets characters with his wand or his spells.

Trap: Two scythe-like blades slash any creature that steps through the secret door. The blades are hidden in compartments on each side of the secret door and are coated with dragon bile poison.

Slashing Blades Trap: CR 9; mechanical; location trigger; automatic reset; hidden lock bypass (Search DC 25, Open Lock DC 30); Atk +16 melee (2d4+8 plus poison/x4, 2 scythes); poison (dragon bile, Fortitude DC 26 negates, initial 3d6 Str, secondary none); Search DC 24; Disable Device DC 21.

Development: Unless the characters catch Jil by surprise, she probably has time to kill Fario before they arrive on the scene. If the characters retrieve Fario's body and they lack the will or the means to bring him back to life, Meerthan brings him to the temple of St. Cuthbert and pays Jenya for a *raise dead* spell.

If Fario is saved or brought back to life, he tells the characters everything he knows about Lady Rhiavadi and her estate. If Fario dies, this information comes from Meerthan instead (see Meeting Meerthan for details).

- House Rhiavadi is an imperious structure with four squat towers, one capped with an observatory. A set of heavy oak doors on the ground floor provides the only obvious entrance, although the building has many windows on the first and second floors.
- Members of the town guard, including half-orc mercenaries hired by Lord Vhalantru, have been seen entering and leaving the manor at all hours of the day and night. Some of the half-orcs head straight to House Vhalantru after leaving House Rhiavadi, and vice versa. Sometimes they stay inside for hours.
- Lady Rhiavadi has not been seen entering or leaving her house in weeks, although members of her household staff (all halflings) come and go during the day. She must have a dozen or more servants.
- Lady Rhiavadi has several shady guests staying at her manor.
- A comely yet pale half-elf clad in scant, tight-fitting black garments arrived at House Rhiavadi last night by horse-drawn coach. She wore a cloak of black shadow that fluttered about her, even though the night air was still. Her coach had blackened windows and sped off into the night after dropping off the woman. She moved with grace up to the doors, whereupon a smiling halfling dressed in a black suit ushered her inside.
- A pair of well-armed humans—perhaps mercenaries or adventurers—arrived at House Rhiavadi two days ago. One of them carried a black mace capped with an iron skull and a heavy shield with the symbol of Nerull emblazoned on it.
- Lady Rhiavadi's other guests include a contingent of five well-armed dwarves who arrived three days ago. One of them was a white-haired, white-bearded dwarf wearing a black leather half-mask that covers his right eye. Set into the mask's eye socket was a black gem. A successful DC 15 Knowledge (local) check identifies the dwarf as Adrick Garthûn.

Meerthan encourages the PCs to investigate what's going on at House Rhiavadi as soon as possible. He and the other Striders do not accompany the PCs, since Meerthan would rather keep these agents close at his side for now in case the Last Laugh or other enemies

strike at them again. Likewise, he tells the PCs that he and the other Striders can mount a rescue operation if they are captured. At your option, one of the Strider agents could accompany the PCs to House Rhiavadi, especially if you feel they could use the extra help in dealing with the dangerous encounters that wait for them there.

PARTY AT HOUSE RHIAVADI

Lady Thifirane Rhiavadi, Vhalantru's scheming confidante and a high-ranking Cagewright, lives in a formidable manor on Obsidian Avenue. Known for hosting outlandish gatherings, Thifirane has invited some of the realm's worst villains to her estate to learn about the Cagewrights' plans for Cauldron and to tempt them into joining forces with the Cagewrights and their fiendish allies once Cauldron has fallen. The PCs can learn of the secret gathering from Jil (see Chapter One) or more reliable sources (such as the Striders of Fharlanghn). This section describes House Rhiavadi and its current occupants.

Although this section comes before the one describing House Vhalantru, the characters might very well decide to investigate House Vhalantru first. Once they have finished pursuing Vhalantru, they may decide to confront Lady Rhiavadi and her guests.

HOUSE RHIAVADI FEATURES

Like many buildings in Cauldron, House Rhiavadi has walls composed of gray and black volcanic rock. The building has two stories and four squat towers. Three of the towers have pointed spire caps. A domed observatory made of alabaster and glass surmounts the fourth tower. A large portico supported by four marble pillars covers the main entrance doors. Each pillar is carved to resemble a dragon. The windows of House Rhiavadi are made of frosted glass set in heavy copper frames, with locked wooden shutters covering them at night.

Unless noted otherwise, *continual flame* spells illuminate the manor's chambers. Doors are of sturdy wooden construction with ornate bronze hinges and fittings. Moreover, permanent *unseen servants* open the interior doors whenever one or more creatures approach within 5 feet and close the portals once the creatures have passed through; the exceptions to this rule are the front doors (area **R1**) and the doors barring Lady Rhiavadi's private quarters (areas **R15–R18**), which are *arcane locked* (at 13th level). The ceilings in House Rhiavadi are 15 feet high unless noted otherwise.

Strong Wooden Doors: 2 in. thick; hardness 5; hp 20; break DC 25 (DC 35 if *arcane locked*).

Shuttered Windows: 1 in. thick; hardness 5; hp 8; break DC 18; good lock (Hardness 15; hp 30; Open Lock DC 30).

R1. FRONT DOORS

House Rhiavadi's front doors have an *arcane lock* spell cast upon them (caster level 13th).

Each door sports a bronze knocker shaped like a balled fist. A bas-relief of a two-headed raven is carved above the architrave.

If the PCs knock on the front doors, one of the half-orc guards in area **R2** opens the doors and tries to frighten them off, saying only that Lady Rhiavadi isn't interested in anything they have to offer. However, the guard isn't especially bright, and characters can trick their way inside using Bluff, by pretending to be either late guests or Lord Vhalantru's emissaries. The guard is naturally suspicious and gets a +5 circumstance bonus on his Sense Motive check to oppose any Bluff check.

R2. MAIN HALL (EL 10)

Soft music fills this opulent, sparsely furnished hall. A few chairs and plants stand against the walls beneath brightly colored tapestries. A five-foot-wide, ten-foot-tall spiraling column of butterflies floats in the middle of the hall, moving to the sound of the music.

The butterflies and the music are elements of the same *permanent image* spell (caster level 13th).

Creatures: Four half-orc fighters on loan from Zarn Kyass have taken up semi-permanent resident in House Rhiavadi as guards. Generally, two of them stand guard in this hall. Thifirane ensures their loyalty with 500 gp per month to stand around and look impressive. Each half-orc carries a key to one of the locked chests in area **R14**, where they relax when not on shift. The two half-orcs on guard when the PCs arrive are named Blackspine and Wormspit; the two resting in area **R14** are named Kralk and Yaughr.

Blackspine and Wormspit, half-orc fighter 8 (2): hp 59 each; see Appendix 4.

Development: Unless the PCs can fast talk their way around the guards, they'll have to fight their way through them to get into the house via the front door. If combat does break out, the clashing swords and battle cries of the half-orcs are loud enough to alert the entire household, including Thifirane and her guests (see area **R29**).

R3. DRAWING ROOM

This cozy chamber has a pair of velvet-lined divans, each decorated with a soothing floral motif. Roses and violets grow from the carpet around each, and the air is scented with their fragrance. A delicate end table sits next to each divan.

The roses and scent in the air are illusions.

Treasure: Each end table contains a single tiny drawer, in which are stashed a dozen or so sheets of gold-rimmed stationary, tiny vials of ink, and several silver writing pens. Both sets are worth 500 gp.

R4. CLOAKROOM

Pegs line the walls and clothing racks stand on the floor of this high-ceilinged cloakroom.

Three dwarf-sized cloaks (one of which is quite a bit nicer than the others) hang on pegs here. Each cloak is emblazoned with a stylized symbol of a volcano. A DC 15 Knowledge (local) checks identifies these symbols as the logo for Garthûn Imports. A long coat hangs on one of the racks—this one bears an exquisite embroidery of a flying kingfisher clutching a scroll in its beak. A successful DC 20 Knowledge (local) check identifies this as the symbol of a messenger service based in Kingfisher Hollow called "Kingfisher Sendings."

Treasure: A DC 25 Search of the nice cloak finds a hidden inner pocket, in which are kept 5 cp, 5 sp, 5 gp, and 5 pp—all minted with the Last Laugh markings. Adrick keeps these handy to show off at social gatherings with friends whom he trusts with the knowledge of his coin-minting projects.

R5. LAVATORY AND BOUDOIR

This large chamber is thickly carpeted. The walls bear remarkable scenes of sylvan forests that seem almost lifelike; the leaves on the trees seem to move in a gentle breeze, and now and then the half-seen shapes of cavorting fey can be glimpsed out of the corner of the eye. Wicker folding screens stand throughout the room, along with padded chairs, dressing tables, and some discretely hidden chamberpots.

The walls are *permanent images*; the longer one studies them, the more it becomes obvious that there are numerous nymphs and satyrs frolicking just out of sight.

Treasure: The four chamberpots are of carved obsidian from local mines and gilt in gold and silver. The servants keep them immaculately clean. Each one is worth 250 gp.

R6. DINING HALL

This large chamber has a hardwood floor polished to a glass-like sheen. A huge banquet table, its surface covered with blue silk cloth, sits in the middle of the room. Place settings for a dozen people have been laid out, and a towering mahogany silverware hutch sits against the east wall. To the south, a massive marble fireplace looms, a fire burning merrily within. Several small statuettes sit on the mantel.

Treasure: The silverware set kept in the hutch is of exquisite make, and as a set is worth 1,400 gp. The statuettes on the mantel are all of cavorting nymphs and satyrs, depicted in shocking poses and made of silver and gold. There are seven statuettes in all, each worth 500 gp.

R7. SITTING ROOM

A low table sits in the middle of this room, surrounded by six stuffed chairs with high backs. Blue velvet curtains hang from the walls, and the carpeted floor is thick and cushiony.

Treasure: A DC 25 Search of the west wall finds a cleverly hidden panel that can be pushed aside to reveal a narrow cavity in the wall. Within are eight different bottles of rare and expensive wine and liquor. Each bottle is worth 500 gp—if opened, the value immediately drops to 50 gp.

R8. TEA ROOM

A delicate circular glass table, its edge gilt in silver and gold, sits in the middle of this room. Four polished oak chairs with velvet cushions sit around the table. A sideboard against the wall displays a collection of a dozen pottery tea-containers, each with a differently themed floral lid.

Treasure: The tea stored in the twelve containers is all imported (at relatively great expense) from distant lands. Each container holds 200 gp worth of tea leaves. The sideboard's drawers hold delicate tea cups and saucers; as a set, these are worth 500 gp. The glass table is the greatest treasure in the room. Worth 1,200 gp, the table weighs 70 pounds and is exceptionally fragile.

R9. KITCHEN

This is a well-stocked and well organized kitchen. Large tables for food preparation fill the central area, and the walls are covered with counters and cupboards. A massive marble fireplace sits against the west wall.

At any time, 1d3–1 servants are toiling in here, preparing for their mistresses' next meal.

R10. SERVANTS' QUARTERS

Three small bunk beds are crammed into this room, along with a single table with two small chairs.

Lady Rhiavadi's household staff consists of six middle-aged halflings employed as cooks, maids, and manservants. They are formally dressed, well treated, and free to go where they please. They never question the lady of the house or her orders, and they wouldn't think to betray her. In truth, all of Thifirane's halfling servants are simulacra, created using the *simulacrum* spell. (The models upon which the simulacra are based have been *baleful polymorphed* into animals and caged in area **R18**.) Each simulacrum is treated as a 1st-level commoner with 4 hit points; it is destroyed

if reduced to 0 hit points, turning into a small mound of cold, wet slush. Thifirane can't abide people destroying her simulacra, as they cost precious time and XP to create.

Thifirane's servants constantly move about the manor, performing mundane errands and chores. They occasionally retire to their quarters for a time, usually during the night when Lady Rhiavadi needs some private time to herself. While a simulacrum can communicate, it generally prefers not to.

R11. PANTRY AND LARDER

The walls of this room are thick with wooden shelves, each bearing dozens of jars, metal containers, and baskets of food and cooking utensils. Against the southern wall is a large wooden and metal trunk, almost large enough for a person to lie down in.

Treasure: The trunk is cool to the touch. Within are cuts of meat, dairy products, and other perishable foodstuffs. The inner walls of the trunk are plated with sheets of blue ice, a rare form of magical ice that never melts and can be worked like iron. The interior of the icebox remains at a constant 20°F. The icebox is worth 1,000 gp, but weighs 300 pounds and is too large to fit through the room's door (Thifirane transported it in here with the aid of a *shrink item* spell).

R12. TOWER FOYER

This room is bare and austere compared to the extravagance present in most of the other rooms in the manor. A door once allowed access to area **R9** from here, but the previous occupants of the manor took the door out after they had one too many incidents of the help stealing wine from area **R13**. Thifirane doesn't have problems like that with her simulacrum servants, but never bothered to put in a door since it's easy enough for her to *dimension door* in here when she needs something and can't be bothered to go up and around and down the stairs.

R13. WINE CELLAR

A large wine rack sits against the northern wall of this cool room, a bottle resting gently in each space. A single oak coffin sits on the floor in the middle of the room.

The coffin belongs to Mhad, a vampire from Shatterhorn that Thifirane invited to this meeting. Mhad had the coffin shipped out here several weeks ago in anticipation of her visit. Inside, the coffin is partially filled with moist soil that reeks of the jungle. A DC 20 Knowledge (religion) check is enough for a character to realize that an earth-filled coffin like this is a sure sign of vampires.

Treasure: There are 16 bottles of wine of various vintages on the rack. Each bottle is worth 100 gp, unopened.

R14. HALF-ORC BARRACKS (EL 10)

This room contains two large wood-framed bunk beds. A pair of locked wooden chests rest at the foot of each bed.

Two of the beds are occupied (see Creatures, below), while the other two are empty and unmade. The chests contain the Treasure.

Creatures: Two half-orc fighters sleep on beds in this chamber. The other two beds belong to the half-orcs standing guard in area **R2** (the guards work alternating 8-hour shifts). Lying next to their beds are their weapons and armor. Donning a suit of chainmail takes 4 minutes, so if the half-orcs are roused by sounds of alarm, they simply grab their weapons and run to battle.

Kralk and Yaughr, half-orc fighter 8 (2): hp 59 each; see Appendix 4.

Treasure: Thifirane pays her four half-orc guards extremely well for their service and loyalty. Each of the four chests contains 2,500 gp.

R15. MASTER TOWER FOYER

This thickly carpeted room is empty of furnishings, yet is still oddly comfortable since the muted sounds of violin and flute music waft gently on the air, along with the pleasant scent of wildflowers.

Thifirane's shield guardian normally stands guard in the center of this room. The music and scents in the room are provided by a *permanent illusion.*

R16. MASTER BATHROOM

This opulent room has a polished marble floor that is strangely warm to the touch. Gentle warm breezes waft through the place, carrying with them soft sounds of birdsong and the scent of flowers. A marble counter with a silver washbasin atop it sits to the south, next to a large mirror. The most impressive feature of the room is the large marble tub against the east wall. Gilt with gold and mithral, the tub looks like it could accommodate two people with ease. The tub's rim is decorated with a floral pattern, and a dozen brightly hued songbirds hop and preen on its rim. A shelf at one end is cluttered with numerous vials of colorful liquid and powder. To the north of the tub is an exquisite rock garden, complete with miniature waterfall and tiny miniature trees growing in beds of thick, rich soil.

The heated stone floor of this room is created by a minor magical effect Thifirane put into place to combat the unpleasantness of cold floors in the morning. The rock garden to the north looks like it should take up a sizable area, but this is in fact a *permanent illusion*

designed to make the bathroom look like it takes up the space that is in fact occupied by area **R18**.

Treasure: The tub is a decadent magic item. Any creature who lays within it can command it to fill with water or to empty. She can also control the water's temperature, and can even activate an *unseen servant* to aid in washing. The birds that hop on its rim are *permanent illusions*. The tub itself weighs 1,400 pounds, but is worth 4,000 gp.

The various bath salts and oils on the counter are worth 200 gp in all.

R17. MASTER BEDCHAMBER (EL 3)

This posh bedroom contains a canopy bed, a full-length mirror in a freestanding wooden frame, a small writing desk with matching chair, and several wardrobes and tables covered with small decanters of perfume and fine wine.

The wardrobes are filled with rich gowns and noble outfits, shelves covered with fashionable hats and exotic wigs (many of them artfully designed to hide Thifirane's third eye). The furnishings are plush yet tasteful, and a tapestry helps conceal a secret door (Search DC 25) leading to area **R18**.

One of the tables is cluttered with papers, many of which are crumpled. On these papers, Thifirane has been working out what her speech to her guests should entail. If the PCs miss her speech in area **R29**, they can get the gist of it by looking through these notes.

Trap: The master bedroom has one window that looks out to the northeast. Thifirane has placed a *fire trap* on the window, set to detonate if the window is opened.

***Fire Trap*:** CR 3; spell; spell trigger; no reset; spell effect (*fire trap*, 13th-level caster, 1d4+13 fire damage, Reflex DC 18 half); Search DC 27; Disable Device DC 27.

Treasure: There are 14 noble outfits in the wardrobes, each worth 75 gp. The mirror is worth 200 gp but weighs 35 pounds. The eight vials of perfume are worth 50 gp each, save for one which is a rare tincture distilled from dryad's blood—it's worth 700 gp. The three bottles of wine have been opened, and are only worth 50 gp each.

R18. SECRET STUDY

This room contains a large desk carved with fancy scrollwork and cluttered with papers and scrolls, a tall-backed chair, and six small cages resting atop small tables or hanging from the ceiling by steel chains.

All of the cages are bell-shaped and locked (Open Lock DC 20), and each one contains a different animal: bat, lizard, monkey, rat, raven, and toad. All of these caged animals are actually people whom Thifirane has transformed into animals using *baleful polymorph*. Some of them have acquired the mental abilities of the animals, while others still retain their original mental faculties and can express themselves, albeit crudely.

The caged animals are actually six 2nd-level halfling commoners kidnapped by Thifirane and used as models for her simulacrum servants. They are grateful if rescued but have no reward money to offer their saviors. They are willing to work off their debt, however. Thallo Quickstride, the halfling polymorphed into a monkey, retains his Intelligence and can articulate his feelings using gestures. When he sees the characters, Thallo points excitedly to the raven's cage, hoping the characters will find Thifirane's hidden spellbook and a spell to turn him and the others back into halflings.

A character who collects the notes on Thifirane's desk finds them to be written in Draconic. Anyone who reads through them finds that they contain a wealth of knowledge about the Cagewrights. A character who utilizes these notes while researching questions about this organization gains a +6 circumstance bonus on any associated Knowledge check. In addition, a fair amount of these notes seem to pertain to the design of magic items and illusions. Characters might recognize many of the illusions that exist in this manor here, along with some of the manor's more unique features (like the tub in area **R16**). The notes also detail several of Thifirane's personal magic items, with particular attention paid to an object that must be a construct of sorts. A successful DC 25 Knowledge (arcana) check is enough to correctly interpret the notes and sketches. These notes are for one of Thifirane's most devious inventions—the *simulacrum suit* worn by Vhalantru. It was the creation of this item that earned her a special place in the beholder's heart, for without this suit, Vhalantru's plans for taking over Cauldron would have been far more difficult. The notes make it clear that a person could use a *simulacrum suit* to disguise himself as someone else, and that the disguise is specifically engineered to defeat magical detection (such as by *true seeing*). The notes also make clear the fantastic cost of the item, and that Thifirane has only made one so far as a result. She indicates she has given the suit to someone she refers to only as "V" in return for ample favors and payments. Nowhere do the notes mention that Vhalantru is a beholder.

Treasure: A secret compartment in the base of the raven's cage holds Thifirane's spellbook (see her stat block for details). Finding the secret compartment requires a successful DC 30 Search check.

R19. UPSTAIRS PARLOR

This room is lit by dozens of flickering candles that line the walls, placed artfully around five large paintings. A seven-foot-tall suit of exquisitely crafted full plate stands to the east. The suit of armor holds a bastard sword before it, the point resting on a marble base and its gauntleted hands draped over its hilt.

The candles are all lit with tiny *continual flames*.

Treasure: The five paintings are all landscapes of notable locations around the region. The theme that ties them together is the fact that these landscapes are of the more dangerous areas in the region. One depicts the Demonskar, one the jungle-choked ruins of Shatterhorn, one the looming ruin of the Spire of Long Shadows, and one the frozen facade of the Keep of Jarl Khurok. The fifth painting may seem out of place, as it is a rendition of the Cauldron skyline, as viewed from the northeastern rim. To the PCs, who have endured countless perils within Cauldron's walls, it might not seem out of place at all. Each of the five paintings is worth 750 gp, but are rather bulky to move since each measures 3 feet by 5 feet.

The suit of armor is sized for a human female (Thifirane, in fact, although she never wears the armor and had it made purely on a whim). Both the suit of full plate and the bastard sword are masterwork.

R20. TOWER FOYER

This room is thickly carpeted, and is lit by a pair of lanterns that hang from the ceiling on fine chains.

R21. GALLERY

The walls of this gently curving room are hung with numerous paintings. Each depicts either a serene sylvan scene or cavorting and capering fey creatures.

Thifirane has a particular obsession with fey, and has collected paintings of these creatures and the places in which they live for many years. The paintings on display here are her favorites.

Treasure: Not unsurprisingly, the paintings on display here are also quite expensive. There are 14 paintings in all. Each is worth an average of 250 gp.

R22. VIEWING ROOM

A flight of stairs arcs up to a floor above, while to the south, a pair of high-backed chairs overlooks a large window displaying Cauldron's magnificent skyline.

Thifirane often retires to this room to relax and watch the city below.

R23. OBSERVATORY

This observatory's geodesic dome is made of white alabaster with great shards of glass set in triangular bronze window frames. A large telescope made of wood with brass fittings dominates the middle of the room, its lens pointed up at the sky.

Bulky and awkward, the telescope cannot be removed from the room without first dismantling it (a process that takes 1 hour). Although Thifirane has no interest in astronomy, she often leads guests to the observatory and impresses them with the view of Cauldron by day or the stars by night. In addition to the telescope, the observatory contains some chairs, plants, and other décor.

Treasure: The 800 pound telescope is worth 4,000 gp if transported to a buyer without damaging it.

R24. GUEST TOWER FOYER

This foyer is thickly carpeted, and furnished with a wooden table and two chairs.

Both guest towers have identical features and furnishings. The southern tower is currently used by Khyron and Melagorn, while the southwest tower has been occupied by Zarn Kyass for several months.

R25. GUEST'S BATHROOM

This stone-floored bathroom is furnished with a low marble counter and washbasin and a large marble tub.

Both guest bathrooms, while well made, are pale imitations of the one in area **R16**.

R26. GUEST'S BEDCHAMBER

A pair of large beds sits at either end of this large room. Between them sits a table, four chairs, and a dresser.

The southwest bedchamber, ironically, is in much better shape than the southern one—Khyron and Melagorn are much more slovenly than Zarn Kyass.

R27. LIBRARY

This relatively small library is still warm, comfortable, and well stocked with numerous large and interesting-looking books.

Thifirane maintains a library of useful reference materials covering a broad range of topics. Characters using the library as a reference gain a +2 bonus on the following skill checks: Craft (alchemy), Craft (blacksmithing), Craft (locksmithing), Knowledge (arcana), Knowledge (dungeoneering), Knowledge (geography), Knowledge (history), and Knowledge (nobility and royalty). The library has a significant number of texts relating to the planes, and these references grant a +4 bonus on Knowledge (the planes) checks. None of the books in the library are magical.

In addition to several laden bookshelves, the library contains a reading desk, a chair, and a lovingly drawn map of Cauldron and environs mounted to one wall in a heavy wooden frame.

R28. CONSERVATORY

This carpeted room is dominated by a large mahogany and ivory harpsichord. A glass cabinet to the north contains a large collection of flutes, violins, and horns.

Treasure: All of the instruments here (7 in all, counting the harpsichord) are of masterwork quality.

R29. BALLROOM (EL 20)

The floor of this grand ballroom has black, lavender, and ivory tiles that spiral in toward the center of the room. Directly above the spiral's core hangs a dazzling crystal chandelier lit by magic flames. A tapestry hanging on the north wall has a dark symbol stitched into it. The symbol resembles an eye impaled on an upward-pointing arrow. Beneath the tapestry stands a narrow table covered with a magnificent arrangement of crystal wine goblets, each one filled with some sweet vintage. A semicircle of seven black chairs faces the tapestry and the table of goblets.

Thifirane

The main encounter awaiting the PCs in House Rhiavadi occurs here. Read this encounter thoroughly before attempting to run it. The high number of NPCs and monsters means that a battle in here could last a long time, and likely spills out into adjacent areas of the manor.

This encounter assumes that the PCs arrive just as Thifirane gathers her guests and discloses the Cagewrights' secret designs for Cauldron. It doesn't matter what time of the day the gathering occurs, but if the characters arrive at some other time, you will need to modify the encounter accordingly. For instance, you could alter the encounter so that the NPCs haven't gathered yet and are spread throughout the manor, or you could assume that the meeting has concluded and some of the bad guys are preparing to depart. Regardless, the characters should still feel daunted by the number of foes. Fortunately for them, not all of Thifirane's guests are prepared (or eager) for a fight with high-level adventurers.

Thifirane has turned her ballroom into a meeting hall where she intends to reveal the Cagewright's plans to her guests. The seven chairs are enough to accommodate (from left to right) Adrick Garthûn, Khyron Bonesworn, Melagorn Thureq, Mhad, Vervil Ashmantle, Velior Thazo, and Zarn Kyass. Adrick's two dwarven bodyguards stand by the southwest doors, while Vervil's babau demons have positioned themselves near the south doors. Thifirane's shield guardian remains by the north set of doors, while Thifirane herself stands next to the table of wine goblets, facing her guests.

Any number of things can happen once the characters make it this far. If they announce their presence and show their true faces, Thifirane recognizes them immediately; the PCs are famous heroes, after all. If the characters wear disguises, Thifirane has a chance to see through their disguises (see the Disguise skill description, pages 72–73 of the *Player's Handbook*). The characters might pass themselves off as a band of evil adventurers who heard about the secret gathering at House Rhiavadi, or they might pretend to be emissaries or acquaintances of Lord Vhalantru. They might also announce themselves by kicking in the door, drawing weapons, and taking the fight to Thifirane in her own house!

If Thifirane has an opportunity to formally address her guests, and the characters do not immediately intervene, read or paraphrase the following:

Lady Rhiavadi lets the wine goblet that she is holding drift from her hand. It floats next to her, suspended in the air as if held by some unseen servant. A golden weasel with beady black eyes slinks across the floor toward her, and she scoops it up and begins stroking it affectionately. Her voice fills the hall as she welcomes her honored guests and shares her chilling vision of the future.

"More than three centuries ago, the demodands sent a few of their kind to our reality," she says. "Disguised as humans, they mated with humans and other denizens of this plane. Most of their spawn were stillborn, but a few survived. They in turn mated and produced the next generation with demodand blood. As the generations passed, all obvious traces of their demodand ancestry faded away. Today, we recognize this

sacred lineage by an invisible birthmark: the sign of Carceri!"

At this point, Lady Rhiavadi gestures to the symbol on the tapestry behind her, which begins to writhe. "We call these honored descendants 'the Shackleborn,' and their sacrifice is the key to unlocking a portal to Othrys, the first realm of Carceri. Here, demodands and countless other fiends have languished for near-eternity. In Cauldron, we have found more Shackleborn than anywhere else in the realm, and in Cauldron, we have the perfect conditions for the ritual of planar junction."

The tapestry's writhing rune suddenly grows, becoming a twisted black tree with metal cages dangling from its iron branches. "For the past several years, the Cagewrights have labored in secret to build thirteen soulcages to drain the life energy from the Shackleborn. These soulcages hang from an artifact called the Tree of Shackled Souls—the device that gathers the life energy needed to unlock the prison doors of Carceri. All of the preparations are now complete. The Shackleborn are safely in our hands and ready to give their lives to change the world forever. All that remains is the ritual itself, and it is already underway."

The black tree bursts into flames and melts into nothingness. "Once the ritual is complete, Cauldron won't be the same quiet little burg it is today. It will be the font from which the darkness gushes forth, a roiling pit filled with doom and despair for our enemies. Almost immediately, fiendish armies will sweep across the land and lay waste to surrounding territories, enslaving the weak and carving out new dominions. Naturally, we expect resistance on all sides, and that's where you come in."

As Lady Rhiavadi's revels draw to an end, a fat humanoid with boarlike tusks speaks up. "All eyes will be on Cauldron," he chuckles. "We'll have their worst fears to toy with."

"Precisely," replies Thifirane. "As kings raise armies to confront the legions of Carceri, your slavers, merchants, mercenaries, spies, and assassins will methodically search for weaknesses from within, soften their resolve, and convince them that their only true choices are to yield or die. And there is one group in particular that has been nipping at my masters' heels for far too long. Your organizations have tangled with them before... you know whom I speak of. I trust that, as your first services to the Cagewrights, you can see to these meddling gnats with all possible haste."

If the PCs interrupt Thifirane's speech, they might lose valuable clues about the Cagewright's plans. Likewise, the PCs can miss the speech entirely if they simply attack the group the instant they reach the room. In this case, the PCs can learn much of the above information

Vervil Ashmantle

via spells like *speak with dead*, or by finding the documents in Thifirane's bedchamber that outline her speech.

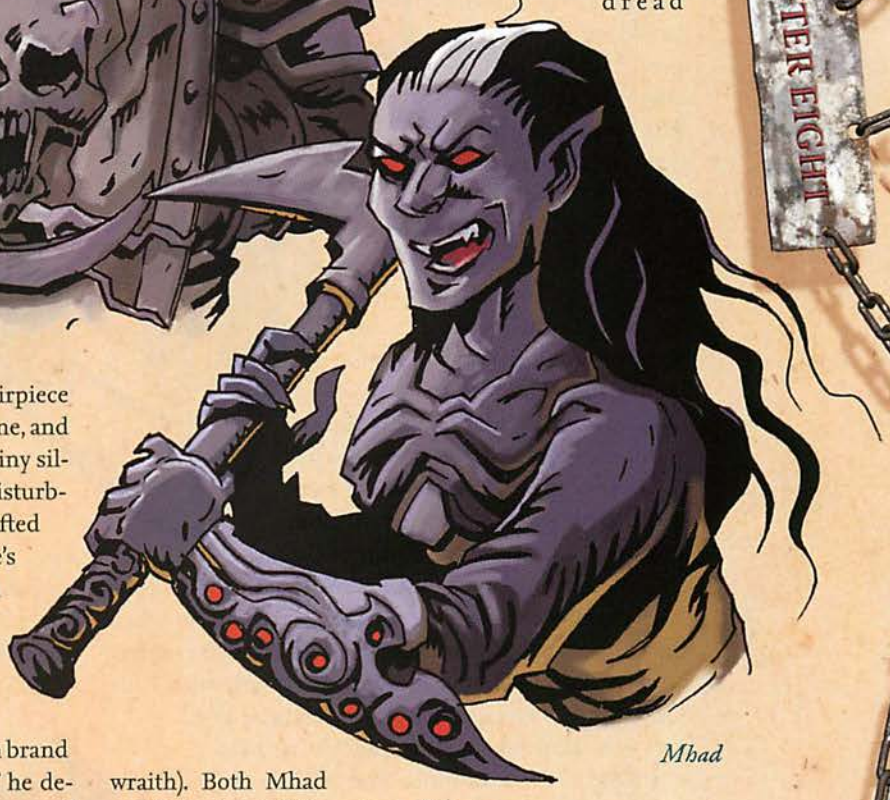
Once her speech has concluded, Thifirane mentions what each of her guests stands to gain by joining the Cagewrights until, finally, the gathering devolves into a half-dozen or more small conversations. Thifirane isn't prepared to say anything more about the ritual of planar junction or the *Tree of Shackled Souls*, assuring her guests that some level of secrecy must be maintained.

Creatures: Thifirane Rhiavadi and her guests are described below.

Thifirane Rhiavadi: A 37-year-old lady of fine breeding,

Adrick Garthûn

Khyron Bonesworn



Mhad

Thifirane wears an elegant yet elaborate black gown decorated with arcane glyphs stitched in silver thread. The dress has a strange asymmetry to it—the latest fashion among the noblewomen of Sasserine, no doubt. A bizarre hairpiece holds her golden-brown hair up above her neckline, and around her neck hangs a pendant shaped like a tiny silver cage (actually a *shield guardian amulet*). More disturbing than her attire is the living beholder eye grafted to her forehead—a gift from Vhalantru. Thifirane's shield guardian—another gift, this time from her fellow Cagewrights—stands no more than 10 feet from its mistress.

Adrick Garthûn: Adrick is an unscrupulous dwarven merchant who provides the gold and silver that the Last Laugh needs to mint their own brand of coinage. For his contributions to "the cause," he desires exclusive mining rights in the mountains around Cauldron. He appears as a snowy-haired, snowy-bearded dwarf of 90 years wearing a black leather half-mask with a translucent black gem set into the eyehole. The mask covers up an eye he lost in battle. His good eye is crisp blue, like a frozen lake, and he has a pale complexion. He is fond of smiling, revealing that all of his teeth are made of gold. Adrick is joined by two bodyguards, Daxavalt and Kerg.

Khyron Bonesworn: The leader of a band of evil adventurers called the Necrocants, Khyron is a powerful up-and-coming cleric of the god of death. He aspires to rule the city of Sasserine and displace the high priest of the city's hidden temple of Nerull. Khyron is a sensationally handsome and charismatic 26-year-old man with short black hair and creepy yellow eyes. He wears spiked full plate and carries a heavy shield adorned with the symbol of his god. He wields a black heavy mace with a black, skull-shaped head. He is rarely seen without his companion Melagorn Thureq, a gaunt figure with long white hair clad in black robes.

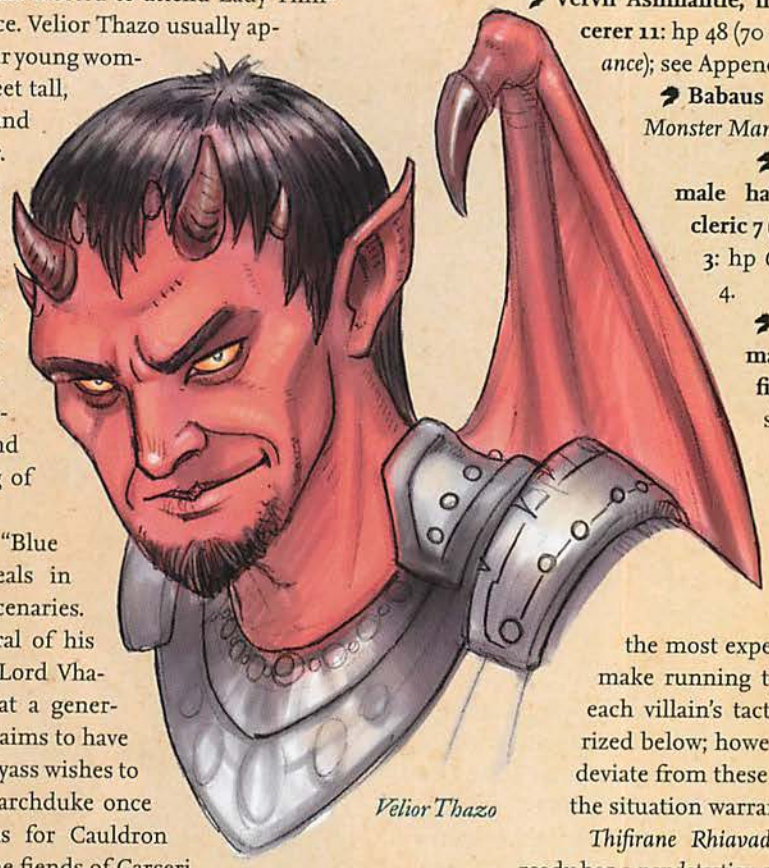
Mhad: This 330-year-old half-elf vampire has long black hair with a silvery-white stripe running through it. Although breathtaking in life, her alabaster-white visage is now a twisted mask of utter contempt, and her eyes burn crimson. She wears an elegant but tattered black gown and silvery-gray bracers studded with red bloodstones. The black cloak of shadow she appears to wear is actually her traveling companion, Hate (a dread wraith). Both Mhad and Hate inhabit the ruins of Shatterhorn east of Cauldron, sharing it with a secret coven of Cagewrights. Mhad wants the Cagewrights and their fiendish masters to help her annihilate a widespread order of lawful good monks called the Order of the Silver Dream that has tried and failed to destroy her several times over the past 200 years.

Vervil Ashmantle: The self-proclaimed "Lord Ashmantle" is a corpulent, mean swine of a tiefling, not to mention a notorious slaver who deals primarily in surface races. Fat in all the wrong places, he traces his abyssal ancestry back to a nalfeshnee demon. His bloodshot eyes are sunk deep into the folds of his face, and his lower jaw sports a pair of stumpy, four-inch-long yellow tusks. He wears a gold ring on one tusk and a black platinum ring scribed with silver runes on the other. He hides his bloated body beneath elegant purple robes threaded with gems. Two babau demons serve as his traveling companions and henchmen "on the road." Vervil wants to legitimize and rule the slave trade, and

the only way that can happen is by allying with the Cagewrights and their fiendish masters.

Velior Thazo: The guildmaster of the Last Laugh, also known as the Jester, has elected to attend Lady Thifirane's secret conference. Velior Thazo usually appears in public as a dour young woman standing barely 5 feet tall, with a slender build and short, curly-red hair. When not hiding his true form, Velior appears as a bat-winged humanoid with claws, fangs, short horns, and smoldering orange eyes. An uncomfortable tension still rankles between him and Zarn over the burning of Minuta's Board.

Zarn Kyass: The "Blue Duke" Zarn Kyass deals in ogre and half-orc mercenaries. He has provided several of his finest mercenaries to Lord Vhalantru and Cauldron at a generous discount, and he claims to have countless more. Zarn Kyass wishes to be made a general or archduke once the Cagewrights' plans for Cauldron come to fruition and the fiends of Carceri are unleashed upon the land. Zarn Kyass uses his *polymorph* spell-like ability to conceal his true form when traveling abroad, but within House Rhiavadi he prefers his true form. He enjoys a special rapport with Lady Thifirane and has secretly grown infatuated with her—a weakness he guards well. He has been staying at her manor for several weeks as a house guest.



Velior Thazo

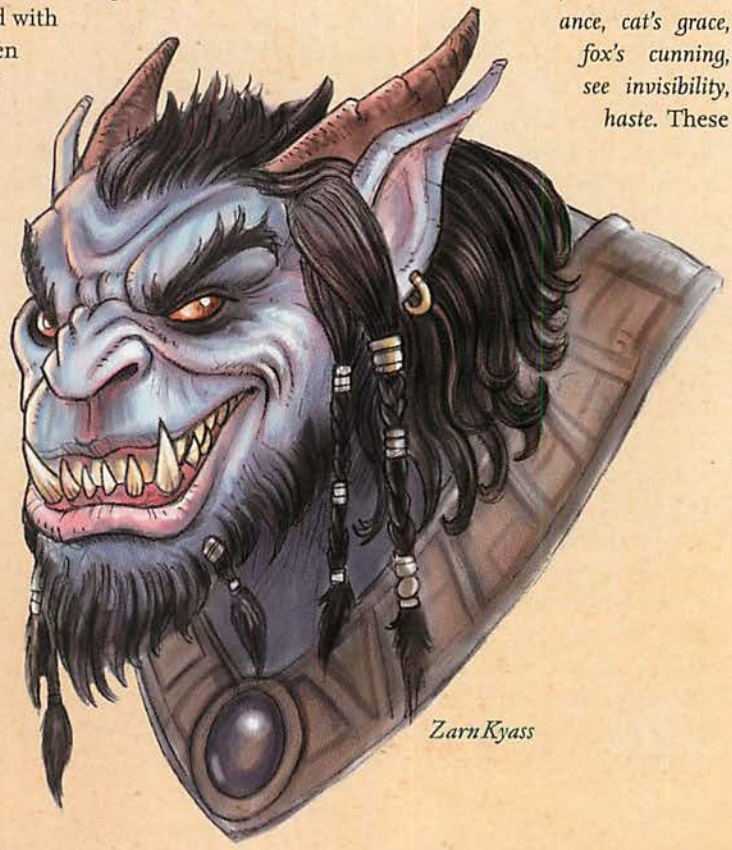
- **Thifirane Rhiavadi, female human transmuter 13**: hp 51; see Appendix 4.
- **Thifirane's Shield Guardian**: hp 112; *Monster Manual* 223.

Spell Storing (Sp): The shield guardian has a *fire shield* spell stored in it. It activates the spell when so commanded by Thifirane, usually before she heads into battle.

- **Adrick Garthûn, male dwarf fighter 5/rogue 5**: hp 68; see Appendix 4.
- **Daxavalt and Kerg, male dwarf fighter 6**: hp 62, 60; see Appendix 4.
- **Khyron Bonesworn, male human cleric 10 (Nerull)**: hp 67; see Appendix 4.
- **Melagorn Thureq, male half-elf wizard (necromancer) 9**: hp 38; see Appendix 4.
- **Mhad, female half-elf vampire monk 9/shadow dancer 4**: hp 90; *Monster Manual* 251.
- **Hate, dread wraith**: hp 104; *Monster Manual* 258.
- **Vervil Ashmantle, male tiefling sorcerer 11**: hp 48 (70 with *bear's endurance*); see Appendix 4.
- **Babaus (2)**: hp 66 each; *Monster Manual* 40.
- **Velior Thazo, male half-fiend human cleric 7 (Erythnul)/rogue 3**: hp 63; see Appendix 4.
- **Zarn Kyass, male ogre mage fighter 4**: hp 85; see Appendix 4.

Tactics: The encounter with Thifirane and her guests will test the skills of even the most experienced DM. To make running the battle easier, each villain's tactics are summarized below; however, the DM can deviate from these preset tactics as the situation warrants.

Thifirane Rhiavadi: Thifirane already has a *nondetection* spell cast on herself and keeps her shield guardian close to her at all times. Before entering combat, she casts the following spells, in sequence, if time allows: *stoneskin, mage armor, shield, bear's endurance, cat's grace, fox's cunning, see invisibility, haste*. These



Zarn Kyass

spells also affect her weasel familiar. On her first initiative action, Thifirane activates a *contingency* spell that, in turn, triggers a *lesser globe of invulnerability* spell (which also affects her familiar). She also instructs the shield guardian to activate its *fire shield* spell. In combat, Thifirane uses her eye ray and her offensive spells, occasionally switching out a spell to cast a scroll (*prismatic spray*) or expend a charge from her *wand of magic missile*. She uses her *wall of force* spell to divide her enemies or block their advance. Her weasel familiar tries to stay within 5 feet of Thifirane, yet out of harm's way. The shield guardian uses its shield other ability to absorb damage dealt to Thifirane. However, if she is reduced to half her hit points, Thifirane abandons her shield guardian and *teleports* to Oblivion (see area **O9**), where the PCs may encounter her again.

Adrick Garthûn: Adrick tries to flank foes to gain the benefit of a sneak attack. Otherwise, both he and his bodyguards use straightforward combat tactics. If both of his henchmen are killed or incapacitated, Adrick surrenders or flees. He may even switch sides if he thinks he stands a good chance of survival with little possibility of retribution.

Khyron Bonesworn: Khyron hasn't pledged his undying allegiance to the Cagewrights, but he isn't foolish enough to cross them, either. He packs a lot of defensive spells. Before jumping into battle, Khyron casts *magic vestment* on his shield. When combat begins, he casts *shield of faith*, *spell resistance*, *freedom of movement*, *bear's endurance*, and *divine power* on himself (in that order). Time allowing, he also casts *magic circle against good* and *death ward*. He likes to wade into battle with his unholy mace, saving his *hold person* and *slay living* spells for particularly annoying foes. If gravely wounded, he pulls out of combat long enough to cure himself. His comrade-in-arms, Melagorn, casts *false life*, *displacement*, and *shield* on himself (in that order), then bombards enemies with offensive spells.

Mhad: Although arguably the most lethal combatant in House Rhiavadi, Mhad doesn't like fighting unfamiliar opponents in unfamiliar surroundings. She stays out of the fight as long as possible. If attacked, she and her dread wraith flank and try to stun and drain the attacker as quickly as possible. Under no circumstances does she join forces with the heroes, but if she and the characters are the last ones standing, Mhad lets them live for the time being. As soon as night falls, she returns to her lair in the ruins of Shatterhorn east of Cauldron.

Vervil Ashmantle: Vervil orders his babaus to attack the PCs while he casts *greater invisibility* and other defensive spells on himself. The tiefling takes magical "cheap shots" (a *magic missile* here, a *baleful polymorph* there) while physically staying on the outskirts of the battle.

Jester Velior Thazo: Jester Velior Thazo calls upon Erythnul, god of slaughter, to help him destroy his new enemies. If he has time to prepare for battle, he casts *bull's strength*, *bear's endurance*, *shield of faith*, and *divine favor* on himself (in that order). Against ranged foes, he casts *unholy blight* or *searing light*. He then closes for melee combat, furiously swinging his *+1 morningstar*.

Zarn Kyass: At the first sign of trouble, Zarn turns *invisible* and moves to protect Thifirane. He uses straightforward tactics in battle, swinging his greatsword at singular enemies and saving his *cone of cold* for an opportune moment. If Thifirane is killed, Zarn flies into a rage and attacks her slayer without mercy or quarter. Given the chance to murder Velior Thazo and make it look like the PCs' work, Zarn takes the opportunity—he still seethes that the guildmaster dared to burn Minuta's Board while so many of his mercenaries were staying there.

Development: Nothing the PCs accomplish at House Rhiavadi prevents the Cagewrights from proceeding with the ritual of planar junction. The best the characters can hope for is to take down a member of the Cagewrights' inner circle (Thifirane Rhiavadi) and several of the realm's most despicable criminals.

THE HUNT FOR VHALANTRU

The final section of this chapter deals with the characters' search for Vhalantru. Whether enticed by rumors or their own growing doubts about Vhalantru's intentions, the PCs decide pay a visit to Lord Vhalantru's estate. This chapter deals with the repercussions of that decision.

To most citizens of Cauldron, Lord Vhalantru is a charitable noble with no known family in Cauldron or the surrounding area. In public forums, he used to jokingly refer to himself as "one of Cauldron's proud orphans." When the lord mayor recently vanished without a trace, Lord Vhalantru quickly swept in and took control. However, the situation in Cauldron has steadily deteriorated, leading some people to doubt Vhalantru's political commitment and intentions. He rarely makes public appearances anymore, and the half-orc mercenaries he hired to bolster the town guard are little more than thugs more interested in safeguarding his estate than insuring the well-being of the common folk. Only the Cagewrights and a few select members of the Last Laugh know for certain that Vhalantru is a beholder whose ultimate goal is to enslave Cauldron's populace and transform the town into his personal demesne.

HOUSE VHALANTRU FEATURES

House Vhalantru is a stately, three-story manor located on Obsidian Avenue. Like many estates in Cauldron, it has walls of mortared volcanic rock. However, the interior surfaces on the second and third floors (including walls, floors, and ceilings) are made of sturdy wood. In addition, Vhalantru has taken strides to make the house appear more "elven." The wood paneling and railings display some of the finest leaf scrollwork in Cauldron, and the windows are made of glass set in light wooden frames, with lovely silver laurel designs running through the glass.

Most of the statues found in House Vhalantru are in fact petrified enemies—adventurers, politicians, merchants, and even minions. It's even possible that an NPC that the PCs met earlier in the campaign but have since lost contact with can be found here, petrified and on display. If the PCs rescue any of these individuals, they may be able to provide rewards or further adventures as you see fit.

Unless noted otherwise, natural light provides illumination during bright hours, and candelabras provide light during the dark hours. The doors of House Vhalantru are of sturdy wooden construction with ornate silver hinges and fittings. All ceilings are 15 feet high unless noted otherwise, and secret doors require a successful DC 20 Search check to locate.

Strong Wooden Doors: 2 in. thick; Hardness 5; hp 20; Break DC 25; Open Lock DC 30.

V1. FOYER

Four lifelike statues in alcoves greet visitors as they enter the estate—a female elven wizard in robes, a male elven ranger with a longbow, a female elven cleric carrying a shield with the symbol of Corellon Larethian carved into it, and a male elven druid wearing a cowl and carrying a vine-like whip.

Unlike the other statues in the estate, these ones are simply expert carvings. A red carpet stretches from the front doors to the far end of the main hall (area **V2**).

V2. MAIN HALL (EL 10)

A five-foot-wide staircase climbs up the eastern wall to an overhanging balcony fifteen feet above. The red carpet that began at the front doors crosses the room and continues up the stairs to the balcony. Two heavy five-foot-tall candelabras stand in the middle of the hall but are unlit.

Four statues—actually four adventurers turned to stone by Vhalantru—stand in different corners of the room: a male dwarven fighter wearing full plate and carrying a greatsword, a female halfling rogue/sorcerer perched atop a stone pedestal with a staff in one hand and a short sword in the other, a male human monk in a battle-ready unarmed stance, and a male gnome cleric of Garl Glittergold holding a morningstar and clutching a light steel shield.

A character who makes a DC 20 Wisdom check can detect a faint smell of rotting meat coming from somewhere in the house. A creature with Scent can tell the smell comes from upstairs. The source of this smell is in area **V15**.

Creatures: Two half-orc guards stand to either side of the stairs. They've been told by Vhalantru to escort any visitors back outside, and to kill anyone who doesn't comply. The guards call out an alarm if a fight starts, and their fellow guards from areas **V3**, **V5**, **V6**, and **V7** come to their aid. Vhalantru has ordered them to never enter the upper floors of his home, warning them that the guardians there would treat them as intruders as well. If the PCs flee upstairs, the guards do not pursue. Instead, they take up positions here and in area **V3**, hoping to catch the PCs on their way back down. None of the guards know about the *illusory wall* in area **V8**.

Benkus and Drulak, half-orc fighter 8 (2): hp 59 each; see Appendix 4.

V3. GUARDROOM (EL 11)

Creatures: Three more half-orc guards are posted here, tasked with guarding this entrance to the upper floor.

Renk, Krund, and Yash, half-orc fighter 8 (3): hp 59 each; see Appendix 4.

V4. FOUNTAIN OF SEHANINE MOONBOW

An exquisite marble fountain sits in this room. Standing at its center is a masterfully carved statue of a beautiful elven woman. She holds a quarterstaff in her hands, and has a serene, dreamy look in her delicate features. Three marble benches and several painted ceramic vats of sweet-smelling earth add to the decor.

Vhalantru thought it would be a clever touch to build a fountain in his house, because surely that's what humanoids do! He charmed a local sculptor into crafting a statue of the elven goddess Sehanine Moonbow ("the Lady of Dreams"), then placed it atop the marble plinth where the water spills out into the basin.

V5. KITCHEN

A long, wide counter runs along the south wall of this kitchen. The wall above is covered with cupboards, and a large fireplace sits to the west.

A cursory examination of this kitchen reveals that it hasn't seen use for several days. This room is only used when Vhalantru has guests.

V6. DINING ROOM (EL 12)

A long, oaken table surrounded by a half-dozen chairs sits in this room. The east wall sports five impressive floor-to-ceiling windows that afford a nice view of southern Cauldron.

Creatures: A group of four half-orc guards are relaxing here, awaiting their turn to serve shifts in areas **V2** or **V3**.

Jorgat, Werskin, Prathik, and Toarth, half-orc fighter 8 (4): hp 59 each; see Appendix 4.

V7. PARLOR (EL 13)

Five plush chairs surround a large round table in the middle of this room. Couches, wine cabinets, and other furnishings are haphazardly arranged.

The northern door leading to area **V8** is locked with a good lock (Open Lock DC 30).

Creatures: Three half-orc guards enjoy some off-duty time in this room. One relaxes on a leather couch while the other two engage in a rowdy, sometimes bitter game played with dice, goblin finger bones, and hard-earned coins. They attack intruders on sight, particularly if it looks like they're headed for the door to area **V8**.

Uriad, Brenk, and Rukner, half-orc fighter 8 (3): hp 59 each; see Appendix 4.

V8. WINE STORAGE

Rows of shelves along the north wall hold several dozen bottles of good wine. Boxes of wine are piled all over the room, making it difficult to get at the walls without moving the boxes aside.

Beholders have an atrophied sense of taste—alcohol is one of the few flavors they can enjoy. Vhalantru goes through vast amounts of wine in a week. It's fair to say a significant portion of the funds he embezzles from taxes fuels this habit.

A *true seeing* spell or tactile inspection of the east wall reveals that part of the wall is illusory. Characters can walk through the *illusory wall* and enter area **V9**.

V9. VEILED SHAFT (EL 3)

Behind the *illusory wall* lies a circular room containing six statues—the petrified remains of four more adventurers and their animal companions: a male halfling rogue with a quizzical expression etched into his face, a female elven wizard aiming a wand, a female human druid petrified while drinking a potion, her cheetah animal companion, a male human ranger with his longsword and short sword crossed in a blocking maneuver, and his black bear animal companion.

Trap: An *illusory wall* spell conceals a smooth, 50-foot-deep, 10-foot-wide shaft in the middle of the floor. The pit drops into area **O1**. In addition to landing prone, a fallen character is attacked by the creatures in area **O1**.

Pit Trap: CR 3; DC 16 Reflex save avoids; 50 ft. deep (5d6, fall); Search DC 29.

V10. MASTER STUDY

This room contains two overstuffed couches that face each other, separated by a low marble table. A gold and jade water pipe sits on the table. A single chair sits in a circular nook to the southeast.

Vhalantru would use this study to entertain visitors and meet with Thifirane or other allies.

Treasure: The water pipe testifies to another of Vhalantru's vices. It is quite exquisite, and is worth 800 gp.

V11. MASTER BEDROOM

This large bedroom features an oversized canopied bed with purple silk sheets. A huge obsidian fireplace is built into the southern wall, and several beautiful paintings of elven cities hang on the walls. A writing desk and comfy chair sit in a circular nook to the northeast.

A search of this room reveals that everything here is covered in a fine layer of dust. Vhalantru never used this room, but kept it up for the sake of appearances.

Treasure: The seven paintings are all well made—each is worth 100 gp.

V12. BATHROOM

This bathroom served guests and servants; it's clean, but a layer of dust covers everything.

V13. LIBRARY

This cozy room is dominated by numerous wooden shelves, each filled with dozens and dozens of books. A single reading table and chair sit in the central portion of the library.

Vhalantru's library is quite well stocked—reading is perhaps the beholder's least-offensive obsession. A fair number of the books stocked here are on magical theory; a character who uses these books to aid in research gains a +4 circumstance bonus on Knowledge (arcana) checks. The books in the west wing are all about elven and half-elven society. An investigation of these books reveals they have all been quite well read—Vhalantru used these books to study up on how to act believably as a human. These books are worth 5,000 gp in all, but transporting them out of House Vhalantru might prove tricky.

V14. SERVANT'S QUARTERS

A spiral staircase winds down to the lower level. Surrounding it are several simple cots, six in all.

Vhalantru's house servants live here—when the beholder has them. He generally hires servants from nonlocal sources. He prefers to hire people with no families—he says in his interviews that he prefers to have his servants live on site and not be distracted by family matters, when in fact he's just looking out for the fact that, eventually, his servants are eaten. Servant eating is one of Vhalantru's bad habits; something he does when he gets nervous. With the PCs' growing power, the beholder's been growing increasingly nervous. He ate his

last charmed servant a week ago, and hasn't bothered to hire any new ones yet.

V15. AVIARY (EL 13)

More than a dozen birdcages fill this room, each one once home to three or four small but colorful birds (finches mostly). Most of the cages sit atop shelves or tables by the windows, but a few hang from the ceiling by elegant chains. Unfortunately, the colorful contents of these cages all lie dead, apparently for some time, as the smell of rotting flesh is thick in here.

The songs of the birds here once evoked a sense of natural tranquility, making the dark stone edifice feel less dreary. Since Vhalantru ate his servants and retreated into Oblivion, no one has fed or watered the birds for weeks and they have all long since died of thirst.

Creatures: Vhalantru came upon a series of caverns deep under Cauldron a few weeks ago claimed by a small group of allied gauth beholderkin. Normally, Vhalantru would have annihilated such hideous mockeries of the beholder form without a thought, but he realized after killing three of the dozen creatures that he could use them. They were similar enough to his own physiology that they would make perfect guinea pigs for the *Zar'ilkoth Tarteros*. Vhalantru charmed the remaining nine gauths, rounded them up, and brought them to Oblivion, whereupon he bound the souls of nine farastu demodands to them. The first three gauth died, but the remaining six were a success. Delighted with the results, Vhalantru moved the six charmed tarterian gauths up to serve as guardians for his manor while he turned his attentions to the next stage in his experiments (see area **V18**).

The six tarterian gauths remain charmed by Vhalantru, and spend their time floating at various points in the aviary, dutifully awaiting new orders from their master. If they hear the sound of combat or an alarm raised down on the ground floor, they spread out throughout this floor, taking up positions near the stairs down to area **V2**, this room, and the entrance to area **V14**. Their orders are clear: they are to prevent intruders from entering the second floor—this includes half-orc guards. They pursue enemies upstairs or downstairs once combat begins, but will not leave the manor.

Tarterian Gauths (6): hp 45 each; see Appendix 4.

V16. GUEST BEDROOM

These two bedrooms are fairly plain; Vhalantru used them to house the rare visitor to his home but neither has been used in many months.

V17. GUEST BATHROOM

These rooms are serviceable, but dust-covered. There is nothing of interest here.

V18. DELUXE GUEST BEDROOM (EL 14)

Both of these rooms are extravagantly appointed, with large beds, writing tables, fireplaces, and dressers. Thifirane often stayed in the eastern room when she didn't fancy staying in the room Vhalantru set aside for her in Oblivion.

Creature: The southern of these two bedrooms has been the lair of Vhalantru's doppelganger minion Gortio for several years. Many times, when Vhalantru was distracted with other issues, Gortio posed as the noble in public meetings. He also posed as Zenith Splintershield's father in Chapter Four.

After Vhalantru successfully used the *Zar'ilkoth Tarteros* to transform the gauths, he approached Gortio with an offer. Vhalantru was worried that the *Zar'ilkoth Tarteros* wouldn't work as well on a creature of superior intellect such as himself—testing the ritual on the gauths proved that it worked, but it wasn't enough to convince the beholder that the process wouldn't drive him insane, or worse. So he made Gortio an offer—submit to transformation via the *Zar'ilkoth Tarteros* or be petrified and put on display in Oblivion. The choice was an easy one for the doppelganger rogue, and within a day his body and soul had become infused with the spirit of a kelubar demodand.

The success of this ritual was all Vhalantru needed. He ordered Gortio to return topside and to aid in guarding the estate from entry, especially by the PCs, whom Vhalantru had been growing ever more paranoid about. While Gortio guarded the upper levels, Vhalantru retreated into the depths of Oblivion to begin the *Zar'ilkoth Tarteros* ritual one final time—this time, with himself as the subject.

Gortio is still not quite comfortable with his newfound powers, and has been practicing suppressing the acidic slime he now exudes in his true form. If the PCs manage to reach this area without raising the alarm, they find the doppelganger in his true form here, amid a great swath of acidic slime that is slowly eating through his furniture and the carpet to pool and bubble on the wood floor below, which is only barely resisting the acid damage with its hardness. If he hears an alarm raised, he uses *clairaudience/clairvoyance* to scout out the house. Once he sees it's the PCs, he changes form to match one of them, hoping to get a chance to throw some confusion into their intrusion. While in a different form, Gortio does not exude acidic slime.

Gortio, male kelubar tarterean doppelganger rogue 9: hp 62; see Appendix 4.

Tactics: Gortio uses his *wand of shield* before combat, and if he has the chance he becomes invisible as well. He prefers to initiate combat from a position of ranged superiority, often achieved via *spider climb*, so he can use his wands against his enemies. In melee, he fights with a punch dagger and his slam, taking full attacks only if his enemy seems weak. Otherwise, he uses Combat Expertise to full effect, and makes liberal use of Improved Feint and Improved Trip. Gortio is loyal to Vhalantru,

and if he can't escape a battle that turns against him, he fights to the death.

Development: If the PCs manage to capture Gortio alive, they'll need to use magic to get him to talk—no amount of Diplomacy or Intimidation can get him to betray Vhalantru. Remember, he's immune to charm effects but not compulsions—*dominate monster*, *suggestion*, and similar spells can still affect him.

If made to talk, Gortio can give the PCs a wealth of information. He knows that Vhalantru is a beholder, that he's allied to the Cagewrights, that he's trying to find out where the Cagewrights are based in Cauldron, that he's down in Oblivion now infusing himself with Tarterian power, and that he's become increasingly obsessed with killing the PCs. Gortio has never been allowed into Oblivion before, but he can show the PCs where the entrance to this underground complex is (area **V9**).

OBLIVION

Vhalantru built the subterranean redoubt of Oblivion to suit his own tastes. Consequently, creatures lacking the ability to fly have a difficult time navigating the lair. Oblivion has three levels spaced roughly 100 feet apart (Level 1 being the closest to the surface, and Level 3 being the deepest). Two long shafts (areas **O2** and **O4**) connect the various levels. A third shaft—this one 10 feet in diameter and 50 feet long—serves as the entrance to Oblivion, connecting area **O1** with area **V9** in Vhalantru's estate.

Vhalantru used his disintegrate eye ray to carve Oblivion out of the rock beneath Cauldron. The beholder tends to favor spherical rooms and tubular passageways (although exceptions exist). Since Vhalantru has darkvision, he has little need for illumination, and visitors are expected to bring their own light sources.

Scaling the vertical and curved walls of Oblivion requires a successful DC 25 Climb check.

The lair includes some unusual features that required the expert services of several Cagewrights to complete, including Vhalantru's insidious "oblivion doors" (see area **O3**) and the transmutation circle for the *Zar'ilkoth Tarteros* ritual (see area **O15**).

O1. NASTY FARASTUS (EL 14)

A ten-foot-wide shaft drops through the ceiling of this thirty-foot-high, forty-foot-wide cylindrical chamber. Carved into the rough walls of the cylinder at various heights are twenty-one shallow alcoves, each niche holding an ancient statue.

Each niche holds one of Vhalantru's petrified victims.

A 12-foot-high opening in the north wall gives way to a vertical drop of 200 feet (see area **O2**).

Creatures: Three half-orc "guards" stand watch in front of the north exit—or so it seems. The half-orcs are actually zombies that have been treated by Vhalantru and Thifirane with experimental magical portals that activate when the zombies are destroyed. As soon as intruders appear, the half-orc zombies lunge toward them. Once destroyed, a zombie shivers momentarily and drops its weapons. Moments later, a farastu demodand explodes from within the zombie, clawing its way to freedom with a terrible rush of tar and stink. Once a farastu emerges, it fights the PCs to the death.

Half-orc Zombies (3): hp 16 each; *Monster Manual* 266 (use statistics for the human commoner zombie).

Farastu demodands (3): hp 71 each, see Appendix 4.

O2. EAST SHAFT

This vertical shaft measures 20 feet wide and stretches 220 feet tall, connecting every level of Vhalantru's lair. Sound carries well in the shaft, so characters in the shaft or in open rooms adjacent to the shaft (such as areas **O1** and **O12**) gain a +2 circumstance bonus on Listen checks.

O3. OBLIVION DOORS (EL 10)

A large and intricate circular door measuring nine feet across completely blocks the passageway. The portal has interlocking parts made of composite materials—primarily darkwood, bone, iron, and adamantine. The door's face has been worked into the likeness of a stylized beholder with ten eyestalks. Set into each eyestalk is a different color gemstone, and set into the large central eye is a transparent crystal the size of a human fist. The thick stone doorframe is shaped like a ring and carved with eight strange glyphs.

Oblivion doors are recurring features in Vhalantru's lair. They're designed to make travel through the complex challenging for all creatures other than beholders. The strange glyphs on the doorframe spell the word O-B-L-I-V-I-O-N in Undercommon, but they have no bearing on how the doors operate. The color of a particular gem is also irrelevant.

Beholders have ten eyestalks. Not coincidentally, Vhalantru's lair contains ten oblivion doors, and each one is attuned to a different beholder eyestalk (as shown in the table below). Vhalantru opens an oblivion door by firing the correct eye ray at the fist-sized crystal embedded in the door's central eye. Spellcasters can bypass the doors by casting similar spells on the fist-sized crystal. For instance, oblivion door **O3J** (connecting areas **O12** and **O13**) is specifically attuned to the telekinesis eye ray, yet casting a *telekinesis* spell on the central crystal also works to open the door.

Oblivion Door	Attuned Eye Ray
3A	*flesh to stone*
3B	*fear*
3C	*disintegrate*
3D	*finger of death*
3E	*inflict moderate wounds*
3F	*sleep*
3G	*charm person*
3H	*slow*
3I	*charm monster*
3J	*telekinesis*

Each oblivion door weighs 5,000 pounds, and forcing one open physically requires a nearly impossible Strength check (DC 50). A rogue can attempt to "finesse" the door, tricking it into opening with a successful Open Lock check (DC 45). However they do it, when the PCs unlock their first oblivion door, read or paraphrase the following:

The door makes some dull grinding noises, then splits into three sections. Each section quickly retracts into part of the adjoining doorframe. Once the three sections have fully retracted, the passage stands open.

Oblivion doors stay open for 3 rounds, then close automatically. Anyone standing in the doorframe when an oblivion door closes is crushed for 10d6 points of damage per round (Reflex DC 15 half).

There is nothing stopping characters from using spells such as *teleport*, *dimension door*, *ethereal jaunt*, and *passwall* to circumvent the oblivion doors.

Oblivion Door (locked): 3 ft. thick; hardness 8; hp 540; Break DC 50; Open Lock 45; impervious to spells and spell-like abilities except for the spell effect keyed to that particular door.

Trap: If the wrong eye ray or the wrong spell is cast on an oblivion door, or if an attempt to Open Lock or bash it open fails, the door remains sealed and instead fires 1d10 rays of force back at the offender. The rays of force emanate from small gems set into the oblivion door's eyestalks. A character with an active *shield* spell may count the spell's +4 shield bonus toward her touch AC, since the spell was designed to absorb force damage.

Force Ray Trap: CR 10; magic device; spell trigger (varies by door); automatic reset; Atk +10 ranged touch (1d6+1 points of damage per ray, 1d10 rays); Search DC 25; Disable Device DC 33.

O4. WEST SHAFT

This 20-foot-wide shaft measures 120 feet tall and connects levels 2 and 3 of Vhalantru's complex. The shaft is otherwise similar to the east shaft (area **O2**).

O5. BEHOLDER BATH

The lower half of this spherical room is filled with water seepage from Cauldron's lake. Vhalantru has taken to calling the room his "bath," although he'd intended to use the space for something else.

O6. BOOK VAULT

This twenty-foot-square room has a ten-foot-diameter, bowl-shaped indentation carved out of the floor, the ceiling, and every wall. Floating in the exact middle of the room, just out of arm's reach from the floor, is a single book with a red leather cover.

Most of this room radiates magic. The bowl-shaped indentations in the walls generate crisscrossing levitation fields that have the effect of suspending objects in the middle of the room, where a creature like Vhalantru can get at them easily. Currently, only one book is kept here.

Treasure: The book in question has the words "Zar'ilkoth Tarteros" scrawled on the inside front cover. Vhalantru used it to research information about the ritual to turn him into a Tarterian beholder, but he's done with the tome for the time being. Characters wishing to perform the *Zar'ilkoth Tarteros* ritual themselves can do so, but doing so is an evil act. The *Zar'ilkoth Tarteros* is a fantastically rare book, and is worth 10,000 gp to an interested scholar.

O7. EYES IN THE DARK (EL 13)

Several doors lead into this irregularly shaped nexus chamber, which is guarded by the Creatures. They wear the Treasure.

Creatures: Three Nessian warhounds lair here. They belong to a group of mercenaries called the Flamewarders (see area **O10**). The warhounds attack anyone they don't recognize.

Nessian warhounds (3): hp 114 each; *Monster Manual* 152.

Treasure: The Nessian warhounds wear black leather collars studded with diamonds and rubies. Each collar is worth 4,500 gp (total value 13,500 gp).

O8. EMPTY ROOM

This spherical chamber is where Vhalantru kept a charmed Celeste for a few days, until he was able to procure a scroll of *binding* and had Thifirane imprison her in a painting (see area **O14**).

O9. THIFIRANE'S QUARTERS

Vhalantru has set aside this spherical room for Thifirane Rhiavadi (see Chapter Two). To make Thifirane more comfortable, a wooden floor has been built across the room's equator, creating a hemispherical space with a flat floor. Thifirane has already made the room her own, adding various handpicked pieces of furniture and bringing along some of her outlandish wardrobe in large, unlocked trunks. Characters searching through Thifirane's belongings won't find anything of great value.

Development: If Thifirane fled House Rhiavadi, she is "regrouping" in this chamber. Her weasel familiar may be with her as well. See Appendix 4 for her tactics.

O10. FLAMEWARDERS (EL 18)

Sconces shaped like stony fists protrude from the walls of this twenty-foot-high chamber at regular intervals, each one grasping an everburning torch. A great fire-scorched throne sits at the north end of the room. The throne is carved in the shape of a fire giant.

Creatures: In the middle of the room, a tall woman with hair like flames swings her greatsword at unseen foes, seemingly oblivious to the presence of any PCs. Her body is covered with a layer of rust-colored fur, and her eyes smolder. She is clad in a mithral breastplate, wears metal gauntlets, and has a large shield floating beside her, moving as she moves. A pink, rhomboid-shaped stone orbits her head lackadaisically, and she wears a red-lacquered armband on one upper arm. As she cleaves the air in front of her, fire plays across one edge of her greatsword, ice across the other.

When she notices the PCs she stops, looking barely out of breath. Casting a baleful glance at them, she walks over to the throne and sits down. From behind the throne emerges a sneering wolf with flame-colored fur and red embers for eyes.

"Flameless Ones, have you come to pay tribute to Ti'irok Coalfire?" the woman hisses.

A fire giant named Ti'irok Coalfire leads a small legion of mercenaries comprised of haraknin canomorphs (fiery humanoids that can assume hell hound form). This mercenary company is called the Flamewarders, and a few years back it caught the attention of the Cagewrights. Ti'irok has been serving the Cagewrights loyally ever since, thanks in no small part to the generous stipend they pay him. Ti'irok is away handling various important matters, but he's left behind his best lieutenant to guard his secret treasury (area **O11**).

The flame-haired creature is Ti'irok's lieutenant—a powerful female haraknin canomorph named Aszithef. The sneering wolf is a second haraknin canomorph named Khetru, who prefers to wile away the hours in hell hound form. Although she initially resented Ti'irok buying her clan, he has treated her people fairly and paid them well. Ti'irok has also won Aszithef's devotion by entrusting her with his prized greatsword *Coldfire*. Aszithef is bored without Ti'irok and the others around. She can't leave the immediate area since she can't open the oblivion doors or easily navigate the shafts, and so she waits with Khetru for Ti'irok to return for them after the Cagewrights have finished the ritual of planar junction. Between the two of them, they should be able to mop the room with the PCs' guts. Khetru demands that the characters pay a tribute of 10,000 gp, plus an additional 5,000 gp for each Nessian warhound they killed in area **O7** (lest they face the wrath of the Flamewarders). If the characters try

to negotiate, Aszithef and Khetru deliberately frustrate the characters at every turn, hoping to provoke them into a fight.

Aszithef, female haraknin fighter 7/rogue 6: hp 149; see Appendix 4.

Khetru, male haraknin fighter 5/rogue 5: hp 108; see Appendix 4.

Development: If the characters kill Aszithef and claim the greatsword *Coldfire* for themselves, they might need to reckon with Ti'irok Coalfire in the future.

O11. TI'IROK'S TREASURY

The secret door leading into this room is quite large (5 feet wide by 13 feet tall) and bulky, requiring a successful DC 25 Strength check to push open. Detecting the secret door requires a DC 20 Search check. The door was designed with a fire giant in mind.

Ti'irok isn't happy about having to store a significant amount of his treasure here, particularly since he doesn't know Vhalantru very well.

Treasure: Two enormous iron chests rest in the middle of the room. Both chests are locked (Open Lock DC 30), and Ti'irok took the keys with him. Moreover, each chest weighs close to 800 pounds.

Chest #1 contains 22,150 gp, 30 large geodes worth 300 gp each, a suit of dragonhide plate, a mithral heavy shield, 15 cold iron javelins sized for a Large individual, masterwork chainmail barding (for a horse or nightmare), and a suit of masterwork full plate made for a Large individual.

Chest #2 contains 18,925 gp, an unlocked iron box containing 450 pp, 10 flasks of oil, an iron strongbox containing 4 *potions of invisibility*, and an adamantine battleaxe.

O12. EMPTY ROOM

This hemispherical chamber is currently unused. The Nessian warhounds in area **O7** used to play with Ti'irok the fire giant in this chamber, and the floor is strewn with old bones, dung, and tattered bits of leather.

O13. ART TREASURY (EL 13)

Bricks cover the walls, floor, and ceiling of this twenty-foot-high vault. Some of the bricks in the north wall have been neatly removed, creating rows of cubbyholes and giving it a slightly pockmarked look. Many of the cubbyholes hold bits of treasure.

Many of the cubbyholes are filled with treasures Vhalantru has amassed over the years (see Treasure). The beholder guards his treasure well, however (see Creatures).

Creatures: Observant characters who succeed at a DC 22 Search check notice the pair of stone golems embedded in the chamber floor. Because of the brickwork, it's hard to tell where the bricks end and the edges of each golem begin. The golems rise up from the floor

and attack any non-beholder who removes something of value from a cubbyhole. The golems were gifts from Vhalantru's Cagewright friends.

Stone golems (2): hp 107 each; *Monster Manual* 136.

Treasure: The cubbyholes contain the following items: 24 ceramic urns containing 100 gp apiece, 7 painted copper urns containing 50 pp apiece, a pouch of 5 moss agates (10 gp each), a pouch of 8 azurites (10 gp each), a pouch of 5 zircons (40 gp each), a silver oakleaf brooch (80 gp), a pair of matched crystal candlesticks (400 gp), a white velvet sash set with tiny rubies (600 gp), a set of ivory and obsidian chess pieces (1,200 gp), a silver brazier engraved with crashing waves (1,700 gp), a gold necklace set with lapis lazuli (2,100 gp), a gold bracelet set with sapphires (3,000 gp), a platinum scepter set with emeralds (3,000 gp), a silver clam-shaped case containing 4 black pearls (4,000 gp), a platinum crown set with emeralds (7,000 gp), a *wand of bull's strength* (42 charges), a scroll of *cure serious wounds*, an *amulet of natural armor +4*, a *+1 frost kama*, and a *minor ring of acid resistance*.

O14. TROPHIES

The walls of this thirty-foot-high hall are carved with myriad bas-reliefs depicting various Underdark creatures and terrains. This hall also holds an impressive collection of monstrous statues, arranged in a semicircle and all very lifelike. To the north, a huge archway looms. Two paintings hang on the wall to either side of the arch. The western painting depicts what looks like Cauldron under a burning sky. The eastern painting depicts a beautiful but horrified blonde woman imprisoned in a metal cage that looks almost as if it were made of iron ribs and adamantine skulls.

Vhalantru keeps several petrified monster trophies in this hall. From west to east, they are as follows: juvenile black dragon, juvenile minotaur, harpy, otyugh, rust monster, kuo-toa, and phantom fungus.

The western painting is an artist's rendition of what Cauldron might look like after the Cagewrights open the portal to Carceri. Vhalantru ate the artist after he finished this piece, but liked it enough to hang it on the wall here.

The eastern painting is magical. In fact, it is a variant form of the *binding* spell. Vhalantru procured the spell from his connections with Sasserine's black market, then had Thifirane use the scroll on Celeste a few days after the beholder captured and charmed her during Chapter Four. Vhalantru hasn't quite figured out what to do with Celeste yet, but is happy, for now, leaving her trapped in the painting.

A character who touches the painting notices that the canvas feels shockingly warm and smooth, almost like living skin. Anyone who has met Celeste before automatically recognizes her as the woman pictured in the painting, otherwise a DC 20 Knowledge (local) check is enough to recognize her. An *antimagic field* or *Mordenkainen's disjunction* affects the painting, but *dispel magic* does not. The painting is magical, and any attempt to destroy it causes it to bleed real blood and fills the attacker's mind with horrified mental screams. If the painting is destroyed, the *binding* is immediately cancelled—the painting vanishes and an unconscious Celeste (at 0 hit points) appears in its place.

Binding Painting: Hardness 0; hp 60; Break DC 30. The painting repairs damage inflicted to it at a rate of 20 hit points per round.

Development: Celeste is incredibly grateful for being rescued, and promises the PCs she'll see to rewarding them as soon as she can. She wants to teleport back to her patron and warn him of what's going on down here in Cauldron, but is willing to stay with the PCs for a short while. Although she has no gear (her *+4 holy greatsword* was sold by Vhalantru to agents from Sasserine, ironically, to fund the purchase of the scroll he used to bind her into the painting), she still has all of her cleric spells prepared—she's far from helpless, and can provide immense aid to the PCs when they attack Vhalantru.

Possible questions the PCs might have for her, and their answers, are given below.

Why did you trick us? "I'm sorry for deceiving you. My patron rightfully suspected that there was a dangerous conspiracy afoot here, and we suspected they were gathering Shackleborn. I discovered that Zenith was one of them and intended to use him as bait once you returned with him. I was only trying to coax the conspirators out into the open. I was confident I could protect Zenith once you got him back to Cauldron. Unfortunately, I was wrong."

Who is your patron? "A powerful archmage from the north. And no, I don't intend to give out his name."

What happened to you? "While you were rescuing Zenith, I began some investigation on my own. I was hoping to find a solid lead as to who the conspirators were, and when you returned I was going to ask your aid in exposing them. My investigations led me to confront Vhalantru. I realized my error too late. He's not a half-elf at all. The man Cauldron takes to be Vhalantru is in fact some sort of disguise worn by the true Vhalantru—a beholder. I tried to escape but he got me with one of his beguiling eyes. For the next few days, I wasn't in my right mind. Eventually, he and Thifirane used a scroll to bind me in that horrible painting, and now, here I am."

Where is Zenith now? "Vhalantru and Thifirane handed him over to a pair of sinister-looking women. One was a rail-thin human woman who wore her hair pulled back tightly from her face and was dressed in blood red robes. The other was a bald tiefling woman who was covered with tattoos and wore simple white robes. The tattooed tiefling took Zenith, and the other woman cast a *teleport* spell that whisked them away. To where, I can't even guess."

If brought up to date with what the PCs have learned so far, Celeste grows even more worried. If the PCs haven't killed Vhalantru yet, she encourages them to seek him out and volunteers to aid them however she can. Once the beholder is slain, she thanks the PCs

again for rescuing her, promises to send them a reward when she can, and teleports back to her mysterious patron to give her report. She's true to her word about the reward (sending the PCs 20,000 gp in gems a few days later), but beyond that, Celeste's remaining role in the campaign is up to you. She could be sent on another quest by her patron, or she could return to Cauldron to provide the PCs with more aid as you see fit.

Ad-Hoc XP Award: If the PCs rescue Celeste, award them experience points as if they had defeated her in combat.

O15. OBLIVION'S WOMB (EL 17)

This is a fifty-foot-wide, fifty-foot-high hemispherical chamber with weird, abstract murals painted on the ceiling. Everburning torches in sconces brightly illuminate the room, revealing its contents. At the far end of the room is a large desk, heaped with books and scrolls. What looks like a horribly deflated human body is draped over the desk's chair. A bloated sphere with nine flailing eyestalks floats in the middle of the room, pale green fluid weeping from knobby, festering sores covering its body. It hovers above a twenty-foot-diameter symbol carved into the floor: a triangle inscribed within a circle, both inlaid with gold. At the three corners of the inscribed triangle, chained to the stone floor, are three figures wearing crude leather straitjackets fitted with black straps and iron buckles. They appear to be a human male, a half-orc male, and a gnome female. The figures are held in place by ankle and wrist manacles, their heavy chains looped around iron rings securely fastened to the floor. Suddenly, arcs of black lightning leap from their eyes and strike the beholder, causing its great bulk to heave and become even more distended for an instant. The three figures collapse into heaps of ash on the floor, leaving behind nothing but charred straightjackets and burnt buckles.

No matter how long the PCs take to reach this chamber, they arrive just in time to witness the final stage of Vhalantru's transformation into a Tarterian creature. As Vhalantru notices them, he turns to face the PCs. Pressed up against the convex pane of his enormous central eye, the PCs can see the horribly fat visage of some demonic creature with a wide mouth full of sharp, triangular teeth. This is the spirit of the shator demodand he has just bonded with.

The three bound figures were commoners whom the Cagewrights abducted and afflicted with *insanity* spells. Nothing of them remains except bits of their apparel.

Creature: Vhalantru has only just transformed, yet his superior intellect is able to immediately comprehend and merge with the demodand's spirit. He suffers no period of disorientation or confusion from the transformation, but may be a little shocked and surprised to find the PCs here. Allow the PCs to make Hide and Move Silently checks. Anyone who beats both of Vhalantru's opposed Listen and Spot checks may take a single action in the surprise round—Vhalantru's only action in this round is to gawk in shock at the PCs. The beholder is in no mood to parlay, and once he realizes the peril he's in he wastes no more time and attacks.

Vhalantru's missing eyestalk is his inflict moderate wounds eye. He recently gifted this eye to Thifirane as thanks for her service.

Vhalantru, Shator Tarterian advanced beholder: hp 157; see Appendix 4.

Tactics: This should be one of the most dangerous fights the PCs have had yet in the campaign. Vhalantru has all of the options available to most beholders in combat, plus the potent defenses and abilities of a shator demodand. The PCs might gain a few critical early attacks in the surprise round, and may have managed to free Celeste, whose protective aura should help the PCs immensely with their ACs and saves against the beholder's eye rays. Nonetheless, you should expect at least a few PC casualties in this battle.

Vhalantru is a complex monster, and has an amazing number of combat options available to him. He also knows the PCs, having had them under observation since practically the start of the campaign. His primary tactic is to fly up near the roof of the room and then bombard the PCs with eye rays and spell-like abilities. Keep the following in mind when running this battle:

- Vhalantru tries to catch as many PC spellcasters in his antimagic cone as he can. In particular, he tries to keep Celeste in its area, if she is present. From his position near the center of the dome-shaped ceiling, he can catch all of the lower fifteen feet of the room in the area of his antimagic cone. If some of the PCs can fly, Vhalantru keeps his central eye directed down like this to keep characters on the ground from harming him with spells. He only diverts his central eye if a magically flying character is attacking him in melee, in which case he can use the anti-magic cone to make such characters fall.
- Vhalantru cannot use his spell-like abilities or eye rays against targets in the antimagic cone of his central eye, but he can use his paralyzing slime spit attack. He'll use this tactic against creatures on the ground who use nonmagic ranged attacks, although this tactic prevents him from using spell-like abilities and forces him to descend to a height of only 30 feet.
- If not spitting or biting, Vhalantru uses his spell-like abilities. He starts with *mass charm monster*, then follows with targeted *dispel magic* and *ray of enfeeblement*. If there are a large number of archers on the ground, he'll divert his antimagic upward to flying characters and drop *cloudkills* and *stinking clouds* down below to damage the archers and block their line of sight to him. Once he's used up his more powerful spell-like abilities, he resorts to using *fear* on any survivors.
- Vhalantru can use his eye rays as a free action, even in rounds in which he utilizes his spell-like

abilities. Split the room up into four quadrants; he can use up to three eye rays per quadrant. Remember, he knows the PCs. He won't use his charm person eye ray on someone he knows is not a humanoid. He prefers to target characters with eye rays that take advantage of their class' poorest saves. Remember, he does not have his *inflict moderate wounds* eye ray anymore.

- If the battle goes against him and he is reduced to fewer than 40 hit points, Vhalantru goes on the defensive and tries to escape. He tries to use his eye rays to clear a path to the exit—if this isn't possible, he instead uses his disintegrate eye ray to start burrowing an escape tunnel straight up. It's 100 feet to the surface, and he can disintegrate a 10-foot-long tunnel in a round, so it takes him a minute (10 rounds) to reach the surface. He recasts *invisibility* on himself each round after disintegrating another 10 feet of tunnel and moving up. If the PCs still follow, he might try to cloud his escape with any *cloudkill*, *fog clouds*, or *stinking clouds* he has left. If he manages to burrow all the way up to the surface, he emerges just north of his estate. If he's got any left, he drops a *cloudkill* on the nearby street. The cloud slowly rolls downhill toward crater lake, killing numerous innocent people as it goes—Vhalantru hopes this tactic delays any good-hearted PCs from pursuing him.

Treasure: Apart from the beholder's gear, Vhalantru's desk should be of immense interest to the PCs. Draped over the chair near the desk is the *simulacrum suit* Thifirane built for him—it is with this suit that the beholder was able to masquerade for so long as a half-elf, and the suit should give the PCs indisputable proof that they have done Cauldron an immense favor by slaying Vhalantru rather than a traitorous disservice. Vhalantru generally navigated Oblivion in his true form, but brought the *simulacrum suit* with him using his *telekinesis* eye rather than risk its discovery if he left it upstairs.

The books, papers, and scrolls on the desk are equally damning. They catalog the length of Vhalantru's stay in Cauldron, and using these notes the PCs should be able to piece together much of the beholder's history as detailed in the Introduction. In addition, the PCs find several sheets of paper that at first look like nothing more than complex scribbles. A successful DC 20 Knowledge (dungeoneering or geography) check reveals the truth—these pages comprise a complex map of the tangled caverns below Cauldron. The PCs should be able to find the locations of the Malachite Fortress, Jzadirune, and the Kopru Ruins with ease if they care to look. They should also note that all three of these locations were hidden relatively close to the surface, and that the tunnels continue to stretch for some distance down into the Underdark. The map indicates that the crater lake is almost 4000 feet deep, and that the tunnels extend even further below this point.

Examination of the maps and the notes Vhalantru was making seem to indicate he was searching for something called the "Fiery Sanctum," which he seems to believe is the secret deep-underground fortress the Cagewrights are lurking in. According to the notes, Vhalantru was trying to find this location simply because it rankled him that the Cagewrights were keeping so many secrets from him.

Vhalantru's notes grant a +10 circumstance bonus on Knowledge checks made to research the Cagewrights.

Development: If Vhalantru manages to escape, he flees Cauldron and hides out in the ruins of Shatterhorn. A coward at heart, he decides to leave the city to the Cagewrights, but may be encountered later (perhaps during Chapter Eleven) as you see fit. He certainly burns with a need for revenge against the PCs, but at the same time, he has no desire to engage in combat with them again on his own.

BEHIND THE SCENES: LORDS OF OBLIVION

The PCs finally start confronting the villains of the campaign directly in this chapter. Once "Lords of Oblivion" is done, the Last Laugh, Vhalantru, and several other local menaces should have been put on the defensive, leaving only the Cagewrights and Adimarchus himself as the remaining antagonists.

The Cagewrights complete the purification rituals of the Shackleborn at some point during this adventure, and then retire to rest and recuperate before they finally begin the ritual of planar junction in Chapter Nine. Embril Aloustinai leads five of the Thirteen (Ssythar Nahazir, Alurad Sorizan, Xokek, Kyan Winterstrike, and Viirdran Daraqor) on what is intended to be a short pilgramage to Carceri via a *plane shift* spell. These six intend to gather a great host of demodands at Skullrot, the location that they intend to link to the Material Plane. Once these demodands are in place, the six intend to return to aid with the ritual of planar junction, but unfortunately for them, things are about to get out of hand.

CONCLUDING THE CHAPTER

"Lords of Oblivion" puts the heroes on the offensive, giving them a long-awaited opportunity to take the fight to the Last Laugh, the Cagewrights and their would-be allies, and the ambitious Lord Vhalantru. By the end of the chapter, they should know about the Cagewrights' plans for Cauldron. Moreover, Vhalantru should no longer pose any threat. However, a couple important puzzle pieces are still missing. The PCs may know about the ritual of planar junction, but they don't know where the ritual is taking place or where the Cagewrights have hidden the Shackleborn and their nefarious *soulcages*. Fortunately, they may have recovered Vhalantru's notes and maps. With these and with Thifirane's notes, the PCs have most of what they need to track down and finally confront the Cagewrights in their lair.

But before they'll get that chance, the Cagewrights finally take things into their own hands.

CHAPTER NINE
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FOUNDATION OF FLAME

CHAPTER NINE

FOUNDATION OF FLAME

BY CHRIS THOMASSON

This chapter is unusual in that there are no dungeons to explore. Instead, the PCs are faced with the daunting task of evacuating the city of Cauldron before a volcanic eruption. Running an event-based adventure is tricky. It can be difficult to keep up the pace, and it's easy to waste time flipping pages between events. Study the entire chapter carefully prior to play to familiarize yourself with its contents. This adventure utilizes many complex rules for handling large crowds and adjudicating city-based disasters. You should feel free to reorganize the timing of the events as you see fit. Take the time to familiarize yourself with the abilities and tactics for the primary villains in the adventure, in particular the derro assassin Kravichak, the demodands, the Crater Lake Monster, and the mighty dragon Hookface.

EVENT 32: A MEETING OF MINDS

The PCs are likely to share their findings from Chapter Eight with their allies. Even if they don't the city of Cauldron soon comes to realize that something very fundamental has changed. The town guard seems confused and disorganized. The relentless tax collectors are nowhere to be seen. Rumors that Terseon Skellerang has committed suicide spread like wildfire. And perhaps most interesting of all—Lord Vhalantru is nowhere to be found.

As word of the destruction of the Last Laugh, the assassination of Lord Vhalantru, and other, even more fantastic suppositions begins to spread, the PCs are contacted by their allies. The surviving leaders of Cauldron have called for a meeting in the town hall, and the PCs have been invited to attend. If they refuse to attend, then nearly all of Cauldron's influential citizens are slain by Kravichak and his berserker minions (see event 33). Jenya manages to escape and locates the PCs later to fill them in on events and to express her disappointment that they weren't there to aid in the city's defense. The quakes begin soon thereafter.

Jenya Urikas is the one responsible for calling this meeting of the city's remaining powerful, influential, or perceptive members. She intends to determine a course of action for Cauldron, including compiling a list of potential replacements for the slain lord mayor. In addition to inviting the PCs, she also invites all other allies to the cause, including clerics from the other temples (excluding the now closed temple of Wee Jas), prominent merchants, and members of the Chisel and the Striders of Fharlanghn.

Jenya's invitation list also includes the heads of Cauldron's most important noble families, some of which are parents of NPCs the player characters might have already encountered. The meeting itself takes place in a large room in the Town Hall. As the meeting progresses, the PCs should have ample opportunities to size up the nobles and others, either through conversation (Diplomacy checks) or careful observation (Sense Motive checks). Most of the nobles do not respond well to intimidation, and any attempted Intimidate checks automatically turn their attitude unfriendly. The nobles aren't foolish enough to assault the PCs, but they are generally brave enough to argue with them.

The meeting begins with Jenya introducing everyone. Her goals for the meeting include the following:

- How should Cauldron go about replacing the lord mayor? Historically, the lord mayor appointed a successor, but unfortunately the previous mayor never took this step.
- Would a new form of government be better for the city? Jenya is pondering the concept of going to a

STARTING THE CHAPTER: FOUNDATION OF FLAME

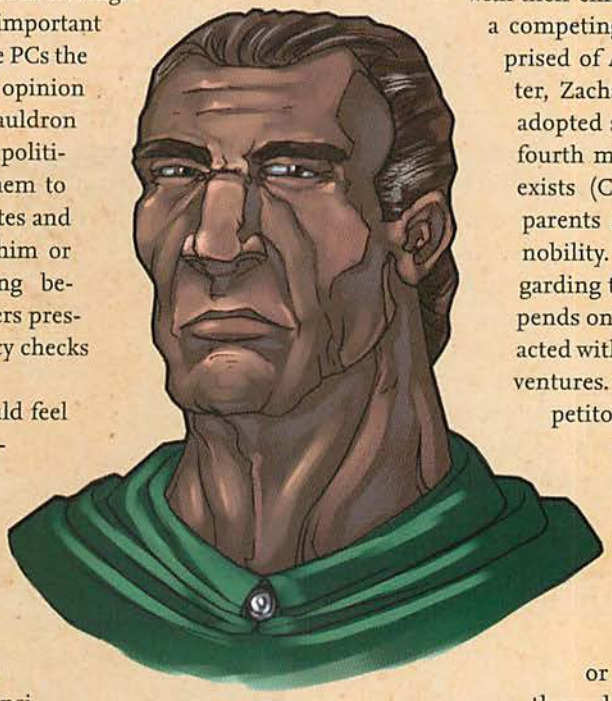
The average party level should be 15 when you start this chapter. As the PCs emerge from Vhalantru's lair, they are likely wounded, weary, and possibly carrying their dead—the PCs need time to rest. How long they have to recover from the previous adventure is up to you. If they managed to finish the previous chapter with little trouble or are above 15th level, event 32 could begin only few hours after they emerge. If, on the other hand, they took heavy casualties, give them a few days to recover, resupply, and prepare. One thing to keep in mind is that once this chapter gets under way, the PCs aren't going to have an opportunity to really rest and recover their resources until Chapter Eleven. In addition, the very nature of Cauldron changes at the end of Chapter Ten. You should take the time before starting Event 32 to give the PCs a chance to tie up any loose ends they may have in town, or to finish creating magic items or researching spells. Once you judge that they are ready, start with event 32.

ruling council format, with the office of lord mayor becoming a tie-breaking position in the council.

➪ Jenya asks the PCs to report on what they've learned about the city's troubles.

Of course, the meeting quickly crumbles into several heated discussions amongst those present. The most important thing to do here is allow the PCs the chance to form their own opinion about what's good for Cauldron and to let them flex their political muscles a bit. Allow them to endorse their own candidates and make their own case for him or her. Encourage roleplaying between the PCs and the others present by asking for Diplomacy checks or Sense Motive checks.

Ultimately, the PCs should feel like they have a great responsibility to the city and its people. If you feel they're losing sight of the goal of the meeting, Jenya reminds them of this on a few occasions. They should feel the weight of this responsibility, and know that suffering could arise if they make the wrong choice.



Lord Ankhin Taskerhill

The various participants at the meeting are detailed below. Only brief statistics are given for each, for two reasons. First, when combat breaks out (see Insanity Plea, below), the majority of these NPCs quickly flee. Even if they were to remain, only a few of them are capable of providing concrete assistance. Since many of the NPCs at this meeting have played key roles in prior adventures in the series. As a result, they may have progressed in wildly different ways in different campaigns. Feel free to replace the NPCs here with others that have become important in your specific campaign. After all, the purpose of this encounter is to allow the players a chance to roleplay with the numerous friends and allies they have made over the course of the campaign, and to perhaps feel as if their characters have an impact on the development of the city's future.

Lady Aeberrin and Lord Premiach Vanderboren

THE NOBILITY

The PCs may have had prior encounters with some of the noble families in the past; specifically, with their children. The Stormblades are a competing adventuring group comprised of Ankhin Taskerhill's daughter, Zachary Aslaxin's son, and the adopted son of the Vanderborens. A fourth member of the Stormblades exists (Cora Lathenmire), but her parents are not among Cauldron's nobility. The nobles' attitudes regarding the PCs at this meeting depends on how the heroes have interacted with their children in prior adventures. If the PCs are heated competitors with the Stormblades, they may suffer a –2 or –4 penalty on Diplomacy and Intimidate checks during the meeting. If the two adventuring groups have become allies, they may gain a +2 or +4 circumstance bonus on these skill checks.

Three notable noble families are absent. The Tercivals are gone (unless Alek somehow survived the battle with Nabthatoron, in which case you may wish to add these nobles to the meeting as well), and of course Thifirane and Vhalantru are likely both dead.

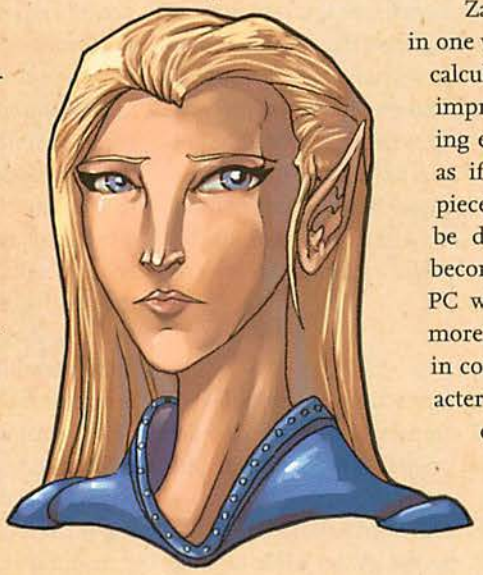
Lord Ankhin Taskerhill, male human aristocrat 8: hp 28; AL NE; Bluff +15, Diplomacy +10, Sense Motive +12.

Lord Taskerhill has always made the appearance of being a dutiful citizen, even spending time socializing with the boorish ex-lord mayor. Secretly, he has always dreamed of becoming lord mayor himself, using his combined political power and material wealth to rise to heights of power undreamed of by previous lord mayors. From this meeting, he seeks to cement the support of the other nobles for his candidacy. He wanted to hold this meeting at his own manor—all the better to

impress his inferiors with his wealth and power—but Jenya flatly denied him for all the same reasons.

Ankhin responds poorly to diplomatic attempts to pursue another candidate for lord mayor, and tries to return the subject to the appointment at any opportunity if it diverges. Although haughty and cool to the PCs, he probably responds best to intimidation, since he's quite a coward at heart.

Unknown to him, Taskerhill is currently being scryed upon by a deranged derro sorcerer named Kravichak (see Event 33). If a PC has an Intelligence of at least 12, he may notice the *scrying* sensor. Make a secret DC 20 Intelligence check for him; success indicates that he notices it. Likewise, spells like *detect scrying* can reveal the sensor. If the PCs notice the sensor and take drastic action (such as attempting to dispel it), Kravichak immediately teleports in and the meeting detailed here must be rescheduled.



Lord Zachary Aslaxin I and Lady Ophellha Knowlern

Lord Premiach Vanderboren, male human expert 3/aristocrat 3: hp 21; AL LN; Bluff +11, Diplomacy +14, Knowledge (geography) +8, Knowledge (local) +10, Sense Motive +8.

Lady Aeberrin Vanderboren, female human expert 2/aristocrat 4: hp 21; AL LG; Bluff +11, Diplomacy +11, Sense Motive +10.

Lord Vanderboren is a savvy businessman with a keen eye for things that other people often overlook. He is still uncomfortable with the title bestowed on him by the late lord mayor. His time on the streets gave him something of a rough edge, and he asks the PCs to call him Premiach or "Vandy," whichever they prefer. He doesn't say much throughout the proceedings, speaking mostly only when directly solicited for input. He also has the bad habit of occasionally interrupting someone when an idea occurs to him, and he often makes crass jokes when he's nervous (and he's very nervous at this meeting).

Lady Vanderboren is fiercely protective of her husband and her family's newfound status. As a result, she seems overly assertive and might even come across as ambitious or power-hungry. Perceptive PCs who see the nobles interacting with each other will begin to suspect the truth before long, though.

The Vanderborens were the only family invited that sent two representatives. They didn't realize that tradition in Cauldron is that one person (the head of the household) speaks for the family so no other family feels as though one of its rivals is more heavily favored than any other. The Vanderborens realized this only too late due to an overheard remark made by Lord Aslaxin, and they're still embarrassed. The Vanderborens want the city to remain safe and prosperous and have no real political agenda. However, Premiach is most interested in hearing about Orbius Vhalantru's lair, and he tries to find out repeatedly who owns it (so he can make an offer on the place).

Lord Zachary Aslaxin I, Male Human aristocrat 9: hp 31; AL N; Bluff +12, Diplomacy +12, Sense Motive +10.

The Aslaxins are primarily art dealers. They ship most of the non-obsidian artwork crafted by local craftsmen out of town, but the bulk of the family's fortune is tied up in shipping art and furniture, both simple and exotic, into town. The Aslaxins don't get along particularly well with the Taskerhills. Lord Aslaxin has always resented the Taskerhill control of the local obsidian trade, which turns a tidy profit each year.

Zachary can be described in one word: ice. Cool, silent, and calculating, he always gives the impression that he's appraising everything he sees, almost as if everyone he meets is a piece of art whose value must be determined. Lord Aslaxin becomes very interested in any PC with a Charisma of 12 or more, spending time engaged in conversation with that character in an attempt to win him or her over. He is sincere, serious, and earnest, but he also takes the opportunity to quietly inform anyone he speaks with that he expects Ankhin Taskerhill to make a bid for the office of lord mayor. He believes that only someone with ulterior motives would actually want such a difficult position. He also mentions occasionally that he'd prefer a lord mayor who was reluctant to take the position, an orchestrated move to set up his actual plan.

Aslaxin wants a peaceful Cauldron because he's had difficulty with his business. In fact, for the past few months, his financial situation has grown more and more dire. His primary contacts in other cities have been reluctant to do business lately, and he's getting desperate. He came to this meeting determined to walk out the only candidate for lord mayor. He never broach-

es the subject, but once it comes up, he circuitously approaches the idea of a nominee from this group. Although he seems as if he's not personally interested, he really wants the position, mostly for the salary and the opportunity to steal the coveted obsidian trade from the Taskerhills.

Lady Ophellha Knowlern, Female Elf expert 4/aristocrat 2: hp 15; AL NG; Bluff +8, Diplomacy +10, Knowledge (local) +14, Sense Motive +13.

Like Zachary Aslaxin, Lady Knowlern does not live in Cauldron—she makes her home in Hollowsky. Not nearly as openly powerful as the other nobles present, she was invited because she knows the city, is a genuinely compassionate person who likes Cauldron, and is a close friend of Jenya Urikas.

Ophellha projects a stern, commanding aura. She has cultivated this almost fierce exterior as a defense mechanism to keep suitors away. At heart, though, she's quite compassionate, and if the PCs recount any of their adventures that deal with the plight of the less fortunate, a successful DC 20 Spot check reveals that Ophellha is listening carefully, and perhaps surreptitiously wiping a tear away from her eye. For the most part, however, she's distant, terse, and somewhat unpleasant.

Ophellha Knowlern is here at Jenya's request to keep an eye on the other nobles. She has no interest in becoming lord mayor, but she has a definite interest in who does. She observes the meeting and tries to gauge what everyone present really wants. Secretly, Lady Knowlern hopes that Jenya herself will make a bid to become lord mayor, but she's unwilling to put her friend on the spot by nominating her without discussing the matter privately first. She might also throw her support behind Lord Vanderboren or even Lord Aslaxin, as she finds the latter noble hard to read and believes him to be sincere in his concern for the city.

ADDITIONAL ALLIES

Jenya called upon representatives from the temples of Kord and Pelor for moral support and so they could help judge the character of anyone who is nominated for lord mayor.

Jenya herself seems taken with Lord Aslaxin. He walks her around the room, refilling her goblet while talking softly in her ear and listening intently to everything she says. Jenya is a logical choice for the PCs to select as their candidate for lord mayor. She honestly doesn't want the position, but truly persuasive PCs might be able to convince her it's the best thing for the city with a successful DC 35 Diplomacy check. Lord Taskerhill and Lord Aslaxin oppose this move vehemently; they each make a DC 20 Diplomacy check to oppose the PCs. Each success invokes a –2 penalty to the PC's own check to convince Jenya.

In addition to the PCs, Jenya has invited several others to the meeting to help decide Cauldron's future. You should select additional NPCs that the PCs have had contact with in prior adventures.

Omar Tiskinsen, the second-in-command of Cauldron's church of Kord, falls firmly into Lord Taskerhill's camp. He spends most of his time loudly recounting stories of the noble's athletic prowess while Lord Taskerhill smiles thinly and chuckles at all the right moments.

Kristof seems entirely out of place. The other nobles mostly ignore the least powerful cleric, and he nervously sips too much wine while waiting for the evening to end.

The Striders of Fharlanghn (Fario, Fellian, Shensen, and Meerthan) stay fairly quiet during the meeting, watching the nobles and anyone else nominated for the post. If pressed for their own nominations, they nominate the PC that has formed the closest bond with their organization. Otherwise, they prefer to remain silent observers.

The merchants (Keygan, Skie, and Tygot) quickly become fairly vocal and passionate about supporting their choices for lord mayor. Keygan supports Taskerhill, Skie the Vanderborens, and Tygot the Aslaxins. A successful DC 30 Diplomacy check can convince them to support a new nominee.

Most of the other participants of the meeting (with the exception of the Striders, Jenya, and the PCs) assume Maavu is here to help represent the merchants of Cauldron; he does own several warehouses in town. Maavu supports Lord Aslaxin's nomination, and stridently opposes Lord Taskerhill. A successful DC 30 Diplomacy check can convince him to support a new nominee, unless that nominee is Ankhin Taskerhill.

Development: Although this meeting may ultimately come to nothing (especially if the PCs fail to successfully evacuate the city later), the PCs won't be aware of this at the time. Eventually, the citizens of Cauldron attempt to rebuild their lives. Just how the city recovers and rebuilds can be quite strongly influenced by the results of this meeting, even though dire times are coming for Cauldron.

It's possible that one of the PCs may become a favored nominee for the office of lord mayor. For the remainder of the campaign, Cauldron is in no shape to be worrying much about the government, but eventually the city will need new leadership. Ruling a city and defending it from yet unseen dangers could form the basis of a continuing campaign beyond the final adventure in this series.

Ad-Hoc Experience Award: If the PCs help select a good choice for lord mayor, award them experience points as if they had defeated a CR 15 creature to reward their roleplaying efforts.

EVENT 33: INSANITY PLEA (EL 17)

A derro savant named Kravichak has been scrying on Lord Taskerhill since his arrival at the meeting. Kravichak has decided that Cauldron has calmed down too much; a little chaos and fear can only further the Cagewrights' plans. When the meeting reaches a particularly tense moment, Kravichak and his barbarian minions teleport into the room.

Creatures: Kravichak and his barbarian minions appear with little fanfare within 10 feet of Lord Taskerhill. Since he's been observing the room via his *scrying* spell, his familiarity is "viewed once" and he has a 76% chance of successfully teleporting into the room. If he fails, he continues to try once per round until successful.

Kravichak looks like a small, hunched dwarf with pale, blue-white skin and bulging white eyes. He wears unkempt but fine robes, and a long, wispy goatee hangs from his chin and upper lip. His hair is crudely cut in no particular fashion, chopped by one of his berserkers when the mood suits him. The derro has roughly even odds of being filthy or fastidiously clean. When Kravichak speaks, his grating and squeaky voice frequently breaks into upper registers. The derro often erupts into spasmodic, lurching giggles, which invariably give him a bad case of hiccups. The foaming mouths of his four berserker minions constantly stream an unending litany of shrill gibberish.

Utterly insane, the derro savant teleported into the Cagewrights' lair one day and declared himself their ally. Despite their initial attempts to rid themselves of the crazed creature, the Thirteen have since decided that the sorcerer has his uses. He has been sent on many deadly missions with little expectation for survival, but each time, he and his berserkers managed to return alive and successful. Some within the Cagewrights believe that some of his berserkers have died at some point, but since only Kravichak seems able to tell them apart, no one is entirely sure.

Kravichak Riolgh

Kravichak Riolgh, male derro sorcerer 13: hp 110; see Appendix 4.

Kravichak's Berserkers, male and female derro barbarian 10: hp 108; see Appendix 4.

Tactics: Kravichak loves to see his berserkers hurl themselves into battle, but he loves hurling spells in with them even more. Spellcraft checks to determine the spells he casts are nearly pointless, since he frequently shouts out the names of the spells as he casts them. Most of the time he says the name of the spell correctly, but sometimes he makes honest mistakes. Kravichak is especially fond of ray spells, and his gibbering screams of joy and ecstasy while he casts them have unhinged otherwise doughty warriors.

Kravichak's initial plan was to teleport into the meeting and kill everyone. The presence of the PCs doesn't surprise him, but it does alter his plans; he's not insane enough to not recognize that they pose the greatest initial threat. He orders his berserkers to kill them while he focuses his spells on them at range. If you elect to have any of the other NPCs remain to assist the PCs, the derro extend their attacks to them as well.

Kravichak teleports in with some defensive magic already cast. He has used his *wand of fly* on himself and his *wand of invisibility* on each of his four berserkers. He has also cast *shield* and *detect thoughts* on himself, and *haste* on the entire group. The stat blocks in the appendix incorporate the benefits of these spells.

Meerthan, Jenya, and any other high-level NPCs in the room react quickly when the attack begins. Meerthan gathers the five nobles and teleports away to safety, and the others simply flee via the doors as they can. Each of the nobles has an AC of 11 and hit points as indicated in their brief NPC capsules above.

Development: If one or more of the nobles dies, the survivors certainly have an easier time selecting a new lord mayor. Jenya arranges *raise dead* and *resurrection* spells as necessary, but the onset of the events in the rest of this chapter soon make the prospects for a new meeting remote.

The Mountain Awakens

The Cagewrights don't immediately realize that Kravichak has launched his own, private assault against the leaders and heroes of Cauldron. When they do notice his absence, however, their plans quickly accelerate. The Thirteen have specifically ordered everyone within the complex deep under Cauldron to remain there; this close to success, they aren't willing to risk exposure and want their lair to be as well defended as possible. Several of their members (Ssythar Nahazir, Alurad Sorizan, Xokek, Kyan Winterstrike, Viirdran Daraqor, and Embril Aloustinai) have left for Carceri to arrange the formation of the demodand army to invade Cauldron, and those who remain under Cauldron wait impatiently for word from Embril that the ritual may proceed.

After the events of "Lords of Oblivion," the Cagewrights know that the PCs have struck a major blow against their plans, especially if Thifirane was killed. When the Cagewrights discover Kravichak is gone, they quickly determine what happened by casting several divination spells. The Cagewrights have been awaiting the return of their remaining members to begin the ritual, but this was more out of respect than necessity. Once they realize what has happened, the Cagewrights immediately begin the ritual of planar junction without them.

The secondary effects of the ritual include steadily increasing tremors, soon joined by fissures opening in the ground. Dark clouds converge over the city, crackling with energy. These clouds signify the first tenuous connection between Carceri and the Material Plane. As the barrier between the planes weakens, demodands begin falling from the clouds and onto the surrounding countryside and city. It is the beginning of the end for Cauldron, and only the PCs can do anything about it.

The timing for the rest of the adventure depends on when the Cagewrights begin the ritual of planar junction. If the PCs only barely survived their battle with Kravichak, you can wait long enough for them to rest and recover spells. If they made it through the battle with no problems, the ritual could begin as early as only a few hours later. If the PCs seem determined to track down Kravichak's masters, that's a good sign to start the ritual as well.

As a result of their tampering with the forces within the volcano, the Cagewrights set off a chain reaction that threatens to destroy Cauldron. As this chapter progresses, the effects of these forces proceed through two distinct stages, each of which is detailed below. The Cagewrights foresaw these devastating effects and have taken steps to ensure their safety. The artifact that serves as a focus for the ritual, the *Tree of Shackled Souls*, suppresses the effects of earthquakes and volcanic activity within a half mile. Since the Cagewrights' hold is located deep underground, these stabilizing effects do not extend to the city above. Further details on this location can be found in the next chapter.

As this chapter begins, the Cagewrights have just begun the ritual of planar junction. Consequently, the volcano is beginning to stir in a series of uneasy rumblings and grumblings. Initially, these tremors are ignored. The townsfolk are no strangers to minor earthquakes, and react with little more than nervous jokes. As the minutes pass and the tremors continue to occur, however, the joking ceases. It doesn't take long for the citizens to realize something terrible is on the way.

It's possible that once the tremors begin to shake Cauldron, the PCs can learn of the doom coming to the city on their own by using various divination spells or skill checks. In this case, allow them to draw their

own conclusions about what's happening. When the need to evacuate the city becomes apparent, Jenya may still contact them for advice or aid. If, on the other hand, there isn't a PC that can cast powerful divination magic, or if they seem to be ignoring the coming dangers or making plans to go elsewhere, use Jenya to focus their goals as detailed below. In any event, as the tremors build, it should become quite apparent that the volcano is awake.

Spellcasting characters may use spells like *divination* or *commune* to determine what's happening. You should frame your answers to let the PCs know that Cauldron may have only a few hours left before the volcano erupts, and that the PCs should do what they can to evacuate the city before the disaster strikes. If the PCs don't hit on the idea for evacuating the city, you can have Meerthan, Jenya, Maavu, or another ally suggest the course of action to them.

THE EVACUATION BEGINS

The second stage of volcanic activity in the region begins shortly before the PCs can officially get started on the task of evacuation. This stage lasts for the remainder of the chapter. The shift is sudden, and is not normal behavior for an earthquake or the beginnings of a volcanic eruption. In addition to worsening tremors and other volcanic hazards, this stage is accompanied by a darkening of the skies and roiling clouds above. Oddly colored lightning and flashes of energy pulse in the clouds, and a successful DC 30 Knowledge (the planes) check allows a character to realize that the cloud formations are disturbingly similar to those found on the prison plane of Carceri. Eventually, fissures begin to open in the ground, unleashing steam, toxic gas, and magma. The central lake boils and begins to flood the lower reaches of Cauldron. Portals begin opening in the skies above, raining demodands down upon the countryside. Time is running out.

To completely evacuate Cauldron, the PCs must eventually travel to every section of the city. For the purposes of running the evacuation, Cauldron has been split into five sections: four quadrants that reach from the city walls to Ash Avenue, and the lakefront area at the center of town from Ash Avenue inward. The PCs don't need to personally escort each citizen out of the city; the city watch, helpful merchants, and other NPCs are also helping to organize the evacuation. But without the PCs there to help take care of the major problems, the majority of the citizens are doomed.

To evacuate a section, the PCs must convince the locals to help them by spreading the word. The best way to do this is by performing acts of heroism that free trapped or endangered citizens and allow them to escape. Once a section of the city has been evacuated, simply tell the PCs that they have done all they can here and can move on to a new section of town. The order in which the PCs evacuate the city is largely up to them, but the Lake District is in the most danger due to flooding and other trouble coming from the depths of the lake. As the PCs begin to evacuate the city, allow them DC 20 Gather Information or Knowledge (nature) checks. Success indicates that they learn (either via rumors and panicked citizenry or via their own knowledge of how volcanoes function) that the Lake District should be one of the first sections evacuated.

The rest of this chapter provides details on several events that the PCs may encounter as they evacuate the city. One of these events (The Morkoth Rises) can only occur in the central section of the city, but the majority can occur anywhere. If the PCs successfully deal with an event, they gain a number of Evacuation Points as detailed in that event's Development section. To successfully evacuate a city section, the PCs must accumulate at least 16 Evacuation Points in that section. The characters should have to overcome at least two events per city section, and may need to tackle three. Evacuation points in excess of 16 do not count toward the successful evacuation of other city sections.

LOCAL HEROES AND VICTIMS

In many of the following events, local Cauldronites are in peril and the PCs must rescue them to help with the evacuation of the city.

The PCs may have to carry citizens (who are often unconscious) to safety. Unless stated specifically in the text, 80% of the victims are Medium, and the rest are Small. Carrying victims can reduce a PC's speed and skill checks due to encumbrance. A Medium victim has an average weight of 175 pounds and a Small victim has an average weight of 50 pounds.

But not all of the locals are victims. The PCs can attempt to influence the public into aiding them in their evacuation efforts. In each of the events detailed later in

Situation	Diplomacy Modifier	Intimidate Modifier
The PC reminds the citizens of the group's previous heroism in town.	+2	+2
The player roleplays effectively, appealing to the townsfolks' humanity and innate decency.	+2	–2
The PC can prove he's acting on the authority of Cauldron's leadership.	+2	+2
The PC reveals information about the Cagewrights and their plans.	–2	+2
The PC plays on the crowd's fears, telling them they'll die a fiery death unless they cooperate.	–4	+2
The PC is analytical and logical, pointing to the devastation that has already threatened the city as an example of what will happen to the townsfolks' friends and family if the civilians don't help.	+2	+2
The PC plays to the guilt of the citizens for abandoning their fellows.	+2	–2
The PC offers bribes to anyone who helps with the evacuation.	+2	+2

this chapter, a section described under Citizen Aid details how the locals can help the PCs successfully complete the encounter. Of course, the citizens of Cauldron aren't heroes themselves, so they'll need to be convinced to help.

In order to convince the locals to help, a PC must make a successful DC 30 Diplomacy or Intimidate check to secure aid. These checks normally take a minute to perform, but a character can rush the check as a full-round action, taking a –10 penalty on the check as a result. Diplomacy generally works better in this situation, since intimidating the locals damages the PCs' heroic reputation. Each Intimidate check made in an event to convince the locals to help reduces the Evacuation Point award for that event by 1.

You should encourage the PCs to roleplay their attempts to secure the aid of the locals. If they say certain things during this roleplay, they gain bonuses (or penalties) on their Diplomacy or Intimidate checks, as detailed on the previous page.

If the PCs wish to recruit a citizen with specific skills (such as Handle Animal or Heal), they'll need to make a successful DC 20 Gather Information check to find the desired individual after ten minutes of interviewing locals.

Cauldronite Citizen, commoner 1: hp 7; see Appendix 4.

VOLCANIC HAZARDS

As the adventure proceeds and you run the events below, the escalating tremors and volcanism create additional hazards for the characters. Use these hazards as you see fit to liven things up between events, or to increase the danger and add variety to an event you run more than once.

Tremor (EL 1): Tremors shake the ground, cause minor property damage, and generate rising feelings of panic within the citizenry. Each tremor only lasts for 1d4+2 rounds. Each round during a tremor, creatures standing on the ground must make a DC 15 Reflex save or fall prone.

Building Collapse (EL 6): A creature inside a collapsing building takes 8d6 points of bludgeoning damage (Reflex DC 15 half) and is pinned beneath the rubble. Pinned creatures take 1d6 points of nonlethal damage per minute while pinned. If a pinned creature falls unconscious, he or she must make a DC 15 Constitution check or take 1d6 points of lethal damage each minute thereafter until freed or dead.

Yawning Fissure (EL 2): As the volcanic activity proceeds, fissures begin to tear open the ground beneath Cauldron. A single fissure consists of a 5-foot-wide crack that opens to a depth of 1d3×10 feet. A creature in the square when a fissure opens can avoid falling in with a successful DC 20 Reflex save.

Crushing Fissure (EL 7): A crushing fissure functions as a yawning fissure, save that 1d4+2 rounds after it opens it slams shut. Creatures inside a fissure when it closes are crushed for 12d6 points of damage and are buried. Buried creatures take 1d6 points of nonlethal damage per minute and cannot breathe or cast spells with material components. A burrowing speed allows a buried creature to escape.

Steam Vent (EL 5): A vent opens in the ground and fills a 10-foot-spread area with steam. The steam deals 8d6 points of fire damage (DC 15 Reflex save half).

Gas Vent (EL 7): A cloud of superheated gas boils up from a vent in the ground, engulfing a 30-foot-radius spread. Everyone in the area takes 6d6 points of fire damage (Reflex save DC 15 halves). In addition, the cloud is toxic. A creature exposed to the cloud must make a DC 17 Fortitude save or take 1d4 points of Strength damage and 1d4 points of Constitution damage. The initial and secondary damage is the same. Note that the steam that rises from the boiling waters of the lake is also composed of this toxic gas, and can affect anyone within 10 feet of the water's surface once the lake boils over.

Lava Vent (EL 10): A vent opens in the ground and a gout of lava blasts out of it to a height of 1d4×10 feet, spattering everything within a 20-foot burst. Creatures in the area take 10d6 points of fire damage (DC 18 Reflex halves). Anyone who is damaged by the lava continues to take damage for 1d3 rounds after exposure, but this additional damage is only half that dealt during actual contact (5d6 fire).

Boiling Tsunami (EL 8): The deep tremors cause the waters of the central lake to periodically flood the lower portions of the city. Waves wash as high as Ash Avenue in places. These waves make the waterfront area a priority for evacuation, as not only do they drown victims caught, but the waters themselves have been heated to boiling by the volcanic activity deep below. A single wave of boiling water strikes everyone within a 30-foot spread. Characters in the area take 8d6 points of fire damage (Reflex DC 15 half) and must make a successful DC 18 Balance check or be knocked prone and dragged 20 feet closer to the waterline by the sharp undertow. Characters very near the water risk being dragged into the lake itself. Immersed characters take 8d6 points of fire damage per round that they remain within the scalding water and must make a Fortitude save due to exposure to the toxic waters (see Gas Vent, above).

EVACUATION EVENTS

The descriptions of these events assume that the adventure takes place during the day; if you set the events to occur during the night, modify each event's description as appropriate.

You should plan which events the PCs face in each city section before the game starts. Plan for 2–3 events per section. Since there are 13 events in all and five city sections, you'll probably need to run some events multiple times in order to give the PCs a chance to earn enough Evacuation Points. You can combine two or more events or add volcanic hazards to form different and interesting variations.

AD-HOC EXPERIENCE AWARDS

Most of these events do not involve traditional fights with monsters or traps to be discovered and overcome. Each time the PCs complete an event, they should earn an experience point award as if for a creature of a Challenge Rating equal to the amount of Evacuation Points they earned for the encounter. A 15th-level character thus gains no experience points for an event that goes poorly and results in an Evacuation Point award of fewer than 8 points. Only four of the events (40, 44, 45, and 46) should have experience points awarded normally for the defeat of monsters rather than for Evacuation Points earned.

EVENT 34. THE UPPER STORY (EL 8)

A tall tenement structure stands here, the windows on the top floor thrown open. A hysterical man leans precariously out one of the windows, a wailing child clutched in his arms. On the street below, another man stands screaming up at the man in the window, gesticulating wildly and pointing at the ground floor.

Creatures: The two men are brothers. Rhegin is trying to convince his stubborn brother Tomash to abandon the house and to flee Cauldron. Tomash has lived in this home his entire life, and sees no reason to leave. Rhegin has noticed several cracks forming in the building's foundation and is growing desperate. A successful DC 20 Knowledge (architecture and engineering) check confirms that the building is nearing collapse.

Rhegin is afraid to enter the teetering building but is quite concerned for his brother's welfare. Despite Rhegin's best efforts, all he's managed to do is drive Tomash into a near frenzy of panic. Tomash is almost completely unaware that his youngest child dangles precariously from his grip, and is equally oblivious to Rhegin's warnings that the building could collapse at any time.

A DC 10 Sense Motive check makes it clear that any sudden moves might further panic Tomash into doing something stupid—like dropping his son, Hagin. Tomash also has a 2-year-old daughter, Uhlia, who is also trapped within the building.

If the PCs try to talk Tomash down using Diplomacy or Intimidate, treat Tomash as hostile. His attitude must shift to at least friendly before he agrees to come down. Rhegin aids the PCs in any Diplomacy checks they make with the aid another action (he has Diplomacy +0). Unless the PCs rush their check (and suffer a –10 penalty), each check takes a minute to perform. It takes Tomash one additional minute to grab his other child and exit the building once he's convinced he needs to leave.

Of course, the PCs can also attempt to force Tomash to leave the building. The front door to the building is locked (Open Lock DC 25). Once through the door, it takes a minute to get upstairs to Tomash's location. The PCs can also attempt to climb or fly up to his window and bring him down that way.

Once Tomash sees the PCs trying to break into his house or come for him, his panic takes over. He backs into his room, slamming his window shutters and locking them as he goes. If the PCs charge him or cast spells, he is so startled that he must make a DC 12 Reflex save or drop his son. Any PC that has reach to the square directly under the window can then attempt a DC 20 Reflex save to catch the falling infant. Failure indicates the child (who has only 1 hp) takes 2d6 points of falling damage. If Tomash drops Hagin, he wails in anguish and collapses inside the building.

Otherwise, Tomash must be successfully pinned, knocked unconscious, or otherwise immobilized before he can be carried anywhere. Once he is pinned, he stops struggling, and merely pleads that the PCs not forget his babies. His daughter Uhlia is only 7 years old, but if the PCs break into the house she panics as well and hides (Hide +4) in a closet and must be found before she can be rescued. A search of the house for her takes 1 minute, unless she hears her father call her name.

With each passing minute, there is a cumulative 20% chance a tremor strikes. If this occurs, the building collapses, likely killing Tomash and his two children.

Citizen Aid: If the PCs can convince nearby townspeople to help, they add their voices to the requests for Tomash to calm down and flee the building, automatically granting the PCs a +2 circumstance bonus on Diplomacy or Intimidate checks.

Evacuation Award: The PCs gain 8 Evacuation Points for successfully convincing Tomash to leave the building before it collapses. If Tomash dies, reduce the Evacuation Points awarded by 1. For each of his children who die, reduce the total Evacuation Points by 2. If the PCs resort to force to bring Tomash and his children out, their hostility reduces the Evacuation Points by 1.

EVENT 35. TRAPPED TOWNSFOLK (EL 9)

A narrow residential street here is filled with rubble. The shattered remains of a large house seem to be the primary source of the rubble. It must have collapsed fairly recently, since the rock dust hasn't settled and the debris still shifts periodically.

The rubble has trapped a family of 1d4+2 citizens. One family member has just managed to stagger clear of the rubble, but the rest of the family is still trapped. These trapped individuals have 2 minutes to live before they die of suffocation.

A successful DC 20 Spot check indicates that the PCs see someone stagger out of the rubble (the escaping family member) and collapse to the street. This person was at 0 hit points after the collapse, and the strain of escaping has reduced him to –1 hit points. Unless he stabilizes or is healed, he'll soon die.

A successful DC 28 Listen check means the PCs hear faint coughing and muffled cries for help coming from the rubble.

The rubble must be shifted carefully. If a PC simply rushes in and starts tossing rocks around, the rubble shifts inward, burying the trapped citizens alive. If this happens, a successful DC 18 Listen check lets the digging PC hear the screams of the trapped individuals as the rubble pins them down. At this point, they'll die in 3 rounds unless freed.

If the PCs stop to analyze the rubble, a successful DC 15 Knowledge (architecture and engineering) check or a successful DC 28 Search check allows the PC to realize how best to move the debris. A character with stonecunning receives a +4 bonus on these checks. The rubble can be shifted and moved with a successful DC 22 Strength check. Up to six other individuals can use the aid another action (by making a DC 10 Strength check) to aid the character moving the rocks. Each successful Strength check uncovers 1d4–1 people.

Magic can be used to clear rubble quickly as well. *Disintegrate*, if cast on the rubble, immediately frees the trapped family with no further injury. *Transmute rock to mud* frees the family from the rubble but they immediately begin drowning in the viscous mud. They must be freed in 3 rounds or they all die. Extracting someone from the mud is a standard action. *Stone to flesh* converts the pile of rubble into a hideous mound of inert flesh. This doesn't change the situation for the trapped townsfolk at all, unfortunately, but if the PCs inflict at least 100 points of damage to the AC 0 mound of flesh they can extract the family safely. Two *stone shape* spells can reach the trapped family, creating a narrow tunnel a Medium creature can crawl through without difficulty.

Citizen Aid: The PCs can call upon the aid of any helpful locals to tend to the escaped family member's wounds, or to help move aside rubble.

Evacuation Award: The PCs gain 9 Evacuation Points for successfully saving the trapped family members. Each family member that dies reduces this award by 1 point; if all family members perish, the PCs gain no Evacuation Points at all.

EVENT 36. SQUISHED (EL 9)

A massive fissure at least fifty feet long and half that wide at its widest point bisects the street ahead. Steam rises from the crack in jets. Suddenly, the ground convulses sharply, and the edges of the fissure crumble a bit and slowly start to close. A chorus of screams wells up from within.

This massive crack split a major road, and fourteen hapless townsfolk have tumbled inside. Several were knocked unconscious by the fall, but none have died—yet. The crack has widened and deepened by several feet for the past few rounds until it reached its current depth of 50 feet. The tremors and crumbling edges have made it impossible for anyone to climb out. To make matters worse, the buckling earth now seems about to reverse its course, and the crack has started to close. If it closes all the way, every one of the townsfolk inside will be crushed and buried alive.

The crevice is closing at a rate of 5 feet every 2 rounds. Its current width is 25 feet. Thus, the PCs must descend into the crevice and retrieve the wounded and unconscious townsfolk within 10 rounds. Climbing the sides requires a successful DC 25 Climb check due to the shifting soil and tremors. A PC anchoring a rope from the top reduces the DC by 5. Even so, a character with a speed of 30 feet climbing to the bottom reaches it in about 3 rounds. A PC can climb twice as fast using the accelerated climbing option described on page 69 of the *Player's Handbook*, but doing so results in a –5 penalty on any Climb checks. Failure by 5 or more indicates that the character slides to the bottom of the rift, taking 1d6 points of nonlethal falling damage per 10 feet (Reflex DC 15 half). Of course, a brave PC can also simply slide down the narrow side of the 50-foot-deep fissure and reach the bottom in a single round. Naturally, characters that can fly can reach the trapped townsfolk with ease.

Five of the citizens are unconscious and at –4 hit points when the PCs arrive. If not stabilized, they die in 6 rounds. To get full credit and experience for the encounter, the PCs must see that any unconscious civilians are brought to a safe zone (a temple or city gate).

Citizen Aid: Any citizens aiding the PCs can help tremendously with this encounter. They can anchor ropes, climb or fly down (if the proper spells are cast on them), or use the aid another action to help a character with the Heal skill stabilize unconscious citizens brought to the top.

Evacuation Award: The PCs gain 9 Evacuation Points for successfully rescuing all 14 of the trapped locals. Reduce this award by 1 for each local who perishes (minimum award of 0).

EVENT 37. A CITY AFLAME (EL 10)

Plumes of smoke rising from minor fires have become an unfortunately common sight, but for now it seems that none of them are too large for the citizens to handle themselves. Not so the billowing wall of dark smoke rising from behind a nearby row of buildings; even now licks of flame can be seen rising dangerously high

This fire is the first of any significant size to start during the seismic activity, and if the PCs don't help fight it, it quickly grows out of control. Currently, it is contained to a single large (mostly wooden) house. To make a bad situation worse, a family was in the three-story building when the fire started, and they're unable to reach an exit. The screams of the trapped folk on the ground floor are impossible to ignore, but the coughing of the victim on the upper floor is more difficult to hear.

Upon entering the burning building, a breathing character takes 1d6 points of fire damage per round (no save). He must also make a Fortitude save every 5 rounds (DC 15, +1 per previous check) or take 1d4 points of nonlethal damage. A character who holds his breath can avoid the lethal damage, but not the nonlethal damage. Those wearing heavy clothing or any sort of armor take a –4 penalty on these saving throws. In addition, those wearing metal armor are affected as if by a *heat metal* spell (see page 239 of the *Player's Handbook*).

Unless a character in the building takes a move action to avoid flames and falling burning debris, he takes an additional 2d6 points of fire damage per round and must make a successful DC 15 Reflex save to avoid catching on fire.

The thick smoke in the burning building also poses a hazard. Anyone breathing the smoke must make a Fortitude save each round (DC 15, +1 per previous check) or spend that round coughing and choking. Note that this prevents the character from moving to avoid fire and falling debris and results in 2d6 fire damage. A character who chokes for 2 consecutive rounds takes 1d6 points of nonlethal damage. The smoke also obscures vision, and provides concealment to characters within it.

Eight people are trapped in the burning building. Four of them have succumbed to the heat and smoke and are unconscious, and the other four cower in the few relatively safe pockets left.

To find a trapped citizen, a PC must spend 5 rounds searching in the building. A successful DC 25 Listen check also reduces the amount of time by 2 rounds, as the coughing Cauldronites lead the PCs to their location. A successful DC 20 Knowledge (architecture and engineering) check reduces the search time by 1 round, as the PC is able to determine where the living quarters of the family members are likely to be. Once the required amount of time has passed, the character must make a successful DC 20 Search check to find a citizen. For every 5 points by which this Search check exceeds the DC of 20, an additional citizen is located.

An area effect cold or water spell directed at the ground floor extinguishes one-third of the fire; three such spells put the fire out completely and enable the PCs to retrieve civilians without having to worry about the fire (although the smoke persists for many more minutes and the family still dies if left unattended). A *quench* spell cast by a caster of at least 10th level puts out the blaze entirely.

Any citizen still trapped in the house after 4 minutes perishes.

Citizen Aid: The PCs can call upon any citizens aiding them to begin a bucket brigade to put out the fire. Doing so has no immediate effect, but after 2 minutes all fire damage suffered is halved as the bucket brigade's work begins to take hold.

PCs can also enlist hardy citizens to accompany them on forays into the structure to use the aid another action to aid a PC's Search check. A Cauldronite can only make one such trip before having to stagger outside and rest his weary lungs and tend to his burns.

Evacuation Award: The PCs gain 10 Evacuation Points for successfully rescuing the family and putting out the fire. If they fail to extinguish the fire, reduce the Evacuation Point award by 2. Reduce the award by 1 point for each family member who perishes. If all family members perish, the PCs gain no Evacuation Points for this event, even if they put out the fire.

EVENT 38. LAKE OF FIRE (EL 10)

Several streets meet here at an intersection that forms an open square. The cobblestones seem to be covered in a thick layer of rough, black rock. Several pedestrians stand motionless in the center of the intersection; in fact, they look to have stopped mid-stride. Two additional figures are slumped over near the center of the intersection, either unconscious or dead. Whatever their situation, the tendrils of smoke rising from the bodies is a bad sign.

A lava vent opened up just above this intersection, and a river of thick magma bubbled to the surface. It then flowed down the street to this intersection, pooling in the shallow depression of the convergence of roads. The pool of magma quickly cooled once it stabilized as an 80-foot-diameter pond, and the top layer formed an insulating shell of volcanic rock. The next several people to walk by didn't realize the street they were walking on was actually a layer of hardened magma until they reached the thinner center, at which point two fell into the lava. The remaining ten people now stand frozen on a lake of magma, too terrified to move.

The magma pond is mostly hardened, but a nearly 1-foot-thick layer of lava still smolders beneath the crust. The crust can support 200 pounds of weight in one 5-foot square, except for at its center, where a 5-foot square can only hold 150 pounds. If a character breaks through the crust, he immediately takes 2d6 points of fire damage. As if that wasn't bad enough, the character becomes wedged in the stone crust and requires a DC 20 Strength check or a DC 25 Escape Artist check to get free. A trapped person takes 2d6 fire damage each round he remains stuck, and takes half damage for 1d3 rounds after being freed.

The two unfortunates who lie slumped over near the center of the lake were the first victims of this hazard. When they first fell through, their screams of terror and pain alerted several nearby citizens who immediately rushed to their aid, not realizing the danger. Only when they got close enough to see the lick of flames from the hole did they realize their mistake.

To add to the danger, lava has begun seeping to the surface again. Not enough has seeped up to cause the crust to break apart, but fissures begin forming 2 minutes after this event begins. Every round thereafter, one

citizen succumbs to the lava and perishes. The PCs must move quickly to save the ten scattered and panicked townsfolk.

Walking out to save the townsfolk is dangerous because the added weight could cause the shell of rock to crack open, especially if a PC enters a local's square to pick him up. The PCs can convince the locals to walk toward them with a successful DC 25 Diplomacy or Intimidate check; remember that these checks normally take a minute to perform and if the PCs wish to rush the check as a full-round action they take a –10 penalty on the roll. Talking the individuals off the lava must be done one at a time.

Cold and water spells harden any volcanic crust within their areas of effect. Increase the support weight by 25 pounds for each 10 points of damage such a spell deals. Any spell that deals non-cold damage, including *ice storm*, actually causes the crust to break apart, sending any creatures within 20 feet on the crust into the lava unless they succeed at a DC 15 Reflex save.

Flight can result in a speedy rescue. However, the locals are terrified, and aren't necessarily convinced that a PC won't drop them back onto the lava. Until at least one person is rescued by a flying PC, each attempted flight rescue requires the flying PC to make a successful DC 15 Diplomacy or Intimidate check to convince a trapped local to trust the flying PC. A flying PC can attempt to grapple a stubborn civilian, but if he fails to do so the struggle causes the crust below to fracture, dealing 2d6 points of fire damage to the local and 1d6 points of fire damage to the PC.

Citizen Aid: There is little aid that helpful citizens can provide, with the possible exception of using the aid another action to help with Diplomacy or Intimidate checks.

Evacuation Award: The PCs earn 10 Evacuation Points for rescuing the ten trapped civilians. Reduce this amount by 1 point for each civilian who perishes.

EVENT 39. STAMPEDE! (EL 11)

Sure Foot Livery, near the lake at the center of town, is the largest livestock (and livestock accessory) business in Cauldron. When the tremors first began, the animals kept in the stables here began to panic, and as the situation in Cauldron worsened, the staff eventually lost control of the herd. As the tremors grew worse and fissures and gouts of lava began to appear, the animals went berserk. Sure Foot Livery's employees fled to their homes to see to their personal affairs, leaving the livestock to fend for itself. It didn't take long for the animals to break out and begin stampeding through the streets of Cauldron.

The PCs can encounter multiple stampedes as they attempt to evacuate Cauldron. If you run this event more than once you should liven things up with falling demodands or volcanic hazards. In any case, the animals madly attempt to find a way out of the bucking, heaving city, but they've mostly just been running around the streets in giant circles.

PCs can deal with the herd in several ways. Destroying the herd is the most obvious solution, although doing so impacts the number of Evacuation Points gained for this event.

A less destructive option is to try to herd the animals along the city streets, eventually leading them to a city gate so they can escape down the mountainside. This is a more challenging prospect, but animal-loving PCs

might seek such an avenue. To accomplish this, the PCs must first calm a heard down so that it can be led. A DC 30 Handle Animal check is enough to stop a stampeding herd. Making a Handle Animal check in this manner is a full-round action. Characters with the wild empathy ability receive a +2 bonus on this check.

Creatures: The livestock herd is composed mostly of horses, although a few oxen, cattle, and other animals are scattered throughout it as well. Details on the mob subtype appear in the Appendix.

Stampede, mob of light horses: hp 195; see Appendix 1.

Tactics: The animals in the stampede are terrified, and are simply looking for a way out of the city. The stampede attempts to overrun any PCs in its path during the first round of combat. PCs that enter the stampede or are overrun by it are subject to the herd's mob damage.

PCs can try to control the stampede by erecting magical barriers (like *walls of stone* or *fire*) in its path. Such obstacles can be used to direct the herd out of town while causing minimal damage. Six such spells placed in strategic locations should be sufficient to redirect the stampede to a city gate.

Citizen Aid: If the PCs secure the assistance of a local with ranks in Handle Animal, that local can aid a single Handle Animal check with the aid another action. If none of the PCs has the Handle Animal skill, one of these helpful locals can make the check for them.

Evacuation Award: The PCs gain 11 Evacuation Points for calming the animals or redirecting them out of the city. For each group of stampeding livestock killed, reduce this award by 2, to a minimum of 5 points.

EVENT 40. ANGRY ELEMENTAL (EL 11)

A steaming fissure yawns at the edge of the street here, lit from below by an ominous orange glow. Instantly, the fire within surges, growing brighter and fiercer. A spray of lava spurts from the fissure and spatters the surrounding area as a glowing appendage of flame erupts from within. A burning figure clambers out of the vent, howling in a voice that crackles and roars like an inferno.

The lava vent remains active for 1d6 rounds. Depending on where you place this event, the lava may or may not create secondary fires that the PCs must battle.

Creatures: The magma-filled reservoirs of the volcano below Cauldron have been home to numerous fire elementals. Much like a beehive incited to frenzy by mayhem, these elementals are shaken into a brilliant furor. They flow with the rest of the magma, eventually surfacing at various points in the region to unleash their fury on the surrounding terrain. They are quite enraged as well to find that "squatters" have taken up residence on the surface of "their" volcano. Those fire elementals that emerge into Cauldron proper, like this one, seek to drive the terrified citizens away and cleanse the mountain of the taint of humanity.

Elder Fire Elemental: hp 204; *Monster Manual* 99.

Tactics: The fire elemental attacks the first creatures it sees, which are likely to be the PCs unless they're being stealthy. Otherwise, it immediately attacks nearby buildings or townsfolk. The elemental isn't particularly smart, so it won't try to bull rush or carry PCs into the area of the lava vent, but it does find fighting near the vent more comforting.

Citizen Aid: Civilians can't help the PCs in this straight-up fight. The most helpful thing citizens can do is run in and drag unconscious PCs to safety if no elementals are within 10 feet of the downed character.

Evacuation Award: The PCs gain 11 Evacuation Points for defeating the fire elemental.

Development: This event works well multiple times, although as the adventure progresses you should make the encounter more difficult. Adding another elder fire elemental or 1d4 greater fire elementals to the battle is an effective way to accomplish this. The PCs should gain an additional Evacuation Point over the standard 11 for each additional elemental slain.

EVENT 41. MOB TROUBLE (EL 12)

Fear does terrible things to people. In this event, the PCs encounter mobs of panicked citizens, fueled by fear and guided by the cries of a few insurgents and doomsayers. Usually, these mobs are interested only in attempting to flee the city, but sometimes the mobs are more destructive. Some of them loot shops and homes, but the worst are the mobs who have become convinced that certain groups or individuals are responsible for the trouble. In this event, the PCs come face to face with a mob that is convinced that the volcano is awakening as a direct result of the trouble the PCs have been stirring up.

Some of the mob's leaders are minor NPCs that the PCs may have slighted, insulted, or otherwise annoyed in a prior adventure. They could even be people the PCs have never met but through their actions in prior adventures may have influenced. One might be a housewife whose husband was killed in the Cauldron Tax Riot. Another might be Mergala, the female elf rogue who the PCs might have apprehended while they fought the umber hulk that was savaging the town. They might even be surviving Alleybashers that the PCs all but wiped out many months ago. Whatever the tie, the PCs may or may not recognize these individuals, but they should certainly recognize the threat the mob represents.

Creatures: When the angry mob attacks, it surges forth and tries to overwhelm the PCs. They make grapple attacks en masse and try to pummel the characters to death. There are three mobs in all.

Riot, mob of humans (3): hp 135; see Appendix 1.

Tactics: If the PCs hear the mob before they see it, they have a chance to avoid this event by hiding or otherwise escaping. Likewise, once the mob attacks, the PCs can probably escape via flight or teleportation with little difficulty. Although this prevents unnecessary vio-

lence, it also fails to defuse the mob, which is free to do more damage to the city.

The mob is a collection of irrational, frightened townsfolk, and they behave as such. They attack with mindless ferocity until reduced to 0 or fewer hit points, at which point the mob disperses. The mob charges the PCs, hoping to grapple them and drag them down so they can begin crushing them. If the PCs seek to avoid the mob rather than confront them, the mob exults in their perceived victory. So emboldened, they march toward a location in town the PCs frequent; a favorite tavern (perhaps the Tipped Tankard), the building in which they live, or even the church of St. Cuthbert. Once there, they quickly begin to dismantle and destroy the location to vent the anger and fear they had hoped to inflict upon the PCs themselves.

The best tactic in handling the mob is a non-hostile approach. The mob's initial attitude is hostile, and if a PC has attacked them already, Diplomacy checks are made at a –10 penalty, or –20 if the attacking PCs are using lethal attacks. The mob disperses if the PCs can adjust its attitude to friendly (DC 35) or helpful (DC 50). Intimidate checks can also disperse the mob, but rather than calm them down these checks (if successful) merely cause the mob to scatter, only to reform about 20 minutes later to hunt down the PCs again.

Citizen Aid: Civilians are likely to be more a hindrance than help in this event. The mob assumes that anyone in the company of the PCs is likewise responsible for their woes, and regular Cauldronites aren't likely to survive the mob's crush for long without quick thinking on the PCs' part. This challenge is best handled by the characters alone.

Evacuation Award: The PCs earn 12 Evacuation Points for dispersing the mob in a non-violent manner. If the mob is dispersed with violence, word of the heavy-handed heroes spreads quickly. This grants all future angry mobs encountered a +2 morale bonus on all attack rolls, grapple checks, and saving throws. Likewise, any Diplomacy checks made against future angry mobs suffer a –2 penalty. PCs earn only 3 Evacuation Points for dispersing the mob violently.

EVENT 42. GAS EXPLOSION (EL 12)

When this event begins, the PCs should make a DC 40 Listen check and a DC 30 Spot check. A successful Listen check allows them to hear a strange rumbling and hissing sound under the ground, and a successful Spot check indicates they notice the ground swelling slowly, almost imperceptibly, upward about 20 feet ahead of them. A successful DC 25 Knowledge (nature) check indicates that these are signs of imminent volcanic activity. This knowledge grants the character and anyone he warns a +4 bonus on the Reflex save to halve damage done by the impending explosion.

The PCs have only three rounds after this event begins to react. If none of them make the Listen or Spot check to notice the impending explosion, they are caught at ground zero when it does explode.

The ground heaves suddenly, lurching violently upward. An instant later, a massive explosion rips through the street. A ball of fire the size of a large house tears through the cobbles, followed by a thunderous blast of stone debris.

Pockets of toxic, volatile gas have been building in the many chambers and passages riddling the mountain beneath Cauldron. Some manage to dissipate harmlessly in the form of gas vents, but others—like this one—are touched off by the smallest spark and burn away in an explosive flash. This particular pocket had been building for some time beneath the streets of the city. When a crack beneath the pocket allowed some magma to seep into the cavity, it triggered a massive explosion that has now left a large crater in a major thoroughfare of Cauldron.

The explosion has a primary blast radius that affects a 30-foot-radius burst. It also has a secondary blast radius that affects everything in a ring-shaped burst from 31 feet to 60 feet. Everything in the primary blast radius takes 8d6 fire damage and 8d6 bludgeoning damage; a successful DC 18 Reflex save halves the damage. Everything in the secondary blast radius takes 2d6 fire damage and 2d6 bludgeoning damage; a successful DC 12 Reflex save halves the damage.

The resulting crater in the street is 30 feet in diameter and 15 feet deep at the center. Smoke rises from the rift, obscuring everything in the crater and for an additional 30 feet beyond. Anyone breathing the smoke must make a Fortitude save each round (DC 15, +1 per previous check) or spend that round coughing and choking. A character who chokes for 2 consecutive rounds takes 1d6 points of nonlethal damage. The smoke also obscures vision, and provides concealment to characters within it.

Dense rubble chokes the entire 60-foot-diameter area. Entering a square of dense rubble requires two squares of movement. The DCs for Balance and Tumble checks increase by 5, and the DC of Move Silently checks increases by 2.

There's little the PCs can do to prevent the gas explosion, although a few spells can minimize or stop it. A *wall of stone* or *wall of iron* placed over the bulging section of ground delays the explosion by one round per caster level, but such a spell can only be cast once this area has been cleared of pedestrians. A wall spell used in this manner reduces the final radius of rubble to 30 feet. Wall spells can also be used to provide cover from the explosion. *Transmute rock to mud* immediately triggers the explosion, but reduces all bludgeoning damage inflicted by the explosion to the minimum possible. Creatures inside a *prismatic sphere* or a solid wall *forcecage* are completely protected from the explosion. Simply changing the shape of the stone (with spells like *stone shape* or *disintegrate*) causes the explosion to occur

immediately. Of course, *miracle* or *wish* can negate the explosion with ease.

Creatures: When this event begins, three locals are standing in the primary blast zone and nine are in the secondary blast zone. If the PCs notice the bulging ground in time, they can yell at the locals to run, or can even use magic or physical force to move them. Any local caught in the primary blast radius is probably killed instantly, but those in the secondary blast radius might survive. Certainly several locals need immediate attention or they'll die of their wounds. Of course, the rubble and thick smoke complicate matters, making it difficult for the PCs to reach wounded locals.

Citizen Aid: Helpful citizens can provide great help here in tending to the wounded; an average citizen of Cauldron has Heal +0, but they can also use the aid another action to assist PCs who use Heal to stabilize dying locals.

Evacuation Award: The PCs earn 12 Evacuation Points for preventing the explosion from killing anyone. Each local slain by the explosion reduces this award by 1 Evacuation Point.

EVENT 43. URBAN AVALANCHE (EL 12)

A low rumble that permeates the air sounds and even feels different than the periodic tremors that have been shaking Cauldron. The sound continues to build, quickly adding numerous screams to its chorus. An instant later, the source of the strange sound is apparent. From one of the steep streets that leads to the edge of the city, rubble from collapsed buildings and other debris is sliding and tumbling downward, forming an avalanche of detritus and ruin that threatens to engulf everything in its path.

A group of well-meaning city guards and townsfolk sought to consolidate the rubble from a number of structures in order to keep the streets clear. Unfortunately, these good intentions have resulted in catastrophe. One of these piles of rubble has collapsed and shifted into several other piles. As this event begins, the mass of rubble slides down one of the steep streets toward the city's center. The avalanche of rubble picks up steam and mass as it tumbles down the slope. Many citizens piled their belongings in the street in preparation to leave the city, and the avalanche is only too happy to pick them up and carry them along on its journey. The shifting, sliding, tumbling mass now moves quickly down the slope toward the PCs.

When this event begins, all PCs can make a DC 20 Listen check to hear the approaching slide (and to realize it's something different than a tremor), or a DC 25 Spot check to see its rapid approach. Those who notice the avalanche have one round to react.

The urban avalanche has a width of 100 feet. Any PC in its path takes 15d6 points of bludgeoning damage (Reflex DC 20 half). A PC that fails to save against this damage becomes buried and pinned by the rubble. Buried characters take 1d6 points of nonlethal damage per minute; if a buried character falls unconscious, he or she must make a DC 15 Constitution check or take 1d6 points of lethal damage each minute thereafter until freed or dead. Finding a buried character requires a DC 25 Search check. Once a character is found, a successful DC 20 Strength check frees the character.

Of course, the PCs aren't the only ones caught in the avalanche. Several townsfolk are caught up in its path, most of whom are slain outright by the swath of rubble. The disaster leaves a trail of chaos in its wake as it comes to a shuddering stop on the street where it struck the PCs. After the avalanche, 1d6 locals remain alive but buried in the rubble. If they aren't rescued in 1d6 minutes (determine times for each local individually), they perish.

In addition, a major route out of the city has now been blocked, and the PCs must ensure that the street is reopened. The street can be cleared manually, but doing so requires 16 hours of work for one person. Each additional person reduces the amount of time appropriately; thus, a group of four PCs could clear the road enough to allow passage in 4 hours. A far more efficient solution is to use magic to help clear the street. Using the various summoning spells to call upon aid is a good start; a summoned earth elemental is a tremendous boon here if the summoning PC can speak Terran. An earth elemental of size Large or larger counts as two additional people in determining how long it takes to clear the road, even given the short duration of the summoning spell. A creature with a burrow speed counts as one additional person. Other summoned creatures do not remain long enough to provide any substantial aid, unless they can cast some of the following spells.

Spells such as *move earth* and *telekinesis* can clear huge chunks of rubble at once. Each such spell cast on the affected area counts as an additional person. *Disintegrate* can also cut down on the time required; each use of *disintegrate* counts as an additional person. *Sympathetic vibration* does an excellent job at reducing the larger pieces of rubble to manageable fragments; every two rounds a *sympathetic vibration* spell continues it acts as an additional person. Similar spells can also help, but most destructive area-affect spells like *fireball* generally do nothing to help and create new problems of their own.

To determine the final time required to clear the road, simply add up the number of people assisting with the project and the number of "people" provided by spells, and then divide 16 hours by this amount. For example, a group of four PCs assisted by 6 citizens can clear the road in a little more than 90 minutes of work. If the PCs cast *move earth*, two *telekinesis* spells, and two *disintegrate* spells, summon a Large earth elemental, and use a *sympathetic vibration* spell for 16 rounds, the magic adds 15 to the total, reducing the time required to clear the street to about 38 minutes.

Every 10 minutes, there's a 10% chance that a new event occurs, or some new volcanic activity manifests in

the clean-up area. You can determine the new event or hazard randomly, or select one that seems appropriate. These new events normally won't increase the time required to clear the street, but they can put locals at risk and can further deplete the PCs' resources.

Citizen Aid: If the PCs successfully enlist the aid of the locals for this event, they can gather 3d6 citizens to aid in clearing the street. Once the cleaning begins, the PCs don't even need to remain to help, freeing them up to continue with the evacuation elsewhere. Of course, if the PCs leave the locals to clear the street and a new event or hazard manifests, the locals will likely be slain.

Evacuation Award: The PCs earn 12 Evacuation Points for clearing the street of the urban avalanche. Each of the 1d6 locals trapped in the avalanche that perishes reduces this award by 1; likewise, each local that perishes while helping to clear the street reduces the award by 1.

EVENT 44. FALLING FARASTUS (EL 14)

Without warning, a body tumbles from the sky, landing with a wet thump in the middle of the street, splattering a large area around it with a copious spray of thick black sludge. The creature is humanoid in shape, about seven feet tall and possessing overly long arms and legs and a deformed, oblong head. Its skin secretes more of the tar-like ooze even as its body shudders twice and then lies still.

This unfortunate creature seems to be only the precursor of a full-fledged storm of falling bodies as another dozen or so similar creatures tumble out of the sky. They simply appear in the air at varying elevations, crashing down through roofs, glancing off of statues and walls, or simply thudding down into the street like the first. And unlike the initial victim, it appears that at least a few of the creatures have angrily survived their falls.

As the ritual of planar junction continues to build and the life forces of the Shackleborn are drained, some demodands begin finding ways to push through the portal prematurely. However, since the portal isn't completely formed, only a few make it through (usually in small groups of about a dozen), and most appear high enough above the city that the fall slays them. Some, however, are healthy enough on landing to still pose a threat.

Creatures: A few farastu demodands that have landed near the PCs still live. The demodands waste no time in rounding up civilians for their new prison on the Material Plane, but they eagerly engage hostile PCs. Of the initial farastu rain, four of the creatures survive in varying levels of health. The EL for this encounter has been reduced slightly to account for the damage the demodands have already suffered. If you run this event multiple times, feel free to increase or decrease the number of surviving farastus (and their corresponding hit points)

Farastu Demodands (4): hp 71 (currently 68, 60, 56, and 42); see Appendix 4.

Tactics: Farastus are not the most intelligent of creatures, but they possess a natural cunning that enables them to recognize trouble when they see it. As a result, they are unlikely to assume the PCs are normal townsfolk unless the PCs use a disguise. The farastus are also used to working in groups to subdue unruly prisoners on their home plane. Since that's all they think of the PCs, they fall back on their habitual tactics.

The first thing the farastus attempt is to summon more of their kind. This done, at least one farastu uses *ray of enfeeblement* on the toughest-looking melee fighter. The remaining farastus become *invisible* and attempt to disarm the weakened character. If this tactic works, the farastus repeat it on another target. If it doesn't prove successful, some resort to more rays in an attempt to subdue one character, while the others try to pummel the other characters with their natural attacks. A farastu that manages to engage an arcane spellcaster in melee attempts to grapple the foe.

Citizen Aid: In this event, the citizens of Cauldron are more likely to be a hindrance than a help. Farastus won't hesitate to use citizens as hostages, threatening to tear out throats unless the PCs surrender. The best thing the PCs can do for the townsfolk is order any helpful citizens away.

Evacuation Award: The PCs gain 12 Evacuation Points for defeating the demodands.

EVENT 45. DESCENDING KELUBAR (EL 13)

An immensely obese creature flies in lazy circles in the sky on bat-like wings that seem too small to effectively support its bulk. The creature's leathery skin is knobbed, rough, and coated with pale green slime. Its bloated face is demonic and hateful. A crowd of cowering civilians huddles below the circling monster as it barks out orders in a thick, phlegmatic voice. The townsfolk root through the rubble of a fallen building, placing stones atop each other as if building some sort of structure.

Creature: A kelubar arrived early from Carceri due to the same sporadic magic that brought the falling farastus (see event 44). Unlike its lesser brethren, however, the kelubar has wings and was able to descend safely to the city below. It has already begun rounding up terrified townsfolk for the new prison and is giving orders to begin building a new set of cells. The kelubar knows that the cells are likely to collapse from tremors, a fact that makes it enjoy the rebuilding all the more due to its hopelessness. So far, it has recruited fifteen strapping locals.

Kelubar Demodand: hp 97; see Appendix 4.

Tactics: Allow the kelubar Spot and Listen checks at an initial encounter distance of 100 feet to notice the PCs, and another at 50 feet. Remember to apply penalties for distance, and the kelubar takes a –5 penalty on

its checks since it's distracted. If the kelubar notices the PCs before they engage it, it immediately attempts to summon 1d2 more kelubars. If it still hasn't been engaged in melee, it casts *acid fog* on the locals below out of spite before focusing its attention on the PCs.

The kelubar uses its stench in an attempt to ensure that none of the surviving townsfolk can come to the PCs' aid. It then flies up into the air and activates its *invisibility*, followed by another *acid fog* centered on the PCs. The kelubar then alternates *invisibility* with *Melf's acid arrow* and other ranged attacks, moving between each attack to keep the PCs off guard. If the PCs seem capable of seeing through its *invisibility*, the kelubar abandons the ranged attacks and moves to engage a spellcaster in melee.

Citizen Aid: As with the farastus, Cauldronites are unlikely to help here. The kelubar is a savage opponent, and it has no qualms about annihilating irritating townsfolk that get in its way (or even those that get out of its way).

Evacuation Award: The PCs gain 13 Evacuation Points for defeating the kelubar. Subtract 1 point for each local slain during the battle.

EVENT 46. THE MORKOTH RISES (EL 13)

Since this event takes place on the shores of the central lake, it can only occur in the central section of the city. If you choose to start this event when the PCs are in another part of the city, they can be drawn into this event by hearing the screams of citizens attacked by the morkoth (or the morkoth's roars, for that matter). If the PCs have a view of the lake, they might even see the massive creature surface from quite a distance.

> The waters of the central lake have been steaming and bubbling periodically for some time, but the current uprising of frothy water is unusual. Suddenly, a massive pale gray shape surges out of the boiling water with a thunderous roar! The creature's face is that of a deep-sea fish with protruding red eyes and a gaping fanged maw. Horns protrude from its brow and chin, and a spiny sail-like fin runs along its back. Its lower body resembles that of an octopus in that it has eight tentacles, but the creature also sports long, lobster-like legs. The front pair of these legs ends in massive talons. A pair of huge wings or flippers unfurls from the creature's sides, lifting it out of the water and into the air. The creature's flesh is blistered in places, obviously scalded by the boiling water, and it roars again as it approaches the shore and a large group of panicked citizens.

Once this encounter begins, the waters of the central lake have become suffused with toxins and heat from the volcanic activity deep below. Anyone who contacts the lake takes 1d6 points of fire damage, and anyone immersed in the water takes 10d6 points of fire damage per round. In addition, the toxins in the water are released into the air. Anyone who breathes the water or the air within 10 feet of the water's surface must make a DC 17 Fortitude save or take 1d4 points of Strength damage and 1d4 points of Constitution damage. The initial and secondary damage is the same.

BEHIND THE SCENES: FOUNDATION OF FLAME

During this chapter, the Cagewrights are split into two factions. A group of six led by Embril are currently on Carceri, arranging the demodand army. This leaves only seven of the Cagewright leaders in the Fiery Sanctum deep below Cauldron, where for the duration of this chapter they remain engaged in performing the ritual of planar junction. The ritual is emotionally exhausting, and taxes the already shaky sanities of these seven powerful NPCs. When they complete the ritual at the start of Chapter Ten, they'll be at their most vulnerable.

At the end of Chapter Eight, the PCs probably killed Vhalantru. If he still lives, the beholder has retreated to the ruins of Shatterhorn. At about the point when the second stage of the volcanic eruption begins, his mind finally buckles under the enormity of his defeat. The loss of his empire being too great to bear, Vhalantru closes his central eye and turns his disintegrate ray upon himself.

Once he dies (be it by his own machination or that of the PCs), Vhalantru's soul is shunted directly into Carceri as a result of the bond he now shares with the shator spirit. And upon Carceri, the tormented soul finally comes face to face with the mad dreams of Adimarchus and undergoes one final transformation.

Creature: This powerful half-fiend morkoth is the legendary monster of the lake that has long haunted the tales of Cauldron's fishermen and lakeside dwellers. The Morkoth has lived in the lake for hundreds of years, ever since it was originally called from the Outer Planes by the kopru to guard their deep underwater lairs.

Since then, the morkoth has lurked in the depths, expanding its vast network of spiraling tunnels and occasionally swimming to the surface on exceptionally dark nights to pluck one or two victims from midnight swims or early morning fishing trips for its own debased amusement. Stories spread of the lake monster, but before today the beast has never surfaced in daylight. The sudden awakening of the volcano transformed the lower reaches of the lake into a boiling hell, and the morkoth has been forced to swim upward to escape the scathing currents. As it reaches the surface, it's already taken some damage from the boiling water. It leaps clear of the water on wings never used to fly, but after a few flopping false starts it takes to the air with a fury and vents its rage on the hapless populace nearby.

The Crater Lake Monster, advanced half-fiend morkoth: hp 220 (currently 176); see Appendix 4.

Vrocks (1d3): hp 115 each; *Monster Manual* 48.

Tactics: The half-fiend morkoth's first action in combat is to use *summon monster IX* to summon 1d3 vrocks to aid in its assault on Cauldron. After summoning the vrocks, the morkoth takes to the air, flying in circles and using its spell-like abilities and *wand of lightning bolt* at random on the crowd below. In order to use its wands, the morkoth must make a successful Use Magic Device check (DC 20). Its check is high enough that it always makes the check, unless it rolls a 1 (in which case it can't use that particular wand for a day). Despite its bestial form, the creature is quite intelligent and if it encounters the PCs it quickly realizes that they should be the focus of its attacks. It resorts to melee only as a last resort. Note that the morkoth's spell-like abilities function at caster level 21, and as a result, its *blasphemy* spell-like ability can be especially devastating. Evil characters (and those with the Smoking Eye template) are immune to the effects of the morkoth's *blasphemy*, but all other living creatures within a 40-foot radius of the morkoth when it uses this spell-like ability are likely going to be paralyzed, weakened, dazed, or even killed, no save. If you feel that this would unfairly devastate the PCs, it's okay to have the morkoth "waste" its daily *blasphemy* spell-like ability to kill off a large number of commoners—perhaps this horrifying scene is what initially catches the party's attention.

Since the morkoth is an aquatic creature, it can't stay out of the water for long. It must hold its breath while out of the water; it can do so for 11 rounds since it's taking standard and full-round actions. Once this time runs out, the morkoth must make a DC 10 Constitution check every round to continue holding its breath; each round, the DC increases by 1. If it fails the check, it begins to suffocate (see the *Dungeon Master's Guide*, page 304). The morkoth tries to retreat to the water one or two rounds before it must start making Constitution checks; it also retreats if brought below 40 hit points. It's immune to poison so it doesn't have to worry about the toxic effects of the water or the air above it, but it only has fire resistance 10 so it likely takes damage each round from the boiling water. Once it has its breath back, the desperate morkoth bursts out of the boiling lake and flies at top speed in a random direction, hoping to find more hospitable waters to retreat to. There are several rivers in the surrounding area, but the chances of the morkoth reaching one before it suffocates is a mere 10%. Each round that it is prevented from making a double move, this chance is reduced by 1%, so if the PCs can keep it busy for ten rounds, victory is assured.

Citizen Aid: As with the demodand encounters, Cauldronites are more likely to die than help in this event.

Evacuation Award: The PCs gain 14 Evacuation Points for defeating the half-fiend morkoth. The destruction of the legendary monster increases the heroes' Evacuation Point totals by +2 for the four other sections of the city.

EVENT 47: HOOKFACE (EL 18)

A mature adult red dragon named Hookface has dwelt in the mountains near Cauldron for nearly 300 years. He spent the last 50 asleep in his lair far to the north. The dragon has had little interest in the city, and its residents have come to believe him to be more myth than fact. Hookface is all too real, however, and the recent events in Cauldron have woken him from his dreaming.

The first few tremors could be felt for miles around, and they woke Hookface immediately and angered him greatly. As the tremors increased, his anger became curiosity, and he flew to the top of his mountain lair to see if he could discover the source of the seismic activity. He immediately took note of the strange, swirling black cloud roiling above Cauldron to the south. He gathered his gear and took wing, eager to see if new plunder could be had from the once-thriving town.

The timing of this final event is up to you, but it's best played as the PCs are leading the last group of citizens from the city. As the refugees leave via one of the cracked city gates, allow the PCs to make DC 20 Spot checks to notice Hookface's approach as he swoops down out of the clouds and weaves between the occasional falling demodand. Hookface doesn't immediately single out the PCs, preferring to swoop over the city looking for treasure. He casts *detect magic* and flies 60 feet above the ground, searching for magic auras. If the PCs don't take precautions to hide or disguise themselves, allow Hookface a DC 40 Spot check each round. Success means the dragon's amazing eyesight picks up the PCs' gear.

Hookface, male mature adult red dragon: hp 312; see Appendix 4.

Tactics: Hookface has already cast *cat's grace*, *fire shield*, *protection from energy (cold)*, *protection from energy (electricity)*, and *protection from good* on himself. He takes a great deal of joy in the fear his appearance causes, so he saves his *greater invisibility* spell for troublesome opponents or to escape.

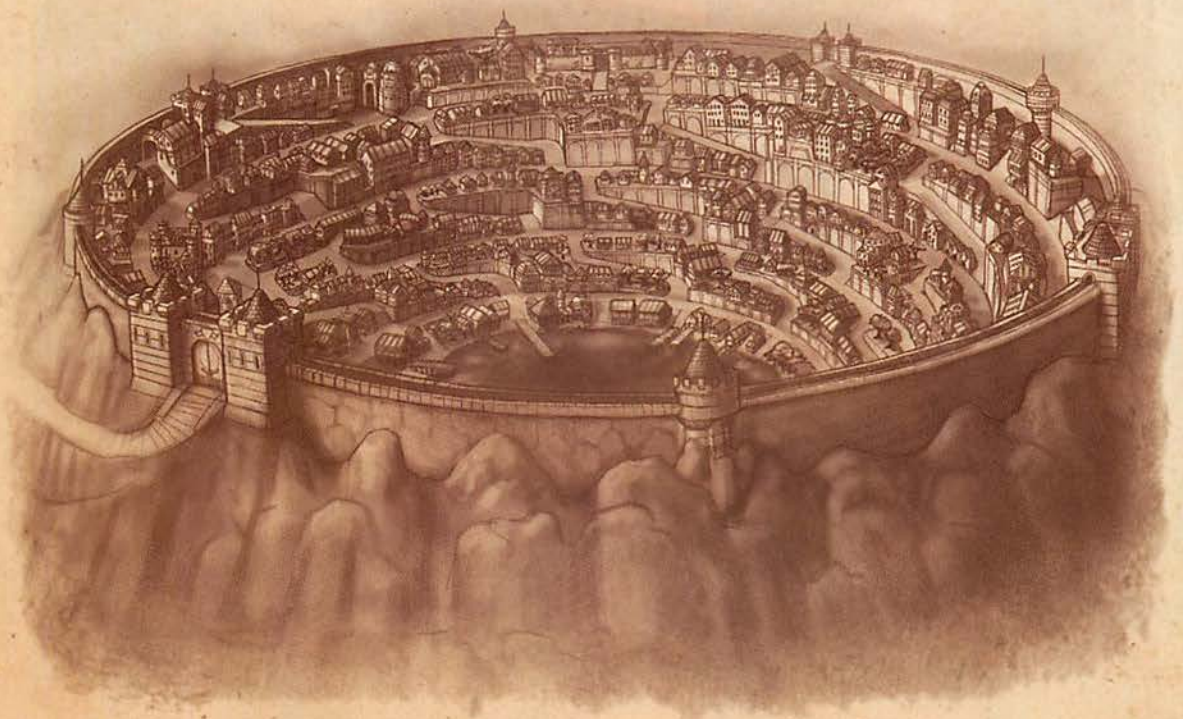
In the first round of combat, Hookface tries to snatch up one of the PCs along with a quickened breath weapon. After successfully snatching a character, he swoops into the air to a height of at least 100 feet before dropping the unfortunate character onto the city below. Hookface repeats this attack unless it proves ineffective, at which point he lands and engages in an all-out brawl.

Hookface doesn't fight to the death if he can help it. If he can't slay a magic-loaded PC quickly and depart with the body, he flees if reduced to 100 or fewer hit points. If Hookface succeeds in taking one of the PCs down and flying off with the body, he doesn't go far. He stops about 100 yards north of the city walls and begins the process of stripping the character of her possessions. Once that task is done (which takes about 2 minutes), he roasts the body with his breath weapon and gulps it down. With that accomplished, he finally takes flight for his lair in the north mountains.

Concluding the Chapter

"Foundation of Flame" concludes as the PCs successfully evacuate Cauldron and defeat Hookface. The PCs have accomplished something incredible. For successfully evacuating Cauldron, award the party experience points as if for a CR 17 creature. This large experience point award in part compensates for the relatively light haul of treasure to be gained in this adventure, but also rewards the PCs for roleplaying and the sheer accomplishment of saving thousands of lives from certain doom.

Finally, remember that the PCs need most of their strength to deal with the Cagewrights and their minions deep under Cauldron. Allow them time to rest, recuperate, and prepare for the assault on the Cagewrights—the ritual of planar junction takes several days to complete. Eventually, the PCs must return to Cauldron and make one last desperate attempt to stave off a terrible doom. If the Cagewrights complete their ritual, the volcanic eruption will quickly become the least of the PCs worries.



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THIRTEEN CAGES
CHAPTER TEN

CHAPTER TEN

THIRTEEN CAGES

BY CHRIS THOMASSON

Cauldron has been evacuated. Violent tremors began rocking the city several hours ago, followed by lava-spewing fissures, monsters falling from the sky, and other catastrophes. In the shuddering red clouds above, a vortex is slowly forming above the city—a spiraling scar in the clouds within which can be seen glimpses of an alien sky. As blasts of steam and ash vent out of the volcano, they spiral up and merge with these clouds—some panicked citizens even claim to see tortured faces hidden in them. Yet these events are but symptoms of the true doom that has come to Cauldron.

The Cagewrights, long plotting to turn Cauldron into a gateway for the fiendish demodands of Carceri, have completed the ritual of planar binding, a ceremony that uses the life energy of the Shackleborn to create this gateway. The lynch-pin for this ritual is the *Tree of Shackled Souls*. The tree is a hideous adamantine and mithral structure with thirteen branches built to hold thirteen *soulcages*. In each cage is imprisoned one of the Shackleborn. In the previous chapter, events conspired to force the Cagewrights to begin the ritual earlier than they planned, without all thirteen of their ruling members present, and as a result the ritual took longer for them to complete than they had anticipated. Yet complete it they did. As this adventure begins, the Cagewrights and their apprentices are relaxing after completing the ritual of planar binding while the *Tree of Shackled Souls* absorbs the volcanic energies of the mountain and the soul energies of the thirteen Shackleborn. The PCs have a window of opportunity to stop the portal from opening, but that window is closing rapidly.

STARTING THE CHAPTER: THIRTEEN CAGES

The average party level should be 16 when you start this chapter. In this chapter, the PCs finally come face to face with the Cagewright leaders. This chapter is also set against a timer—if the PCs take too long, the volcano erupts and Caldron is destroyed. As such, you should allow the PCs to rest up and be fully healed before you start this chapter, although there's certainly no time to scribe spells or build magic items.

REVELATIONS AND DESCENT

Now that the PCs have evacuated Cauldron, and the townsfolk stream down the mountain toward safety under the direction of the town guards and clergy, they finally have the chance to plan an assault on the Fiery Sanctum, the deep underground fortress used by the Cagewrights to stage the ritual of planar binding.

If the PCs don't take it upon themselves to find out where the Cagewrights are hiding, they are approached by one of their allies (Jenya, the Chisel, or the Striders) and prompted to do so. Knowledge checks, divination spells (particularly *commune with nature*, *commune*, and *divination*), captured intelligence from the enemy, and council with allies should provide the PCs with the following three key points of information.

- The volcanic activity is not natural, as a DC 25 Knowledge (nature) check can attest. It should have erupted already, given the magnitude of the tremors and minor venting of gas and lava—it almost seems as if some vast force is barely holding the eruption in check. But judging from the increasing magnitude of the tremors and minor eruptions, the power of this force is failing rapidly.
- A DC 35 Knowledge (arcana) check allows a character to piece together the clues and realize that this "force" is likely the ritual of planar junction, using the volcano as an energy source to power the opening of the portal to Carceri which is forming in the tortured skies above the city. If the PCs have access to Fetor's, Thifirane's, or Vhalantru's notes, they gain a +4 bonus on this Knowledge check for each set of notes they have access to. *Commune* and *commune with nature* can suggest or verify this theory.
- Now that there's been some time to observe the slow formation of the Carcerian portal above Cauldron and its interaction with the volcanic activity below, a successful DC 25 Knowledge (arcana) or Knowledge (the planes) check allows a character to formulate a theory about the nature of the waxing portal. Its formation is fueled by something deep under Cauldron (likely this *Tree of Shackled Souls* the PCs have heard about from Thifirane's speech or the captured notes). If the portal can be cut off from this

source of energy before it completes its formation, it will collapse. Cauldron may still be lost, but a disastrous link between the Material Plane and Carceri will be averted.

The exact amount of time left for the PCs to defeat the Cagewrights is not static; you should use the imminent threat of the opening portal to spur the PCs onward. Although the dangers encountered in this adventure are significant, the greatest problem facing the PCs is the fact that they'll probably need to complete this entire adventure without stopping to rest and recover resources. As a general rule, as long as the PCs don't flee the dungeon or stop to rest, they should have enough time to stop the creation of the Carcerian portal. If they insist on retreating from the Fiery Sanctum to rest, recover resources, identify magic items, or otherwise waste time, the *Tree of Shackled Souls* completes its work and opens the portal as detailed in "Concluding the Chapter." If, on the other hand, the PCs come up with creative solutions to the problem (such as retreating to the Astral Plane or some other timeless region where they can rest without fear of "advancing the clock"), don't punish them. After all, coming up with unexpected solutions is part of the fun of playing a high-level adventure!

Finding the Fiery Sanctum

Investigation, divination spells, and logic should point the PCs toward the Fiery Sanctum, the Cagewright stronghold deep under Cauldron. Unfortunately, the Fiery Sanctum itself is protected by the aura of the *Tree of Shackled Souls*—this aura not only prevents direct teleportation into the sanctum, but also shields the location from divination effects.

Nevertheless, there are three methods that the PCs can use to locate the fortress.

- *Vhalantru's Maps*: If the PCs discovered Vhalantru's extensive maps of the underground regions below Cauldron, they can study them for a critical clue. Although the map seems fairly extensive and complete, a DC 20 Knowledge (dungeoneering) check reveals a noticeable gap in the region deep under the crater lake's bed—a region that Vhalantru's notes indicate he never explored because he assumed that the volcano's magma core was located there. While he's partially correct, the Fiery Sanctum is indeed hidden away on the fringe of this inhospitable realm. The map is detailed enough that a character could use *greater teleport* to move down into a cavern or passageway near the edge of this unmapped region. This method is the least precise, since it still forces the PCs to explore a fair amount of caverns, but it narrows down the search considerably.
- *Divination Magic*: Attempts to observe the Fiery Sanctum directly with spells like *scrying* automatically fail, due to the presence of the *Tree of Shackled Souls*. If the right questions are asked, *commune* can point the PCs in the right direction, but probably can't give them enough information so they can use *greater teleport* to reach the vicinity. *Find the path* is the best spell in this situation, for it can lead the PCs directly to the Fiery Sanctum.
- *Interrogating Prisoners*: Of the villains the PCs have directly confronted so far, only two know the exact location of the Fiery Sanctum: Thifirane and Kravichak. No amount of diplomacy or threat can convince these two to give up the Sanctum's location, but where interrogation fails, magic can succeed. Giving up this information is against their nature, so they may gain additional saving throws to resist the effects of a *charm spell* when asked to divulge the route to the Fiery Sanctum, but with the right questions and the right combination of *dominate person, demand, suggestion*, and *speak with dead*, the PCs should be able to get a good enough description of the region that they'll be able to teleport into the caverns and passageways surrounding the fortress.

Once the PCs have located the approximate location of the Cagewrights' complex, they must attempt a precarious descent into the depths of the volcano. The initial portion of this excursion is deadlier in many respects. The *Tree of Shackled Souls* emits a half-mile radius effect that stabilizes the seismic energy near the heart of their complex, keeping them perfectly stable while tremors rock the rest of the mountain. The PCs, however, must travel through the network of lava tubes that leads to this safe zone, and until they reach it must deal with frequent earthquakes and the other perils of the tunnels.

Tremors continue to rock the earth as the PCs make their descent (see Chapter Nine for details on how to run tremors). The lava tubes from the northwest point of entry down to the Cagewrights' lair are all fairly sturdy, and the Cagewrights have reinforced the weaker portions of them with magic. Although this magical influence can't be detected with a *detect magic* spell, a dwarf or other character with stonecunning can make a DC 20 Spot check to notice the residue of these spells. A character with Knowledge (nature) or Knowledge (architecture and engineering) can make a similar check (DC 30) to garner the same information.

At various points throughout the descent to the lair of the Cagewrights, the PCs must deal with more than just the tremors that result from the group's ritual. Caveins have blocked some passages, and others are simply dead ends (usually magically induced to prevent more than one point of access to the complex). Still others hold pockets of toxic, volatile gas released by the reactivated volcano, monsters that call these passages home, and water leaking into the passages from the central lake (which is in the process of steaming away in the now-empty city above).

If the PCs decide to approach the Cagewrights' stronghold (known to them as "The Fiery Sanctum") via the lava tubes, they've got an approximately 8-mile hike through these stifling, tremor-laden tunnels. Treat these treacherous, rubble-strewn tunnels as trackless mountains for determining overland movement speeds; thus, a party moving at a speed of 30 can reach area C1 in about 180 minutes. A party that uses divination magic, Vhalantru's map, or interrogated prisoners to gain enough information to use *greater teleport* can cut this down to a mere mile of navigating the same tunnels.

As the PCs make their way through the tunnels, you can run some or all of the following encounters to liven up the journey as you see fit. Use these encounters as guidelines for developing additional encounters of your own design for this portion of the adventure.

BOILING LAKE (EL 13)

The tunnel widens and the moisture clinging to the black rock of the passage increases along with the sound of boiling water as the lava tube intersects a large cavern. A beach of rock meets a steaming pool of bubbling water as dark as the volcanic stone it laps against, and the ceiling, fifty feet above, echoes with the sound of water dropping from the stone. The passageway continues on the far side of the cavern.

This cavern is roughly circular, with a diameter of sixty feet. The pool of water is several hundred feet deep and boiling hot.

The ritual of planar junction has created several instabilities in the borders between the Material Plane and the Outer Planes. Because they're performing their ritual in the heart of a volcano, the Cagewrights have inadvertently created weak spots between this region and similar areas on other planes besides Carceri. This has had little effect on the Cagewrights, but the PCs are about to learn a little more about the side effects of the ritual.

The boiling water inflicts 1d6 points of fire damage unless the victim is fully immersed, in which case it deals 10d6 points of fire damage per round of exposure. The air in this cave is extremely hot. Breathing the air in here deals 1d6 points of fire damage per minute. In addition, characters must make a Fortitude save every 5 minutes (DC 15, +1 per previous check) or take 1d4 points of nonlethal damage. Those wearing heavy clothing or any sort of armor take a –4 penalty on this save, and those wearing metal armor are affected as if by *heat metal*.

Creatures: Two phiuhls from the plane of Gehenna—a place of infinite, desolate volcanoes—inadvertently wandered through a weak spot created by the ritual and into this chamber inside Cauldron's volcano. By the time they realized what had happened, the planar rift had sealed and the creatures were trapped on the Material Plane. Not the brightest of creatures, the phiuhls have been pondering what course to pursue while enjoying the occasional gouts of toxic gas venting into the room. When the PCs enter, they forget their plight momentarily to engage in their favorite pastime: tormenting mortals. The phiuhls are hiding at the roof of the chamber when the PCs enter. Characters can make Spot checks opposed by the phiuhls' Hide checks to detect the gaseous creatures.

Phiuhls are formed from an unholy amalgamation of misery, pain, hunger, sweltering heat, and poisonous vapors. They resemble a churning miasma of green and violet smoke that often forms into a humanoid shape with long spindly arms and a leering, elongated face.

Phiuhl (2): hp 76 each; see Appendix 4.

Tactics: Unless the PCs are particularly cautious and enter the room stealthily, the phiuhls detect their approach and are hiding in the center of the room (roughly 50 feet from the waterline) near the ceiling. When they attack, their elongated, wispy faces contort in malicious glee. As soon as they approach within 50 feet of a PC, the character must deal with their death gas. Once within 30 feet, they must also deal with the phiuhls' heat aura. The phiuhls attempt to swoop through the PCs' squares in order to use their desiccate ability.

Development: The phiuhls don't know where they are, but they're not willing to die here. If one dies, or if both are reduced to 25 hit points or less, the creatures attempt to flee through one of the many cracks in the chamber walls.

BAD AIR (EL 9)

The increased volcanic activity has generated significant amounts of toxic, explosive gases in parts of the mountain's interior. As the PCs descend, the smells of sulfur and other volcanic minerals increases, so these normally fragrant gases are indistinguishable from the surrounding air by the time the PCs reach an area of bad air. The toxic, flammable gas within is heavier than the surrounding air and pools in sections of the tunnel that dip down for a short distance.

Trap: A DC 25 Survival check determines that the air in these areas is even fouler than that in the tunnels above. Creatures with scent automatically know that something is wrong with the air in the chambers just before they enter the danger, but they don't know specifically what without the successful Survival check. A *detect poison* spell cast at the entrance to one of these areas reveals that any 5-foot cube within 10 feet of the floor is poisonous. A section of poisonous air generally runs for a length of 3d6×10 feet.

Flammable Toxic Gas Trap: CR 9; mechanical; location trigger; automatic reset (always active or 1 hour reset); multiple targets (all targets within 10 feet of the floor); poison (volcanic gases, DC 20 Fortitude resists, 2d6 Con/2d6 Con) and fire (10d6 fire, Reflex DC 15 half, negates poison damage for 1 hour, fire only if gas exposed to open flame); Search DC 30; Disable Device n/a.

ELEMENTAL JUNCTION (EL 11)

The tunnel branches up ahead. One passage leads off to the right, sloping up slightly, while the other bends sharply down and off to the left. The ground ahead gives a sudden lurch, as if in protest to the volcanic activity that's plagued the area.

The PCs are likely to think this another tremor, but a DC 20 Knowledge (nature) check reveals that the lurching ground is likely caused by some sort of Creature, probably an earth elemental.

Creatures: Two greater earth elementals have journeyed here from higher in the mountain. The lurching ground is caused by the argument they're having about what to do now (the argument has consisted of "Yes" and "No," back and forth, for the past hour). If the PCs watch, the ground lurches again roughly 1 minute later as one of the huge creatures shifts its position. Their voices can't be heard, as the creatures' heads are buried in the stony floor. They are so absorbed that they don't notice the PCs until they're within 15 feet, at which point they attack.

A PC who speaks Terran can approach and get their attention by rapping something hard sharply on the stone floor. The character can then attempt a DC 25 Diplomacy check to prevent combat and possibly gain some information.

Greater Earth Elementals (2): hp 228 each; *Monster Manual* 97.

Tactics: The elementals attack if the PCs just approach or if the characters try to simply bypass them. These elementals are ready to blame any creature they encounter for the trouble in their home. The characters might be able to sneak past, but to do so they'd have to step on squares effectively occupied by the elementals, which are submerged in the floor of the tunnel, imposing a –10 penalty on any Hide or Move Silently checks for such an attempt. In combat, the elementals attack from the walls, floor, and ceiling, using their push abilities to set up flanking attacks. They fight only until one of them is slain, at which point the other attempts to flee.

Development: If the PCs successfully use Diplomacy to deal with the elementals, they can learn some interesting bits of information from the creatures. These two fled their homes near the mountain's heart over a year ago, driven from there by a great creature of fire. They describe its terrible heat, and how it lives in a lake of fire. They're describing the pyroclastic dragon Moltenwing in area **C14**, but the PCs might assume they're speaking of another elemental. In either case, it reinforces to the PCs that they had better be prepared to deal with fire when they reach the Cagewrights.

A DC 35 Diplomacy check reveals that one of the elementals actually managed to explore a bit of the Fiery Sanctum before being driven away. This elemental can describe a human spellcaster that tried to cast magic that ensnared the elemental. The elemental doesn't know much about magic (nor can it identify human genders), but it knows that this human was powerful in magic that dealt with elementals and other such creatures. It has felt the pull of binding magic before in its long life, and it managed to escape this spellcaster only because it recognized a similar force. The human was accompanied by a tiny flying creature with spiky horns and a wicked grin (a DC 25 Knowledge [the planes] check reveals this to be a quasit). This was Thearynn Louvel, a conjurer and member of the Cagewrights, and his quasit apprentice Xarthyx.

THE FIERY SANCTUM

However the PCs reach the Fiery Sanctum, the areas inside the fortress have many aspects in common. Ceiling height in the complex remains constant at 15 feet unless otherwise noted. The rooms and chambers are lit by numerous tiny cages (replicas of the *soulcages*) containing squirming, glowing fire beetle larvae; these "lanterns" provide illumination equal to torchlight.

Most doors in the Sanctum are made of stone and are unlocked. Secret doors in this dungeon are quite cleverly hidden and require a successful DC 35 Search check to locate.

Several areas feature heavy cloth draperies woven cunningly to resemble the volcanic rock so common in the Sanctum. The cloth feels like stone even to the casual touch, but can be pushed aside for passage beyond. These draperies are used to conceal areas the Cagewrights want to keep private but easily accessible. Finding one of these curtains requires a DC 20 Search check. Parting a curtain can be made as part of any other move action.

If the PCs use *find the path* to help navigate the dungeon, remember that the numerous thin stone walls that block several passageways in the complex register as blocked routes; *find the path* works around them. Unless PCs discover these walls, the shortest path to the *Tree of Shackled Souls* is neither the safest nor the most direct.

Many areas in the Fiery Sanctum include lakes or rivers of lava. Make sure you are familiar with the lava rules on page 304 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide*.

Note that the Cagewrights are presented here as they are after they finish the ritual and have retreated to their respective chambers to recover from the exhausting ritual. They all suffer somewhat from various forms of insanity, and often their egos get in the way of common sense. Each thinks themselves the better of the PCs, and being able to claim their destruction on their own would place them in Dyr'ryd's great favor. As a result, the Cagewright leaders don't initially mount an organized defense against the PCs' intrusion into the Fiery Sanctum. If the PCs let several of them escape, the surviving Cagewright leaders may gather in area **C27** to join forces. A fight against all seven of the Cagewright leaders and their apprentices involves nearly a dozen complex NPCs. This could well be an EL 22 encounter. Handle such a battle with care.

Finally, the presence of the *Tree of Shackled Souls* suppresses all teleportation magic in the Fiery Sanctum; for complete details, refer to the *Tree of Shackled Souls*.

Stone Door: 4 in. thick; Hardness 8; hp 60; Break DC 28, Open Lock (when locked) DC 40.

C1. THE GATE (EL 8)

A monstrous gate of black metal blocks further progress along this smooth, volcanic tunnel. Fully fifteen feet high and eight feet wide, the gate is emblazoned with the Carcerian Eye—the symbol of the Cagewrights. A twisted, leering visage sculpted from the same metal as the gates adorns the lintel over the door. The face seems both calm and entirely insane, if such a thing is possible, and its race or gender is indeterminate. Its glowering eyes have also been carved in the symbol of the Carcerian Eye.

This gate is made of adamantine and is both locked and trapped.

Adamantine Gate: 1 ft. thick; Hardness 20; hp 480; Open Lock DC 40 if *arcane lock* is dispelled; Break DC 50 (*arcane lock*, caster level 15th).

Traps: The alarm is triggered if someone opens the gate without a proper password (Adimarchus's name, pronounced by two people, one in Abyssal and the other in Celestial, spoken within 20 feet of the gate). This password also deactivates the *disintegrate* trap for one minute. The *disintegrate* trap can target two creatures per round within range. The sickly green beams of the spell launch from the eyes of the visage over the door to strike at the two nearest creatures within 10 feet.

Gau Kleeoch

***Alarm* Trap:** CR —; magic device; proximity trigger (20 ft.); automatic reset; spell effect (mental *alarm*, 1st-level wizard, mentally alerts specific Cagewrights within 1 mile); Search DC 26; Disable Device DC 26.

***Disintegrate* Trap:** CR 8; magic device; proximity trigger (10 ft.); automatic reset; Atk +10 ranged touch (twice); spell effect (*disintegrate*, 13th-level wizard, 26d6 damage, DC 19 Fort save for 5d6 damage); Search DC 31; Disable Device DC 31.

C2. DETOUR

The curve in the tunnel hides a secret door that leads to Gau's chambers. If the PCs take no precautions to move quietly, she automatically hears them as they pass by and prepares for combat.

C3. GAU'S CHAMBERS (EL 15)

The severe neatness and organization of this chamber stands in stark contrast to the animal stench that fills the room—a combination of sweat, manure, and wet fur makes the air thick and fetid. This appears to be some sort of dueling or training chamber. Practice dummies line the walls, along with weapon and armor racks displaying exotic equipment of all sorts. The most disturbing thing about the chamber is the spikes protruding from the walls in clusters at various heights.

These two chambers (areas **C3a** and **C3b**) are inhabited by a minotaur named Gau. If the PCs pass by these rooms, Gau repositions herself at area **C5** to ambush them later.

Gau's living quarters (area **C3b**) are sparse, furnished with little more than a few dire bear rugs and a large bed made of animal hides and bones.

Creature: Gau is the most martial—and the most feral—of the Cagewrights. Not particularly bright, she is valued for her intense loyalty to Dyr'ryd, the Cagewrights, and their plans.

Gau Kleeoch, Cagewright Leader, female minotaur barbarian 11: hp 181; see Appendix 4.

Tactics: Gau rages and Power Attacks for at least 10 points, reducing the amount as needed in later rounds until she hits with at least three of her four attacks in a given round. She also charges, goring and using Improved Bull Rush to push opponents into the barbed spikes on the walls of her chambers. Creatures pushed into the spikes take 2d6 points of piercing damage, plus additional damage equal to Gau's Strength modifier. In addition, creatures stuck on the nasty spikes must take a full-round action (that provokes attacks of opportunity) to yank themselves free with a successful DC 20 Strength or Escape Artist check. A creature that does so takes an additional 2d6 points of damage from the spikes as they tear loose.

Treasure: Three of the weapons on the racks are unusual. One is an adamantine morningstar and another a silver flail. The most impressive weapon is a trophy Gau won from a paladin; a *holy avenger* emblazoned with the symbol of Pelor.

C4. FARASTU LAIRS (EL 14)

Beyond the heavy curtain is an irregular room. Odd, uncomfortable pieces of furniture lie about the chamber, including several long, narrow beds. Bizarre statuary and paintings adorn the walls and several low pedestals, and a thick, black, tarry substance covers most of the room's surfaces.

Areas **C4a** and **C4b** have similar décor. The tarry substance is exuded by the three farastus that live here.

Creatures: The farastus are likely to hear PCs passing in the hallway to the north and prepare for combat by hiding in the shadows of the room. If the PCs pass by, one farastu in the first room shouts a warning to the other group after 1 round (the sound channels between areas **C4a** and **C4b** allow farastus in either room to hear these warnings automatically), then they all move to flank the PCs in the hall.

Farastu Demodands (3 each): hp 71 each; see Appendix 4.

Tactics: The floor in each room is caked with farastu slime. Creatures other than farastus treat these areas as filled with dense rubble (*Dungeon Master's Guide* 60).

C5. BREAKAWAY WALL

As mentioned at the start of this chapter, this is one of several thin stone walls built to baffle *find the path* spells.

Thin Stone Wall: 1/4 in. thick; Hardness 8; hp 15; Break DC 15.

C6. GUARD STATION (EL 11)

Creatures: A pair of vrocks has been stationed here via *binding* by Shebeleth (second-in-command of the Cagewrights). The demons lurk in small, cramped quarters behind two heavy stone-colored curtains, which they hurl aside to attack the party's middle ranks as they pass by. Remember that, like the PCs, the vrocks' *greater teleport* spell-like abilities don't function this close to the *Tree of Shackled Souls*.

Vrocks (2): hp 115 each; *Monster Manual* 48.

C7. KELUBAR COMMAND (EL 15 OR EL 17)

This chamber reeks of a strong, acrid odor. A pale green ichor coats the floor in the chamber beyond, and strange, warped furniture can be seen among the room's contents. A rack has been attached to the far wall, and stretched out on it are the burned and disfigured remains of at least seven humanoids, although an exact number is difficult to ascertain given the condition of the corpses.

Creatures: This chamber is the lair of a pair of kelubar demodands that answers directly to Dyr'ryd.

Kelubar Demodands (2): hp 97 each; see Appendix 4.

Tactics: If the kelubars are warned of the PCs' approach, they turn invisible and wait for the characters to investigate this chamber before attacking. If the PCs show no inclination to enter the kelubars' lair, they wait until the characters leave the area before gathering any nearby allies to stalk and ambush the PCs.

If combat breaks out here and Gau is lurking to the north of area C5, she breaks through the wall to come to the kelubars' aid. The Flamewarders in area C8 quickly warn Ti'irok Coalfire in area C10 and then marshal in the corridor outside that area in preparation for battle.

C8. PASSAGE OF FIRE (EL 17)

The floor, walls, and ceiling are polished to a mirror finish in this stiflingly hot hall, the light of dozens of cages of glowing grubs reflected a hundredfold. The western wall has been carved in a series of terrifying scenes. Fiends of all shapes and sizes force creatures of an even wider variety into burning servitude. Lording over them all, however, is a horrifying menace. Its misshapen face seems to face two directions, implying that nothing escapes its fierce, maniacal gaze.

Characters who stride boldly into the area just north of the thin wall that closes off this hallway stumble into a particularly devastating Trap. In addition, several creatures lie in wait to ambush anyone who approaches.

Creatures: Areas C8–C10 have been given over to the Flamewarders, a mercenary band composed of extraplanar creatures known as haraknin: hell hounds that can assume humanoid form. The Flamewarders are led by a fire giant named Ti'irok Coalfire.

Two Flamewarders stand guard here at all times, listening for sounds of intruders beyond the breakaway wall. If they hear sounds of battle from area C7, one of them alerts their commander in area C10, while the other retrieves the other two Flamekin stationed in area C9. The haraknin mercenaries are under orders not to attack beyond the breakaway wall but to form ranks to repel invaders from here.

Flamewarders, male and female haraknin fighter 5/rogue 5 (4): hp 108 each; see Appendix 4.

Tactics: The haraknin fight out of admiration of and devotion to their fire giant commander, not out of any loyalty to the Cagewrights. They attempt to block the PCs from moving out of the trapped area behind the break-away wall for as long as possible. If the battle goes poorly, the Flamewarders make a fighting retreat toward area C10, where their commander joins the fray.

Trap: The 10-foot area right behind the break-away wall is dreadfully trapped. When anyone steps on the area without speaking Dyr'ryd's name aloud, the monstrous, two-faced creature in the wall carving (a representation of Dyr'ryd himself) launches beams of negative energy at the intruders. As long as a PC stands on one of the four squares behind the wall, the wall continues to fire two beams each round at targets in the area (determined randomly from available targets).

***Energy Drain* Trap:** CR 12; magic device; location trigger (10-foot area behind break-away wall); automatic reset; multiple traps (two simultaneous *energy drain* traps); Atk +10 ranged touch and +10 ranged touch; spell effect (energy drain, 17th-level wizard, 2d4 negative levels); Search DC 34; Disable Device DC 34.

Development: If the PCs met and killed Aszithef Flamewarder in Chapter Eight and one of them now wields her greatsword *Coldfire*, the flamewarders recognize the weapon and become enraged, taking special pains to focus their attacks on that character.

C9. FLAMEWARDER BARRACKS (EL 15)

Long cots fill this chamber in orderly rows. The cots are immaculately made and look quite uncomfortable. Closed footlockers rest at the end of each bed. The walls bear only a single decoration—a tapestry depicting a field of red with a black silhouette of a bearded face outlined in flames and howling in fury. The air smells strongly of brimstone.

Creatures: These are the barracks for the haraknin Flamewarders. Most are stationed elsewhere, but a pair of them rests here now unless they have been summoned to help protect area C8.

Flamewarders, male and female haraknin fighter 5/rogue 5 (2): hp 108 each; see Appendix 4.

Treasure: The footlockers contain spare uniforms, whetstones and armor-cleaning supplies, and bits of food. A DC 30 Search check turns up a few items of interest, including a total of 347 gp, 445 sp, a *potion of cure moderate wounds*, and a *wand of knock* (10 charges).

C10. TI'IROK'S CHAMBERS (EL 19)

The walls here are rough and natural, although the floor is polished smooth. A massive iron bed fills half the wall to the east, and a stream of glowing lava runs slowly though the center of the room to what appears to be a large sunken pool built into the west wall. A tapestry made of a dark, heavy metal adorns the wall across from the door, displaying a silhouette of a bearded face outlined in flames and howling in fury, all on a field of red. A large iron bookshelf sits on the floor below, carrying several oversized books. Next to that and facing the door is a massive iron table cluttered with metal sheets and a dragon's skull.

The leader of the Flamewarders dwells here. He is Ti'irok Coalfire, a fire giant who assembled his band of haraknin on a trip to the Elemental Plane of Fire many years ago. He bought the entire lot of them from an efreeti slaver and had them transported back to his clan's lands. After a failed coup against his clan leader, Ti'irok found himself out of favor. Consequently, he left his clan behind and set off, haraknin in tow, to seek his fortune as leader of a mercenary band.

After a few successful campaigns, Ti'irok's remarkable band of Flamewarders drew the attention of the Cagewrights. He has been serving the Cagewrights loyally—thanks in no small part to the massive sums of gold they pay him—for the past six years. Ti'irok still holds the contract of purchase for

the haraknin, but he has never resorted to keeping the lawful creatures in line with it—he has had no need. Through their battles together, he has always tried to treat them well, if strictly, and the harkanin have thrived under Ti'irok's leadership.

Ti'irok's lieutenant and cohort was a female haraknin named Aszithef. He assigned her to the beholder Orbius Vhalantru to act as an intermediary between the creature and the Cagewrights (and also to keep an eye on the eye tyrant), but she has not reported back in several days, likely due to the PCs' interference in Chapter Eight.

Creatures: Ti'irok is likely aware of the PCs' approach due the sounds of battle from area **C8**, and has marshaled two of his haraknin to help prepare his reception for the PCs.

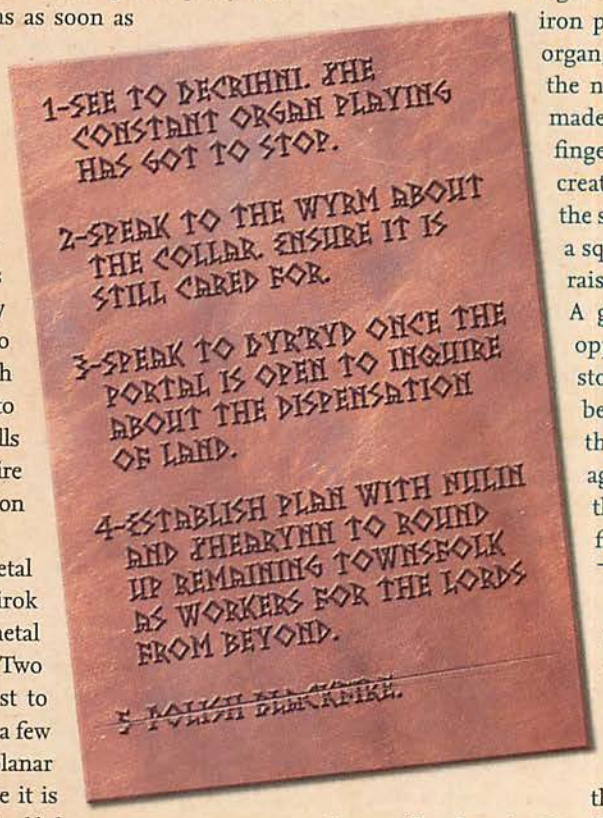
Ti'irok Coalfire, male fire giant fighter 8: hp 249; see Appendix 4.

Flamewarders, male and female haraknin fighter 5/rogue 5 (2): hp 108 each; see Appendix 4.

Tactics: Ti'irok uses his *helm of telepathy* to contact Dyr'ryd as soon as he's aware of the PCs. If they detect the characters in advance, he and his Flamewarders ready actions to attack the first target they see. Otherwise, they draw weapons as soon as they become aware of the characters; Ti'irok engages in melee and the Flamewarders move to the edges of the room to fire their bows.

Ti'irok begins the encounter near his bed. As soon as the opportunity presents itself, he attempts to use his Improved Bull Rush feat to push someone into the lava pool. A PC who falls in takes 20d6 points of fire damage from total immersion in the 12-foot-deep pool.

Development: The metal sheets on the table serve Ti'irok as paper; he uses special metal inks to write on them. Two sheets might be of interest to the PCs. The first contains a few notes about the ritual of planar junction; namely, that once it is completed the *Tree of Shackled Souls* still requires several hours to build up enough energy to open the portal. During this vulnerable time the tree must be defended at all costs.



The second is a list of tasks shown above.

C11. TESTING CHAMBER (EL 0 OR 17)

This chamber is some sort of martial training facility. Combat dummies in various states of repair line the walls, padded practice weapons rest in racks on other walls, and curls of mist rise from a low pool in a nook across from the door, heated by trickles of lava running down the walls into fissures around its edges.

The lava running down the walls heats the stone around the pool, creating a hot bath in which weary haraknin can relax. The pool is far too hot for creatures lacking some resistance to fire, however, at an uncomfortable 150 degrees. Creatures exposed to the water take 2d6 points of fire damage, or 8d6 per round if fully immersed.

Creatures: Four Flamewarders train here. The door to this chamber is normally kept open, so chances are that they'll hear the sound of combat in nearby areas. If they do, they quickly grab their weapons and join the battle.

Flamewarders, male and female haraknin fighter 5/rogue 5 (2): hp 108 each; see Appendix 4.

C12. DECRIHNI BAIUL'S CHAMBER (EL 14)

The first object that draws the eye is a massive pipe organ along the west wall. Black iron pipes run up from the large organ, and along the contours of the natural ceiling. The keys are made of what appear to be the fingerbones of various humanoid creatures, and the organ bench is the skeleton of a dwarf, bent into a squatting position with hands raised to support the musician. A gilded bed sits against the opposite wall next to a carved stone wardrobe that looks to be part of the rock wall of the room. A small shrine sits against the south wall, and the scent of burning incense fills the air.

Shebeleth Regidin has graciously allowed his protégé, Decrihni Baiul, to assume chambers separate from his own, something most of the other members of the Cagewrights' inner circle have refused to do. Decrihni is of a martial bent, and spends nearly as much time in combat drills with the Flamewarders and Gau as he does aiding Shebeleth in his rituals and arcane researches.

Creatures: Decrihni stands about 5 feet tall, and has a thick, barrel-shaped body and arms and legs like the trunks of healthy trees. His eyes protrude from beneath a coarse brow and his bulbous nose is shot through with burst blood vessels. His shaggy black hair is chopped short, and he wears a scraggly black beard.

When the PCs arrive in this chamber, they find Decrihni madly playing his pipe organ. Decrihni isn't very good, but he makes up for his lack of skill with sheer exuberance.

Decrihni Baiul, male human fighter 5/cleric 9 (Adimarchus): hp 99; see Appendix 4.

Tactics: Decrihni casts *divine power* and a quickened *divine favor* on himself as soon he notices the PCs. He then wades into melee gleefully, his eyes shining and maniacal spittle flying from his lips as he occasionally shouts prayers to the dark powers in which he believes (chief among them being Adimarchus).

Development: Decrihni's pipe organ is more than it appears. A DC 30 Search check uncovers a strange set of symbols carved into an obscure corner of the contraption. A DC 30 Decipher Script or Perform (keyboard instrument) check reveals that the symbols indicate a specific chord on the organ, which can be successfully played by anyone with at least 1 rank in Perform (keyboard instrument) or with a successful DC 25 Dexterity check. Doing so causes the organ to swing open and reveal a narrow, twisting passage into the stone behind. This leads to a private shrine of Decrihni's dedicated to the demon prince Adimarchus. The walls are painted with a mix of blood and other, fouler substances in mad, haphazard swirls. The room reeks, and a shrine in its center holds a stone statue featuring the Carcerian Eye. Adimarchus's name is also painted on nearly every available surface in Abyssal, Infernal, and Undercommon, along with terribly crafted poems praising the "dark lord of madness" and all his works.

A character with the Smoking Eye template feels a strange reaction to this room; good characters become overwhelmed with sorrow and pity while evil characters are filled with exultation and joy. A neutral character feels nothing, but all characters with this template immediately understand that the shrine can be used to draw upon the energies of the Abyssal layer of Occipitus to use *wish* once as a spell-like ability. This wish must be made in this room and does not cost experience points to cast; once used, the connection between Occipitus and this altar is burned away, forever gone.

C13. MEETING ADJOURNED

Every surface of this large, rectangular room has been polished to a mirror sheen. Quarter-circle pools of lava in three of the room's four corners augment the light provided by numerous grub cages. Massive double doors carved with the Carcerian Eye exit the room to the east, but the chamber is dominated by an immense, carved stone table, also in the shape of the Carcerian Eye. Thirteen chairs surround the table, the one at the head larger than the others.

This is the meeting chamber of the Thirteen. They gather here when great events must be discussed, or when the group must be informed as a whole of one of Dyr'ryd's decisions.

C14. PYROCLASTIC ACTIVITY (EL 17)

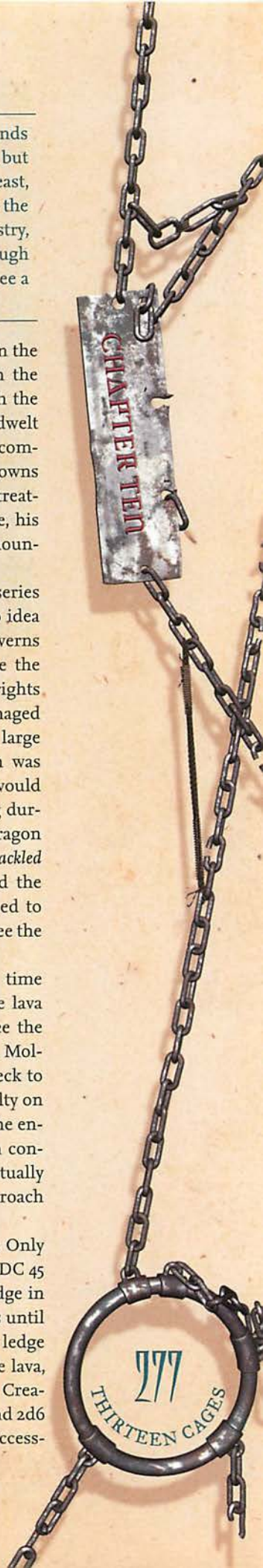
This massive cavern is lit by a large lake of lava. Islands of volcanic stone protrude from the molten rock, but gaps of five to fifteen feet separate them. To the east, the cavern wall curves gently to a larger ledge. At the rear of that far ledge hangs a magnificent tapestry, black with thread of gold strung through it. Through a gap between the tapestry and the wall, you can see a dark chamber extending even further beyond.

Long before the Cagewrights arrived, before even the founders of Cauldron built the first structure in the bowl of the dormant volcano above, Garathrynakh the pyroclastic dragon (known also as Moltenwing) dwelt here. Moltenwing spent several decades after first coming to the Material Plane ravaging now-ancient towns and civilizations, but eventually grew weary and retreated into the depths of this volcano to sleep. Above, his legend faded, and eventually settlers reached the mountains and built the first buildings of the city.

When the Cagewrights first found the crude series of chambers near the volcano's heart, they had no idea they were trespassing in the outer warren of caverns around Moltenwing's lair. Their intrusion awoke the dragon, who responded with fury. The Cagewrights were not interested in a fight, however, and managed to secure the dragon's reluctant friendship with large amounts of gold, magic, and flattery. A bargain was struck between the two parties: the Cagewrights would send regular payments of treasure to Moltenwing during their stay in the caverns, and in return, the dragon would not bother them. Later, when the *Tree of Shackled Souls* was completed, the Cagewrights also asked the dragon to guard a magic collar that could be used to shut the *Tree* down in the event of an emergency (see the *Tree of Shackled Souls*).

Creature: Moltenwing spends most of his time snoozing on a ledge submerged 7 feet below the lava level in the far eastern portion of the cavern (see the map for details). When the PCs enter the room, Moltenwing lounges there and can make a Listen check to detect their approach. Moltenwing has a –18 penalty on this check due to the distance between him and the entrance to his lair. If he fails to hear them, he can continue to make Listen checks each round, and eventually detects them with his blindsense when they approach within 60 feet.

When the PCs arrive, the dragon does nothing. Only the tip of his snout is exposed to the surface (as a DC 45 Spot check reveals), resting on the edge of the ledge in the southeastern corner of the chamber. He waits until they come within 60 feet or step onto the large ledge to the north of his position, then bursts from the lava, splattering everything within 30 feet with magma. Creatures in the area take 2d6 points of fire damage, and 2d6 more for the next 2 rounds from the hot lava; a successful DC 15 Reflex save negates this damage.



Moltenwing knows by their entrance that the PCs are not of the Cagewrights, who always contact him with a *sending* before approaching. However, he is curious about even more humanoids daring to enter his lair, and is supremely confident in his ability to handle them should the need arise. After potentially showering them with lava, he steps up onto the large ledge and bellows at them to identify themselves.

Moltenwing has given his word to the Cagewrights, but more importantly, they have shown him proper respect and showered him with wealth. He doesn't want the cash flow to stop, so he acts to protect the Cagewrights from any perceived threats. While he talks, he tries to keep the PCs in a line respective to his position (to use his breath weapon), and warns them not to approach closer than halfway across the room. The dragon isn't a skilled diplomat, and clever PCs might be able to wrangle some interesting bits of information from him before he decides to attack.

Moltenwing's initial attitude is hostile, but he's willing to talk to the PCs long enough for them to make Diplomacy or Intimidate checks to adjust his attitude. If the PCs can adjust his attitude to friendly he admits that he has indeed formed an alliance with the Cagewrights. He'll also, at this point, proudly announce that he guards something of incredible import for them, since they're obviously too weak and puny to guard their own treasure. Only if the PCs make him helpful does he volunteer the names and brief descriptions of the Thirteen if asked. If the PCs can successfully Bluff him into believing they're Cagewright allies and his attitude is helpful, he'll hand over the important thing he's guarding (the *dispersal collar*) if they ask for it. Otherwise, Moltenwing grows tired of the discussion in a few minutes and if the PCs haven't left his lair by then, he attacks. Of course, if he ever suspects that they're here to harm the Cagewrights, he attacks immediately.

Moltenwing (Garathrynakh), male mature adult pyroclastic dragon: hp 312; see Appendix 4.

Tactics: When Moltenwing attacks, he tries to catch at least two PCs in the area of his disintegrating line breath weapon. He then attempts to bull rush a PC into the lava. If successful, he dives in after them, grapples them in the magma to keep them from escaping, and eats their charred remains without resurfacing. Otherwise, he takes full attack actions, using his breath weapons when he can.

The dotted lines on the map represent passages Moltenwing has carved out beneath the islands so he can crawl through the magma without having to squeeze. When moving through the magma, Moltenwing uses his burrow speed.

Treasure: Behind the massive tapestry is Moltenwing's hoard chamber. He has amassed an impressive amount of treasure worth a total of roughly 34,000 gp: 2,411 gp, 339 pp, 32 assorted gems worth a total of 2,762 gp, a silver hand mirror (50 gp), an oaken hairbrush inlaid with jade (60 gp), a green dragon-skin rug (500 gp), a pair of platinum bracers (600 gp each), a silver candelabra (700 gp), a silk tapestry depicting the constellations, with diamonds set as stars (1,200 gp), a *potion of lesser restoration*, an arcane scroll of *charm person*, *knock*, and

ray of enfeeblement, a *golembane scarab*, a *cloak of Charisma +4*, a *wand of bull's strength* (24 charges), and a *dispersal collar*. This last item is the device the Cagewrights built as a safety measure against catastrophe should the *Tree of Shackled Souls* fail.

C15. ROUGH PASSAGE

If the PCs don't take care to remain silent while traversing this passageway, the demodands lurking in area **C16** likely hear them and react accordingly.

C16. DEMODAND TORTURE CHAMBER (EL 15)

The walls of this chamber look like melted wax, and the air smells acrid and foul. Various implements of torture occupy the chamber, including a bed of wicked, barbed spikes, some sort of stretching device resembling a rack, and hooks on the wall that hold corpses in various states of decay. A large chest sits in an alcove to the south.

Creatures: Two farastus and a kelubar inhabit this chamber. They have had no task or purpose for months, and their boredom led them to gather a few torture devices and turn this chamber into a room more reminiscent of those they occupied on Carceri. Despite their orders not to risk discovery by meddling with surface dwellers, the kelubar managed to sneak to the surface a few times to capture beggars to torture.

Kelubar Demodand: hp 97; see Appendix 4.

Farastu Demodands (2): hp 71 each; see Appendix 4.

Treasure: The demodands have amassed a fair amount of treasure from their victims. The large chest contains 1,455 gp, a scroll of *flame strike* (10th level), a scroll of *mass cure light wounds*, a *+1 dagger*, a *+2 breastplate*, and a *periapt of health*.

C17. FREIJA DOORGAN'S CHAMBERS (EL 16)

A large canopied bed rests against the far wall, the covers pulled tight and neatly tucked. Workbenches and shelves line the other walls, covered with magical apparatus, books, and papers. A circle has been carved into the floor. Arcane glyphs and runes have been scribed and intertwined around and through the circle, and it glows with a soft, silvery light.

Creature: Freija Doorgan is the item creation expert for the Cagewrights. She crafted most of her own gear and much of that carried by her fellows in the organization. She also aids Shebeleth in research matters. Her full library isn't here, as she hasn't been engaging in any research, but enough portions of it are that an arcanist interested in conjuring magic or item creation could find reference materials of interest.

Freija is a rail-thin woman who wears her hair pulled back tightly from her face. She wears austere robes that cover her from neck to wrist to ankle, always of the same blood red color. She is fastidiously clean, and her chambers are the only ones in the complex that look scrubbed. This cleanliness is actually a sign of her obsessive compulsive behavior. She prepares for every battle by casting the same preparatory spells in the same order. If her robe is mussed in a fight she becomes enraged and focuses on the character responsible with grim implacability until that person is dead, all the while screaming, "You got me dirty! How dare you, you filthy, filthy maggot!" and similar imprecations.

Freija Doorgan, female human conjurer 15: hp 95; see Appendix 4.

Tactics: If warned of the PCs, Freija casts *displacement* and *shield*. She prefers to fight from behind a screen of summoned monsters. As soon as she hears the PCs outside, she casts *summon monster VIII* to summon a vrock, followed by her other *summon monster* spells in descending order. She uses her *wand of enervation* to maximum effect, targeting spellcasters first if she can.

Treasure: Equipment from the workbenches includes expensive reagents used to craft magic items worth 3,000 gp, and the gear from the area can be used to put together two full alchemist's labs if it's relocated.

Development: In a secret drawer of one of Freija's workbenches (Search DC 30, Open Lock DC 30) is a collection of notes written in Abyssal that details the creation of the *dispersal collar*, a device Freija was ordered to create should the need ever arise to shut down the *Tree of Shackled Souls* in the event of an emergency. The notes mention that the collar has been secured with "that dark wyrm of Gehenna."

Freija Doorgan

C18. FIRESTREAM (EL 17)

A stream of lava running along the far wall of the tunnel empties into a pool of molten rock that fills the majority of the eastern section of this cavern. A rough stone table covered with scraps of charred, nearly raw meat, along with several stone stools stands in the room's center. A water barrel rests near the entrance.

The pool of lava is only 3 feet deep; creatures can wade through it as if it were dense rubble but suffer damage from the lava each round

Creatures: Four Flamewarders guard this chamber. They can serve as reinforcements for areas **C20** or **C27** as necessary. Two of the Flamewarders are located on the north side of the pool, with the second pair on the southern shelf with their bows at the ready. If combat begins, they make sure to call out warnings to the nearby denizens.

Flamewarders, male and female haraknin fighter 5/rogue 5 (4): hp 108 each; see Appendix 4.

C19. FALLING FLOOR (EL 9)

A tall stone door stands in the northern wall of this cavern, with passages leading to the east and south. A single rill of lava flows out of the far wall through this chamber, then follows the east wall of the passage around a bend to the south.

Trap: The floor is actually an illusion that blends seamlessly into the bordering stone floor and walls. The illusion conceals a network of artificially deepened lava streams that criss-cross the true floor in an intricate pattern. The one visible stream is part of the illusion, although it mirrors one of the many streams on the actual floor. Characters who don't see through the illusion or fly over it step in one of the 4-foot-deep streams of lava, at which point they can make Will saves to recognize the illusion for what it is.

Illusory Floor and Lava Trap: CR 9; magic device; proximity trigger (entire room); automatic reset; *illusory wall* on floor conceals network of 4-foot-deep, 3-foot-wide lava streams (8d6 fire damage from partial immersion, 4d6 fire damage on following round, 2d6 fire damage on third round); multiple targets (all creatures touching the floor in the room); DC 16 Will disbelief (if interacted with); Search DC 29; Disable Device DC 29.

C20. GATHERING CHAMBER (EL 16 OR EL 19)

This large chamber looks partly natural and partly sculpted. The ceiling is high here, reaching to roughly thirty feet. Two thick streams of lava course slowly along the floor. One emerges from the north wall and the other from the south. The two lava rivers merge in the center of the room and continue to flow through a channel to the south. Sturdy stone benches line the walls where the lava doesn't flow, sculpted out of the volcanic rock. The Carcerian Eye has been carved into the south wall. The sculptor was either a master or had the aid of magic, for the disturbing image seems to follow movement in the room.

This central gathering chamber is used by the Thirteen when they must confer with their mercenaries, apprentices, or other servants. It is also a central rallying point used in the case of intruders.

Creatures: If the PCs have already encountered Ti'irok in area **C10** and dealt with the Flamewarders there, two Flamewarders guard this chamber along with a glabrezu named Ja'akrand called here by Shebeleth (who used his *gate* scroll to do so). The powerful demon was initially unhappy about being called from the Abyss until it realized it had been called to the Material Plane. It now intends to destroy as many souls from this plane as it can during its stay here, and its pincers snap and twitch in anticipation of mortals to rend.

If the PCs have not yet dealt with Ti'irok but raised the alarm, the fire giant has been notified to coordinate a defense in this room. The Cagewrights connected these passages in such a way as to channel intruders to this point, and Ti'irok has drilled his Flamewarders in the defense of this chamber. If this is the case, Shebeleth has not used his scroll of *gate* to call the glabrezu, relying on the resilient fire giant and his band to repel the intruders. Ti'irok brings the four Flamewarders from areas **C10–C11** to help defend the chamber, leaving the other four in area **C8** to defend that area of the Fiery Sanctum.

Flamewarders, male and female haraknin fighter 5/rogue 5 (2 or 4): hp 108 each; see Appendix 4.

Ja'akrand, Male Glabrezu: hp 174; *Monster Manual* 43.

Ti'irok Coalfire: hp 249; see Appendix 4.

Tactics: The Flamewarders tumble to flank and attack single targets until they take him or her down. The glabrezu is a more cunning foe. It hangs back and uses its spell-like abilities to great effect. It activates *mirror image* in the first round, then uses *power word stun* on an arcane spellcaster or rogue it can see (it's trying to pick a target with lower hit points). Flamewarders make sure to attack stunned targets to maximize their sneak attacks. Ja'akrand then uses *reverse gravity* on heavily armored characters, sending them to the 30-foot ceiling for 3d6 points of falling damage. It engages in melee only when that is the best option left available.

Ti'irok uses tactics as described in area **C10**, bull rushing likely targets into the lava stream, where they take 4d6 points of fire damage (followed by 2d6 the following round and 1d6 the round thereafter).

C21. STALAGMITE GARDEN (EL 14)

A cluster of large stalagmites rises toward the roof of this fifteen-foot-high cavern. Each has been sculpted into humanoid shapes of exquisite detail. In addition, parts of the figures appear to be made of some clear material, allowing you to see that the stalagmites seem to be filled with lava. The molten rock glows from within the partially translucent figures, casting strange shadowy shapes on the walls. The display of statuary would be quite beautiful if not for the gruesome scenes depicted. Each figure displays a visage of cruel savagery, snarls in fury, or grimaces in pain. Several display cruel deformities or vicious wounds, the

light from the magma within causing them to glow with terrible fire.

This garden is kept by Grehlia Cairnis, apprentice Cagewright to Nulin Wiejeron and onetime leader of the local Ebon Triad cult. A sculptor by hobby, she uses spells to augment her trained ability to create these tributes to Vecna.

Grehlia joined the Cagewrights only recently, abandoning her post as leader of the Ebon Triad in the region to do so. Some of the other members of the Thirteen objected when she was initiated, claiming that she was too advanced in skill and experience to be pliable enough to accept her role within the organization, but her enthusiasm and skill eventually allayed their doubts.

Grehlia is open about the worship of her deity, and keeps a small shrine in the chambers she shares with Nulin, spending at least an hour every day in prayer. She suspects that the other divine casting members of the Cagewrights are uncomfortable with her faith, but she doesn't know why. She asked Decrinhi once about his god, but he only sneered and stalked away. Shebeleth secretly believes that Grehlia's faith in Vecna may prove to be a liability when she eventually learns the truth of the organization's devotion to Adimarchus. He has Decrinhi keep an eye on her; Embril does the same when she is around. Grehlia knows she is being watched and resents the suspicion. Thus, despite their similarities in combat style or faith, she finds herself mostly avoiding the company of the other clerics. She has started to doubt the wisdom of joining the group, and might even be convinced to betray them by a particularly diplomatic party.

Thearynn Louvel

Creature: Grehlia is small and stout. She has mousy brown hair cropped just above her ears. She typically keeps it slicked back with some greasy substance to keep it out of her eyes. Her eyes are the same brown as her hair, and she tends to breathe through her mouth unless she's on a job. In such cases, her focus sharpens noticeably, and she moves as silently and gracefully as any to have practiced her trade. She speaks with a noticeable lisp, but any who have pointed her impediment out to her have usually ended up screaming with agony as the dark power of Vecna coursed through their bodies.

Grehlia Cairnis, female human rogue 2/cleric 11 (Vecna)/assassin 1: hp 84; see Appendix 4.

Tactics: Grehlia favors *inflict wounds* spells used in conjunction with attacks from her spiked gauntlets. If she knows the PCs are only a few rounds away from reaching this area, she casts the following spells in this order: *aid, protection from good, air walk, prayer,* and *divine power,* followed finally by *harm* (she holds the charge for the first round of combat). She then hides within the maze of her statuary garden. She attempts to stay hidden until the PCs enter, then sneaks up on a lightly armored character to strike with her spiked gauntlets and *harm.* She then attempts to withdraw to the statue garden, using *flame strike* before being forced into melee.

Grehlia's loyalty to the Cagewrights has eroded. She begs for mercy if brought below 25 hit points.

Development: Sounds of battle here are probably heard by Thearynn in area **C22**, as well as Nulin in area **C27** and Shebeleth in area **C24a**.

If the PCs grant Grehlia surrender, her initial attitude is unfriendly. If made friendly, she'll agree to tell the PCs what she knows about the Cagewrights if they agree to first escort her out of the immediate area and then teleport her to safety. If made helpful, she allies with the PCs and aids them in their fight against the remaining Cagewrights. The other Cagewrights react with rage in any battle where Grehlia's betrayal is obvious, and they focus their attacks on her rather than the PCs as a result.

Grehlia has learned an amazing amount about the Cagewrights during her short time here—her capacity for learning and keeping secrets has served her well as a cleric of Vecna. You can use her information as you see fit to give the PCs an advantage over the Cagewrights, or even to reveal to the PCs the best method for stopping the formation of the Carcerian portal.

Grehlia's alliance with the PCs ends as soon as this chapter ends; she wants nothing more to do with them, the Ebon Triad, or the Cagewrights. Left to her own devices, she *plane shifts* to a distant plane and starts her life over.

C22. THEARYNN LOUVEL'S CHAMBERS (EL 17)

This chamber is almost barren of furnishings. A narrow cot rests against the far wall next to a workbench containing a few tools and a simple wooden chest. A perch that looks like it might act as a rest for a large bird sits in one corner; a number of black, foul-looking droppings litter the floor beneath it. An iron brazier heats the cold space.

Creature: Thearynn Louvel is the most paranoid of the Cagewrights. He lives isolated from the other members of the Thirteen, nurturing his mistrust and his own form of madness. Thin and pale, with wide, darting

brown eyes, he keeps his head shaved except for a small forelock in the middle of his brow that he toys with when nervous, making it greasy and flat. He favors summoning spells because he can avoid combat by making other creatures fight for him. One of the only Cagewrights not to take a human apprentice, he thought that selecting an outsider would ensure that he wouldn't be betrayed. As all three of his previous apprentices (humans all) tried to assassinate him and assume his position as one of the Thirteen, his paranoia is understandable. He wears frayed brown robes to avoid showing signs of obvious wealth, and only ventures from his chambers on the summons of Dyr'ryd or to visit Moltenwing, with whom he is completely fascinated.

Xarthyx the quasit serves Thearynn as an apprentice. Bored with his life in the Abyss, the quasit was intrigued when he was called up by Thearynn and offered an apprenticeship. Xarthyx has made incredibly rapid leaps in his spellcasting, but his raw power and inexperience leads him to make mistakes, a trait Thearynn hasn't had the inclination to correct. The quasit is a dark green color, with a bloated, rotund belly and a tendency to twitch his tail and salivate tremendously when excited.

Thearynn Louvel, male human conjurer 15: hp 68; see Appendix 4.

Xarthyx, male quasit sorcerer 11: hp 57; see Appendix 4.

Tactics: Thearynn has developed a plan to deal with those out to get him, and he has drilled with Xarthyx extensively to ensure its success. When Thearynn becomes aware of intruders, he casts *true seeing* and uses his *boots of levitation* to ascend into a hole sculpted into the ceiling. The hole is actually not visible to those on the ground, due to a permanent *illusory wall* spell concealing the entrance. Not even the rest of the Thirteen are aware of this hidey hole. Thearynn can see through the illusion due to his *true seeing* spell, and he has a small ledge in the hole on which he can lie down and observe the entire room. He casts his defensive spells when he hears battle in area **C21**. He also casts *ventriloquism* on himself.

Xarthyx's job, meanwhile, is to turn invisible and wait. When the PCs enter the room, Thearynn casts *open/close* to close the door behind them. The invisible quasit uses a scroll of *arcane lock* to seal it (the PCs automatically hear the quasit read the scroll, but he doesn't turn visible). The imp then flies to a corner of the room near the ceiling and begins launching a barrage of deadly spells—mostly evocations—at the intruders.

Thearynn meanwhile casts *acid fog*, filling the room with the deadly mist, followed by *Evard's black tentacles* to try to keep them grounded. If the PCs look as though they're capable of handling the fog, he casts his *summon monster* spells, using his *greater extend metamagic rod* to keep the summoned creatures around longer. By virtue of his *ventriloquism* spell, he's able to throw his voice even when casting spells, making it seem as though the caster is everywhere at once. If Thearynn takes more than half his hit points in damage, he casts *phase door* to escape to area **C25**. If this happens, the PCs encounter Theraynn again in the fight with Shebeleth, where he makes his last stand.

Treasure: Thearynn keeps his spellbooks in his secret niche in the ceiling, along with some rambling notes, mostly written in Abyssal, that are the obvious product of a dysfunctional mind. Among the bits and pieces of trivia, though, is a passage that reads, "I know the Fish is out for me. I know the Fish wants my power. I know the Fish is a traitor. A liar, backstabber—I know. The sneaky Fish. Set the traps on the south wall. I know he's tunneling—tunneling to me. Sneaky Fish. Rotten Fish."

C23. ARDETH WEBB'S CHAMBER (EL 18)

A pool of glowing lava nearly thirty feet across fills a sunken region to the south of this large cavern. The ceiling is forty feet high, and the room appears to be some sort of training facility. Paper screens line most of the walls, painted in various impressionistic patterns and designs, and reed mats cover the floor. Weapon racks hold a variety of exotic weapons. A pair of practice dummies hangs from the high ceiling along the east wall, and a low, wooden cot sits against the west. To the south stands a large armoire.

This chamber is the home of Ardeth Webb, one of the Thirteen, but another member of the group is found here as well: Nulin "Fish" Wiejeron, the spymaster of the Thirteen. He spends a great deal of time here training with Ardeth, and he has long planned to make his stand in this room given its unusual features.

This chamber has been enhanced with several permanent *invisibility* spells, each of which fills a 5-foot-square as indicated on the map. Anyone who stands on them and says aloud, "Blessings of Adimarchus" in any language as a free action becomes invisible, as the *invisibility* spell (caster level 10th).

Creatures: Ardeth is an enigma, even to her comrades. All they know is that she has been a part of the Thirteen longer than any other member except Dyr'ryd. She was born on the Material Plane over 150 years ago, the child of a servant of a dark monastery that trafficked with the spawn of the Nine Hells of Baator. Her mother died in childbirth and Ardeth was brought up by the monks. At the age of 20 she left the monastery, and by age 40 she had been recruited by Dyr'ryd. Money and material gain have never driven Ardeth—only power motivates her. It was during her long time among the Cagewrights that she became a tattooed monk (this prestige class is detailed in full on pages 82–84 of *Complete Warrior*, but all relevant details are presented in her stat block).

Ardeth keeps her own counsel most of the time. She seems content to pursue the machinations devised by Embril and Shebeleth, secure in the knowledge that they bring the Cagewrights' goals ever closer to fruition. She knows that her silence unnerves the others, and that brings her a certain amount of perverse joy.

Ardeth stands about 5 and a half feet tall, and weighs about 130 pounds. Fit and strong, she spends most of

her days conversing (and planning) with Dyr'ryd or honing her skills with Nulin. She keeps her head shaved to display a twisted tattoo of a scorpion across her scalp. Her eyes are dark and her face ageless, adding to the mystique that surrounds her. She typically wears simple white robes.

Ardeth Webb

Ardeth's most striking features are her tattoos. The most prominent is the scorpion tattoo on her shaved head. The body of the creature begins on her forehead, its pincers sweeping down on either side of her eyes. Its hindquarters end just above her neck, its tail coiling around her neck to end just above the joining of her collarbones. She bears a crane tattoo on her back, a tiger on her right arm, a wasp on her left, and a phoenix on her chest. The most disturbing aspect of her tattoos is that they are twisted and malformed, possibly from the effects of her fiendish blood. Two small horns jut from Ardeth's brow, and the faint smell of brimstone follows her wherever she goes.

Nulin "Fish" Wiejeron

Nulin "Fish" Wiejeron earned his nickname years ago when he worked as a waterfront tavern bouncer in a distant city. He became something of a local legend due to his ruthlessness and cold-blooded willingness to engage in violence. If someone insulted him or threatened him with violence, they turned up dead within a day, their bodies picked clean. He learned his skills as an assassin when he felt the money he earned in the tavern couldn't keep him comfortable—and when the job became boring as fewer and fewer patrons were willing to risk his ire by misbehaving. Shebeleth and the other Cagewrights recognized his talents, chief among them his discretion. Eventually he proved himself enough times that he was offered a position among the Thirteen. Never one to pass up an opportunity for more power and influence, Nulin readily accepted.

Nondescript in the extreme, Nulin is quiet, and seems content to mostly go along with the plans the other Cagewrights cook up. He wears dark clothing as a rule, but owns a massive wardrobe, with clothing suitable for the throne room as well as beggar's rags. A master of disguise, the balding, ordinary-looking assassin's many outfits find frequent use. He has no chambers of his own here, spending most of his time on the surface until recently. He now spends his time here with Ardeth, training, or with his apprentice in area **C21**.

Ardeth Webb, female tiefling monk 6/tattooed monk 10: hp 119; see Appendix 4.

Nulin "Fish" Wiejeron, male human rogue 5/fighter 2/assassin 8: hp 82; see Appendix 4.

Tactics: Fish and Ardeth use the *invisibility* squares in this room to great effect. The two pursue similar tactics, disappearing one round, then moving and attacking in the next. If a PC seems able to see invisibility, they focus their attacks on that character exclusively. When they activate a square, they whisper the command word in Abyssal. A successful Listen check (DC 20, modified for distance) allows a character to hear this command word.

Treasure: The weapon racks contain two each of every monk weapon (see page 40 of the *Player's Handbook*), and each is of masterwork quality. In addition, the following magic monk weapons are kept here: a +3 *adamantine dragon bane nunchaku* and a +2 *ghost touch kama*. A secret compartment beneath Ardeth's cot (Search DC 30 to find) contains an arcane scroll of *dimension door* and *dimensional anchor*, a *staff of frost* (23 charges), and a *druid's vestment*. Finally, the armoire contains Fish's expansive wardrobe, which is worth a total of 2,400 gp.

Development: If Ardeth is defeated before Fish, the PCs are faced with an interesting conundrum. The assassin, who is pragmatic before all things, remains invisible but breaks off combat to address the PCs. He offers information in exchange for his life. After extracting a promise of safety from the most lawful-looking PC, Fish (still invisible) quickly answers any questions the PCs may have. He can tell them the names and basic powers of all the other Cagewrights, the purpose of the ritual of planar binding, and the purpose of the *Tree of Shackled Souls*. He only reveals that the *dispersal collar* can safely deactivate the tree if his initial attitude of hostile can be made helpful. Finally, if asked who it is the Cagewrights serve, he takes a deep breath and admits they serve a powerful demon prince imprisoned on Carceri, and that this demon prince is named Adimarchus.

C24. SHEBELETH REGIDIN'S CHAMBERS (EL 19 OR 20)

The western half of this chamber is decorated lavishly as a bedchamber. Fine rugs cover the stone floors,

and tapestries the walls. An ornate desk sits against one wall, emblazoned across the front with the Carcerian Eye. A wardrobe built of ebony sits near a large, four-poster bed. The room narrows to the east, then opens into a second chamber. This one is much more spartan. The floor is bare, but has been carved once more with the symbol of the Cagewrights. An altar and font stand near the far wall, both covered in a strange glowing script.

The strange altar is dedicated to Adimarchus, and the spidery runes on it sing his praises in Abyssal. The font nearby contains 20 doses of unholy water. As with the secret shrine of Adimarchus in area **C12**, characters who have the Smoking Eye template feel a strange bond to the altar if they approach within 10 feet of it. In this area, such a character gains a +4 insight bonus on attack rolls, saving throws, and skill checks as he is able to draw upon the power of Occipitus via this altar.

The area to the east (area **C24b**) is Shebeleth's personal library. The tomes in this chamber cover a wide range of subjects, from the Outer Planes to local history.

Creatures: Of the Thirteen, few wield as much power as Shebeleth. Only Dyr'ryd and Embril Aloustinai are more powerful. The other members secretly fear this intimidating priest. Shebeleth was the primary builder of the *Tree of Shackled Souls*. A keeper of lost mysteries and arcane knowledge, he owns a tremendous collection of books worth quite a bit of money (see Treasure, below). Shebeleth is also a fair musician, a trait his apprentice has attempted to emulate. Strains of his eerie compositions on the violin fill the Cagewrights' complex at all hours, sending chills down everyone's spines.

Shebeleth Regidin

Shebeleth is tall and gaunt. He rarely eats, taking his meals in his chambers while he works. He wears nondescript dark robes that cover him from his neck to his feet, with long, voluminous sleeves that conceal even his hands. In battle, however, he throws his sleeves back to reveal spindly arms covered in gruesome scars. The rest of the Thirteen speculate that similar scars actually cover his entire body, signifying his commitment to whatever force grants him his clerical powers. Shebeleth keeps his head shaved and sports no facial hair. His only adornments are a dark, diamond-shaped crystal embedded in the middle of his forehead and his holy symbol, a dark iron amulet in the shape of the Carcerian Eye that hangs from a thick iron chain.

Shebeleth is always attended by a shator demodand minion named Keeriv. The demodand secretly believes Shebeleth should be serving it, as is only proper, but it has greater respect and fear for Dyr'ryd.

Shebeleth Regidin, male human cleric 10 (Adimarchus)/loremaster 7: hp 120; see Appendix 4.

Keeriv, Shator: hp 127; see Appendix 4.

Tactics: Shebeleth has been aware of the PCs for some time now, but remained unconcerned. This fearlessness is his own brand of madness—unless magically compelled, he feels no emotions whatsoever. When the PCs arrive, he turns to them and attempts to stall them with conversation as long as possible to give the *Tree of Shackled Souls* time to complete its job. If combat does erupt, he reacts by casting *time stop*, then *spell resistance*, *magic circle against good*, and *protection from good* on himself if there's time, followed by *summon monster IX* to summon a hezrou.

Keeriv casts *mage armor*, *bull's strength*, *blink*, and *true strike* if he realizes the PCs are near. While Shebeleth talks, he lurks in the shadows of the chapel, trying to appear threatening until combat erupts.

Treasure: The shelves in area **C24b** hold numerous tomes that address matters arcane and planar. Also on the shelves are an arcane scroll of *analyze dweomer*, an arcane scroll of *phase door*, and an arcane scroll of *fire shield*. Construction plans for the *Tree of Shackled Souls* can be found here as well. Written in Abyssal, these plans outline in detail the Cagewrights' goals. They do not mention the *dispersal collar* (those plans are found in area **C17**), but they do mention a failsafe back-up plan for shutting down the tree should something go awry, and that Freija has been tasked with implementing this plan.

Development: Combat here is likely heard in area **C27** by Dyr'ryd (Listen DC 35).

C25. FOOD AND SUPPLIES

This large cavern is used to store food, water, and other supplies. Several barrels of wine, ale, and fresh water rest against the north wall, and three heavily laden shelves hold several hundred pounds of food.

Treasure: A successful DC 25 Search check reveals a small cask behind a sack of dried beef on one of the shelves that holds six potion vials, each labeled clearly in Abyssal as a *potion of cure moderate wounds*.

C26. DYR'RYD'S CHAMBER (EL 15)

The walls of this large chamber are dark red. In the corner of the chamber lies a pile of cushions nearly

Dyr'ryd

thirty feet across, stacked nearly six feet high. The cushions, like the floor, are covered in a pale, sickly slime. A desk behind a bend in the chamber is sized for someone overly large—at least ten feet tall.

This is Dyr'ryd's personal chamber. The leader of the Thirteen and pre-eminent Cagewright is currently spending his time in area **C27** with the *Tree of Shackled Souls*.

Creatures: Three fellow demodands await Dyr'ryd's pleasure here. They won't leave this room to investigate the sounds of battle elsewhere, instead remaining here to guard Dyr'ryd's treasury and the secret door.

- **Kelubar Demodand:** hp 97; see Appendix 4.
- **Farastu Demodands (2):** hp 71 each; see Appendix 4.

Treasure: Area **C26b** serves Dyr'ryd as a treasury. Three urns hold a total of 2,333 gp and 639 pp. Also among the loose treasure are two *potions of cure moderate wounds* and a *potion of bull's strength*. There are signs that more treasure was at one point stored here, but the majority of it was used to finance the construction of the *Tree of Shackled Souls*.

C27. TREE OF SHACKLED SOULS (EL 20)

This massive elliptical chamber glows with a hellish light from lava bubbling through shaped channels that form a familiar pattern in the floor. These rivers of lava form the sign of the Carcerian Eye, and from the eye's "pupil" grows a horrendous sight.

A large tree of metal erupts from the lava there. Thirteen branches sprout from a central trunk several feet across, twisting menacingly around the chamber to increase the diameter of the area occupied by the tree to nearly sixty feet. The branches are covered in wicked barbs, but each branch tapers to end in a hook. From each hook hangs a cage, and within each cage you see the slumped form of a humanoid figure. These must be the Shackleborn—individuals cursed by fate to be the keys to unlocking the gate to Carceri.

The terrible metal tree is the *Tree of Shackled Souls*. The PCs may recognize some of the Shackleborn in the thirteen *soulcages*, including Terrem and Zenith

Splintershield. Full details on this artifact and how the PCs can deactivate it are detailed below.

Creature: Dyr'ryd waits here for the PCs, the last line of defense for the *Tree of Shackled Souls*. The massive demodand is actually two entities inhabiting the same monstrous body. He looks like a normal shator with the exception of a second, loathsome face and a small, stunted arm and leg that protrudes from the side of his head. This second face resembles Dyr'ryd's, but is not identical. The demodand's main face is actually the personality known as Dyr, while the second, cancerous face goes by the name Ryd. When Dyr'ryd speaks, both voices rasp just out of sync. Utterly insane, Dyr'ryd often converses with himself, especially when he's excited. One face compliments the other on a particularly devastating attack, while if a stratagem fails, one chastises the other, screeching imprecations for a few seconds while the vestigial leg twitches and the arm clenches its tiny fist. Of the two faces, Ryd is far more foul tempered, and more likely to attempt Intimidate checks. Dyr is smoother and more prone to using Bluff or Diplomacy than resorting to threats.

Dyr'ryd, advanced shator demodand: hp 180; see Appendix 4.

Tactics: If warned, Dyr'ryd uses *clairaudience/clairvoyance* to check through the complex and determine in which direction the PCs are heading. When the PCs approach this chamber, he casts *invisibility* on himself, then the following spells in order: *mage armor, bull's strength, displacement,* and *true strike*. When the PCs enter, he casts *haste*. He extends *displacement* and *haste* with his gauntlet, reserving the last use of the item in case his spells are dispelled.

When the PCs enter, Dyr'ryd tries to stall them, much as Shebeleth does in area **C24**. Revealing his massive, horrid form to the PCs, he asks why they've come. He grills them with difficult questions and tries to convince them that servitude to the demodands is not only inevitable, but good for the people of the Material Plane. He also tells the PCs that destroying the tree will set off a chain reaction that will destroy the mountain (although this is true, the PCs are unlikely to believe him given the circumstances). Dyr'ryd answers many of the PCs' remaining questions about the Cagewrights or the Thirteen—anything to stall them as long as possible—but refuses to disclose how the tree functions or what could shut it off.

In combat, Dyr keeps the PCs at bay with his spells and spell-like abilities, while Ryd shouts at his other face to hack the characters to bits with *Mindbite*. Once engaged in melee, the demodand uses his weapon's reach to keep the PCs at a distance. If he can, Dyr'ryd bull rushes spellcasters or ranged attackers into one of the lava channels.

Concluding the Chapter

The chapter can end in one of three ways: in defeat, with an eruption, or in total success. Each possibility is detailed below.

Defeat

Should the PCs fail and be defeated, the *Tree of Shackled Souls* completes its dark duty and creates a permanent rift between the plane of Carceri and the city of Cauldron. Demodands pour through and set out to create a demodand empire in this part of the world. Whether they succeed in this grand endeavor is out of the characters' hands, although this scenario can form the foundation for an apocalyptic new campaign in which new PCs strive to close the portal and reclaim lost lands.

Eruption

If the PCs destroy the tree, the pent-up seismic energy is released in a massive rush back into the volcano's heart. They have prevented the formation of the Carcerian gate, but in so doing have triggered a massive volcanic eruption that destroys the city above and possibly the PCs with it. The eruption process takes 10 minutes to begin once the tree is destroyed, so PCs may be able to escape by using magic to flee.

Characters that remain in the volcano when it erupts are immediately slain (no save) and their bodies and equipment destroyed. Only a well-phrased wish or miracle can avert the explosion at this point. With Cauldron's destruction, this is a pyrrhic victory at best.

Success

The best solution to the situation is to use the *dispersal collar*. If the PCs use this device, the ground gives one last lurch as the tree is drained of energy. This final tremor is massive, and can be felt for dozens of miles. Characters still in the Fiery Sanctum are thrown to the ground if they fail a DC 20 Reflex save. Above, a significant portion of the southeast corner of Cauldron, weakened by previous tremors, collapses in a tremendous blast of sound. The remaining ground remains stable and the city can be rebuilt, but the familiar concentric ring of Cauldron has been permanently broken. It bears this scar for the remainder of its existence.

From the Ashes

Ideally, the PCs complete the adventure by shackling the tree, freeing Cauldron from the potential tyranny of the demodands without completely destroying the city. The Shackleborn, one in each of the *soulcages*, remain dead. Their bodies are withered and pinched as if completely drained of moisture, due to their soul energy being funneled into the tree. The bodies are intact, however, and now that things have been set right, the thirteen descendents of the demodands can be raised from the dead.

When the PCs share the news of their success, they are heralded as the heroes of the city, and the new lord mayor makes a vow to have statues of the characters erected in Cauldron to honor the moment. He also promises to name a new holiday in Cauldron after the heroes (named after their group name, if they have one, or simply "Hero's Day" if they do not).

Allow the PCs time to bask in their victory. They've accomplished something incredible. Over the next several weeks, the citizens of Cauldron slowly return to their shattered city and begin the process of rebuilding. The PCs can aid in this process as they see fit, but things are not quite safe in Cauldron yet.

For one last villain remains.

Adimarchus himself.

BEHIND THE SCENES: THIRTEEN CAGES

This chapter should mark the beginning of the end for the Cagewrights.

Vhalantru's tormented soul reaches Skullrot just as the PCs close the portal. Their heroic act causes the dreams of imprisoned Adimarchus to pulse with rage and frustration. These dreams wash out over the surrounding region, infusing the gathering demodand horde at Skullrot with rage. The horde explodes into a riot of self-destruction. Embril and the other remaining Cagewright leaders surmise that something cataclysmic has happened, *plane shift* back to the Material Plane, and then retreat to their hideout under the ruins of Shatterhorn to regroup.

On Carceri, Vhalantru's soul is swept up by the current of Adimarchus's dreams of mad rage, to be carried between the dimensions and eventaully to be deposited on Occipitus, where the beholder is returned to life... of a sort...

CHAPTER ELEVEN
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STRIKE ON SHATTERHORN

CHAPTER ELEVEN

STRIKE ON SHATTERHORN

BY CHRISTOPHER PERKINS

Smoke still rises from the shattered buildings and ruined streets of the troubled city of Cauldron, yet if not for the actions of a band of heroes, it would not exist at all. The Cagewrights lie shattered, their surviving members put on the defensive for the first time. All that remains is to finish the job, but the surviving Cagewrights still have some surprises left in their mysterious stronghold under the snake-haunted ruins of Shatterhorn.

The surviving Cagewrights have withdrawn to their secret redoubt in the nearby ruins of Shatterhorn, an ancient yuan-ti stronghold hidden in the jungle east of the town. Angered and dumbfounded by their recent "setback," the surviving Cagewrights plot their next move. Desperate to free the demon prince Adimarchus from his prison on Carceri, Embril has resurrected a spell weaver whose body was recently recovered from the ruins of Karran-Kural. In exchange, the spell weaver—a master of necromantic lore—has agreed to help Embril. With an appropriate sacrifice to Nerull, the god of death, Embril believes she can secure the god's aid in freeing Adimarchus from his prison on Carceri.

SHATTERHORN

Shatterhorn, located roughly 50 miles east of Cauldron in a section of the Amedio Jungle known as the Grayhaunt, is a 200-foot-high jagged spire of solid rock reaching up toward the sky. Four hundred years ago, a yuan-ti prophet named Ssythar Vassha claimed Shatterhorn was a divine oracle—an instrument for communing with the yuan-ti god Merrshaulk. He and his followers raised a keep around the spire, and used it as a base for their raids. One stormy night, an incredible bolt of lightning split Shatterhorn into three, cracking it open from peak to base. At first, the yuan-ti took the event as an ill omen, but when no trace of Ssythar Vassha could be found, his followers assumed that Merrshaulk had rewarded the visionary yuan-ti by taking Ssythar Vassha into his eternal embrace. Vassha's followers built a secret temple beneath Shatterhorn and placed a statue of the "prophet ascendant" in its greatest hall. Other yuan-ti prophets rose to take Vassha's place and lead the cult, but it soon became clear that Shatterhorn had lost its alleged power to commune with Merrshaulk. The yuan-ti cult's fortunes turned, and they were driven off and exterminated by their enemies.

The characters come to the ruins of Shatterhorn seeking to capture or eliminate surviving Cagewrights, who have been using the ruins of Shatterhorn as a secret staging area for their plots in Cauldron. Shatterhorn harbors several high-ranking Cagewrights who share the ruins and the dungeons below with a number of allied creatures. The journey to the ruins from Cauldron should pose little threat to high-level PCs, especially if they use *greater teleport* to travel there.

THE RUINED KEEP (EL 18)

A two-hundred-foot-tall spire of jagged rock stands in a rough clearing, dwarfing the surrounding trees. Some great force has split the rock into three sections, forming deep clefts. Around the base of the cleft spire, someone has built a one-story stone keep. Many of the keep's walls have collapsed, and a thick shroud of fog envelops the structure. The lone, shrill cry of a baboon echoes in the desolation of this dreary place.

An eerie, nonmagical fog engulfs the keep, reaching a height of 20 feet before thinning out. Creatures within the thick fog have concealment against attacks made more than 10 feet away. Rain seems to fall more frequently here than in other areas, making all surfaces slick and damp (–2 penalty on Balance and Climb checks).

Use the Ruins of Shatterhorn map for this encounter.

A single-story stone keep surrounds the Shatterhorn. Although most of the keep's mortared walls remain intact, its entire roof structure has collapsed, exposing the various rooms and corridors to the open sky. Some of its thick walls have collapsed as well, leaving behind

STARTING THE CHAPTER: STRIKE ON SHATTERHORN

The average party level should be 18 when you start this chapter. After evacuating Cauldron and defeating the Cagewrights in the previous chapters, the PCs deserve a chance to rest, research spells, and create magic items. They should know of the existence of the second Cagewright hideout by now, but there's no real rush to take care of them quite yet. After the hectic pace of the last few adventrues, the PCs can take their time dealing with the remaining leaders of the cult.

heaps of rubble (moving through 5 feet of debris costs 10 feet of movement). Over the years, assorted denizens have cleared the debris from the rooms to create lairs for themselves. Countless adventurers have plundered the keep as well, drawn by false rumors of dragon hoards hidden within the ruins.

The ruined keep is far from the impenetrable bastion it once was. The Cagewrights, in particular, have done precious little to fortify the keep, arguably to preserve its "abandoned" appearance. That said, the Cagewrights have left a monstrous garrison in the ruins to dispatch unwanted interlopers (see Creatures, below). The ruins are also inhabited by troops of screaming baboons that fall strangely silent in the company of strangers.

The characters probably have more than one way to reach the keep, or may circumvent it altogether by teleporting directly into the dungeon beneath (see "Under Shatterhorn"). Characters searching the keep notice serpentine bas-reliefs carved on the inside walls, although heavy rain has eroded some of the finer works. Stone basins built into the floor that once served as yuan-ti baths now hold murky pools of water. Decrepit wooden doors bear rusted iron hinges and handles shaped like serpents and dragons, and some of the floor stones bear chiseled yuan-ti inscriptions. Characters searching for treasure discover that the ruins have been picked clean, except for the occasional armor fragment or rusted weapon.

Creatures: The ruins are crawling with baboons, and characters navigating the ruins notice that the normally skittish creatures become quiet and still as the party passes, fixing their black eyes on the characters until they pass out of sight, at which point the baboons resume their normal behavior. Only if attacked do they scatter, in which case they retreat in a strangely orderly, unnervingly silent exodus.

In addition to the baboons, characters exploring the ruined keep or the Shatterhorn itself may attract the attention of the keep's guardians: a hill giant barbarian named Ghath, his two dire wolf pets, a small gang of half-orc bandits called the Grayhaunt Marauders, and their trained spider eater mounts. These mercenaries work for the Cagewrights and can be placed anywhere inside the keep walls. (The hill giant normally patrols the keep's interior, while one Grayhaunt Marauder and mount usually stays near the outermost corners of the keep.) They converge on any area where trouble is detected.

A pair of ancient will-o'-wisps that predate the fall of Shatterhorn also haunt the ruins, remaining invisible until they strike. Predatory and opportunistic, yet loosely allied with Ghath and the Grayhaunt Marauders, they join the battle in the keep's defense 2 rounds after combat erupts.

- **Ghath, male hill giant barbarian 10**: hp 263; see Appendix 4.
- **Dire Wolves (2)**: hp 64 each; *Monster Manual* 65.
- **Grayhaunt Marauders, male half-orc fighter 8 (4)**: hp 59 each; see Appendix 4.
- **Spider Eaters (4)**: hp 42 each; *Monster Manual* 234.
- **Ancient Will-o'-Wisps (2)**: hp 212 each; see Appendix 4.

Tactics: The ruins provide Ghath with plenty of rocks to throw, but he prefers melee combat over ranged combat. He uses the fog for concealment as he closes in for the kill, and his dire wolves are trained to provide flanking opportunities and sniff out invisible foes. Against poorly armored foes, Ghath uses his Power Attack feat, taking a –5 penalty on attack rolls to gain a +10 bonus on damage rolls with his greatsword (when Ghath rages, these modifiers increase to –10 and +20, respectively).

One of the half-orcs blows his hunting horn when the battle is first joined, alerting the keep's other denizens and setting off a riot of baboon shrieks. The half-orcs and spider eaters provide aerial support, using their *+1 seeking arrows* to ignore the 20% miss chance caused by the fog. The half-orcs only fight on the ground if their mounts are slain—they know that spider eaters are surprisingly frail, and generally do not fly more than 20 or 30 feet off the ground.

The will-o'-wisps are tenuous allies of the Cagewrights and their minions. They serve as the giant's invisible "eyes" and "ears" until he's killed, and they are quick to attack characters that split off from the group. If one of the will-o'-wisps is slain, the other flees.

Development: The hill giant hurls rocks at any interlopers he sees while sending his dire wolves after characters who keep their distance. The half-orcs prefer not to leave the spider eater mounts behind, but a half-orc deprived of his mount pursues characters into the cleft. Only the will-o'-wisps know about the *illusory wall* in the cleft (see The Cleft Horn, below). Their unfriendly attitude aside, the will-o'-wisps are open to negotiation. A successful Diplomacy check can shift the wisps' attitude to indifferent, friendly, or helpful. They can also impart useful information if bribed with 5,000 gold pieces worth of treasure. They recognize the Cagewrights as "the ones wearing the silver, cage-shaped pendants" and can describe each of them, as well as provide the location of the dungeon entrance.

If the characters raise the alarm or otherwise make a lot of noise, they alert Ssythar Nahazir's familiar (see The Cleft Horn, below).

THE CLEFT HORN

Shatterhorn is a fractured, horn-shaped spire of solid rock 90 feet wide at its base and 200 feet tall. A narrow cleft separates the towering thirds of the spire, creating three narrow, debris-strewn passages that meet at the heart of the spire. These passages are open to the sky and widen toward the top. Climbing the inside or outside walls of Shatterhorn requires a DC 17 Climb check (including a –2 penalty for the slick surface).

The entrance to the dungeon is carved into the northern fragment of Shatterhorn and consists of a 10-foot-tall, 5-foot-wide downward-spiraling passageway. The passage makes several descending revolutions before opening into area 1 of the dungeon. An *illusory wall*

spell (caster level 9th) obscures the passageway, disguising it as part of the surrounding rock wall. The wall appears absolutely real when viewed, but physical objects can pass through it without difficulty. A character with *true seeing* active does not perceive the *illusory wall* but instead sees the open passageway. The *illusory wall* is permanent until dispelled.

Creatures: Ssythar Nahazir has hidden his snake familiar Salsinath among the rocks near the *illusory wall.* If it sees intruders entering the cleft or otherwise hears disturbing noises, it slithers down the spiraling passage and alerts its master in area 1.

Salsinath, Ssythar Nahazir's snake familiar: hp 36; see Appendix 4.

UNDER SHATTERHORN

The "dungeon" under Shatterhorn contains temples, catacombs, and hidden vaults built by the yuan-ti. Characters can reach the dungeon under Shatterhorn using the downward-spiraling passage at the base of the spire (see The Cleft Horn) or using powerful magic.

The dungeon under Shatterhorn has the following features:

Illumination: Unless noted otherwise, all dungeon corridors and chambers are torchlit. The torches cast eerie shadows upon the walls, ceiling, and floor.

Stonework: All areas have 10-foot-high, bare stone ceilings unless specified otherwise. The walls are made of mortared bricks of black volcanic rock covered with painted plaster murals depicting yuan-ti and other serpentine creatures. Most of the murals have faded, and in many areas the plaster has peeled or fallen away, revealing damp black stone underneath.

Secret Doors: Secret doors are actually 3-inch-thick barriers of painted plaster that blend seamlessly with the surrounding murals and stonework. A secret door doesn't open like a normal door; it must be smashed through (Hardness 2; hp 15). Unless the fragments of a smashed secret door are moved to another area, a programmed *make whole* spell automatically reassembles a broken secret door after 1 hour.

Secret Door: 3 in. thick; Hardness 2; hp 15; Break DC 13.

Illusory Effects: Various minor illusory effects pervade the dungeon, courtesy of permanent *minor image* and *ghost sound* spells. Tiny illusory snakes slither across the floor, emerge from cracks in the walls, or coil around sundry objects. These shiny-black vipers dissolve into nothingness when touched. A rattling noise echoes through the dungeon as well, but the rattling always seems distant, and its origin cannot be traced. These illusions pose no threat yet serve to keep interlopers on edge.

Collapsed Areas: Over the years, earth tremors have caused sections of the dungeon to collapse; attempts to clear collapsed sections only cause further collapse. If you wish to expand the dungeon, you can add new areas to any of the places where the map currently shows a collapse.

Treasure: At many points, the text calls for rolls on the following table to flesh out minor treasures hidden in the ruins.

D%	Treasure
01–04	Black funereal vestments traced with gold (150 gp)
05–08	Black gold fang-shaped ring with single-dose poison reservoir (180 gp)
09–12	Amber serpent figurine (200 gp)
13–16	Crystal flask containing *elixir of sneaking* (250 gp)
17–20	Crystal flask containing *elixir of hiding* (250 gp)
21–24	Vial of *silversheen* (250 gp)
25–28	Gold mask with small obsidian horns (360 gp)
29–32	Snakeskin-wrapped scroll tube containing a 3rd-level divine scroll*
33–36	Gold, wavy-bladed ceremonial dagger inlaid with red garnets (500 gp)
37–40	A *bead of blessing* (600 gp)
41–44	Silver scroll tube (10 gp) containing a 4th-level divine scroll*
45–48	Gold serpent-shaped bracer inlaid with jade (750 gp)
49–52	Golden necklace with eight dangling jade orbs (900 gp)
53–56	*Salve of slipperiness* in a snakeskin-wrapped flask (1,000 gp)
57–60	Crystal flask containing *elixir of fire breath* (1,100 gp)
61–64	Ivory scroll tube (50 gp) containing a 5th-level divine scroll*
65–68	Gold circlet with black gold inlay and amber tracery (1,200 gp)
69–72	Fire opal pendant on a fine gold chain (1,400 gp)
73–76	Platinum necklace with dangling jet fangs (1,500 gp)
77–80	Platinum bracelet set with three black pearls (2,000 gp)
81–84	Snakeskin tube containing *oil of magic vestment +4* (2,400 gp)
85–88	Golden headdress with emerald and golden topaz inlays (2,500 gp)
89–92	*Golembane scarab* (2,500 gp)
93–96	*Necklace of fireballs, type II* (2,700 gp)
97–100	Gold ring set with rubies (3,500 gp)

**Roll on Table 7–24: Divine Spell Scrolls in the Dungeon Master's Guide.*

1. TEMPLE OF FANGS (EL 14)

Ten thick pillars support the ten-foot-high ceiling of this large, unlit room. Deep alcoves are recessed into the west and east walls. A few snakes slither across the floor, and a distant rattling noise emanates from the deeper darkness. A sculpted stone altar rests in the middle of the room, its surfaces stained with dried

blood and carved with serpentine motifs. One end of the altar curls up to form the head of a great snake with stony fangs and gems for eyes.

The distant rattling noise is an eerie illusory effect (see Dungeon Features).

The eastern alcoves are, in fact, part of one large alcove with a "rolling pillar" in the middle of it. The pillar looks like a protruding section of wall but has stone rollers tucked into its base, allowing it to roll to the north or south. Noticing the rolling pillar requires a DC 25 Search check, and rolling it requires a DC 25 Strength check. The rolling pillar conceals a 10-foot-long passage leading to area **2**.

A secret door (see Dungeon Features) is set into the south wall and leads to area **22**.

The altar weighs close to 1,800 pounds and radiates a continual *unholy aura* (caster level 18th) to a range of 30 feet. All evil creatures within range gain a +4 deflection bonus to AC, a +4 resistance bonus on saves, spell resistance 25 against good spells and spells cast by good creatures, and immunity to possession and mind-affecting effects. In addition, if a good creature succeeds on a melee attack against a warded creature, the offending attacker takes 1d6 points of temporary Strength damage (Fortitude DC 22 negates). Destroying the altar negates the *unholy aura*.

Altar of Fangs: 3 ft. thick; Hardness 8; hp 540; Break DC 50.

Creature: Ssythar Nahazir, a mad yuan-ti Cagewright, hides behind the altar (in the square marked "N" on the map). Nahazir believes he is a prophet of Merrshaulk gifted with divine insight, which explains the self-chosen title of Ssythar (a Yuan-ti word meaning "chosen one"). Nahazir has a serpentine head and scaly skin, but otherwise appears human. He conceals his features beneath a form-fitting black robe, and around his neck he wears a silver pendant shaped like a tiny cage. His snake familiar, if present, is coiled around one of his wrists.

During his exploration of the catacombs, Nahazir stumbled upon a yuan-ti pureblood mohrg guarding a collection of burial urns (area **5**). He used a *command undead* spell to win the mohrg's favor and relocated it to this chamber. It hides in the alcove marked "M" and emerges to attack when spotted or when someone other than Nahazir stands adjacent to the altar. The mohrg has serpentine fangs and a slinky gait, but it does not speak and could easily be mistaken for a human mohrg.

Ssythar's statistics assume he's had time to cast *mage armor* and *shield* and drink his *potion of barkskin* +3.

Ssythar Nahazir, male halfblood yuan-ti sorcerer 10: hp 72 (86 with *false life* spell); see Appendix 4.

Advanced Mohrg (yuan-ti pureblood): hp 148; see Appendix 4.

Tactics: Nahazir has already cast *mage armor* and *false life* on himself (each spell has a remaining duration of 1d8 hours). If forewarned of danger, Ssythar drinks his *potion of barkskin +3* and casts the following spells on himself, in the following order: *see invisibility* (lasts 100 minutes), *shield* (lasts 10 minutes), *expeditious retreat* (lasts 10 minutes), and *displacement* (lasts 10 rounds). If his familiar is present (see The Cleft Horn, above), it gains the benefits of these spells as well. Time allowing, Nahazir casts one or more *resist energy* spells, then hides.

At range, Ssythar Nahazir prefers to cast heightened *slow* (5th level; save DC 19), followed by *enervation*, *Evard's black tentacles*, empowered *lightning bolt*, and empowered *magic missile*. In melee, he jabs foes with his empowered *wand of idiocy* or *wand of poison*. Nahazir must make a successful DC 20 Use Magic Device check to use the *wand of poison*, and he cannot take 10 on this check. He saves a *teleport* spell for his escape, retreating to the Temple of Merrshaulk (area **20**) to make his final stand.

Ssythar Nahazir

The mohrg tries to grapple and paralyze foes. Its paralysis is contagious, thanks to its Contagious Paralysis feat (see Appendix 1).

Trap: Any non-yuan-ti that defaces or otherwise damages the altar must make a successful DC 22 Will save or be teleported inside the hollow black egg in the Temple of Merrshaulk (area **20**). This trap even affects a creature that damages the altar with a ranged attack.

Teleportation Trap: CR 8; magic device; touch trigger; automatic reset; spell effect (*greater teleport*, 13th-level wizard, Will DC 22 negates); Search DC 32; Disable Device DC 32.

Treasure: The two gems embedded in the altar's "eyes" are black sapphires worth 1,000 gp apiece.

2. HIDDEN VAULT

The walls of this room are painted with plaster murals depicting eleven golden serpents, one per five-foot section of wall. Each serpent holds a painted, unfurled scroll in its mouth, and arcane runes adorn each scroll. Some of the plaster has chipped or fallen away, marring the images.

The scrolls painted on the walls are treated as pages of a spellbook. Each scroll outlines a different arcane spell that can be transferred to either a spellbook or an actual scroll. Only seven of the eleven scrolls can be deciphered; the other four are too damaged to read, but can be repaired with *make whole* spells. The legible spells are *bestow curse*, *control undead*, *eyebite*, *finger of death*, *greater planar binding*, *stone to flesh*, and *summon monster VII*. The unreadable spells are *Bigby's grasping hand*, *create greater undead*, *limited wish*, and *waves of exhaustion*.

3. PLASTER PILLARS (EL 18)

Thick pillars support the ten-foot-high ceiling of this hall. Four alcoves hold heaps of dust and bone intermingled with shards of painted ceramic. A stone arm—the remains of a shattered statue, perhaps—rests on the floor between the pillars. The arm looks human-sized and is broken at the shoulder. One of its stony fingers bears an iron ring.

The alcoves hold the shattered remains and spilled contents of four ceramic burial urns. The ceramic fragments are painted with serpentine motifs and images of yuan-ti dressed in ceremonial armor and robes. Amid the refuse lie yuan-ti bones and tattered funereal wrappings. The northeast and northwest alcoves contain secret doors leading to area **4C** and **5**, respectively (see Dungeon Features for more information about Shatterhorn's secret doors).

The four pillars surrounding the stone arm are actually made of painted plaster. Although the plaster pillars look like ordinary stone pillars, careful inspection and a successful DC 25 Search check reveal the truth. The stone arm is all that remains of a petrified human rogue. The iron ring bears an inscription: "Here lies your doom." A *Nystul's magic aura* spell makes the ring radiate magic as though it was a *ring of evasion*, but the aura is false. Touching the ring or the petrified arm causes the four plaster pillars to shatter and awakens the Creatures.

Creatures: Each plaster pillar holds a medusa rogue in temporal stasis. Disturbing the petrified arm dispels the *temporal stasis* and causes the plaster pillars to shatter, releasing the medusas. Before they were placed in *temporal stasis*, the medusas imbibed potions of *bear's endurance*, *cat's grace*, and *eagle's splendor*; the potions last roughly 3 minutes. The bonuses imparted by these potions are included in their stat block; if they are dispelled, remember to adjust the stats accordingly. Yuan-ti clerics also placed *greater magic weapon* spells on the medusas' short swords; the effects last 7 hours.

Medusa rogue 10 (4): hp 157, 150, 142, 129; see Appendix 4.

Tactics: Each opponent within 30 feet of a medusa must make a saving throw against its petrifying gaze attack each round at the beginning of his or her turn in the initiative order. The medusas do not make active gaze attacks on their turns, instead attacking with their short swords and snakes. They also try to make sneak attacks against flanked opponents.

4. PIT TRAPS (EL 14)

This is a four-way intersection of fifteen-foot-wide passages illuminated by torches in sconces. Like other areas of the dungeon, the walls are adorned with faded murals depicting yuan-ti rituals and great serpents. The passage to the north has collapsed.

This intersection contains two concealed pit traps (areas **4A** and **4B**, respectively). An *illusory wall* (caster level 9th) conceals an arrow slit overlooking each pit. Behind these concealed arrow slits, a farastu demodand stands watch in a 10-foot-square room (area **4C**). When one or more characters stand on a pit, the farastu pulls a stone lever set into the wall of area **4C**, opening the pit doors; the secret room contains two stone levers, one for each pit. A pit can also be opened using a *knock* spell or, once detected, it can be forced open with a successful DC 30 Strength check.

Creature: The farastu in area **4C** serves the Cagewrights. If characters discover and open the secret door leading to its chamber, it brazenly charges forth to attack them.

Farastu Demodand: hp 68; see Appendix 4.

Trap: The pit traps in areas **4A** and **4B** are well hidden. When the appropriate lever in area **4C** is pulled, the lid of each pit opens in the middle, dropping creatures into the pit. Pit **4A** is 30 feet deep and filled with whirling blades the size of longswords that shred anything that falls in, dealing slashing damage each round; these blades are treated as magic weapons for the purposes of penetrating damage reduction. Pit **4B** is 30 feet deep and has large stone rollers 10 feet down (and 10 feet above the pit's floor) that pulverize anything that drops in; creatures that survive the rollers land on a bed of poisoned iron spikes.

Whirling Blades Pit (area 4A): CR 12; mechanical; location trigger; manual reset; DC 22 Reflex save avoids; 30 ft. deep (3d6, fall); whirling blades every round (10d8+10, slashing, Reflex DC 25 half); Search DC 25; Disable Device DC 30.

Grinding Poison Spike Pit (area 4B): CR 12; mechanical; location trigger; manual reset; DC 22 Reflex save avoids; stone rollers (10d6, bludgeoning) and 30 ft. deep (3d6, fall); pit spikes (Atk +15 melee, 1d4 spikes per target for 1d4+5 plus poison each); poison (purple worm poison, DC 24 Fortitude save resists, initial damage 1d6 Str, secondary damage 2d6 Str); Search DC 25; Disable Device DC 30.

Development: Triggering either pit trap alerts Alurad in area **9**.

5. SERPENTINE URNS (EL 10)

The walls of this catacomb are filled with five-foot-deep alcoves. Within each alcove stands an ornate, four-foot-tall, varnished ceramic urn. The urns are painted with images of serpents, scimitars, and yuan-ti dressed in ceremonial armor.

These catacombs contain yuan-ti burial urns. Each sealed urn weighs 180 pounds and contains the desiccated remains of a pureblood or halfblood yuan-ti priest or warrior encased in sawdust. Clay canopic jars placed at the bottom of the urn contain the yuan-ti's vital organs (heart, liver, and so forth). Some of the mummified yuan-ti are buried with Treasure. Opening or smashing an urn also triggers a Trap.

Magically Treated Ceramic Burial Urn: 1 in. thick; Hardness 5; hp 10; cold and fire resistance 10; Break DC 25.

Trap: Opening or smashing an urn triggers a *wail of the banshee* spell that affects all creatures within a 40-foot-radius spread. An urn can be lifted and moved without activating the trap.

***Wail of the Banshee* Trap**: CR 10; magic device; touch trigger; no reset; spell effect (*wail of the banshee*, caster level 17th, DC 23 Fortitude negates); multiple targets (kills up to 17 creatures); Search DC 34; Disable Device DC 34.

Treasure: Each urn has a 20% chance of containing a valuable item. If the characters smash or search an urn, consult the Shatterhorn Treasure Table to determine what, if anything, they find.

6. BROKEN URNS (EL 10)

This unlit passage contains ten five-foot-deep alcoves. Large ceramic urns occupy eight of the alcoves, and the two remaining alcoves contain shattered urns and sawdust. To the north, the tunnel has collapsed.

This area is similar in all respects to area **5**, including the presence of several *wail of the banshee* traps on the urns. The eight intact burial urns contain the mummified remains of yuan-ti packed in sawdust; these urns are trapped and may contain treasure. The southernmost smashed urn used to contain a yuan-ti mohrg guardian, but Ssythar Nahazir took command of the creature and moved it to area **1**. The western smashed urn wasn't sealed properly and cracked open on its own, spilling its contents onto the floor. Characters searching the refuse find the moldering, desiccated remains of a pureblood yuan-ti priest with no valuables. Five canopic jars containing the dead priest's shriveled vital organs lie amid the remnants of the urn.

7. EMPTY ROOMS

Much of the plaster has broken off the walls here, revealing the black stone underneath. These rooms are otherwise empty. This area might make a suitable redoubt for characters that need to regroup and heal.

8. PREPARATORY CHAMBER

This torchlit chamber contains two oval stone tables with built-in shelves beneath them. The shelves are lined with clay jars and tattered funereal vestments and wrappings. The murals on the walls depict yuan-ti burial rituals: the removal of vital organs, the placement of the organs in clay canopic jars, the mummification of the body, the placement of the remains in a large ceramic urn, and the ritual sealing of the urn.

Yuan-ti priests used the stone tables during mummification rituals. The shelves under the tables hold empty clay canopic jars (for storing vital organs) and black funeral wrappings.

9. SERPENTINE HALL (EL 16)

The four innermost pillars of this chamber bear lit torches in serpentine sconces, and the flickering light casts sinister shadows upon the walls, ceiling, and floor. Some of the pillars are cracked and crumbling, revealing slick black stone beneath the plaster murals. The murals depict masses of writhing snakes and yuan-ti clad in black robes and golden armor.

One of the northwest pillars (marked "S" on the map) bears a mural of a masked pureblood yuan-ti priest (Ssythar Vassha) dressed in black robes and wearing a golden coronet. In one hand the yuan-ti priest clutches a green viper, and the other hand is outstretched and has an eyeball set into its palm. A successful DC 25 Search check reveals that the palm's eye can be depressed. Pressing the eye causes the entire pillar to sink into the floor. The pillar drops 25 feet, revealing a secret vault underneath (area **10**). The pillar stops descending once it becomes flush with the floor of the secret chamber. The top of the pillar contains a visible stone plate; if stepped on, the plate causes the pillar to ascend to the floor level of area **9**. One round later, the pillar rises to the ceiling. Anything atop the pillar when it reaches the ceiling is crushed for 20d6 points of damage (Reflex DC 15 half). Any creature still in area **10** when the pillar rises is effectively trapped there, as there's no way to lower the pillar from within the secret vault.

Alurad Sorizan

Creatures: In addition to the sinking pillar, this hall contains one of the Cagewrights—a blackguard named Alurad Sorizan. Until recently, Alurad spent most of his time disposing of adventurers sent to Cauldron to investigate the trouble there. His morbid fascination with slaughter and evisceration puts off most of the other Cagewrights. He wears a cloak and gloves made of stitched human skin, and he keeps the ripped-out hearts of his victims in his quarters (area **12**). Alurad has shaggy black hair, blood-red tattoo patterns on his face, and the unholy symbol of Erythnul prominently displayed on his shield. Alurad and his fiendish dire badger servant hide behind the two easternmost pillars, ready to leap out and attack the characters when they least expect it.

A strange madness has overcome Alurad Sorizan. He believes he is Adimarchus. If one or more of the characters acquired the Smoking Eye template as a result of completing that adventure, "Adimarchus" senses that they have been to his lost realm and says, "You dare to steal from me? Occipitus is mine, not yours, and so it will always be." He focuses all of his attacks on such characters and orders his fiendish dire badger servant to attack them as well.

Alurad Sorizan, male human cleric 6/fighter 2/blackguard 8 (Erythnul); hp 164; see Appendix 4.

Fleshripper, fiendish dire badger: hp 92; see Appendix 4.

Tactics: Given sufficient preparation time, Alurad quaffs a *potion of extended bear's endurance* (lasts 6 minutes) and a *potion of heroism* (lasts 30 minutes), then casts *freedom of movement* (80 minutes), *bull's strength* (lasts 6 minutes), *shield of faith* (lasts 6 minutes), and *divine favor* (lasts 10 rounds) on himself. The potions and *divine favor* spell modify Alurad's statistics as follows: hp 196; AC 27, touch 13, flat-footed 27; Grp +20; Atk +26 melee (1d10+9/17–20, +1 *bastard sword of mighty cleaving*) or +18 ranged (1d4+8/19–20 plus poison, dagger); Full Atk +26/+21/+16 melee (1d10+9/17–20, +1 *bastard sword of mighty cleaving*) or +18 ranged (1d4+8/19–20 plus poison, dagger); SV Fort +19, Ref +7, Will +14; Str 22, Con 18; Bluff +11, Diplomacy +5, Disguise +3 (+5 acting), Hide +20, Intimidate +11, Knowledge (religion) +6.

Upon confronting foes, Alurad threatens to carve out their hearts and add them to his "altar" (see area **12**). If Fleshripper is killed or Alurad is reduced to 30 or fewer hit points, he flees and hides in area **12**, casting *nondetection* on himself and making his final stand there.

10. SUNKEN VAULT (EL 9)

This unlit fifteen-foot-square room contains four statues in alcoves. The statues depict halfblood yuan-ti warriors with humanoid bodies and serpentine heads. Each statue holds a stone chest in its claws, and the front of each chest is carved with a demonic face.

One can reach this vault via the "sinking pillar" in the chamber above (see area **9** for details). The statues are handsomely carved yet nonmagical. The stone chests are actually part of the statues, but they can be opened and hold the Treasure. All of the chests are fitted with a locking mechanism (Open Lock DC 30), and the southern chest is trapped (see Trap, below).

Stone Yuan-ti Statues: 6 feet tall; Hardness 8; hp 150 (30 for stone chest); Break DC 30 (25 for stone chest).

Trap: Touching the southern chest causes it to expel an *incendiary cloud* spell that fills the room.

***Incendiary Cloud* Trap:** CR 9; magic device; touch trigger; no reset; spell effect (*incendiary cloud*, caster level 15th, 4d6/round for 15 rounds, Reflex DC 22 half); Search DC 33; Disable Device DC 33.

Treasure: The western chest holds 1,500 pp. The northern chest contains ten eye agates (10 gp each), six carnelians (50 gp each), four deep green spinels (100 gp each), four violet garnets (500 gp), two white opals (1,000 gp each), and a *fire elemental gem*. The eastern chest contains 1d4 items rolled randomly on the Shatterhorn Treasure table. The southern chest contains a *serpent's eye* on a green velvet cushion; the *serpent's eye* has 7 charges remaining. The *serpent's eye* is detailed in Appendix 2.

11. STATUE OF SSYTHAR VASSHA (EL 15)

A six-foot-tall black marble statue stands at the end of this fifteen-foot-wide hall, facing west. It depicts a humanoid creature with subtle snakelike features clad in a black robe and wearing a coronet. In one outstretched hand it grasps a viper, and its other outstretched hand has an unblinking eye set into its palm, staring blindly down the passageway. Behind the statue is a five-foot-deep empty alcove.

The statue depicts the pureblood yuan-ti prophet Ssythar Vassha. The statue of Ssythar Vassha is fixed to the floor and cannot be lifted or pushed over without breaking it. However, a successful DC 20 Search check

reveals that the statue stands atop a circular flagstone with built-in rollers that enable the statue to be turned to face any direction. If the statue is turned to face the eastern alcove, the back wall of the alcove rises into the ceiling. This "back wall" is actually a hollowed-out 10-foot-high, 5-foot-wide, 5-foot-thick stone shell. As it rises into the ceiling, it reveals the Creature and area **13** beyond.

Statue of Ssythar Vassha: 6 feet tall; Hardness 8; hp 150; Break DC 30.

Creature: The hollow stone shell that seals off area **13** contains a 9-foot-long crystal snake that's released once the shell rises into the ceiling. The transparent crystal snake is filled with bright energy that illuminates a 15-foot radius and provides shadowy illumination out to a 30-foot radius. Once released, it attacks any non-yuan-ti it encounters.

Crystal Snake: hp 165; see Appendix 1.

12. ALURAD'S CHAMBER

This large chamber has slimy black walls with bits of painted plaster clinging to them. Around the base of the walls lie the broken fragments of murals. Four pieces of furniture rest in the middle of the room: a wooden cot, a monstrous wooden chest with clawlike feet, a table covered with clay jars and lit candles, and a wooden chair draped with skin.

The furnishings belong to the blackguard Alurad Sorizan (see area **9**). The cot is where he sleeps. The wooden chest has a built-in superior lock (Open Lock DC 40) and contains the Treasure. The table holds twelve clay canopic jars splattered with dried blood, each one containing the heart of one of Alurad's past victims. Coupled with the lit candles, the table serves as a morbid altar to Erythnul (the god of slaughter). The flesh draping the chair belongs to a former comrade whom Alurad betrayed, killed, and skinned.

Treasure: Alurad's chest contains trophies taken from victims of his wrath, including an adamantine battleaxe, a +1 *axiomatic scimitar* wrapped in human skin, a +1 *evil outsider bane spiked chain*, a +1 *shocking burst kukri*, four +1 *cold iron arrows*, three +2 *bolts of wounding*, a scroll of *sympathetic vibration*, and a *lesser rod of empower metamagic*.

13. TOMB OF SSYTHAR VASSHA (EL 18)

The walls of this secret vault are painted with murals depicting yuan-ti warriors in golden armor marching toward the east end of the room. Some of the plaster has cracked and fallen away, revealing wet black walls underneath. Two thick pillars support the twenty-foot-high ceiling. Serpentine sconces built into the pillars hold flaming torches.

This tomb was built to hold the remains of Ssythar Vassha, a powerful yuan-ti cleric of Merrshaulk. Several years ago, a half-elf vampire named Mhad, while scouring the dungeon for a suitable lair, stumbled upon this crypt. She removed Vassha's mummified corpse from its resting place, unceremoniously scattered his bones around the base of the sarcophagus, and took it as her own. A small hole chiseled into the lid allows Mhad to enter and leave the sarcophagus in gaseous form. Lifting the lid requires a DC 23 Strength check.

When the Cagewrights arrived at Shatterhorn, they struck up a tenuous alliance with Mhad, inviting her to join their cause. Hunted by powerful enemies and desperately seeking allies, the vampire happily agreed. Recent events in Cauldron have soured Mhad on the alliance, and she has retreated to her crypt to consider other options. Mhad enters and leaves the crypt by assuming gaseous form and slipping through a crack in a wall between area **12** and area **13**, thereby circumventing the crystalline snake that lurks in the hollow pillar between here and area **11**.

Four everburning torches are mounted to the pillars and can be removed easily. They fill the room with flickering orange light and wavering shadows.

Creatures: Unless she was destroyed in Chapter Eight, Mhad is resting inside the sarcophagus, watched over by her undead minions. Mhad's shadow companion floats above the sarcophagus, but as soon as it detects intruders, it sinks into the sarcophagus and wakes its mistress. Mhad is swathed in a black shroud that is, in fact, a dread wraith called Hate. Both the vampire and the dread wraith emerge the following round, while the shadow hides in the sarcophagus (attacking the first creature that peers inside). If Mhad was destroyed in Chapter Eight she and her incorporeal companions are not present.

Mhad, female half-elf vampire monk 9/shadowdancer 4: hp 90; *Monster Manual* 251.

Shadow: hp 19; *Monster Manual* 221.

Hate (dread wraith): hp 104; *Monster Manual* 258.

Tactics: If she has time to rise from her undead slumber, Mhad uses her hide in plain sight ability and crouches atop the sarcophagus, ready to spring into action. She uses Spring Attack to leap forward, strike once with her +2 *keen kama*, and leap back onto the sarcophagus. If her enemies close to within melee range, she attacks with a flurry of unarmed strikes, coupling her first attack with her Stunning Fist feat (Fortitude DC 22 negates) and using the sarcophagus as higher ground (+1 bonus on attack rolls). She can use this feat ten times per day. Against ranged foes, she uses her dominate ability (Will DC 17 negates), her +1 *frost sling*, or her children of the night ability to call up 1d6+1 rat swarms.

Trap: Lifting the sarcophagus lid triggers a trap. Scythelike blades hidden in the sides and seams of the sarcophagus slash madly about, striking any creatures standing in adjacent squares (Reflex DC 24 half). The scythe blades are coated in a supernatural yuan-ti poison that saps all moisture out of living creatures, turning its victims into desiccated husks. The trap resets when the lid is put back into place.

Poisoned Scythe Trap: CR 12; mechanical; location trigger; manual reset (trap resets when lid is replaced); scythe blades (+20 melee, 1d4 blades per target for 2d4+5/×4 plus poison each); poison (DC 24 Fortitude save resists, initial and secondary damage 2d6 Con); Search DC 25; Disable Device DC 25.

Treasure: In addition to her gear, Mhad keeps several items of value in the sarcophagus, hidden in a secret compartment (DC 25 Search check to locate). These items include a *periapt of wound closure*, a *python rod*, a scroll of *blade barrier*, a scroll of *summon monster VII*, a *potion of rage*, a *potion of greater magic fang (+2)*, a coffer containing 260 pp, and 1d4 items from the Shatterhorn Treasures table (see page 68).

14. ILLUSORY PILLARS (EL 18)

Two of the pillars in this hall are illusory, created by *permanent image* spells (caster level 18th). A *true seeing* spell pierces the illusion and reveals the Creatures standing "inside" them. The illusory pillars can also be detected via a thorough inspection of the pillars (Will DC 23 disbelief).

Creatures: Two half-iron golems stand within the illusory pillars, stepping out to attack characters who enter areas 15 or 16. The Cagewrights experimented on two half-orc fighters, promising them great power. Instead, they joined iron plates and metal limbs to their flesh and transformed them into obedient constructs.

Krojen and Tyrrx, male half-iron-golem half-orc fighter 13: hp 129, 113; see Appendix 4.

15. SECRET MANSION (EL 18)

The north and south walls of this room are carved with two-foot-high niches, two per wall. A one-foot-tall gold statuette of a yuan-ti abomination stands in each niche. An eight-foot-diameter, semicircular stone basin emerges from the eastern wall opposite the doorway, its sides carved with serpentine engravings. Water pours out of a stone snake's head carved above the basin, filling it.

The basin once served as a yuan-ti bath. A drain at the bottom of the basin allows the water to bleed away, and a *decanter of endless* water embedded in the wall provides a steady water supply. The gold statuettes are described under Treasure, below. Characters who can see invisible objects or have *true seeing* see a shimmering portal, 4 feet wide and 8 feet high, in the middle of the room. The portal is the hidden doorway to a *Mordenkainen's magnificent mansion* spell, but the characters can't pass through it. Xokek, the shadar-kai Cagewright, has sealed himself and two death slaadi inside the mansion. If the mansion is successfully dispelled, Xokek and the slaadi appear instantly in the middle of the room.

Xokek

Creatures: Xokek hates the world and everyone in it. He struggles with the same shadow curse that afflicts all shadar-kai (who are also known as "shadow fey"). Xokek joined the Cagewrights because their apocalyptic vision of a world enslaved by the fiendish hordes appealed to him, and he quickly became a member of the "inner circle" by demonstrating his glaring misanthropy and subtle guile. He remains locked away in his *Mordenkainen's magnificent mansion* and has forbidden entry to all others except his two death slaad companions, who assume the forms of shadar-kai monks.

Xokek, like all shadar-kai, is a graceful, stealthy fey with gray skin and black eyes. He stands slightly over 5 feet tall, has long black hair, and wears dark clothing that seems to pull the shadows around him. The death slaadi appear as unarmed shadar-kai wearing body-tight black leather.

Xokek, male shadar-kai wizard (illusionist) 13/rogue 2: hp 71; see Appendix 4.

Death Slaadi (2): hp 142 each; *Monster Manual* 231.

Tactics: The slaadi stand between Xokek and his enemies. They rely on their natural attacks, stun ability, and potent spell-like abilities, and if one slaad dies, the other uses its summon slaad ability to bring forth reinforcements (1–2 blue slaadi, 60% chance of success). Meanwhile, Xokek uses his hide in plain sight ability while casting silent *haste* and silent *shadow puppeteer* (in that order), followed by *shadow dagger*. He looks for opportunities to flank opponents and make sneak attacks using his *shadow dagger*. Xokek relies on his *major cloak of displacement* to protect him from attacks and uses *teleport* to escape if reduced to 6 or fewer hit points.

Treasure: The four niches each contain a solid gold statuette of a ruby-eyed, serpent-bodied yuan-ti

abomination wielding a pair of scimitars or a longbow. Each statuette is worth 1,500 gp. Digging the *decanter of endless* water out of the wall requires 10 minutes of work, or a spell like *stone shape*.

16. SERPENT SENTINEL (EL 5)

This room is empty except for the serpentine wall murals, pieces of netting in the corners, and iron hooks jutting from the ceiling. A sinister, serpent-like hissing begins as soon as a living creature approaches within twenty feet of this room. This room apparently once served as sleeping quarters for the yuan-ti priests. They used to hang hammock nets from the ceiling hooks, and a few traces of their old hammocks lie strewn in the corners.

Trap: A permanent *serpent sentinel* spell (caster level 18th) has been cast in the middle 5-foot square of this room. The *serpent sentinel* spell is similar in all respects to the *Mordenkainen's faithful hound* spell, except that it manifests as a hissing serpent instead of a barking dog.

17. SLITHERING HALL

This fifteen-foot-wide hall stretches from east to west. The plaster wall murals have broken away in places, revealing slimy black stone beyond. Most of the murals show yuan-ti engaging in morbid rituals or hunting humans in the forest. One particularly graphic mural along the southern wall depicts a twenty-five-foot-long serpent with maroon scales, a pair of arms, and the vague shape of a human torso. In place of a head, six long serpents project from the top of its torso. Yuan-ti priests wearing black robes and golden masks genuflect before the horrid abomination. Wrapped in the creature's coils are several human sacrifices.

The large mural on the south wall depicts a yuan-ti anathema, revered by the yuan-ti as an incarnation of their deity (see *Fiend Folio*, page 193). The eastern end of the hall has collapsed, and the western end holds a pair of heavy iron portcullises (see area **19**).

18. CAGEWRIGHTS' QUARTERS

This torchlit room contains four beds draped with blankets and furs. The west, north, and east walls each bear a mural depicting a loathsome serpent with a black body banded in swaths of bright crimson, its head vaguely human, with stringy hair and yellow fangs.

Four of the resident Cagewrights (Nahazir, Kyan, Viirdran, and Embril) use this room as sleeping quarters, as well as a place to meditate or prepare spells.

The wall murals depict three spirit nagas, and each one radiates magic. Any creature that touches a naga mural as a standard action gains the benefits of a particular spell (caster level 9th): *invisibility* (west mural), *cure light wounds* (north mural), and *shield of faith* (east mural). Each mural can be used seven times per day. Destroying or defacing a mural (Hardness 2; hp 5) also destroys its magical property.

Development: If Ssythar Nahazir fled from area **1**, he can be found here. He uses the northern mural to heal himself, then uses the other murals as needed. If she survived Chapter Eight, Thifirane Rhiavadi is here as well.

19. PORTCULLISES

A heavy iron portcullis blocks this archway. A stone lever juts from the wall of an adjacent alcove, and pulling up on the lever raises the portcullis. The stone lever is too heavy for a *mage hand* spell to move, but an *unseen servant* or *telekinesis* works. A creature with more than a 5-foot reach can also lift the lever from the south side of the portcullis, but squeezing an arm through the bars to reach the lever requires a successful DC 30 Escape Artist check.

Iron Portcullis: 2 in. thick; Hardness 10; hp 60; Lift DC 25; Break DC 25.

20. TEMPLE OF MERRSHAULK (EL 18)

This is some sort of temple, its walls covered with murals of gigantic, entwined black and gold snakes, its ceiling thirty feet high. A ten-foot-high stone balcony clings to the north wall and overlooks the rest of the chamber. Flanking the balcony are two stone braziers carved with serpentine motifs. To the south, between several thick pillars, rests a six-foot-wide, nine-foot-tall black stone egg carved with strange runes. The egg rests atop a two-foot-high stone base shaped like a claw, holding the egg in place.

An *unhallow* spell (caster level 9th) wards this chamber and area **21** above. Creatures in the room gain the benefits of *magic circle against good*. All turning checks made to turn undead take a –4 penalty, and turning checks to rebuke undead gain a +4 profane bonus (spell resistance does not apply to this effect). Evil creatures in the area also gain the benefit of a *freedom of movement* spell.

The black egg is a magically treated, 8,000-pound stone ovoid called the *Egg of Merrshaulk*. The runes etched across its surface grant magical powers to anyone who traces them (caster level 20th). The egg bears ten runes in all, and tracing a rune (a full-round action) causes it to glow for 6 hours, during which time the rune's power cannot be invoked again. Each rune bestows a different spell-like effect upon the tracer, as noted on the Runes of the *Egg of Merrshaulk* table.

The Cagewrights in the temple (see Creatures, below) may avail themselves of the egg's powers. If they hear enemies approaching, they trace one or more of the runes to gain their power (in addition to preparing spells).

Runes of the Egg of Merrshaulk

Rune	Rune Name	Spell	Effect (Duration)
1	Arrythar	*Death ward*	Immunity to death spells and negative energy (1d6 hours)
2	Dessath	*Spell resistance*	Spell resistance 32 (1d6 hours)
3	Fyrraess	*Resist energy*	Resistance to acid 30 (1d6 hours)
4	Kjaras-eth	*True seeing*	True seeing (1d6 hours)
5	Mhavaess	*Resist energy*	Resistance to electricity 30 (1d6 hours)
6	Thysstrune	*Stoneskin*	Damage reduction 10/adamantine (1d6 hours)
7	Uraess	*Resist energy*	Resistance to fire 30 (1d6 hours)
8	Vasshaess	*Greater teleport*	Tracer teleported into the egg; Will DC 22 negates (instantaneous)
9	Yutharaess	*Resist energy*	Resistance to cold 30 (1d6 hours)
10	Z'thareth	*Heal*	Heals up to 150 hp (instantaneous)

The walls south of the black egg are adorned with life-sized murals depicting pureblood yuan-ti priests wearing black veils and clutching silver staffs shaped like coiled serpents. One of the southernmost pillars contains a secret door leading to a 5-foot-wide, 20-foot shaft with a stone ladder (see Dungeon Features for more information). The ladder climbs 10 feet to area **21**.

Creatures: Two Cagewrights and two farastu demodands can be found here. The first Cagewright is an elf arcane archer named Kyan Winterstrike, and she stands next to the *Egg of Merrshaulk*. The other, a dark elf eldritch knight named Viirdran Daraqor, stands on the balcony. A few months ago, they were bitter rivals, and now, inexplicably, they are madly in love with one another. The other surviving Cagewrights speculate that Kyan's and Viirdran's apparent insanity may have something to do with the *Egg of Merrshaulk*, when in fact they have been touched by the madness of Adimarchus. The farastus lurk in the south end of the room, behind the pillars, but emerge to attack when intruders appear.

Kyan Winterstrike

Kyan has jade green eyes and long, midnight-blue hair held back by an ornate silver headdress. She is otherwise the typical, pale-skinned elven beauty. Viirdran has the black skin, white hair, and sinister bearing common to all drow. His eyes flicker and flash like lightning, and he wears tight-fitting black clothing with weblike patterns. He moves with the dark grace of a hunting spider.

Kyan's statistics assume she has had time to drink her *potion of barkskin +5* and to cast *shield* and *expeditious retreat*. Likewise, Viirdran's stats assume he has had time to drink his *potion of barkskin +3* and *potion of bear's endurance*, and to cast *mage armor*, *shield*, and *fox's cunning*.

Kyan Winterstrike, female elf wizard 1/fighter 6/arcane archer 8: hp 75; see Appendix 4.

Viirdran Daraqor, male drow fighter 7/evoker 5/eldritch knight 3: hp 78 (108 with *bear's endurance*); see Appendix 4.

Farastu Demodands (2): hp 80, 74; see Appendix 4.

Tactics: If alerted to the presence of intruders, Kyan and Viirdran trigger the runes on the *Egg of Merrshaulk* to gain various defensive benefits. If pressed for time, Kyan drinks her *potion of barkskin +5* (lasts 120 minutes) and casts *expeditious retreat* (lasts 10 rounds) and *shield* (lasts 10 rounds). She stays behind Viirdran, peppering foes with arrows while he engages in melee. Against large numbers of foes, she uses her hail of arrows ability. If things turn sour, she uses her *lesser amulet of the planes* to *plane shift* to Skullrot, on the first layer of Carceri. She gambles that the characters won't pursue her.

At the first sign of trouble, Viirdran casts *mage armor* on himself (lasts 5 hours), followed by *protection from energy* (fire; lasts 50 minutes), *shield* (lasts 5 minutes) and *fox's cunning* (lasts 5 minutes). Finally, he drinks his *potion of barkskin +3* (lasts 60 minutes) and *potion of bear's endurance* (lasts 3 minutes). During the first round of combat, he casts *haste* (lasts 5 rounds; affects up to five creatures), then draws his adamantine rapier and leaps into battle. He uses his cold iron rapier instead against any obvious fey or demonic targets. He uses his Mobility feat to increase his AC by +5, taking a –5 penalty on attack rolls. Like Kyan, he flees to Carceri if things go badly.

As soon as foes are detected, the farastus try to summon more demodands (1d4 farastus; 30% chance of success). Whether their attempts fail or succeed, they and any other farastus that appear attack the following round and fight until slain. The Cagewrights pull back to give the demodands room to fight, if necessary.

Trap: The "vasshaess" rune carved into the *Egg of Merrshaulk* is part of a trap. Any Medium or smaller creature tracing the rune is instantly teleported inside the egg (Will DC 22 negates). The egg is hollow and filled with flesh-eating acid. Any creature trapped inside takes 10d6 acid damage per round, and may start to drown. The egg can be smashed open, although doing so disgorges the acid within, spilling it across the floor; any creature standing on the floor within 15 feet of the smashed egg takes 1d6 points of acid damage (Reflex DC 15 half). The acid drains away through cracks in the floor after 1 round. If the black egg is broken, it loses its magical properties.

The egg traps one creature at a time, during which the "vasshaess" rune glows and remains inactive. While the other runes become inert for 6 hours after use, the "vasshaess" stops glowing as soon as the creature trapped inside the egg dies and liquefies.

***Egg of Merrshaulk*:** CR 12; magical; touch trigger; automatic reset; teleportation (Will DC 22 negates) into acid (10d6 acid per round); Search DC 34; Disable Device DC 34; Hardness 16; hp 180; Break DC 39.

Development: If Kyan or Viirdran is killed or incapacitated, the other cries out, "I will avenge you, my love! Our salvation waits for us in Carceri!" He or she then flees to Skullrot on Carceri, using a *lesser amulet of the planes*. If the characters pursue the fleeing Cagewright, proceed with Chapter Twelve.

Viirdran Daraqor

21. EMBRIL'S JAR (EL 20)

The murals that adorn the walls of this irregularly shaped room depict scenes of yuan-ti engaging in carnal pleasures and offering sacrifices to an aspect of their dread god, who appears as an enormous serpent with multiple heads—some vaguely humanoid, others snakelike. A human woman lies atop a black crystal slab in the middle of the room. An enigmatic figure looms above her—a scrawny white-skinned humanoid dressed in black robes, with a vaguely bird-like face, large dark eyes, a long neck, and six spindly arms. It waves its arms over the woman, as though unleashing some invocation.

An *unhallow* spell (caster level 9th) wards this chamber and area 20 below. Creatures in the room gain the benefits of *magic circle against good*. All turning checks made to turn undead take a –4 penalty, and turning checks to rebuke undead gain a +4 profane bonus (spell resistance does not apply to this effect). Evil creatures in the area also gain the benefit of a *freedom of movement* spell.

One of the alcoves contains a stone ladder descending a 5-foot-wide, 10-foot-deep shaft to area 20. A secret door in the northwest alcove conceals a passage leading to area 22.

Creatures: The three ceramic urns contain the mummified remains of three yuan-ti pureblood clerics, their desiccated remains suspended in sawdust, their organs placed in clay canopic jars at the bottom of each urn.

The figure lying on the slab is Embril Aloustinai, a raven-haired beauty. Embril is not dead, but she has transferred her life force into a black *magic jar* gem clutched to her chest. The enigmatic six-armed figure standing next to her is a spell weaver that Embril recently resurrected. Normally, spell weavers do not associate or communicate with other races, but this particular spell weaver feels obliged to help Embril realize her plan to free Adimarchus from Carceri, as deranged and malevolent as that plan might seem. The spell weaver communicates with Embril via telepathy.

Hidden inside the ceramic burial urns are three greater shadows, one per urn, all under Embril's command. They emerge if Embril's soulless body or the spell weaver is attacked.

Embril intends to prove her devotion to Nerull with a worthy sacrifice; in her madness, she believes that a suitable sacrifice will allow her to commune with

Nerull, unlock the secret of escaping Carceri, and use this knowledge to free Adimarchus from the prison plane. She intends to take over a character's body, thus trapping the character's life force in the *magic jar* receptacle. She then *plane shifts* to Carceri with the *magic jar* gem and her body, where she waits for a representative of Nerull to arrive and claim the character's soul. Embril does not keep a familiar, as she sees them as more a liability than a benefit to her safety. The spell weaver harbors secret doubts that Embril's plan will succeed, but it uses a *mind blank* spell to conceal such thoughts from Embril and others.

Embril Aloustinai, female human wizard 5/cleric 9/mystic theurge 5 (Nerull): hp 66; see Appendix 4.

Advanced spell weaver: hp 86; see Appendix 4.

Greater Shadows (3): hp 58 each; *Monster Manual* 221.

Tactics: Embril's life force can remain inside the *magic jar* gem for up to 10 hours. While her soul is confined to the *magic jar* gem, Embril senses all living creatures within 100 feet (provided they are within line of sight of the gem); she can tell these life forces apart from the spell weaver's as it has a *protection from evil* spell in effect, which protects it from *magic jar* and other attempts at possession. As soon as she notices them, Embril tries to possess one of the characters as a full-round action. If the attempt fails, she tries to possess a different character the following round. Once she succeeds in taking a host body, Embril uses the possessed body to scoop up her own body and the *magic jar* gem it clutches (a move action) and then uses *plane shift* to travel to Carceri with them.

The greater shadows gang up on one foe, hoping to take down that character quickly. The *unhallow* effect makes them harder to turn.

A cautious creature, the spell weaver has cast *mind blank* as well as *protection from evil* to shield itself against Embril's *magic jar* spell. It guards Embril's body until she successfully possesses one of the characters, at which point it gives her the focus she needs to cast her *plane shift* spell (a forked metal rod). Once she vanishes, the spell weaver continues to fight the PCs as long as it looks like they don't have the upper hand in combat; if they do, it *teleports* away to safety.

Treasure: Each of the ceramic burial urns contains a valuable item, determined by rolling on the Shatterhorn Treasure Table. Embril's replica *Leomund's secret chest* can be used to recall the actual chest from the Ethereal Plane; the larger chest is worth 5,000 gp and is trapped. It contains a scroll of *cone of cold* (caster level 10th), a scroll of *heal* (caster level 14th), a *wand of cure moderate wounds* (24 charges), Embril's spellbook, and a *tome of understanding +1*.

Trap: Embril's secret chest has a *greater glyph of warding* placed on it (caster level 14th) that triggers a *slay living* spell if anyone other than Embril opens it.

Greater Glyph of Warding: CR 7; spell; spell trigger; no reset; spell effect (*slay living*, 14th-level cleric, death,

DC 20 Fort save for 3d6+14 damage); Search DC 31, Disable Device DC 31.

Development: If Embril escapes to Carceri with her body and the *magic jar* gem containing the character's life essence, she arrives on Carceri and casts *commune* to contact Nerull and alert him that she has a soul for him in return for the key to releasing Adimarchus. She then waits for Nerull or one of his minions to come for the captured soul; she doesn't have long to wait. Nerull accepts her offering, but does not fulfill her desires completely. Rather than return to the Material Plane, Embril decides to use her *greater scrying* spell to seek out Adimarchus and *teleports* to his Carcerian prison, an asylum called Skullrot, only to be captured by the asylum's lichfiend warden.

Characters wishing to rescue their abducted comrade must travel to Carceri as detailed in Chapter Twelve. Until the missing character's body is recovered, you should allow that player to take on the role of a cohort, or perhaps one of their other allies from the region (such as one of the Striders of Fharlanghn, Jenya, or Nidrama). Of course, once their missing companion is dead, *true resurrection* can be used to bring him back to life even though his body and soul are on Carceri. In this case, Nerull considers the theft of Embril's gift an affront, and sends a marut after the *resurrected* character within 24 hours to punish him for his escape.

Marut: hp 112; *Monster Manual* 159.

22. CRUSHING WALLS (EL 10)

No decorative murals adorn this narrow tunnel, which wends through the black rock and curves off into darkness.

This 5-foot-wide hall joins areas **1** and **21**, and a Trap has been placed here to crush the unwary. Pulling down a stone lever east of the trap deactivates it and allows for safe passage through the tunnel.

Trap: Two large blocks of stone are set into the walls of the tunnel 25 feet from the secret door leading to area **1**. Any creature that passes between the blocks—whether walking, climbing, jumping, or flying—causes them to smash together. Seconds later, the blocks retract into the walls, ready to crush the next creature that passes between them.

Crushing Walls Trap: CR 10; mechanical; proximity trigger (alarm); automatic reset; lever bypass; no attack roll required (18d6, crush, Reflex DC 23 half); Search DC 25; Disable Device DC 27.

BEHIND THE SCENES: STRIKE ON SHATTERHORN

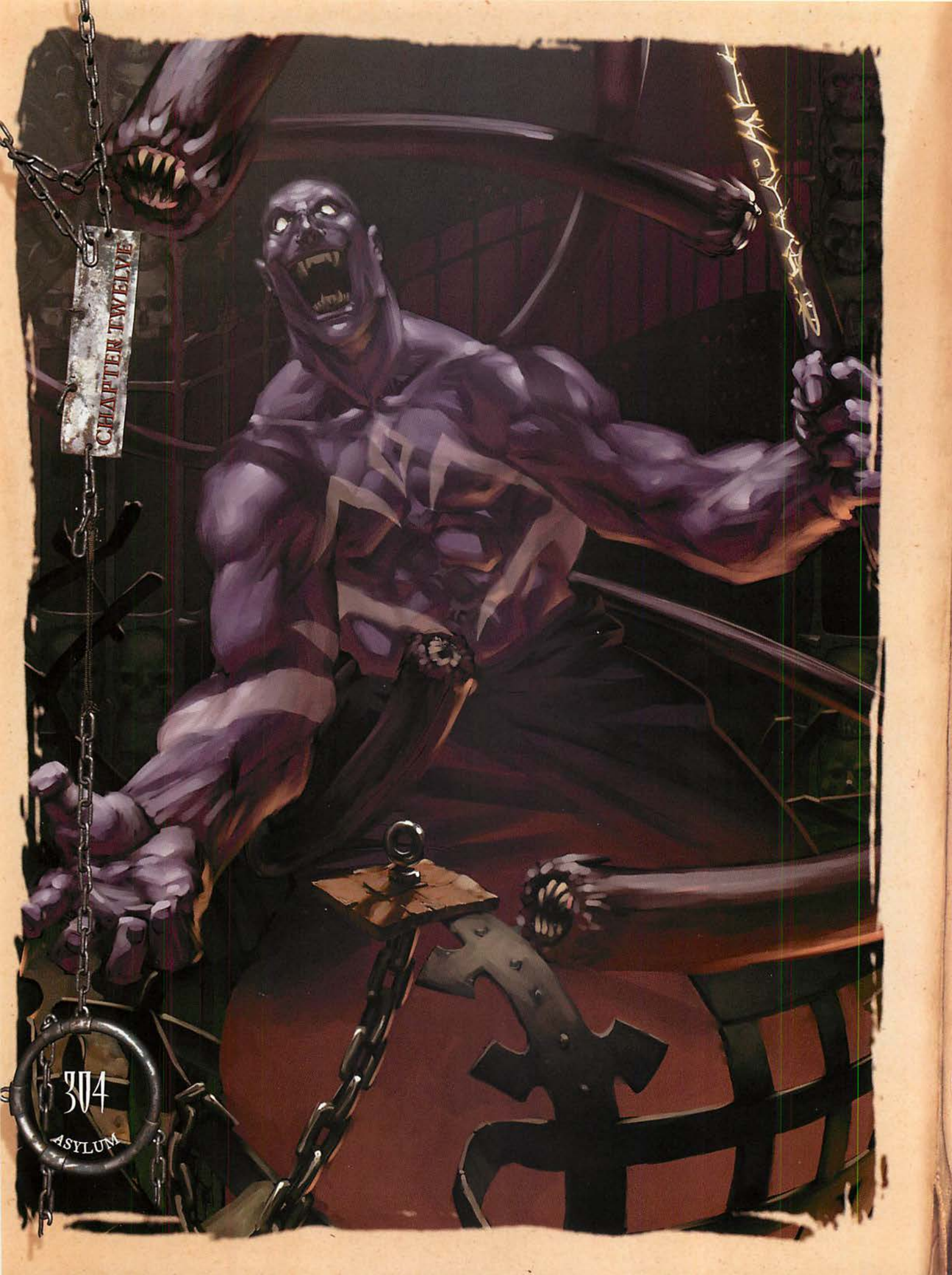
As this chapter progresses, Adimarchus's dreams gain power. Although the PCs prevented the formation of the link between the Material Plane and Carceri, the link was open long enough to augment the sleeping demon's tormented dreams. After 50 years of imprisonment, Adimarcus's cage is beginning to fail.

CONCLUDING THE CHAPTER

This chapter concludes as the PCs defeat the final Cagewright in the ruins below the ancient yuan-ti fortress. Of course, some of the Cagewrights may flee to Carceri, but as long as at least three of them are slain, the blow is enough to ruin the organization.

Yet there remains one final enemy to overcome: Adimarchus himself. The fallen angel (now an insane demon prince) is still imprisoned in Skullrot, a massive asylum built of skulls and located on Carceri. If she escaped to Carceri, Embril still has a chance to free Adimarchus, but even if she doesn't the steps the Cagewrights have taken have weakened his bonds. Very soon, he'll escape from Carceri, return to the realm of Occipitus on the Abyss, and quickly re-establish his empire and avenge his long imprisonment on those responsible. The PCs may well be at the front of this list, simply for their involvement in the destruction of his Cagewrights.

Even if Embril still lives, the PCs should have some time to relax before the final chapter of the Shackled City Adventure Path begins. Carceri is a dangerous place; even the most powerful heroes should take care to prepare before approaching the Asylum of Skullrot!


CHAPTER TWELVE

CHAPTER TWELVE

ASYLUM

BY CHRISTOPHER PERKINS

The Cagewrights are defeated. The *Tree of Shackled Souls* is no more. Lord Vhalantru has been exposed and put down for the menace he truly was. The town of Cauldron has been saved from volcanic apocalypse. The heroes of Cauldron have earned their place in history, and more than deserve a time of rest, yet fate is not so kind. For the true menace behind the curtain still lives. As long as Adimarchus, the demon prince of madness, continues to dream his haunted dreams and writhe away the years in torment in the fiendish asylum of Skullrot, Cauldron can never truly be safe.

If any of the Cagewrights fled to Carceri during "Strike on Shatterhorn," they are invariably drawn to the asylum and to Adimarchus. The warden of Skullrot, however, quickly overcomes them, infects them with his touch of insanity, and locks them away for all time (see area 9 of Skullrot for details)—an ironic fate, to be sure. Dark Myrakul takes exception to anyone who comes to Skullrot seeking to harm or free one of his "guests," and he doesn't give up his prisoners for any price. The PCs may encounter them as gibbering shells or even as caged zombies, but they have nothing to fear from these Cagewrights now.

The one exception is Embril Aloustinai. If she escaped to Carceri with a character's soul in her *magic jar* gem, she uses *commune* to contact Nerull and alerts him that she has a soul to trade for Adimarchus's release. Unfortunately for Embril, Nerull doesn't intend to fully honor this bargain. He sends one of his favored minions to collect on the soul and tells Embril that only the Smoking Eye can free Adimarchus. If any of the PCs has this template, Embril becomes obsessed with capturing that PC and bringing him to Adimarchus's prison. She returns to the Material Plane and tracks that PC down, intending to abduct him as well.

SPAWN OF MADNESS

In the previous chapter, the PCs defeated the last of the Cagewrights in their secret lair under the ruined yuan-ti stronghold of Shatterhorn. The PCs may have their own reasons for traveling to Carceri after finishing this adventure; some of the Cagewrights may have fled to the prison plane, and if the PCs are particularly unlucky, one of the Cagewrights may have escaped to Carceri with a PC's soul!

If, on the other hand, the PCs managed to defeat the Cagewrights completely, they may not immediately have a reason to venture to Carceri. Likewise, if you're playing "Asylum" as a stand-alone adventure, you'll need other reasons to send the PCs into Orthrys, the first layer of Carceri and the realm in which this adventure takes place.

Give the PCs some time to relax and recuperate after their adventures. They may wish to craft magic items, research spells, or aid in the reconstruction of Cauldron. If they're lower than 19th level, you should consider running them on a short side adventure or two first, so they'll be ready for the challenges ahead.

EVENT 48. SMOKING EYES (EL 21)

In Chapter Eight the PCs defeated one of the primary villains in the Shackled City campaign, the beholder Vhalantru, who had infused his body and soul with the spirit of a shator demodand shortly before the climactic battle with the PCs. Vhalantru was most likely slain in this battle, but his mind, like those of the Cagewrights, had been touched by Adimarchus's insanity. The loss of the beholder, and thus the loss of control of Cauldron, was the first in a series of disastrous events for Adimarchus that ultimately led to the Cagewrights' downfall and the failure of the ritual of planar junction that should have opened a permanent portal between Cauldron and Skullrot. Adimarchus's rage at this loss sent out a powerful wave of insanity into his one-time realm of Occipitus on the Abyss, which reacted immediately by creating a magical duplicate of the slain beholder and infusing it with raw power and Abyssal might.

For some time, the reborn Vhalantru wrestled with confusion and madness. He could not comprehend how he had been destroyed by a band of adventurers, nor did he fully understand how he had come to be in this alien realm. Had his thoughts been entirely his own,

STARTING THE CHAPTER: ASYLUM

The average party level should be 19 before you begin this chapter. Alternately, you can start this chapter as soon as the PCs choose to travel to Carceri, possibly in pursuit of a fleeing Cagewright. In this case, you should run event 48 at some point between now and the end of the campaign, such as when the PCs return to the Material Plane to recover from their ordeal on Carceri.

Vhalantru could have become the new ruler of this Abyssal layer, yet his already questionable sanity had been shattered. Memories of his defeat at the PCs' hands seethed and tore at him, and he turned all his power and might toward revenge.

It wasn't long before he realized he had also gained some control over the very chaos and evil of Occipitus. Having been "born" of the realm, he had gained the Sign of the Smoking Eye, a guttering flame where his central eye had been. Using these powers, he began to dominate Occipitus and bend it to his will. Before long, he encountered one of the realm's most tragic inhabitants, the fallen astral deva Saureya. It took the beholder several days to break through Saureya's cynicism and lingering tatters of purity, but eventually his ministrations bent the fallen angel to his will and the fallen celestial agreed to use *plane shift* to send Vhalantru back to the Material Plane.

Creature: Vhalantru is, in many ways, a fragment of the beholder he once was. His scheming brilliance, his gift for deception, and his long-term goals are gone, replaced by a relentless urge to destroy the PCs and avenge his defeat. *Plane shift* doesn't send creatures exactly to where they want to go, so it takes Vhalantru some time to return to Cauldron. When he arrives, though, he wastes no time. He's unsure of where the PCs are, but figures that they remain Cauldron's heroes. If Cauldron was destroyed in "Thirteen Cages" his rage builds greater; he may have been evil, but Cauldron was his home too, and he blames its ruin on the PCs.

Vhalantru knows the region well, and it shouldn't take him long to find the refugees. Once he does, he begins a frothing frenzy of destruction, charming citizens and setting them against each other in battle, disintegrating building supports, hurling burning timbers with telekinesis, and killing and petrifying anyone who tries to get in his way. As he does, he roars out the PCs' names amidst a storm of curses and sputtering epithets. Vhalantru's attack should occur when the PCs are together and nearby; they should hear of his assault soon after it begins. Practical PCs might take the time to cast preparatory spells; compassionate characters probably rush to fight the beholder immediately to prevent it from hurting more innocents. If you find the PCs are taking too long to prepare their spells (more than a minute is certainly too long), feel free to have Vhalantru discover where they are (perhaps from charmed townsfolk) and bring the fight to them.

If the PCs respond to his challenge, the beholder roars in rage as he notices them and attacks. If they ignore him, Vhalantru can do an amazing amount of damage before he is eventually slain. But killing the beholder won't solve the problem forever.

Vhalantru is now a 16-foot-diameter bloated sphere of red pulsating leathery flesh covered with tiny spines and dull chitinous plates. His central eye has been replaced by a ball of flame that gives off no heat and does not burn the surrounding flesh. Plumes of bitter smoke leak upward from the burning socket, yet the eye still functions as normal. Although his Abyssal rebirth has significantly increased his size and strength, Vhalantru should still be readily recognizable to PCs that have encountered him before.

Vhalantru, Smoking Eye fiendish advanced beholder: hp 346; see Appendix 4.

Tactics: As Vhalantru's attack can occur anywhere, no maps are provided for this encounter. Vhalantru's attention shifts to the PCs once they arrive. Remember that he knows the PCs and their capabilities quite well. He tries to keep spellcasters in the zone of his antimagic eye, uses his charm monster, charm per-

son, fear, inflict moderate wounds, sleep, and slow eye rays on fighters and other characters with good Fortitude saves, and uses his finger of death, flesh to stone, and disintegrate eyes on others. If a PC seems to be particularly efficient at damaging him with a weapon, he'll use his telekinesis eye to attempt to disarm the character. Vhalantru knows that if he dies, he'll soon be reborn on Occipitus, and thus fights to the death without fear. Nevertheless, he fights using his Combat Expertise feat to full effect in order to maximize his time on the Material Plane.

Development: Vhalantru is a formidable opponent; if the PCs are having a tough time with him, you should consider augmenting their strength with other powerful local NPCs like Jenya Urikas or Nidrama. You should also consider running them through another adventure before running the rest of "Asylum." If the PCs can't handle Vhalantru, they'll have a tough time with what awaits them on Carceri.

If Vhalantru is slain, his body vanishes in 33 rounds, reappearing dead but intact on Occipitus. If Adimarchus still lives, it is only a few weeks before another surge of the demon prince's insanity reaches Occipitus and restores the beholder to life, at which point he begins his quest for revenge against the PCs again. Quick-thinking PCs can use spells like *dimensional anchor* or *dimensional lock* to prevent the body from returning to Occipitus for as long as the spell lasts. Simply destroying the body before it returns does not stop the death-to-life cycle.

Even if the PCs manage to permanently prevent Vhalantru's body from returning to Occipitus to be reborn, they'll have only gained a small reprieve. Adimarchus's insanity simply targets other villains and minions. In time, the PCs could find themselves facing reborn Cagewrights or any other villains from the Shackled City Adventure Path like Hookface, Tongueater, or Kaurophon. Only by destroying Adimarchus can this destructive cycle be broken.

THE FINAL ENEMY REVEALED

With the reborn Vhalantru put down (even if temporarily), the PCs should realize that something still remains of the Cagewright menace. Unfortunately, no one on the Material Plane can provide further information. The PCs must turn to divination magic to learn more. If none of the PCs can cast spells like *divination*, *commune*, or *contact other plane*, Jenya Urikas, local high priestess of St. Cuthbert, can intervene with a *commune* spell.

You should use the results of these divination spells to steer the PCs toward Carceri. The one thing that they shouldn't discover as the result of these spells, though, is Skullrot's exact location. In order to prevent Adimarchus's release, Graz'zt went through great effort to imbue the asylum with wards and protection against discovery via magic. Although the

Nidrama

deities themselves may know of its location, mere mortal magic such as *commune* or *discern location* cannot provide information about Skullrot other than that it is located on the first layer of Carceri—Orthrys.

Listed below are key pieces of information you should strive to provide the PCs with when they begin researching the situation; this information may come about as the result of multiple spells, but if the PCs ask intelligent questions, you should make sure to reward them with the following points.

- Adimarchus is the true enemy—the driving force behind the Cagewrights. His name had been hidden from magic and divination for the past 50 years, but the defeat of his favored minions (the Cagewrights) has weakened these restraints.
- Adimarchus is imprisoned in Skullrot, a mighty asylum hidden somewhere on the first layer of Carceri (Orthrys). The exact location of this asylum remains hidden from magic.
- The defeat of the Cagewrights has driven Adimarchus's insanity to new levels of power; his madness can now "leak" out of his asylum to be funneled into his one-time lair of Occipitus (the 507th layer of the Abyss). Given enough time, these "insanity leaks" can engineer a method of releasing him.
- Vhalantru's *resurrection* is a direct result of Adimarchus's insanity working on the malleable features of Occipitus. As long as Adimarchus exists, his insanity can infinitely re-create the beholder (and possibly other enemies) from the raw stuff of Occipitus.
- Although Skullrot's location on Orthrys cannot be divined by magic, it can be learned through physical means. Unfortunately, those few who know the way to Skullrot are imprisoned on Orthrys already. To discover Skullrot's location, one must travel to Orthrys and learn the way from one of those imprisoned there.

EVENT 49: UNEXPECTED ASSISTANCE (EL 16)

Before the PCs leave for Carceri, they are contacted by someone they might have forgotten—Nidrama, the angelic guardian of the Cauldron region. Vhalantru's assault on the PCs and the Cauldron refugees did not go unnoticed by Nidrama, but as has happened many times before, ancient (and as Nidrama is fond of saying, outdated) strictures and rules governing celestial intervention in mortal affairs prevented her from stepping in to provide aid. She took a risk in attempting to aid the PCs before, to the great displeasure of her superiors. With the reborn Vhalantru's attack, Nidrama has finally had enough and decides to throw in her lot with the PCs.

Creature: Nidrama is a movanic deva, one of many angels charged with observing and representing the needs of the Positive Energy Plane, the Negative Energy Plane, and the Material Plane. Nidrama's charge is the region surrounding Cauldron. She observed the transformation of the spell weaver city into the Demonskar, the fall of the yuan-ti empire around Shatterhorn, the ruin of Kyuss' Spire of Long Shadows, and the demise of the powerful frost giant Jarl Khurok. And recently, she observed the rise in power of the Cagewrights and their destruction by the PCs.

Nidrama has perfectly white skin and stern, sparkling silver eyes. A pair of feathered wings spreads out behind her back and she wields a flaming greatsword. Although not very tough compared to the heroes, she comes with an array of useful spell-like abilities and some knowledge of the planes, and can provide welcome support to the characters during their travels and exploration of Carceri.

Nidrama presents herself to the PCs not long after they decide they must travel to Carceri to finish off Adimarchus, begging their understanding for her delay in coming to Cauldron's aid and offering her skills and sword to them in any way they need to further their chances against the prisoner of Skullrot. If the PCs include obviously evil characters, Nidrama still offers her services to the PCs as long as the predominant party alignment is good or neutral, but she keeps an eye on evil characters and does her best to treat them fairly and honorably in an attempt to teach them the error of their ways without preaching to them. If the majority of the party is evil, you may

wish to replace Nidrama with a different outsider the PCs may have encountered in the past who nonetheless would like to see Adimarchus defeated. One likely alternate is Aushanna, the erinyes guardian of the shrine to the Sea Mother.

Since her encounter with the PCs some time ago, Nidrama has known in her heart that she would eventually go against the will of her superiors and ignore celestial law to aid the PCs in whatever way she could. To prepare for this event, she has spent the intervening time training and honing her skills; although she is still a fair bit less powerful than the PCs, she is quite a bit more powerful than she was during their last meeting. One unfortunate (although by no means unforeseen by Nidrama) result of her rebellion against celestial law is the fact that she is now a fallen deva, and no longer has the direct support of the celestial host. She has lost several of her spell-like abilities and her protective aura special quality as a result, and her weapons are not automatically treated as good-aligned for the purpose of overcoming damage reduction. Nevertheless, her ability to cast *aid*, *death ward*, and *prayer* at will makes her an invaluable ally.

Nidrama, fallen movanic deva, fighter 6: hp 108; see Appendix 4.

Development: Nidrama is open and honest with the PCs now. If asked why she hasn't helped the PCs more before this, she grows weary and sad, saying only that she lacked the courage until now to go against celestial law. She's abandoned her place in the celestial hierarchy in favor of directly intervening in mortal matters, and she's not willing to risk sabotaging her possible friendship and alliance with the PCs by further withholding information. Nidrama knows much about the Cagewrights, Adimarchus, and the history of Cauldron. Although not even she knows Skullrot's precise location, you can use her to answer any other outstanding questions the PCs may have about the Shackled City Adventure Path as you see fit.

If one of the PCs' souls was stolen by Embril at the end of "Strike on Shatterhorn," you may want to let that player run Nidrama until his actual character is rescued.

The Tarterian Depths of Carceri

Hatred, betrayal, and despair suffuse the bleak plane of Carceri. Many of the creatures that dwell here are petitioners and exiles that have given up all hope of escape. Portals on many planes allow travel to Carceri, but almost none allow travel in the other direction. Only creatures with the ability to *plane shift* or the wherewithal to travel the River Styx hold any hope of escape.

Before they travel to Orthrys, the PCs may wish to research the layer. A DC 20 Knowledge (the planes) check means the character knows a fair amount about the plane (approximately the same amount of information contained on page 161 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide*, in fact). Nidrama can provide this information if she is with the party. Once the characters have a working knowledge of Carceri, a DC 30 Knowledge (the planes) check allows them to narrow the field a bit to two key locations on Orthrys that might contain information about the location of Skullrot. If none of the PCs make this roll, this information can be learned with several days of study in a well-stocked library. The two locations that may hold clues are:

- The Bastion of Lost Hope—an outpost for anarchists and a marketplace for all sorts of goods; the PCs might be able to buy information about Skullrot's location here.
- Harrowfell—a terrible tower said to contain a gemstone that grants *mind blank* to those who touch it, ruled by a strange marilith demon with a smoking left eye. (Although Adimarchus and Occipitus are not mentioned, the smoking eye should clue the PCs in that the marilith has ties to the demon prince of madness.)

For more information on the plane of Carceri, consult page 161 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide* or pages 104–108 of the *Manual of the Planes*.

Exploring Orthrys

Characters who *plane shift* to Carceri arrive in a random location on Orthrys, Carceri's first layer. If they use an *amulet of the planes* or *lesser amulet of the planes*, they might be able to pinpoint their destination, so long as they know where they're going.

Orthrys is a realm of vast bogs and quicksand. The River Styx runs freely through the layer, saturating the ground with its magic. Fetid swamps thrive where the river does not flow, and though patches of dry ground exist, they are rare and usually climb swiftly to rugged mountains. The perpetually crimson sky paints the jagged mountains and stinking bogs of Orthrys in a hellish light, and swarms of insects feast upon travelers indiscriminately.

Terrain: Orthrys consists of vast bogs with quicksand pits, rocky crags, and rugged mountains. For rules on moving through bogs and quicksand, see Marsh Terrain on page 88 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide*; for rules on traveling through rugged mountain terrain, see Mountain Terrain on page 89 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide*.

Encounters: If the PCs find themselves slogging through the swamps or exploring some of the layer's important sites, roll for random encounters every hour using the Orthrys Random Encounters table below. Do not use any given encounter more than once. If you need further encounters, you can use these four as templates.

Orthrys Random Encounters

d%	Encounter	EL
01–25	Demodand squad	15
26–50	Demon hunters	18
51–75	Hunting slaadi	17
76–100	Stygian marauders	18

DEMODAND SQUAD (EL 19)

Demodands are the self-appointed keepers of the Carcerian population. Jailers and wardens of the prison plane, they are themselves trapped here as surely as the petitioners they watch. This demodand squad consists of a huge, wrinkled shator and nine lean, tar-oozing farastus.

This squad is traveling to Skullrot to pay tribute to its warden, Dark Myrakul. They have a single prisoner they intend to offer up as a sacrifice to the warden: a half-celestial human paladin named Kharidian. Kharidian is currently at 0 hit points and stuck fast to one of the farastus, encased in the demodand's adhesive slime. If rescued, he helps the characters complete their quest to the best of his ability, giving his life if necessary to save one of theirs.

Although these demodands know the way to Skullrot, they won't reveal its location to others unless magically compelled (and doing so is against their nature, possibly granting the compelled or charmed demodand an additional save to throw off the enchantment). The surest way to learn of Skullrot's location is to silently stalk the demodands, following them to their eventual destination. Of course, the PCs have no real way of knowing where they're going without using magic.

- **Kharidian, male half-celestial human paladin 9:** hp 90 (0 currently); *Monster Manual* 145.
- **Shator Demodand:** hp 127; see Appendix 4.
- **Farastu Demodands (9):** hp 68; see Appendix 4.

DEMON TROUPE (EL 18)

This demon troupe is wandering Orthrys looking for trouble. It consists of a nalfeshnee, four hezrous, and six vrocks.

- **Nalfeshnee:** hp 175; *Monster Manual* 45.
- **Hezrous (4):** hp 138 each; *Monster Manual* 44.
- **Vrocks (6):** hp 115 each; *Monster Manual* 48.

SLAADI GANG (EL 15)

Like the demons, slaadi on Orthrys typically wander about looking for trouble. This gang consists of a death slaad, two gray slaadi, and four blue slaadi.

- **Death Slaad:** hp 142; *Monster Manual* 231.
- **Gray Slaadi (2):** hp 95 each; *Monster Manual* 231.
- **Blue Slaadi (4):** hp 68 each; *Monster Manual* 229.

STYGIAN MARAUDERS (EL 18)

Stygian marauders are tiefling outlaws who prey on travelers and pillage battlefields near the River Styx. They ride on nightmares.

- **Stygian Marauders, tiefling fighter 2/rogue 10 (6):** hp 72 each; see Appendix 4.
- **Nightmares (6):** hp 45 each; *Monster Manual* 194.

THE BASTION OF LOST HOPE

A fortress made of black igneous rock squats in a mountain range. The ambient, reddish light of Orthrys lends the place a brooding air of menace. Only one entrance offers itself, a portal that one can't help but notice strongly resembles the maw of a massive demonic toad.

No one person rules the Bastion. Instead, it serves as an outpost for anarchists and a haven for some of the worst traitors ever to cross the planes. Here a traveler can obtain all manner of nefarious goods and services. Visitors to the Bastion would do well to remember that they're on a plane of liars and traitors, and to trust no one within its walls. Demodands, Stygian marauders, night hags, and worse can be found here, either plying a trade or shopping. Obviously good-aligned creatures (such as Nidrama or a paladin) aren't particularly welcome here, but if they can adjust the

Byakala

residents' initial attitude of unfriendly to helpful, the merchants agree to take their coin as well. As a general rule, several hundred customers and merchants can be found here, many of them fairly powerful. Characters starting a fight here should find themselves quickly outnumbered and overwhelmed.

Information: Information is pricy at the Bastion; each attempt to Gather Information requires a bribe of at least 2,000 gp. The information brokers of the Bastion are perfectly willing to accept payment in magic items, but they don't give change. With a successful DC 20 Gather Information check, a character can learn some facts about the plane's "movers and shakers." With a successful DC 30 check, they can also learn the location and powers of certain planar touchstones, such as the tower of Harrowfell (see below).

Anyone who asks about Skullrot is met with poorly-concealed claims of ignorance. A bribe of at least 10,000 gp (or equivalent worth in magic items) and a successful DC 30 Diplomacy or Intimidate check is required to get any further information. A successful skill check and bribe is enough to learn the asylum's location, but little more.

Equipment: The Bastion's gp limit for purchasing magic items and equipment is 40,000 gp, although prices are generally double the normal asking price.

HARROWFELL (EL 20)

A sixty-foot-tall, twenty-foot-diameter tower stands atop a rocky crag, surrounded on all sides by bone-strewn battlefields and fetid quagmires. A fence of skull-capped spears follows a twenty-foot-long rough-hewn staircase leading from the bog up to the tower's entrance, which stands agape. The tower itself is made of broken weapons, armor, and bones, held together by terrible magic.

This appalling tower is built around the top of the rocky crag. The tower is hollow, and sprouting from the crag's peak is a 9-foot-tall black crystal vaguely resembling a great black blade split down the middle. Travelers come to Harrowfell to touch the V-shaped crystal and gain its power. Any creature that touches the crystal gains the benefits of a *mind blank* spell for 24 hours (caster level 20th).

Creatures: This tower is currently held by a troupe of demons led by a cynical marilith named Byakala. Once one of Adimarchus's generals, Byakala was ironically imprisoned in Carceri by the demon prince only a few months before he was himself trapped here. Byakala has consigned herself to her fate, and for many decades has claimed Harrowfell as her own. She has gathered several lesser demons to her side as minions, and charges visitors steep prices for the honor of using the crystal at the crag's peak. Normal prices are either 2,000 gp (or the equivalent in magic items) or a live humanoid (to be used as food or worse).

Byakala and her demons make a point of using the crystal every day, and are always under the effects of a *mind blank* as a result. Byakala's long stay in Carceri has left her bitter, and as long as visitors don't insult or threaten her, she has little interest in starting fights.

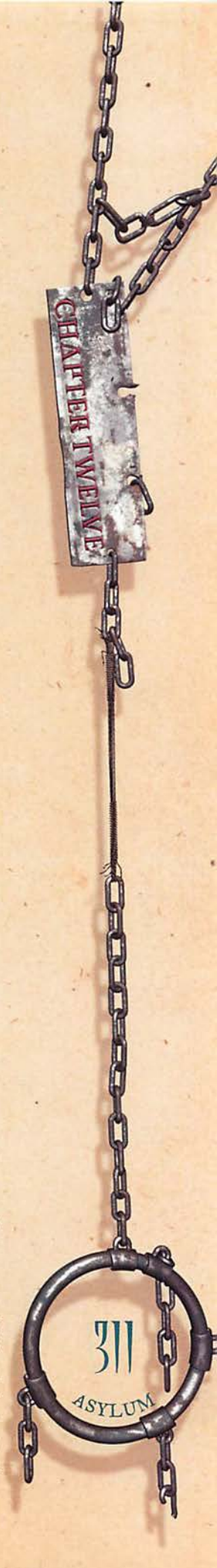
- **Byakala, Smoking Eye advanced marilith demon:** hp 216; see Appendix 1.
- **Hezrou Demons (2):** hp 138 each; *Monster Manual* 44.
- **Babau Demons (5):** hp 66 each; *Monster Manual* 40.

Development: If one of the characters acquired the Smoking Eye template as a consequence of completing the Test of the Smoking Eye, Byakala assumes (perhaps wrongly) that the character has assumed lordship of Occipitus. She tries to parley with the character, curious to know what brings the new lord of Occipitus to the Tarterian depths, and she is secretly hopeful that the new lord has come to free her. If the character has not claimed lordship of Occipitus but tries to convince the demons otherwise, he must succeed at a Bluff check. If the check fails, the demons attack. If the check succeeds, the demon troupe reports that a vast army of trapped fiends has recently dispersed throughout Orthrys, having failed in its latest bid to escape the plane (this army is the same one the Cagewrights failed to release). Byakala's lost any interest in serving demonic masters, and under no circumstances does she agree to join forces with the PCs. If the PCs pressure her to join, she grows angry and attacks them rather than risk becoming someone's minion once again.

If, on the other hand, the PCs tell Byakala they've come to Carceri to destroy Adimarchus, she reacts with disbelief. With a successful DC 30 Diplomacy check, though, the PCs can convince her of their sincerity, at which point she grows visibly excited. Too cowardly to stand against the demon prince herself, the thought of him being put down greatly appeals to her sense of vengeance. She knows the way to Skullrot, and gladly gives directions to the asylum once she believes the PCs.

SKULLROT

Murky, stench-ridden bogs surround the asylum of Skullrot, extending for miles in every direction. Swarms of large black mosquitoes, more annoying than dangerous, hound creatures attempting to cross the black quagmire. The swamp surrounding the asylum is vast and trackless; once the PCs get directions to the place they can use spells like *greater teleport* or *wind walk* to travel there quickly. If the PCs are forced to use more mundane means for travel, they'll need to traverse 3d6×100 miles of stinking swamp to reach Skullrot. The swamp is fairly dangerous, and those traveling through it have a 15% chance per day of an encounter with one of its denizens. These encounters can be with one of the random encounters from the chart above, or with enemies of your own design. Fiendish black dragons, demons, demodands, half-fiend 30-HD swamp krakens, thunderbeast behemoths and worse are said to lurk therein.



As characters approach within 5 miles of the asylum, they notice trampled reeds and crisscrossing tracks. Within 1 mile of the asylum, they stumble upon the bloated, maggot-ridden fungus-encrusted corpses of slaughtered fiends. The Cagewrights knew their portal would have opened near Skullrot, and six of their number came to Carceri to gather a large army here. Thousands of demondands answered the call, gathering here in a gibbering, hooting horde. When the portal failed to open, the fiends turned on each other, leaving behind a bloody mess.

THE HOWLING HALLS OF SKULLROT (EL 16)

A bare black rock rises above the fetid quagmire, and upon it stands a towering white edifice over two hundred feet high. Frightful screams and howls fill the air around the structure. Dozens of iron cages hang from bone spurs along the outside walls of the upper floors, each one holding a humanoid skeleton or corpse. Four massive, horned skulls surmount the structure. The ground surrounding the tower has been trampled flat by a horde of fiends—a horde that now lies slaughtered to the last. Strange leprous fungi and other fruiting bodies grow from the field of carrion with hideous, almost visible speed. Rooting through the horrific mess are dozens of lumbering scavenger beasts the size of elephants. These six-legged creatures look vaguely like tusked hippopotami with long, flat tails, and the thunderous sound of their bellows and open-mouth fungus chewing fills the air with a rumbling accompaniment to the howls and shrieks from the tower itself. One creature in particular is truly massive in size, its ridged back nearly as tall as the tower itself—the others give this cantankerous-looking bull a wide berth as it roots through its horrid dinner near the tower.

Skullrot looms high above the stench-ridden swamps of Orthrys and can be seen from a mile away. The entire building is made from fiendish skulls cemented together with hard resin. Four massive goristro demon skulls are fixed to the uppermost floor, glowering menacingly into the tortured sky.

The skull walls have the strength and consistency of stone, yet they are porous, allowing the wails of mad fiends to carry beyond. The dangling cages are grisly to behold and serve to ward off spirits and other unwanted visitors.

Skullrot embodies the eternal despair and hopelessness of Carceri. Fiends and wayward souls driven mad by futile attempts to escape can be found here, locked away for all time. Skullrot also serves as a prison for beings deemed too dangerous to roam free and too valuable to kill, chief among them the demon prince Adimarchus. Dark Myrakul, his fiendish annis assistant Slouva, and a host of flesh golems and demodands mind the asylum and its deranged residents.

Creatures: The creatures feeding on the fungus blooming from the dead fiends are dozens of thunder beasts. While they pay no attention to the PCs, the thunder beast behemoth near the tower itself is as surly as it is massive, and won't take kindly to any perceived encroachment on the territory it's claimed near Skullrot.

If the PCs approach Skullrot and the behemoth notices them, it unleashes a deafening roar and charges the PCs in a rage. As long as the creature can reach them or see them, it continues to harass them. Even though the creature is massive, it can't fly. Physically, it should pose little threat to high-level characters. The true danger it represents is the fact that its thunderous challenge to the PCs instantly alerts the denizens of Skullrot that someone approaches—if they hear the beast roar, they prepare the asylum's defenses.

The behemoth may be massive in size, but the shrieks and screams from Skullrot unnerve it nonetheless. It won't approach any closer than 60 feet to the tower, under any circumstance. If assaulted by ranged attacks from within this area, it bellows in rage for one or two rounds before it fleeing into the surrounding swampland.

Thunder Beast Behemoth: hp 630; see Appendix 1.

SKULLROT FEATURES

The following features are common throughout Skullrot unless noted otherwise:

Walls, Floors, and Ceilings: Skullrot is made entirely of fiendish skulls, cemented together with hardened resin (excreted by what remains a mystery). The walls, floors, and ceilings have the strength of magically treated masonry, yet they are porous. Characters in gaseous form can pass through walls as easily as they move through open air, and the constant howls and screams of Skullrot's incarcerated fiends can be heard throughout the structure and even in the surrounding swamp. Ceilings are 20 feet high throughout the asylum.

Skull Walls: 1 ft. thick; Hardness 16; hp 180 (per 10-foot-by-10-foot section); Break DC 55; Climb DC 15. Since they are not made of stone, Skullrot's walls are impervious to spells such as *stone shape* and *transmute rock to mud*.

Howling: The fiendish howling and screaming that fills the asylum drowns out all but the loudest noises. Listen checks made in Skullrot suffer a –10 penalty.

Illumination: The creatures entrusted with overseeing the asylum have darkvision, and do not require light to see. Orthrys's red sky bleeds through the porous walls of the asylum, giving the walls a dull red glow that isn't quite sufficient to actually illuminate the interior.

Doors: Skullrot's doors are made of magically treated iron.

Iron Door: 2 in. thick; Hardness 20; hp 120; Break DC 28; Open Lock DC 40.

Dangling Cages: Eighty iron cages hang from bone spurs on the outside of Skullrot. Seventy-two of the cages contain animated skeletons and zombies—the remains of adventurers who unwisely meddled in Dark Myrakul's affairs. The skeletons vigorously shake their cages while the zombies groan mournfully.

Dangling Cage: 2 in. thick; Hardness 10; hp 60; Break DC 28; Open Lock DC 40.

Skeletons (42): hp 6 each; *Monster Manual* 226.

Zombies (30): hp 16 each; *Monster Manual* 266.

Special Spell Effects: Skullrot is protected by the equivalent of an *unhallow* spell (caster level 30th). Creatures in the asylum (but not those in the dangling cages outside the asylum) gain the benefits of *magic circle against good*. All turning checks made to turn undead take a –4 penalty, and turning checks to rebuke undead gain a +4 profane bonus (spell resistance does not apply to this effect). The unhallow spell also carries an *invisibility purge* spell that affects all non-evil creatures inside the asylum.

In addition, Skullrot is protected by the equivalent of a *dimensional lock* spell. This effect bars *astral projection, blink, dimension door, ethereal jaunt, etherealness, gate, plane shift, shadow walk, teleport, greater teleport, teleportation circle;* and similar spell-like effects and psionic abilities. It does not block *banishment, dismissal,* or similar spells, nor does it prevent summoned creatures from appearing or disappearing.

1. BALCONY

This balcony, made entirely of skulls, rises 30 feet above the swamp. Tall iron doors bar entry into the structure. The iron doors are *arcane locked* (see Asylum Features for details).

2. DEMODAND GUARDS (EL 18)

Mournful howls resonate within this dark chamber. The walls of leering skulls bring no comfort, and the floor is covered in sticky tar.

The floor is coated in adhesive slime. Characters moving across the floor must succeed on a DC 17 Reflex save or be held fast; prying oneself free requires a DC 17 Strength check. Characters who make a successful save can move at half speed through the slime. The demodands that guard the room (see Creatures, below) can move through the adhesive slime with impunity. A pair of *arcane locked* iron doors opens out onto a balcony (area 1), and a staircase of skulls rises up out of the slime and leads to area 3.

Creatures: Ten farastus guard the room. They fight to the death and take no prisoners. They have been keeping a wary eye on the thunder beast behemoth for the past several hours, but are unwilling to risk an attempt to scare it off.

Farastu Demodands (10): hp 71 each; see Appendix 4.

Development: If the farastu demodands are alerted to trouble, they all use *invisibility* to disappear, then lurk near the walls of the room and prepare actions to hit any intruders with *fear* and *rays of enfeeblement*.

Hexavog, the guardian in area 3, uses *clairvoyance/clairaudience* to observe the events in this room if combat breaks out. He then tries to summon an additional 1d4 farastus (60% chance of success) before moving to the top of the staircase and filling area 2 with an *acid fog*. He then targets visible foes with *Melf's acid arrow* and *rays of enfeeblement*.

3. HEXAVOG (EL 19)

The fiendish howls are loudest here, in the asylum's heart. This room sits at the base of a twenty-foot-diameter shaft that soars up into darkness. Balconies with iron railings line the walls at higher levels.

Dark Myrakul has ordered a deformed kelubar demodand to serve as a captain of the guard for Skullrot. This creature is Hexavog, and he's spent too many years in the asylum and has been driven mad himself. Hexavog spends countless days singing aloud—a wretched attempt to quell the screams of the myriad fiends trapped in Skullrot. Upon sighting intruders, he sings (in Abyssal) "What madness is this? What madness, indeed! Endless torment, dark despair, caged in bone, can't be freed. All the tales end the same: see you screaming, twisting, dreaming, dreaming you never came."

Creatures: Hexavog moves well despite his massive, undulating bulk. His filthy stench fills the room; all non-demodands within the area must make a Fortitude save against the stench or suffer its ill effects. Hexavog is a monstrously bloated and filthy fiend with batlike wings and six rubbery arms, his black skin coated in wretched green slime.

Hexavog, six-armed advanced kelubar demodand: hp 234; see Appendix 4.

Tactics: Hexavog spends most of his time observing various areas of the asylum using *clairvoyance/clairaudience*. He tries to summon 1d4 farastus (60% chance of success) and fills the room with an *acid fog* before wading into battle. If he has support from the farastus, Hexavog tries to flank foes to make sneak attacks. If reduced to half his hit points, he flies up the shaft to area **10**, singing as he goes. In addition to his regular attacks, Hexavog makes liberal use of quickened *Melf's acid arrows* or quickened *fears* every round; he can quicken each up to three times a day.

If he cannot escape the characters, Hexavog tries to bargain for his life. An expert liar, he tells the heroes whatever he thinks they want to hear. He also likes to gloat when he's clearly winning and may be goaded into revealing some useful information.

Development: Hexavog knows that Adimarchus is trapped in area **10**. However, the kelubar believes that Adimarchus has learned how to "slip" into the minds of other living creatures, making them do things. Hexavog himself has been "touched" by Adimarchus and occasionally feels a driving need to free the demon prince from captivity. However, to date Hexavog has resisted the urge to cross Dark Myrakul. Only his great skill at bluffing has kept Dark Myrakul from learning of this weakness. Hexavog knows that it's only a matter of time before Adimarchus escapes; he just hopes it's not his fault when it happens.

The farastus in area **2** come to Hexavog's aid if combat erupts here. In addition, Slouva (area **8**) likely hears any battle that breaks out here despite the intervening distance and the –10 penalty from the howling fiends, thanks to her high Listen bonus and the low DC (–10) to hear a battle. She arrives 2d4+1 rounds after combat begins to aid Hexavog. If particularly hard pressed, Slouva retreats to her lair (area **6**) to send her minion there after the PCs.

Hexavog

4. GOLEM LAB (EL 17)

This hideous laboratory holds six glass vats, each one four feet tall, four feet wide, and filled with red fluid. The vats hold naked human corpses, their faces peeled off. Human brains and vital organs float in glass canisters on bone shelves above the vats. A table consisting of patchwork flesh canvas stretched over a bone frame dominates the middle of the room. Bone flanges fitted with hooks protrude from the table, and stretched between the hooks are six peeled-off human faces.

Dark Myrakul uses this room to make his hideous flesh golems, two of which stand ready to destroy unwanted interlopers. Any corpse immersed in one of

the vats is permanently preserved as though warded by a *gentle repose* spell; this magic property is as much an effect of Skullrot itself as of the vats (which lose this property if brought outside of the asylum). If the PCs lost one of their own to Embril's *magic jar* gambit in Chapter Eleven, that PC's preserved dead body can be found here, awaiting use in golem creation. Particularly sinister DMs may wish to have the character's body already used to help create the two golems located here.

Creatures: Dark Myrakul's flesh golems are lumbering, apelike brutes with sunken black eyes and skin made of stitched human faces. These golems are much larger and more dangerous than a standard flesh golem.

Advanced Flesh Golems (2): hp 188 each; see Appendix 4.

Treasure: Tucked under the table are three jars of special unguents (400 gp each), three spools of stitching twine (100 gp each), and an incantation to Graz'zt written in blood on a scroll. The incantation allows a character to substitute a *miracle* spell for the *limited wish* spell needed to craft a flesh golem, and is worth 1,000 gp to a collector or worshiper of Graz'zt.

5. DARK MYRAKUL'S STUDY (EL 19)

The middle of this room holds three tables made of hardened black resin. They vaguely resemble flat-topped mushrooms. Two are covered with fat tomes, flasks, candles, and scrolls. The third holds a metal apparatus shaped like a pair of claws, one holding an iron flask inlaid with silver runes, and the other suspended above the flask, its talons hooked into the flask's brass stopper. A fat iron chest shaped like a crouching, demonic toad rests in one corner.

This room serves as Dark Myrakul's workshop and study. Characters searching the tables find the Treasure. However, any living creature that enters the room causes the clawlike apparatus to pull the stopper on the *iron flask*, releasing the Creature trapped within. Only Dark Myrakul knows the correct command word to control the creature ("cthirol").

The iron toad-shaped chest contains more of this room's Treasure.

Creature: Unplugging the *iron flask* releases an advanced devourer. It fights until destroyed and relentlessly pursues its quarry.

Advanced Devourer: hp 234; see Appendix 4.

Tactics: At the start of the encounter, the devourer has 10 levels of trapped essence. In addition to attacking with its claws, the advanced devourer can use its quickened *confusion* once per round, up to three times a day.

Treasure: The iron chest contains two blocks of *incense of meditation* wrapped in a black shroud, a *wand of false life* (6 charges), and any items taken from Cagewrights trapped in area 9. Any items taken from a PC's body stolen by Embril can be found here as well. Characters searching the tables find a scroll of *antilife shell*, a scroll of *planar ally* (calls a bebilith named Iyacchai), a scroll of *discern location*, a potion of *remove curse*, three *potions of inflict serious wounds*, an unholy font made out of a shator's skull (100 gp; focus for *scrying* and *greater scrying* spells), a collection of four malefic tomes titled *The Black Codices of Graz'zt* (a must-read for clerics of Graz'zt, containing unholy prayers and grim treatises on death and undeath; the set is worth 8,000 gp to an interested buyer), a tiny reliquary containing a fragment of bone etched with profane runes (500 gp; focus for the *unholy aura* spell), a *type II bag of holding* containing 20,000 gp (used to cover the costs of flesh golem creation), and a tiny black box traced with silver runes and skull designs (250 gp) containing three black sapphires (worth 15,000 gp, 17,000 gp, and 20,000 gp respectively; foci for *soul bind* spells).

The *iron flask* on the desk can be salvaged with ease, although chances are it's empty by the time the PCs get to it.

6. SLOUVA'S BEDCHAMBER (EL 15)

A ten-foot-long bed made of lashed bones dominates this room. The blankets covering the bed are of stitched flesh and fur. The room is otherwise bare.

This room belongs to Slouva, Dark Myrakul's assistant. Slouva is a fiendish annis barbarian that spends the majority

of her time tormenting the deranged prisoners of Skullrot, feeding their hopelessness. She can usually be found in area **8** on one of the upper floors of the asylum, but may have retreated to this room after coming down to area **3** to aid Hexavog in a fight.

Creature: Although she keeps no valuables in this chamber, Slouva does keep a dangerous minion here, a particularly servile yet sly chasme demon named Lriznisith. Slouva finds the chasme's drone to be quite soothing, and often uses it to drown out the howling of the asylum's prisoners when she sleeps.

Like most chasme, Lriznisith is a disgusting, fly-like demon. An expert in punishment and torture, Slouva sometimes enlists his aid when a prisoner has done something particularly naughty and needs to be reprimanded. Lriznisith has tufts of hair sprouting at random from his tough, insectoid flesh. He has large buzzing wings and six limbs, two of which resemble long, thin human arms. His head is vaguely humanlike, although exaggerated and ugly, with a hard, hooked horn where a human's nose would be.

Lriznisith, advanced chasme demon: hp 199; see Appendix 4.

Tactics: Lriznisith doesn't allow anyone but Slouva or Dark Myrakul into this room; all others are intruders upon his mistress' domain and are attacked immediately. If brought below 40 hit points and Slouva isn't here as well, he flees to area **8** on the 4th floor to report his failure to his mistress and recruit her aid in launching a counterattack against the PCs.

7. HOWLING FIENDS (EL VARIES)

These wings of the asylum contain six cells each (84 cells total, spread across four stories). An *arcane locked* iron door bars each cell. The cell itself contains a screaming prisoner bound in magically treated spiked chains. Creatures with bite attacks also wear iron masks with a narrow mouth slot for feedings. The chains and masks prevent the creatures from using any of their natural attacks. The chains also bind the creatures to the floor, walls, and ceiling. Moreover, any creature that struggles against the chains takes 4d4+10 points of damage per round from the spikes.

Spiked Chains: 2 in. thick; Hardness 20; hp 120; Break DC 30; Escape Artist 50; Open Lock DC 40.

Iron Mask: 1 in. thick; Hardness 10; hp 30; Break DC 24; Escape Artist 50; Open Lock DC 40.

Creatures: Each cell contains a single insane creature. Some of the creatures appear calm, while others are raving mad. The chains prevent them from leaving the cell's confines or attacking with their natural weapons. A metal mask prevents them from making bite attacks. To determine the type of creature in a particular cell, roll randomly on the following table:

HOWLING PRISONERS OF SKULLROT

d%	Creature
01–10	Fallen Angel: astral deva (01–60), planetar (61–100)
11–20	Fallen Archon: hound archon hero (01–50), trumpet archon (51–100)
21–30	Berserk advanced flesh golem (see area **4** for statistics)
31–40	Demodand: farastu (01–50), kelubar (51–85), or shator (86–100)
41–50	Demon: balor (01–10), hezrou (11–40), succubus (41–70), vrock (71–100)
51–60	Devil: hamatula (01–30), erinyes (31–60), cornugon (61–90), pit fiend (91–100)
61–70	Fallen Guardinal: avoral (01–50), leonal (51–100)
71-90	Slaad: red (01–25), blue (26–50), green (51–75), death (76–100)
91–100	Yugoloth: mezzoloth (01–50), nycaloth (51–85), ultraloth (86–100)

The three types of yugoloths are fiendish neutral evil outsiders detailed in *Monster Manual III*. If you don't have this book, simply re-roll on the table.

The creatures imprisoned here are horridly insane and attack anyone who frees them, despite their actual alignment. A *greater restoration*, *miracle*, or *wish* is required to restore an insane creature's mind; each creature freed in this manner reacts differently, depending on its alignment and the PCs' attitude. Remember that even if cured of their insanities, these outsiders are still criminals who committed extremely heinous acts in order to end up here, and releasing them might have unforeseen repercussions beyond the scope of this adventure.

Of course, Dark Myrakul knows if any of his prisoners are freed, and quickly comes to investigate.

8. BALCONIES (EL 19)

Each of these balconies has a four-foot-high spiked iron railing strung with chains. Some of the spikes have skulls impaled on them.

Three Creatures patrol the third floor of the asylum, feeding prisoners and tightening chains. Once they've

inspected all of the residents on that level, they move on to the other floors, or even up to area 9 on floors 5–8.

Creatures: Dark Myrakul's assistant, Slouva, is a fiendish annis with black scraggly hair and pebbly, midnight blue skin. She carries a black jug filled with edible brown sludge that she serves to those prisoners who need to eat and drink—the outsiders imprisoned here don't, but the prisoners in area 9 certainly do. She paces the howling halls with her two flesh golem bodyguards, chanting merrily. Dark Myrakul's flesh golems are lumbering, apelike brutes with sunken black eyes and skin made of stitched humanoid faces.

Slouva, fiendish annis barbarian 11: hp 173; see Appendix 4.

Advanced Flesh Golems (2): hp 188 each; see Appendix 4.

Tactics: The sly annis hopes to run the asylum one day and, being a treacherous creature, she plans to turn against Dark Myrakul if the opportunity presents itself. As long as Dark Myrakul is in charge, however, she obeys his commands and defends the asylum as best she can.

If confronted, she sends her golems into battle. If they are destroyed, she flies into a rage and lunges forth with claws and teeth bared. If truly hard-pressed, Slouva flees and uses her *chime of opening* to unlock one of the denizens of area 7 (preferably an insane pit fiend). Roll on the *confusion* spell table (*Player's Handbook*, page 212) to determine how the pit fiend behaves once released. Slouva hopes the pit fiend distracts her enemies long enough for her to reach area 10 and alert Dark Myrakul.

9. CELLS (EL VARIES)

The inner walls of these corridors are lined with *arcane locked* iron doors. The doors lead to cramped cells, each holding a prisoner stricken with insanity.

Creatures: Unlike the celestials and fiends imprisoned in area 7, the residents of these cells are not bound with chains. Instead, they wear tight-fitting straightjackets made of stitched demon hide. They carry no gear and have no spells prepared. Roll on the following table to determine what type of NPC is confined to each cell, and use the NPC statistics in Chapter 4 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide* as necessary for their statistics.

If any of the Cagewrights escaped from Shatterhorn and found their way here, they can be found in one of these cells, stripped of their gear and their sanity. (Their possessions can be found in area 5.)

Fellern Wards of Skullrot

d%	NPC
01–10	Barbarian, level 1d10+10
11–20	Bard, level 2d6+8
21–30	Cleric, level 2d6+8
31–40	Fighter, level 1d10+10
41–50	Monk, level 1d10+10
51–60	Fallen paladin, level 1d10+10
61–70	Ranger, level 1d10+10
71–80	Rogue, level 1d10+10
81–90	Sorcerer, level 2d6+8
91–100	Wizard, level 2d6+8

Repercussions for freeing any of these insane criminals should be similar to those for freeing the outsiders in area 7.

10. ADIMARCHUS'S PRISON (EL 24)

The staircases lead up to this twenty-foot-high chamber. The floor gives way to a forty-foot-wide shaft in the middle of the room. A large iron cage is suspended over the shaft, its base level with the floor of the room. The cage itself is shaped like a coffin made of metallic bones, the bars studded with spikes and cruel hooks. No door seems to be apparent on the cage, as if it were built to never be opened. Slumped on the floor of the cage is an angelic figure with purple skin, golden tattoolike patterns crisscrossing its body, and wings of metallic gold feathers. It covers its face with its hands and appears to be sobbing.

The central shaft drops 160 feet to the floor of area 3. A thick iron chain connects the hemispherical cage to a heavy iron winch that's bolted to the floor. Using the winch to raise or lower the cage requires a DC 26 Strength check; the cage ascends or descends at a rate of 20 feet (one floor) per round.

The angelic creature trapped inside the cage is none other than the demon prince of madness himself—Adimarchus. While Dark Myrakul torments him with words, Adimarchus tries desperately to tap into the minds of creatures capable of rescuing him. Dark Myrakul knows what the demon prince hopes to accomplish, but he doesn't believe for an instant that Adimarchus can succeed. The failure of the Cagewrights is all the proof the lichfiend needs of this fact.

Creatures: The undead half-fiend Dark Myrakul is the warden of Skullrot; he spends the majority of his time here tormenting Adimarchus, and is here when the PCs first arrive at Skullrot. He trusts his minions to handle

intruders, but if those intruders make it all the way up here he realizes that the defense of Skullrot has fallen to him alone. He is attended at all times by one of his greatest creations, a demonflesh golem. This golem is similar in basic appearance to a flesh golem, yet its parts have been harvested from demons, resulting in a far more horrifying creation than a mere flesh golem.

Dark Myrakul

Dark Myrakul himself appears as a humanoid skeleton with clawed hands, horns, and fangs. He is clad in jet-black chainmail, and bony wings spring from his back. (Although Dark Myrakul's batlike wings are missing their leathery flaps, he can still fly.) Once a half-demodand, Dark Myrakul underwent a painful and torturous process similar to that some humanoids undertake to become a lich; with the aid of his demonic patron Graz'zt, Dark Myrakul became a vile undead menace known as a lichfiend. Today, Dark Myrakul is one of Graz'zt's most dangerous servants. Although a cleric, he does not gain his spells directly from Graz'zt. Rather, Graz'zt acts as Dark Myrakul's patron; the lichfiend's spells are granted by his faith in the abstract forces of chaos and evil.

Dark Myrakul, male half-fiend human lichfiend cleric 18 (Graz'zt): hp 141; see Appendix 4.

Demonflesh Golem: hp 229; see Appendix 4.

Tactics: Before confronting interlopers, Dark Myrakul casts *greater spell immunity* (immune to *disintegrate, heal, magic missile,* and *searing light*; lasts 180 minutes), *spell resistance* (lasts 18 minutes), *shield of faith* (lasts 18 minutes), *eagle's splendor* (lasts 18 minutes), *owl's wisdom* (lasts 18 minutes), *divine power* (lasts 18 rounds), and *divine favor* (lasts 1 minute). With these spells in place, Dark Myrakul has the following modified statistics: hp 159; AC 35, touch 17, flat-footed 33; Base Atk +18; Grp +25; Atk +35 melee (2d4+20/19–20/×4, *+4 keen vorpal adamantine scythe*) or +31 melee (1d4+7, claw) or +31 melee touch (1d8+5 plus insanity, touch); Full Atk +35/+30/+25/+20 melee (2d4+20/19–20/×4, *+4 keen vorpal adamantine scythe*) and +12 melee (1d6+3, bite) or +31 melee (1d4+7, 2 claws) and +26 melee (1d6+3, bite) or +31 melee touch (1d8+5 plus insanity, touch); SR 30; SV Will +18; Str 24, Wis 24, Cha 22; Diplomacy +27, Heal +28, Listen +15, Spot +15; cleric spell save DC 17 + spell level; save DCs for spell-like abilities increase by +2.

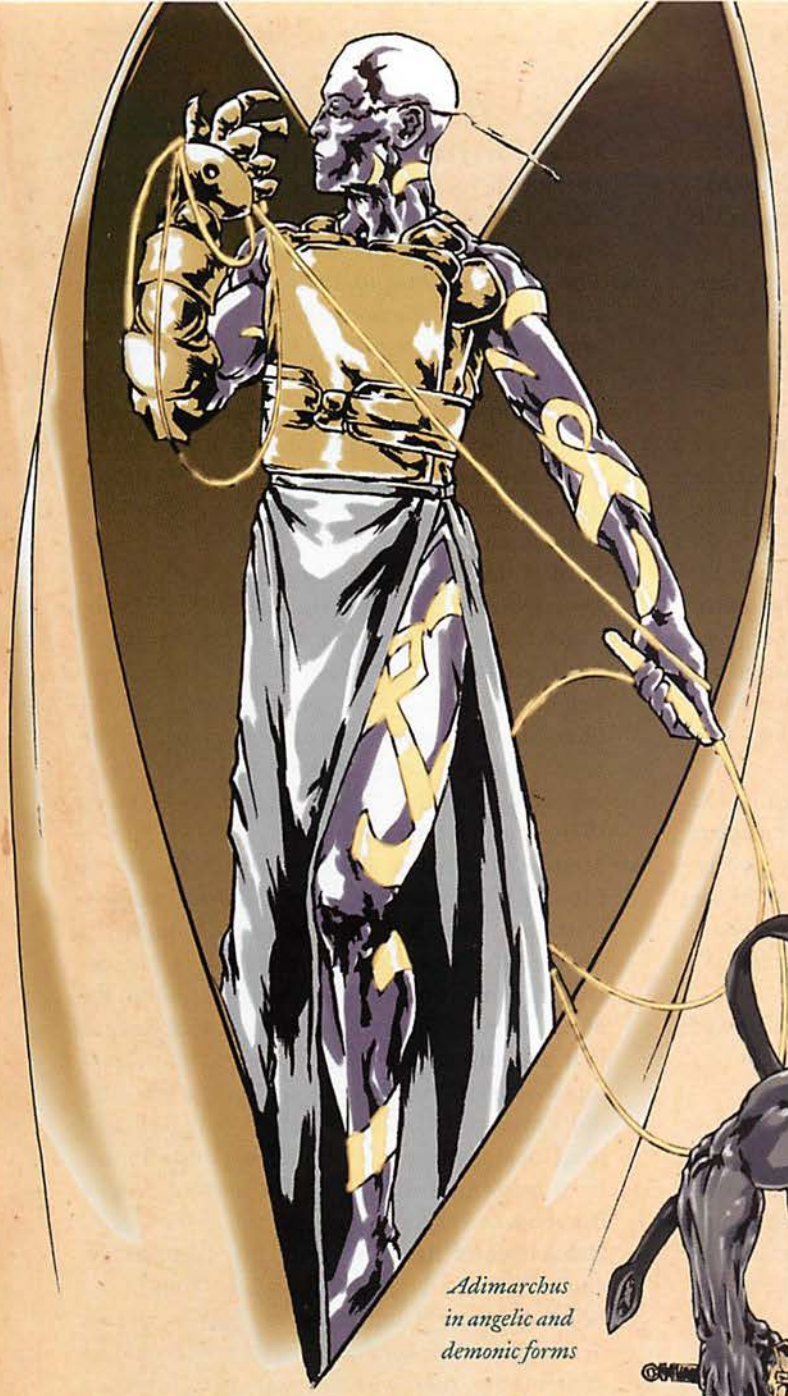
The lichfiend likes to cast offensive spells such as *implosion, energy drain, destruction, summon monster, banishment,* and *greater dispel magic*. In melee, Dark Myrakul wields his *+4 keen vorpal adamantine scythe*. If he can't hit an enemy with his scythe, the lich uses his melee touch attack, combined with his quickened *poison* spell-like ability. His weapons are treated as magic for purposes of overcoming damage reduction.

Development: If destroyed, Dark Myrakul's body vanishes as his life force returns to Graz'zt's side. Fortunately for the PCs, Graz'zt has other pressing matters on his six-fingered hands at this time, and doesn't get around to investigating Dark Myrakul's death for several days. When he does notice that the lichfiend has been slain and realizes that Skullrot's security has been compromised, his reaction is quick and brutal, as detailed in Concluding the Adventure.

ADIMARCHUS UNLEASHED (EL 27)

The characters can choose to leave Adimarchus confined in his cage; however, he eventually escapes, either through his own actions or those of his deranged "followers" (the Cagewrights, for example). Additionally, his madness continues to leak out of the cage and into Occipitus, rebuilding and rebirthing Vhalantru (or other slain minions) at an increasing pace. The longer Adimarchus lives, the more of his madness escapes to torment the PCs in this manner. If the heroes destroy Dark Myrakul and either Slouva or Hexavog takes over as warden, Adimarchus might convince his new jailer to release him in exchange for the promise of even greater power. Unlike the lichfiend, the annis and the kelubar have no allegiance to Graz'zt and are easily swayed.

The cage that holds Adimarchus was created by Graz'zt, and should be treated as a major artifact. Its resemblance to the *soulcages* the PCs encountered earlier in the Adventure Path is no coincidence; the cage is Adimarchus's entire world, and in his insane inspirations gifted upon the Cagewrights, the design of the cage was a central theme. As long as the cage remains intact, Adimarchus cannot use any of his supernatural or spell-like abilities. (He can still shift between his



Adimarchus in angelic and demonic forms

two forms, however; see below for details.) Moreover, his effective Strength drops to 3, making it difficult for him to even stand. The cage itself is impervious to magic and blocks any spell that targets its occupant—yet the cage is not as perpetual as its creator had hoped.

The reason for this is simple. When Graz'zt created the cage, he did so using several *wishes* to duplicate, in part, the effects of a powerful *binding* spell, infusing the cage with these magical energies. Unfortunately, even with these powerful spells he was unable to create a cage that would last forever; the only way to do so required an "escape clause" that would grant possibility of escape under a specific circumstance. By including such a flaw in the cage, he was able to ward the cage from other forces to such an extent that even other demon princes and other quasi-divine entities can do nothing to harm it.

As the escape clause, Graz'zt came up with a condition he felt certain would never come to pass; only the rightful ruler of Occipitus can damage the cage and release its prisoner. Graz'zt felt that any demonic ruler of Occipitus would be the last creature who would want to see Adimarchus released (thus releasing a powerful contender for rulership of Occipitus), but what he didn't realize was that anyone who passed the Test of the Smoking Eye could become the ruler of this Abyssal realm—including creatures that have no interest in ruling Occipitus!

Graz'zt kept this secret to himself, telling no one (least of all Adimarchus himself), yet anyone bearing the Sign of the Smoking Eye who looks upon the cage immediately understands the nature of the flaw. To such a creature, the cage appears rusty, fragile, and feeble, something that can be bashed apart with a single weapon blow.

Releasing the catch on the winch causes the cage to plunge

nine stories, dealing 16d6 points of damage to anything it strikes. If the creature that releases the catch has the Smoking Eye template, the fall destroys the cage. Adimarchus is protected from the fall by the cage, but is freed as a result of such a fall.

As long as Adimarchus is imprisoned in the cage, he is immune to all damage and magic effects—he cannot be harmed at all. If the PCs want to end the threat his madness poses, they must release him and then slay him.

Creature: If freed, Adimarchus reacts strangely to a character with the Sign of the Smoking Eye template. In his angelic form, he sees the character as a hated enemy who threatens to usurp his power, and he attacks that character to the exclusion of others. In his demonic form, he sees the character as a potential ally and heir apparent, and does not attack her (even if she attacks him), determining to win her allegiance in the war against Graz'zt. Only after persistent failed attempts to win the character's allegiance does Adimarchus turn against her.

A character with the Smoking Eye template gains a +4 insight bonus on attack rolls made against Adimarchus and a +4 insight bonus on level checks to bypass the demon prince's spell resistance. In addition, all of the character's weapons are treated as cold iron and good-aligned for the purpose of overcoming Adimarchus's damage reduction.

Adimarchus, Demon Prince of Madness: hp 525; see Appendix 1.

Continuing the Campaign

With Adimarchus freed from Skullrot and likely slain by the PCs, the Shackled City Adventure Path comes to a close. Yet this does not necessarily herald the end of your campaign; much is left to be done in the Cauldron region.

As for the PCs themselves, they're likely regarded as heroes by the refugees of Cauldron. Their actions in Skullrot go unknown by the majority of the populace, yet Cauldronites still view them as saviors, and rightfully so. The PCs have braved terrible fates in the defense of the region, and they deserve some rest. Give them some time to relax and enjoy the freedom they fought so hard for, and in time, if you are continuing the campaign, they'll get the itch to go on a new adventure soon enough. Some possible epic-level adventures are detailed below. With a little work, these adventure seeds can also serve as ideas for starting a brand new campaign in the area with new 1st-level characters.

- **Adimarchus Returns:** If released from Skullrot, Adimarchus returns to the Abyss to reclaim his realm. After reasserting his lordship over Occipitus, Adimarchus spends the next several months attracting deranged worshipers, rebuilding his demonic army, and plotting the downfall of his enemies. Whether or not that includes the heroes, only time will tell! Note that even if the PCs kill Adimarchus on Carceri, his body reforms on Occipitus. If the PCs don't travel there to finish him off, he'll simply return again and again.
- **The Vanishing Plague:** In rebuilding Cauldron, some workers uncover the ruins of a small gnomish enclave in the rock below the town. In so doing, the workers unleash a particularly potent strain of the Vanishing. Unlike the version encountered in "Life's Bazaar," this one is contagious and resists magical curing. The PCs must find a cure for the disease before all of Cauldron's citizens succumb.
- **Lord of the Ebon Triad:** The Ebon Triad played a key role in the creation of the *soulcages* used by the Cagewrights, yet their presence in this campaign has been subtle and minor. Now that the Cagewrights are gone, what sinister plans might the Ebon Triad's shadowed leader have in store for the region, and why are agents of the Ebon Triad so intrigued by the ruins of the Spire of Long Shadows to the northeast of Cauldron?
- **Menace from Below:** The PCs have already delved into the Underdark below the Cauldron region at least once. Other entrances to the Underdark that once existed below Cauldron were recently collapsed by the Stormblades. In her explorations of the region, Shensen Tesseril has discovered that something has recently cleared these passages—something that did so from below. Why did Vhalantru want these entrances closed, and what new menace is creeping up toward town from below now that the recent volcanic activity has reopened them?
- **Nabthatoron's Revenge:** Since his defeat at the end of "The Demonskar Legacy," the body of the exiled glabrezu Nabthatoron has been recovered by his minions. Unable to restore true life to their master, these vile minions used forbidden necromantic lore stolen from spell weaver ruins to restore the demon to life as an undead menace. Now more powerful than ever, Nabthatoron seethes with a need for revenge against the heroes who laid him low.
- **An Abyssal Home Away from Home:** If any of the PCs have the Smoking Eye template, they feel periodic urges to return to the Abyssal layer of Occipitus. What changes have been evolving there, now that Adimarchus is finally defeated, and what is the meaning behind the dreams of burning and suffering bearers of the Smoking Eye have begun to endure?
- **Necroclastic Doom:** After studying the lore contained on the Soul Pillars, Meerthan Eliothlorn made a disturbing discovery. The soul pillars were damaged during the recent volcanic activity, and the necromantic energy within is building at an alarming rate. Before long, this energy could

erupt in a manner similar to the volcano below, spewing negative energy instead of lava and wreaking unimaginable havoc. In order to defuse the soul pillars, the PCs must delve deeper than ever before into the ruined spell weaver holdings near the Demonskar.

- **Haunted House:** Soon after purchasing House Vhalantru, the Vanderborens moved into their new home. Less than a month later, they and their servants have vanished. Those who enter House Vhalantru and stay for a few minutes agree that something seems strange about the empty mansion now... and those who stay for longer vanish utterly. What fell menace has claimed the estate for its own, and what is the source of the strange lights that can sometimes be seen flashing inside the house at night? Has Vhalantru indeed returned from the grave to reclaim his domain?
- **Perils of Politics:** In Chapter Nine, the PCs helped lay the foundations for Cauldron's future, and may have chosen a new lord mayor. The new lord mayor could find himself in over his head when other nobles, guildmasters, and important NPCs start jockeying for favors, and may call upon the PCs to help sort out what is best for Cauldron's future.
- **You Killed My Master!:** Some of the Cagewrights' apprentices were not present at the time of this adventure, and thus still live. With their masters and mistresses slain, these apprentices seek each other out and found a new cabal, one with a far more simple mission than the original Cagewrights. These new Cagewrights seek only the deaths of the PCs; revenge for the same fates they visited upon their lords and ladies.
- **Return of Ssythar Vassha:** Something the PCs did during Chapter Eleven has had unforeseen consequences. Perhaps it was the destruction of the *Egg of Merrshaulk*, or maybe it was the defiling of the Temple of Fangs. Whatever the cause, Ssythar Vassha, the one-time lord of Shatterhorn and prophet of the dark god of the yuan-ti, has returned to life and is gathering the scattered yuan-ti tribes of the jungle to his banner in preparation for a war to reclaim the lands surrounding Cauldron in Merrshaulk's unholy name!
- **Graz'zt's Rage:** Characters who free Adimarchus, either through their actions or inactions, earn Graz'zt's eternal enmity. Once the demon prince realizes that Dark Myrakul is slain, he absorbs the lichfiend's life force out of spite and then sends his son, Athux, to eliminate the heroes. A master of disguise with access to a vast planar spy network, Athux first sends assassins to dispose of the characters. Only if they fail does the son of Graz'zt deal with them personally. Graz'zt himself avoids direct confrontation with the PCs unless he can arrange an ambush; after all, the PCs have already defeated one demon prince!

Alternate Keys to Adimarchus's Cage

If none of the current characters have the Smoking Eye template, you'll need to adjust the conditions for freeing Adimarchus from his cage so that the PCs still have a chance to complete the campaign. The most important thing, no matter how you decide Adimarchus's cage can be destroyed, is that the PCs should be key in some way to the action.

One option is that only good outsiders can damage the cage. If Nidrama is with the party, she can destroy the cage if the PCs can keep her alive long enough to reach it. Otherwise, the PCs may need to use summoned monsters to do the work for them (unless, of course, one of the PCs happens to be a good outsider as well).

Another option is to require that the cage can only be destroyed if it is attacked simultaneously by a lawful good creature and a chaotic evil creature.

A particularly challenging option might be to require the PCs to find a creature with the Smoking Eye template (such as a reborn Vhalantru or the maralith Byakala), somehow transport that creature to area **10** of Skullrot, and then convince or force that creature to destroy the cage.

Note that the more obscure the conditions become, the less likely the PCs are to realize how to destroy the cage. They'll likely need to do some research in large libraries, consult with powerful outsiders, or use potent divination magic to learn the secret. Fortunately, Adimarchus isn't going anywhere, so they should have time to figure things out. Unfortunately, the longer they wait, the more likely it is that Graz'zt realizes his enemy's prison is unguarded.

New Beginnings

Since the beginning of history, humanity has measured time in Ages. Ages of Glory, of Dreams, and even of Great Sorrows mark the human tally of years, giving a sense of order to the events of past centuries. But one age has yet to occur—an age of darkness, of decay, and of writhing doom. Witty bards and wrathful preachers know it as the Age of Worms, weaving it into the peripheries of their passion plays as a mythic era of destruction that could begin at any time. Astrologers, diviners, and the servants of Fate know more. The canniest among them fear that the Age of Worms has already begun.

With the completion of this epic campaign, you and your characters may be ready to start a new campaign. Fortunately, the near-eruption of Cauldron has far-reaching consequences, and these consequences have a way of setting into motion events that the Cagewrights or the PCs could never have anticipated. Far, far to the north, in the shadowed depths of an ancient fissure, something stirs. Something ancient. This waxing menace is the focus of Adventure Path II: Age of Worms, published monthly in the pages of *Dungeon* magazine.

NEW MONSTERS

ADIMARCHUS, DEMON PRINCE OF MADNESS

ADIMARCHUS (ANGELIC FORM)

Medium Outsider (Chaotic, Evil, Extraplanar, Tanar'ri)
Hit Dice: 30d8+312 (525 hp)
Initiative: +6
Speed: 50 ft., fly 100 ft. (good)
AC: 42 (+6 Dex, +7 armor, +9 insight, +10 natural), touch 25, flat-footed 36
Base Attack/Grapple: +30/+38
Attack: +41 melee (1d6+11 plus special, *+3 anarchic clawed gauntlet*)
Full Attack: +39/+34/+29/+24 melee (1d6+11 plus special, *+3 anarchic clawed gauntlet*) and +37/+32/+27 melee (1d3+5 nonlethal plus trip, *+1 brilliant energy whip*) or +39/+34/+29/+24 melee (1d6+11 plus special, *+3 anarchic clawed gauntlet*) and +37/+32/+27 melee (2d4+5/19–20/×4, razorwings)
Space/Reach: 5 ft./5 ft. (15 ft. with whip)
Special Attacks: Implosive strike, razorwings, spell-like abilities, *summon tanar'ri*
Special Qualities: Damage reduction 20/good and cold iron, darkvision 120 ft., golden tattoos, immune to acid, immune to cold, immune to electricity, immune to petrifaction, immune to poison, lie in state, madness, outsider traits, resistance to fire 10, resistance to sonic 10, shroud alignment, spell resistance 35, telepathy 300 ft.
Saves: Fort +30, Ref +23, Will +28
Abilities: Str 27, Dex 22, Con 36, Int 16, Wis 5, Cha 32
Skills: Bluff +46, Concentration +46, Diplomacy +48, Disguise +46 (+48 acting), Intimidate +48, Knowledge (religion) +36, Knowledge (the planes) +36, Listen +30, Sense Motive +30, Spot +30, Survival +30 (+32 on other planes)
Feats: Combat Expertise, Dodge, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (whip), Greater Two-Weapon Fighting, Improved Trip, Improved Two-Weapon Fighting, Flyby Attack, Mobility, Spring Attack, Two-Weapon Fighting, Whirlwind Attack
Environment: Skullrot or Occipitus (507th layer of the Abyss)
Organization: Solitary
Challenge Rating: 23
Treasure: Quadruple standard
Alignment: Chaotic evil
Advancement: —

ADIMARCHUS (DEMONIC FORM)

Medium Outsider (Chaotic, Evil, Extraplanar, Tanar'ri)
Hit Dice: 30d8+312 (525 hp)
Initiative: +10
Speed: 50 ft.
AC: 45 (+6 Dex, +9 insight, +20 natural), touch 25, flat-footed 39
Base Attack/Grapple: +24/+36
Attack: +42 melee (2d6+23/17–20 plus special, *Ashen Blade*) and +34 melee (1d6+6 plus 1d4 negative levels, 4 tentacles)
Full Attack: +42/+37/+32/+27 melee (2d6+23/17–20 plus special, *Ashen Blade*) and +34 melee (1d6+6 plus 1d4 negative levels, 4 tentacles)
Space/Reach: 5 ft./5 ft. (15 ft. with tentacles)
Special Attacks: *Ashen Blade*, enervating bite, spell-like abilities, *summon tanar'ri*
Special Qualities: Damage reduction 20/good and cold iron, darkvision 120 ft., fast healing 15, immune to acid, immune to cold, immune to electricity, immune to petrifaction, immune to poison, lie in state, madness, outsider traits, resistance to fire 10, resistance to sonic 10, shroud alignment, spell resistance 35, telepathy 300 ft.
Saves: Fort +30, Ref +23, Will +28
Abilities: Str 35, Dex 22, Con 36, Int 16, Wis 5, Cha 32
Skills: Bluff +44, Concentration +46, Diplomacy +46, Disguise +44 (+46 acting), Intimidate +46, Knowledge (religion) +36, Knowledge (the planes) +36, Listen +30, Sense Motive +30, Spot +30, Survival +30 (+32 on other planes)
Feats: Blind-Fight, Cleave, Combat Reflexes, Great Cleave, Improved Critical (greatsword), Improved Initiative, Multiattack, Power Attack, Quicken Spell-Like Ability (true seeing), Weapon Focus (greatsword)
Environment: Skullrot or Occipitus (507th layer of the Abyss)
Organization: Solitary
Challenge Rating: 23
Treasure: Quadruple standard
Alignment: Chaotic evil
Advancement: —

Adimarchus is a fallen celestial and the exiled demon prince of madness. Centuries ago, he led a rampaging army of demons on an invasion of Celestia. The heavenly host repulsed the demonic army, but at great cost: the angels of Celestia were forced to cast the part of Celestia occupied by the demons into the Abyss, tear-

ing apart the fabric of the plane in the process. This massive chunk of planar matter came to rest on a layer of the Abyss called Occipitus.

Adimarchus acted quickly to incorporate the wreckage of Celestia into Occipitus. In doing so, he became the demon prince of the plane, gaining almost limitless power. Even in defeat, he knew success. For many years, Adimarchus ruled Occipitus, crafting from the ruins a great demonic empire.

Fifty years ago, Adimarchus made a move against a rival demon prince named Graz'zt. In the midst of a battle between Adimarchus's forces and those of Graz'zt, Adimarchus simply disappeared. Some say Graz'zt killed or captured him, while others say he fled when defeat seemed likely. A few even wonder if he had an attack of conscience and left the Abyss completely on a quest for celestial redemption.

The truth behind Adimarchus's disappearance centers on his love for Athux, a resolute aasimar paladin with six fingers on each hand. Five decades ago, Athux embarked on a quest to redeem Adimarchus's soul. The aasimar cut a swath across the tumorous plains of Occipitus and confronted the demon prince in his own throne room. Adimarchus and Athux fought until, exhausted, the demon prince sundered the aasimar's sword with his own dark blade. Clutching Athux by the throat, Adimarchus saw something in the aasimar's eyes that sparked his compassion. He could not kill Athux, nor could he subject the paladin to the torments of Occipitus. He tried to lure Athux over to the side of evil, but his attempts were halfhearted at best. Athux remained a prisoner on Occipitus and stood by Adimarchus's side as the demon prince plotted against his rival, Graz'zt. All the while, Athux fueled Adimarchus's rage against demonkind. A strange friendship bloomed, puzzling Adimarchus's minions and spurring some to betray him. Graz'zt learned of the planned assault against him and the alliance of Adimarchus and Athux, and in true demonic fashion, he conspired with Adimarchus's treacherous minions to overthrow his rival.

During the epic battle between Adimarchus's army and Graz'zt's hordes, demons swayed by Graz'zt captured Athux with surprising ease, imprisoning him in an asylum on Carceri. Adimarchus could not bear the loss of Athux, and the treachery of fiends rekindled the fallen angel's burning hatred. Adimarchus abandoned his hordes, his realm, and his evil ways, fleeing to Carceri to rescue Athux and find redemption. Alas, the tale of Adimarchus and Athux would not end well.

As Graz'zt's army crushed Adimarchus's abandoned demon horde, Adimarchus arrived at the demonic asylum of Skullrot on Carceri to find Athux overcome with dementia, the prisoner of one of Graz'zt's most powerful allies—a powerful undead priest of Graz'zt named Dark Myrakul. Unable to wrest the aasimar from Dark Myrakul's clutches, Adimarchus traded his own freedom for the paladin's restored mind and safe return to Celestia. The lichfiend readily agreed. The imprisoned Adimarchus watched as Athux shook off his "lunacy," only to transform into a black-skinned fiend with six fingers on each hand. Athux had misled Adimarchus from the start. He was, in fact, Graz'zt's devoted son. At that moment, Adimarchus realized his foolishness. Graz'zt had found a weakness in his rival—a long-buried desire for redemption that Adimarchus assumed he'd lost long ago—and used that weakness to dethrone his enemy. The very thought drove Adimarchus mad.

Dark Myrakul spent the past 50 years tormenting Adimarchus with the knowledge that his futile quest for redemption and his pathetic pursuit of love ultimately cost him his realm, his freedom, his mind—everything. The lichfiend's words fuel the demon prince's madness. More black-hearted than ever, Adimarchus craves freedom, power, vengeance, and myriad other things no demon should ever possess. Fractured are the demon prince's thoughts. Unbeknownst to Myrakul, Adimarchus's demonic insanity has granted him the power to plant fragments of his consciousness in distant minds and twist them in profound ways. Living creatures "touched" by Adimarchus become strangely drawn to him. The Cagewrights represented the most dangerous of these "children" of Adimarchus, yet now that they have failed to rescue their "father," Adimarchus's will and rage have bloomed into something altogether new; he has transformed into two distinct creatures, each with a burning fury to escape Skullrot at any cost.

Adimarchus has two forms. The first is that of a beautifully androgynous angel with pale purple skin, golden tattoolike patterns that shift lyrically across his bare flesh, metallic gold wings as sharp as razors, and dead black eyes. In this form, he wears a golden breastplate and wields two weapons: a brilliant energy whip and a golden gauntlet fitted with sharp, birdlike talons. His other form is a lithe humanoid with ash-black skin, opalescent white eyes, black fangs, and four shadowy tentacles protruding from his back, each one ending in a lamprey's maw. In this form, he wields a smoldering greatsword made of ash and cinders. In either form, Adimarchus's right eye burns with a smoking flame, more so when the demon prince is incensed.

COMBAT

(Angelic and Demonic Forms)

Adimarchus is a single being, but he can shift between his two forms on a whim. Changing between these two forms is a free action, and the demon prince's statistics change to match whatever form he has assumed. Attacking Adimarchus is like fighting two separate creatures; damage taken in one form isn't carried over to the other. To kill Adimarchus, the characters must slay both of his forms. Characters may try to destroy the evil in Adimarchus by slaying his fiendish form; however, both forms have been equally tainted by evil, and killing

one form does not redeem him. Adimarchus is wholly demon, and beyond redemption. In fact, unless both forms are slain, Adimarchus can reform his slain "half" after 1d10 days.

Although each of his two forms has unique special attacks and qualities, many of them are identical. Attacks and qualities that both forms have are detailed here.

***Summon Tanar'ri* (Sp):** Once per day, Adimarchus can automatically summon 1d3+1 glabrezus or 1 marilith.

Lie in State (Su): If both of Adimarchus's forms die, Adimarchus (in his current form) disappears after 24 rounds. The body reappears dead but intact on Occipitus, his realm in the Abyss. Any equipment Adimarchus was wearing or carrying at the moment of his death is likewise transported to Occipitus—and is likewise reconstituted if it was destroyed. *Dimensional anchor*, *dimensional lock*, and similar spells delay the body's transportation in this manner, but once the spell's effect ends, the body transports to Occipitus immediately. After lying in state for 1d100 days on his home plane, both of Adimarchus's forms are restored to full life. If Adimarchus is slain on his home plane, he is dead forever.

Madness (Ex): Adimarchus uses his Charisma modifier on Will saves instead of his Wisdom modifier, and is immune to confusion and insanity effects.

Shroud Alignment (Su): Spells and spell-like abilities with the good descriptor treat Adimarchus as if his alignment were good. Magic items are similarly fooled.

COMBAT (ANGELIC FORM)

In this form, Adimarchus wears a +2 *breastplate of command*, and wields a +3 *anarchic clawed gauntlet* and a +1 *brilliant energy whip*. A clawed gauntlet functions like a spiked gauntlet, only it deals 1d6 points of slashing damage (instead of 1d4 points of piercing damage).

Implosive Strike (Su): Three times per day and no more than once per round, Adimarchus can cause an opponent to implode with any normal melee attack. In addition to taking damage, the target must make a DC 28 Fortitude save or collapse in on itself and be killed instantly. Adimarchus must declare that he is using this ability before the attack roll is made. The save DC is Constitution-based.

Razorwings (Su): These gold-plated wings have razor-sharp feathers. Adimarchus can attack with them as an off-hand weapon, although not in the same round he attacks with two hand-held weapons. The wings deal damage as a *+1 keen scythe.*

Spell-Like Abilities (Sp): Always active—*mind blank* (self only); At will—*detect good, detect magic, detect poison, mirror image, greater teleport*; 3/day—*blindness/deafness* (DC 23), *entropic shield, greater command* (DC 26), *plane shift* (DC 26), *unholy blight* (DC 25); 1/day—*blasphemy* (DC 28), *flame strike* (DC 26), *song of discord* (DC 26), *word of chaos* (DC 28). Caster level 30th. The save DCs are Charisma-based.

Golden Tattoos (Ex): Adimarchus's golden tattoos grant him complete immunity from any extra damage caused by critical hits or sneak attacks.

COMBAT (DEMONIC FORM)

In this form, Adimarchus carries an artifact known as the *Ashen Blade.* This is a *+5 greatsword* that appears to be made of ash and cinders. Once per round, a creature struck by the weapon must make a DC 18 Reflex Save or be immolated in a bloom of white-hot fire, taking 21d6 points of damage. Half of the damage is fire damage, and the other half results directly from divine power. A successful save halves the damage. Adimarchus typically activates this power on the first successful hit with his sword in a round.

Enervating Bite (Su): Any creature bitten by one of Adimarchus's tentacles gains 1d4 negative levels. On a critical hit, the bite instead inflicts 2d4 negative levels. The Fortitude save to remove these negative levels is DC 38; this save DC is Constitution-based.

Spell-Like Abilities (Sp): Always active—*mind blank* (self only); At will—*detect good, detect magic, greater teleport, true seeing*; 3/day—*darkness, greater dispel magic, plane shift* (DC 26), *unholy blight* (DC 25); 1/day—*horrid wilting* (DC 29), *maze, wall of force.* Caster level 30th. The save DCs are Charisma-based.

CRYSTAL SNAKE

Medium Construct
Hit Dice: 18d10+20 (hp 165)
Initiative: +7
Speed: 40 ft. (8 squares)
AC: 35 (+7 Dex, +18 natural), touch 17, flat-footed 28
Base Attack/Grapple: +9/+14
Attack: +14 melee (1d8+7, bite)
Full Attack: +14 melee (1d8+7, bite)
Space/Reach: 5 ft./5 ft.
Special Attacks: Destructive resonance, searing light
Special Qualities: Construct traits, damage reduction 15/adamantine, darkvision 60 ft., death burst, fast healing 5, immunity to magic, low-light vision
Saves: Fort +6, Ref +13, Will +6
Abilities: Str 20, Dex 24, Con —, Int —, Wis 11, Cha 1
Skills: —
Feats: —
Environment: Any
Organization: Solitary
Challenge Rating: 15
Treasure: None
Alignment: Always neutral
Advancement: 19–24 HD (Medium), 25–36 HD (Large), 37–54 HD (Huge)

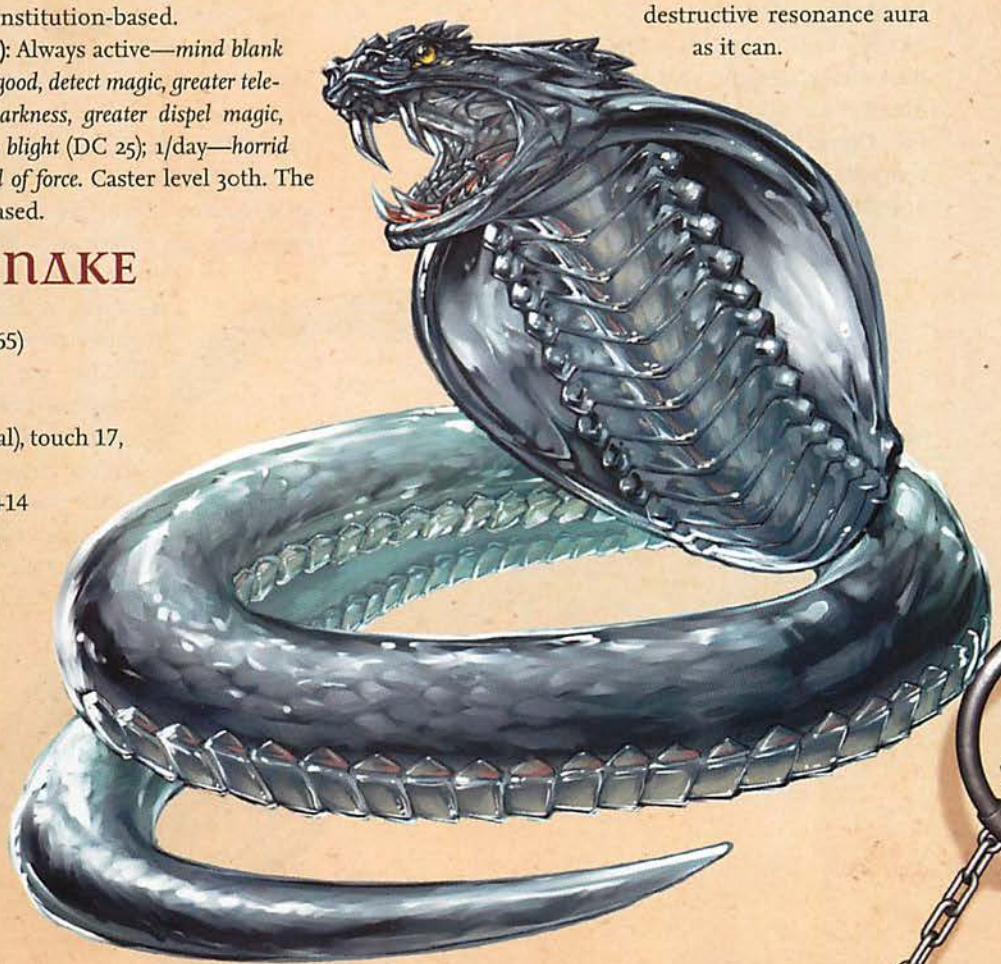
This man-sized snake seems made of delicate crystal. Its head unfurls into a cobra's hood, and brilliant flashes of colorful energy pulse inside its translucent body.

A crystal snake is a golem-like creation of the yuan-ti. Although smaller than most golems, the crystal snake is still a potent and dangerous creation. A crystal snake is shockingly graceful and sinuous in motion, almost as if it were an actual snake made of flexible glass.

A crystal snake weighs about 400 pounds.

COMBAT

A crystal snake's physical attack consists of a single bite. This attack is fairly minor, though, and the snake usually only makes bite attacks when it makes an attack of opportunity. It prefers to use its searing light when attacking targets, and tries to catch as many targets in its destructive resonance aura as it can.



Destructive Resonance (Su): The crystal snake can emit a low-frequency hum as a free action. At the beginning of its turn, it deals 6d6 points of sonic damage to any creature within 10 feet of it. A DC 19 Fortitude save halves the damage; the save DC is Constitution-based.

Searing Light (Su): As a standard action, the crystal snake can fire a *searing light*, as the spell with a range of 250 feet. The snake must succeed on a ranged touch attack to strike its target. A creature struck by the blazing ray takes 5d8 points of damage (10d6 if the target is undead, 10d8 if the target is an undead creature particularly vulnerable to sunlight, 5d6 if the target is a construct or inanimate object).

Death Burst (Su): When the crystal snake is reduced to 0 hit points, it explodes in a 20-foot-radius burst of searing radiance that deals 40 points of damage to every creature in the area (60 points if the target is undead, 80 points if the target is an undead creature particularly vulnerable to sunlight, or 30 points if the target is a construct or inanimate object). A DC 19 Reflex save halves the damage. The save DC is Constitution-based.

Immunity to Magic (Ex): The crystal snake is immune to any spell or spell-like ability that allows spell resistance except spells and effects with the sonic descriptor (such as *shatter*, *shout*, and *greater shout*).

DRACONIC FINGERLING

Diminutive Dragon (Aquatic, Swarm)
Hit Dice: 10d12 (65 hp)
Initiative: +3
Speed: Swim 30 ft. (6 squares)
AC: 18 (+4 size, +3 Dex, +1 natural), touch 17, flat-footed 15
Base Attack/Grapple: +10/—
Attack: Swarm 2d6 + 1d6 acid
Full Attack: Swarm 2d6 + 1d6 acid
Space/Reach: 10 ft./0 ft.
Special Attacks: Distraction
Special Qualities: Darkvision 60 ft., feed, immune to weapon damage, swarm traits
Saves: Fort +9, Ref +12, Will +9
Abilities: Str 1, Dex 16, Con 11, Int 3, Wis 10, Cha 1
Skills: Jump +9, Listen +13, Spot +13
Feats: Great Fortitude, Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes
Environment: Temperate aquatic
Organization: Solitary or colony (2–5)
Challenge Rating: 5
Treasure: None
Alignment: Always chaotic evil
Advancement: None
Level Adjustment: —

A glistening school of ebony tadpoles turns the water black as it swims closer.

The product of the union of a male black dragon and several kuo-toan females, the draconic fingerlings that make up this swarm will eventually grow up to become half-dragon kuo-toas. Until they develop limbs and grow much larger, they swim about in great schools, looking for food.

COMBAT

A draconic fingerling swarm seeks to surround and eat any living creature it finds in the water. If a meal flees, it gives chase, even leaping out of the water briefly to bring down its prey. The swarm deals 2d6 points of damage plus 1d6 points of acid damage to any creature whose space it occupies at the end of its move.

Distraction (Ex): Any living creature that begins its turn with a draconic fingerling swarm in its space must succeed at a DC 15 Fortitude save or be nauseated for 1 round. The save DC is Constitution-based.

Feed (Ex): When a draconic fingerling swarm slays an opponent, it can feed on the corpse, dissolving and devouring the corpse as a full-round action. Feeding destroys the victim's body and prevents any form of raising or resurrection that requires part of the corpse. For every 3 Hit Dice the victim had, the draconic fingerling swarm gains a +1 bonus to its Constitution score. This increase to Constitution lasts for 1 hour. The draconic fingerling swarm ignores living opponents if there's a suitable corpse to feed on within 30 feet.

Skills: A draconic fingerling swarm has a +4 racial bonus on Jump checks, which it uses to leap above the surface of the water to reach prey.

LICHFIEND

"Lichfiend" is a monster template that is nearly identical to the lich template detailed in the *Monster Manual*, save that whereas the lich is the result of a humanoid spellcaster seeking to prolong his life via undeath, the lichfiend is an outsider spellcaster who seeks only to gain personal power at the expense of his free will.

The lichfiend template is identical to the lich template, save for the following differences:

- The lichfiend template may be applied to any evil outsider that has the Evil Brand feat and is at least caster level 11 in a spellcasting class.
- A lichfiend's touch does not threaten permanent paralysis; rather, it threatens permanent *insanity*, as the spell of the same name.
- Lichfiends do not create phylacteries to house their life force. Rather, their life force is maintained by a powerful fiendish patron or evil deity. This patron can revoke the lichfiend's undead status (thereby destroying the lichfiend) as a free action at any time, so lichfiends are unquestioningly loyal to their patrons. A lichfiend that is killed crumbles to dust and its lifeforce returns to its patron, who may create a new body identical to the lichfiend's prior body if he wishes, or may simply absorb the lichfiend's lifeforce, destroying it utterly. The only way to permanently slay a lichfiend is to use a *miracle* or *wish* within one round of the lichfiend's destruction to prevent its life force from returning to its patron, or to convince its patron to destroy the lifeforce rather than restore it to a body.

MOB

A mob is, in many ways, treated as a single entity similar to a swarm, save that it is made of much larger creatures. A mob can be composed of Small, Medium, or Large creatures, but all of the individual creatures must be of the same type. A mob that incorporates a crowd of goblins and a crowd of chokers is best modeled by two separate mobs. You can use the following template to create specific types of mobs.

CREATING A MOB

"Mob" is an acquired template that can be added to any Small, Medium, or Large creature. Generally, mobs are transitory; after forming, a mob lasts for, at most, 1d4+1 hours before breaking up. Most mobs break up naturally far sooner, once the condition that caused its formation is no longer a factor. A mob uses all the base creature's statistics and special abilities except as noted here.

Size and Type: A mob is a Gargantuan creature composed of either 48 Small or Medium creatures or 12 Large creatures. The mob's type remains unchanged from the base creature.

Hit Dice: A mob has a single pool of Hit Dice and hit points. All mobs have 30 Hit Dice; this number represents the mob's mentality and physical mass more than its race or class, since the individual members of a mob don't use their own abilities or experience to aid the whole. The type of Hit Dice rolled is set by the mob's racial Hit Dice, not any class levels the mob may have. Thus, a mob of human commoners would roll d8s for hit points, not d4s.

Reducing a mob to 0 hit points or lower causes it to break up, though damage taken until that point does not degrade its ability to attack or resist attack. Mobs are never staggered or reduced to a dying state by damage.

Initiative: A mob's initiative modifier is always +0.

Speed: A mob's speed is equal to that of the base creature –10 feet.

Armor Class: As the base creature, modified by –4 for the mob's Gargantuan size.

Base Attack: Since all mobs have 30 hit dice, their base attacks are set depending upon their type.

Mob Type	Base Attack
Fey, Undead	+15
Aberration, Animal, Construct, Elemental, Giant, Humanoid, Ooze, Plant, Vermin	+22
Dragon, Magical Beast, Monstrous Humanoid, Outsider	+30

Grapple: As base attack, modified by +12 for its size, and as appropriate for its Strength modifier.

Attack/Full Attack: Mobs don't make standard attacks. Rather, they are treated similar to swarms in combat. A mob deals 5d6 bludgeoning damage to any creature whose space it occupies at the end of its move, with no attack roll needed. Mob attacks are not subject to a miss chance for concealment or cover. The mob's attacks are nonmagical, unless the base creature's attacks are considered magical. Damage reduction applies to mob attacks.

Space/Reach: A mob occupies a square 20 feet on a side, but its reach is 0 feet. In order to attack, it moves into an opponent's space, which provokes an attack of opportunity. It can occupy the same space as a creature of any size since it tramples over and moves around its victim. A mob can move through squares occupied by enemies and vice versa without impediment, although the mob provokes an attack of opportunity if it does so. A mob can move through openings large enough for its component creatures.

Larger mobs are represented by multiples of single mobs. The area occupied by large mob like this is completely shapeable, though the mob usually remains in contiguous squares.

Special Attacks: A mob's mentality is fueled by emotion; as a result, the individual creatures that make up the mob are unable to effectively use any special attacks that require actions to use, such as breath weapons, spell-like abilities, and the like. If the base creature has special attacks that are keyed to its damage (such as poison, level drain, ability loss, improved grab, constrict, rend, or swallow whole), those special attacks function normally on any creature damaged by the mob. Special attacks like gaze weapons that function constantly continue to function normally. The save DCs for special attacks should be recalculated based on the mob's 30 Hit Dice.

In addition, mobs gain some or all of the following special attacks:

Expert Grappler (Ex): A mob can maintain a grapple without penalty and still make attacks normally against other targets (normally, attacking other targets while grappling imposes a –20 penalty on grapple checks). A mob is never considered flat-footed while grappling.

Trample (Ex): A mob that simply moves over a creature and doesn't end its movement with that creature in one of its occupied squares can trample the creature. A trampled creature takes 2d6 + 1.5 times the mob's Strength modifier points of damage. The victim can either make an attack of opportunity on the mob or make a Reflex save (DC 25 + the Mob's Strength modifier) to take half damage.

Special Qualities: A mob retains all of the special qualities of the base creature. In addition, it gains the following special quality.

Mob Anatomy (Ex): A mob has no clear front or back and no discernable anatomy, so it is not subject to critical hits or sneak attacks. A mob cannot be flanked, tripped, grappled, or bull rushed.

Unlike swarms, mobs are made up of relatively small numbers of individual creatures, so spells or effects that target specific numbers of creatures can have an effect on a mob. Each specific creature that is slain, disabled, or otherwise incapacitated by spells or effects that target specific creatures inflicts 2 negative levels on the mob. A mob that gains negative levels equal to its Hit Dice breaks up as if reduced to 0 hit points. Negative levels gained in this manner are not the result of negative energy (and thus cannot be blocked by *death ward* or removed by *restoration*), but never result in permanent level loss. A mob takes half again as much damage (+50%) from spells or effects that affect an area, such as splash weapons and most evocation spells.

Although mobs are treated as one creature, it sometimes becomes necessary to determine the fate of a specific individual caught up in the mob. If a mob is dispersed by non-lethal attacks, there are no casualties. If the mob is dispersed by lethal attacks, assume that 30% of its number are slain and 30% are reduced to 0 hit points. To determine a specific individual's fate, simply roll d%; a result of 01–30 indicates death, 31–60 indicates the victim is reduced to 0 hit points, and a roll of 61–100 indicates the victim escapes relatively unscathed.

Saves: A mob's saving throws are calculated as a 30 Hit Die creature of its particular type. A mob's base good save is +17, and its base bad save is +9.

Abilities: A mob's abilities are the same as the base creature, save that its Intelligence, Wisdom, and Charisma scores drop to 10. If the base creature's Intelligence, Wisdom, or Charisma scores are already lower than 10, they do not change.

Skills: Same as the base creature; do not recalculate based on the mob's 30 Hit Dice. The mob's new Intelligence, Wisdom, or Charisma scores may grant some skills different modifiers.

Feats: Same as the base creature; all mobs gain Improved Bull Rush and Improved Overrun as bonus feats.

Organization: Solitary, pair, or riot (3–12 mobs).

Challenge Rating: 8, or +2 if the base creature's CR is 7 or higher.

Advancement: —

Level Adjustment: —

Sample Mobs

These two stat blocks present two common forms of mob; the riot and the stampede.

Riot, Mob of Humans: CR 8; Gargantuan humanoid (mob of Medium humans); HD 30d8; hp 135; Init +4

Spd 20 ft.; AC 6, touch 6, flat-footed 6; Base Atk +22; Grp +34; Atk/Full Atk mob 5d6; Space/Reach 20 ft./0 ft.; SA expert grappler, trample; SQ mob anatomy; AL LN; SV Fort +11, Ref +9, Will +17; Str 11, Dex 11, Con 11, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 10.

Skills: Listen +4, Spot +4.

Feats: Improved Initiative, Great Fortitude, Improved Bull Rush[B], Improved Overrun[B].

Stampede, Mob of Light Horses: CR 8; Gargantuan animal (mob of Large animals); HD 30d8+60; hp 195; Init +0; Spd 50 ft.; AC 10, touch 7, flat-footed 9; Base Atk +22; Grp +36; Atk/Full Atk mob 5d6+2; Space/Reach 20 ft./0 ft.; SA expert grappler, trample; SQ low-light vision, mob anatomy, scent; AL N; SV Fort +19, Ref +18, Will +9; Str 14, Dex 13, Con 15, Int 2, Wis 10, Cha 6.

Skills: Listen +3, Spot +3

Feats: Endurance, Improved Bull Rush[B], Improved Overrun[B], Run.

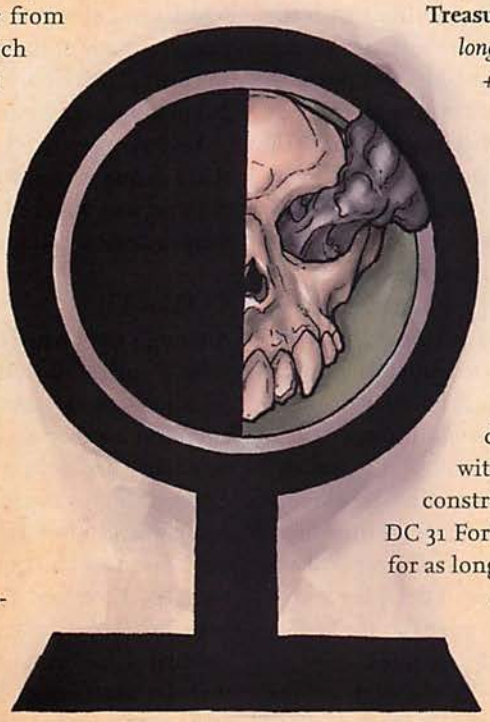
Smoking Eye Creature

The visible mark of one destined to rule Occipitus, the Sign of the Smoking Eye template imbues a creature with the essence of the Abyssal layer (an evil place tinged with good). Receiving the Sign of the Smoking Eye is a necessary first step on the path to ruling the layer as a demon lord. But because Occipitus isn't wholly evil, the Sign of the Smoking Eye can also be a useful tool for a creature determined to expunge every trace of evil from the plane and restore it to its Celestial glory.

The Sign of the Smoking Eye enables its bearer to establish morphic control over Occipitus. The previous bearer of the Sign, the fallen angel Adimarchus, could remake the landscape with a wave of his hand, control magic use across the layer, and draw nigh-limitless evil power from the fabric of the plane itself. Such abilities require both immense personal power and mastery of the esoteric techniques of morphic planar control—neither of which is granted by this template. With time, study, and the acquisition of further power, someone with the Sign of the Smoking Eye can turn Occipitus into a world that reflects its master's every desire.

Sample Smoking Eye Creature

This example uses a marilith demon as the base creature.



Byakala, Smoking Eye Advanced Maralith Demon

Large Outsider (Chaotic, Extraplanar, Evil, Tanar'ri)
Hit Dice: 20d8+220 (310 hp)
Initiative: +6
Speed: 40 ft. (8 squares)
AC: 31 (–1 size, +6 Dex, +16 natural), touch 15, flat-footed 25
Base Attack/Grapple: +20/+35
Attack: *+2 unholy longsword* +33 melee (1d8+11/19–20) or tail slap +30 melee (4d6+11)
Full Attack: *+2 unholy longsword* +33/+28/+23/+18 melee (1d8+13/19–20) and *+2 anarchic longsword* +33 melee (1d8+7/19–20) and *+2 trident* +33 melee (1d8+7) and *+1 keen scimitar* +32 melee (1d6+6/15–20) and *+1 shock flail* +32 melee (1d8+6 plus 1d6 electricity) and *+1 keen kukri* +32 melee (1d4+6/15–20) and tail slap +31 melee (4d6+11)
Space/Reach: 10 ft./10 ft.
Special Attacks: Constrict 4d6+16, improved grab, spell-like abilities, *summon tanar'ri*
Special Qualities: Damage reduction 10/good and cold iron, darkvision 50 ft., immunity to electricity and poison, lie in state, morphic potential, resistance to acid 10, cold 10, and fire 10, spell resistance 25, telepathy 100 ft.
Saves: Fort +24, Ref +19, Will +16
Abilities: Str 33, Dex 22, Con 32, Int 18, Wis 16, Cha 26
Skills: Bluff +31, Concentration +34, Diplomacy +35, Disguise +8 (+10 acting), Hide +25, Intimidate +33, Listen +26, Move Silently +29, Search +27, Sense Motive +26, Spellcraft +27, Spot +26, Use Magic Device +31
Feats: Combat Expertise, Combat Reflexes, Improved Trip, Multiattack, Multi-Weapon Fighting, Practiced Magic, Quicken Spell-Like Ability (*blade barrier*)
Environment: Tarterian Depths of Carceri
Organization: Solitary
Challenge Rating: 19
Treasure: *+2 unholy longsword, +2 anarchic longsword, +2 trident, +1 keen scimitar, +1 shock flail, +1 keen kukri*
Alignment: Always chaotic evil
Advancement: 21–48 HD (Huge)
Level Adjustment: —

Byakala was once one of Adimarchus's chief lieutenants, and like her master is now imprisoned on Carceri at the tower of Harrrowfell.

Constrict (Ex): Byakala deals 4d6+16 points of damage with a successful grapple check. The constricted creature must succeed on a DC 31 Fortitude save or lose consciousness for as long as it remains in the coils and for 2d4 rounds thereafter. The save DC is Strength-based.

Improved Grab (Ex): To use this ability, Byakala must hit with her tail slap.

Spell-Like Abilities (caster level 21st): At will—*align weapon, blade barrier* (DC 24), *magic weapon, project image* (DC 24), *polymorph, see invisibility, telekinesis* (DC 23), *greater teleport* (self plus 50 pounds of objects only), *unholy aura* (DC 26); 3/day—quickened *blade barrier* (DC 24).

True Seeing (Su): Byakala continuously uses this ability as the spell (caster level 21st).

CREATING A SMOKING EYE CREATURE

"Sign of the Smoking Eye" is an acquired template that can be added to any living creature with at least one eye (referred to hereafter as the base creature).

A creature with the Sign of the Smoking Eye uses all the base creature's statistics and special abilities except as noted here.

Appearance: One of the base creature's eyes (usually the left one) is replaced with magical flame that gives off no heat and does not burn the surrounding flesh. When the eye is open, it provides illumination as a candle. The base creature's vision is unaffected—he or she can still see through the transformed eye normally. The eye also gives off wisps of bitter smoke. The smoke doesn't obscure vision, but it does give a +10 bonus to creatures trying to track the base creature by scent.

Attacks: The base creature gains a +1 insight bonus on all attacks as the power of Occipitus subtly guides his blows.

Special Qualities: The base creature retains all special qualities and gains those described below:

Spellcasting: The base creature's effective caster level for spells and spell-like abilities goes up by +1. The power of Occipitus makes the base creature's spells last slightly longer, reach slightly farther, and deal slightly more damage.

Imbued with Evil: Regardless of the base creature's actual alignment, spells and spell-like abilities with the evil descriptor treat the base creature as if his or her alignment were evil. Spells and spell-like abilities with the good descriptor treat the base creature as if his or her alignment were good. Magic items are similarly fooled. An *unholy blight* spell, for example, won't damage a creature with the Sign of the Smoking Eye, no matter what his or her actual alignment is.

Lie in State: When the base creature dies, his or her body disappears after a number of rounds equal to the base creature's Hit Dice. The body reappears dead but intact in the Skull's eye socket on Occipitus. Any equipment the base creature was carrying, holding, or wearing at the moment of death is likewise transported to Occipitus—and is likewise reconstituted if it was destroyed at the moment of death. Each time this ability is used, there's a 20% chance that the base creature loses the Sign of the Smoking Eye template. *Dimensional anchor, dimensional lock,* and similar spells delay the body's transportation in this manner, but once the spell effect ends the body transports to Occipitus immediately.

Morphic Potential: A creature with the Sign of the Smoking Eye has the potential to change the landscape of Occipitus through conscious effort, provided the base creature is powerful enough to do so. Details of how this ability can be used are up to the DM, but in any case, no creature of 20th-level or lower can wield such power consciously. Over time, even a lower-level character exerts a subconscious influence on Occipitus, however, and the landscape and the essential nature of the plane changes to conform to the base creature's alignment and desires.

Saves: The base creature gains a +1 insight bonus on all saving throws—it's almost as if the layer of Occipitus is looking out for him or her.

Challenge Rating: The base creature's CR remains unchanged.

Level Adjustment: Same as the base creature +1. The creature is now treated as one level higher than the base creature's equivalent class level for purposes of determining experience point awards. For example, if a 12th-level human fighter gains this template, he is treated as a 13th-level character when determining experience point awards, and thus gains slightly fewer experience points than he would have without the template's additional powers and bonuses.

THUNDER BEAST

This beast looks like a massive terrestrial hippo, but with longer (and more) legs. It's body appears swollen, and its tail is broad, flat, and fairly short. The beast's mouth is tremendous, with massive tusks. Its yellow-brown flesh is mottled with sickly green warty growths.

These bloated, elephantine creatures roam in herds across the layers of the lower planes, particularly the Abyss and Carceri. Called thunder beasts for their rumbling bellows, intestinal sounds, and offensive breath, these creatures subsist on vegetation and ooze from which unwholesome growths spring. In turn, they are fed upon by many of the other creatures likewise inhabiting the place. Their flesh is rank, fibrous, and disgusting to all but demons and their ilk—and possibly even to them!

For every two adult creatures in a thunder beast herd there is one immature specimen (half normal hit dice with no bite attack). A thunder beast is 18 feet tall and weighs 20,000 pounds.

COMBAT

Although not carnivorous, the thunder beast is a notoriously surly and cantankerous creature, highly prone to unprovoked attacks and sudden charges against anything it perceives as threatening its personal territory. They begin their attacks by charging their targets. Against single targets, they usually utilize bite attacks. Against large numbers of foes they use trample. A thunder beast uses bull rush or overrun to reach and attack the largest creature it sees.

Bellow (Su): As a standard action, a thunder beast can unleash a tremendous roar. All creatures within the thunder beast's reach must make a DC 23 Fortitude save or be stunned for 1 round and deafened for 2d6 hours.

	Thunder Beast Huge Magical Beast (Extraplanar)	Thunder Beast Behemoth Colossal Magical Beast (Extraplanar)
Hit Dice:	15d10+90 (172 hp)	36d10+468 (630 hp)
Initiative:	–1	–1
Speed:	20 ft. (4 squares)	20 ft. (4 squares)
AC:	23 (–2 size, –1 Dex, +16 natural), touch 7, flat-footed 23	33 (–8 size, –1 Dex, +32 natural), touch 1, flat-footed 33
Base Attack/Grapple:	+15/+37	+36/+58
Attack:	Bite +27 melee (2d8+21)	Bite +50 melee (6d8+33)
Full Attack:	Bite +27 melee (2d8+21)	Bite +50 melee (6d8+33)
Space/Reach:	15 ft./10 ft.	30 ft./20 ft.
Special Attacks:	Bellow, powerful charge, trample 2d8+21	Bellow, powerful charge, trample 6d8+33
Special Qualities:	Darkvision 60 ft., immunities, low-light vision, stench	Darkvision 60 ft., immunities, low-light vision, stench
Saves:	Fort +15, Ref +8, Will +7	Fort +33, Ref +19, Will +13
Abilities:	Str 38, Dex 8, Con 23, Int 2, Wis 14, Cha 5	Str 54, Dex 8, Con 37, Int 2, Wis 14, Cha 5
Skills:	Listen +11, Spot +11	Listen +22, Spot +21
Feats:	Diehard, Endurance, Improved Bull Rush, Improved Overrun, Power Attack, Run	Diehard, Endurance, Improved Bull Rush, Improved Natural Armor (7), Improved Overrun, Power Attack, Run
Environment:	Any (Lower Planes)	Any (Lower Planes)
Organization:	Solitary or herd (6–30)	Solitary
Challenge Rating:	9	16
Treasure:	None	None
Alignment:	Always neutral	Always neutral
Advancement:	16–20 HD (Huge), 21–35 HD (Gargantuan), 36–45 HD (Colossal)	37–45 HD (Colossal)
Level Adjustment:	—	—

A successful save negates both effects. A thunder beast may use this sonic attack once a minute.

Powerful Charge (Ex): A thunder beast deals 4d8+42 points of damage with its bite when it makes a charge.

Trample (Ex): Reflex Half DC 31. The save DC is Strength-based.

Immunities (Ex): Thunder beasts are immune to sonic attacks as well as all forms of disease, poison, sickness or nausea caused by odors.

Stench (Su): A thunder beast's breath is supernaturally wretched. Any creature within the thunder beast's reach at the start of his turn must make a DC 23 Fortitude save or become nauseated for 1d4 rounds.

THUNDER BEAST BEHEMOTH

A rare few thunder beasts reach absolutely prodigious size. These behemoths are usually solitary creatures, but sometimes travel with a herd of regular-sized thunder beasts. A thunder beast behemoth can be over 100 feet tall and often weighs in excess of 150 tons.

Bellow (Su): The thunder beast behemoth's bellow can be resisted with a DC 41 Fortitude save.

Powerful Charge (Ex): A thunder beast behemoth deals 12d8+66 points of damage with its bite when it makes a charge.

Trample (Ex): Reflex Half DC 50. The save DC is Strength-based.

Immunities (Ex): Thunder beast behemoths are immune to all forms of disease, poison, sickness or nausea caused by odors, as well as sonic attacks.

Stench (Su): A thunder beast behemoth's breath is supernaturally wretched. Any creature within the thunder beast's reach at the start of his turn must make a DC 41 Fortitude save or become nauseated for 1d4 rounds.

TARTERIAN CREATURE

A creature on any plane other than Carceri can, through ancient magic and arcane rituals, barter with a fiendish spirit trapped in the Tarterian Depths of Carceri. This bargain allows the fiendish spirit a momentary yet priceless flicker of freedom as it bestows the bargainer with fragments of its power. The fiendish spirit is annihilated as a result, but many fiends would rather be destroyed than trapped on Carceri for all eternity.

In exchange for its newfound fiendish powers, the beneficiary, now a Tarterian creature, gives up its soul upon death. Put another way, when the Tarterian creature dies, its soul goes to Carceri and is trapped there. For as long as the spirit remains trapped on Carceri, *raise dead*, *resurrection*, and *true resurrection* spells automatically fail to restore the creature to life.

CREATING A TARTERIAN CREATURE

"Tarterian" is an acquired template that can be added to any living corporeal creature of evil alignment (referred to hereafter as the "base creature"). A Tarterian creature uses all of the base creature's statistics and abilities except where noted here. It also gains new special abilities and special qualities based on the type of demodand spirit it absorbs:

Farastu Demodand Spirit

Special Attacks: The Tarterian creature with a farastu spirit retains all of the special attacks of the base creature but also gains the following abilities:

Adhesive Slime (Ex): The Tarterian creature exudes a sticky, tarlike slime that acts as a powerful adhesive, holding fast creatures or items that touch it. The Tarterian creature gets a +8 racial bonus on grapple checks and disarm checks due to the adhesive slime. A weapon that strikes a Tarterian creature is stuck fast unless the wielder succeeds on a Reflex save (the save DC is Constitution-based). Prying off a stuck weapon requires a DC 17 Strength check.

Lantern oil or some other flammable oil (such as alchemist's fire) dissolves the Tarterian creature's adhesive slime; the creature requires 10 minutes to renew its adhesive coating if doused with oil. A Tarterian creature can dissolve its adhesive slime at will, and the substance breaks down 1 minute after the Tarterian creature dies.

Rage (Ex): Three times per day, the Tarterian creature can fly into a frenzy, raging like a barbarian (see the *Player's Handbook*, page 25). However, the Tarterian creature is not fatigued at the end of its rage.

Spell-Like Abilities: At will—*detect magic, clairaudience/clairvoyance, fear, invisibility, tongues*; 3/day—*fog cloud, ray of enfeeblement*; 2/day—*dispel magic*. Caster level 11th. The save DCs are Charisma-based.

Special Qualities: The Tarterian creature with a farastu spirit retains all of the special qualities of the base creature but also gains the following qualities:

Freedom of Movement (Su): The Tarterian creature gains the benefit of continuous *freedom of movement*, as the spell (caster level 10th).

Scent (Ex): The Tarterian creature can detect approaching enemies, sniff out hidden foes, and track by sense of smell.

Darkvision out to 60 feet.

Immunity to acid and poison.

Resistance to cold 5 and fire 5.

Cannot be raised or resurrected.

Abilities: Increase from the base creature as follows: +2 Str, +2 Cha.

Skills: The Tarterian creature's adhesive slime gives it a +8 racial bonus on Climb checks.

CR: Same as the base creature +2.

Kelubar Demodand Spirit

Special Attacks: The Tarterian creature with a kelubar spirit retains all of the special attacks of the base creature but also gains the following abilities:

Acidic Slime (Ex): The slime secreted by a Tarterian creature adds +1d6 points of acid damage to each of its melee attacks. On a successful critical hit, this burst of acid deals +1d10 points of acid damage instead.

Stench (Ex): The Tarterian creature's slime reeks of filth and decay. All creatures (except other Tarterian

creatures) within 30 feet of a kelubar must succeed on a Fortitude save or be nauseated for as long as the creature remains within the area, and for 10 rounds after the creature leaves. A successful save means the creature is immune to that Tarterian creature's stench for 24 hours (but not the stench of other Tarterian creatures). The save DC is Constitution-based.

Spell-Like Abilities: At will—*detect magic, clairaudience/clairvoyance, fear, invisibility, Melf's acid arrow, spider climb, tongues*; 3/day—*fog cloud, ray of enfeeblement*; 2/day—*acid fog, dispel magic*. Caster level 13th. The save DCs are Charisma-based.

Special Qualities: The Tarterian creature with a kelubar spirit retains all of the special qualities of the base creature but also gains the following qualities:

Freedom of Movement (Su): The Tarterian creature gains the benefit of continuous *freedom of movement*, as the spell (caster level 10th).

Darkvision out to 120 feet.

Immunity to acid and poison.

Resistance to cold 10 and fire 10.

Cannot be raised or resurrected.

Abilities: Increase from the base creature as follows: +4 Str, +4 Cha.

Skills: The Tarterian creature gets a +2 racial bonus on Bluff, Diplomacy, and Sense Motive checks.

CR: Same as the base creature +2.

Shator Demodand Spirit

Special Attacks: The Tarterian creature with a shator spirit retains all of the special attacks of the base creature but also gains the following abilities:

Paralyzing Slime (Ex): Creatures struck in melee by the Tarterian creature's claw or bite attack must succeed on a Fortitude saving throw or be paralyzed for 3d6 rounds. The Tarterian creature can choose to spit a globule of slime as a ranged touch attack with a range of 30 feet, with the same effect. The save DC is Constitution-based.

Spell-Like Abilities: At will—*detect magic, clairaudience/clairvoyance, fear, invisibility, spider climb, tongues*; 3/day—*cloudkill, fog cloud, ray of enfeeblement, stinking cloud*; 2/day—*dispel magic*; 1/day—*mass charm monster*. Caster level 15th. The save DCs are Charisma-based.

Special Qualities: The Tarterian creature with a shator spirit retains all of the special qualities of the base creature but also gains the following qualities:

Freedom of Movement (Su): The Tarterian creature gains the benefit of continuous *freedom of movement*, as the spell (caster level 10th).

Scent (Ex): The Tarterian creature can detect approaching enemies, sniff out hidden foes, and track by sense of smell.

See Invisibility (Su): This ability functions as the *see invisibility* spell, except that it is always active and its range extends to the limits of the Tarterian creature's vision.

Darkvision out to 120 feet.

Immunity to acid, mind-influencing attacks, and poison.

Resistance to cold 20 and fire 20.

Cannot be raised or resurrected.

Abilities: Increase from the base creature as follows: +6 Str, +6 Cha.

Skills: The Tarterian creature gets a +2 racial bonus on Bluff, Diplomacy, and Sense Motive checks.

CR: Same as the base creature +3.

FEATS, SPELLS AND ITEMS

FEATS

ADROIT FLYBY ATTACK [GENERAL]

You can make flyby attacks and get out of reach quickly.

Prerequisites: Fly speed 90, Flyby Attack, Hover or Wingover.

Benefit: When flying and making an attack action, you can move both before and after the attack, provided that the total distance moved is not greater than your fly speed. Your flying movement does not provoke attacks of opportunity from the creatures you attack during the round when you use this feat.

This feat is from *Draconomicon: The Book of Dragons.*

CONTAGIOUS PARALYSIS [MONSTROUS]

Your paralyzing attack is contagious.

Prerequisite: Paralysis as an extraordinary or supernatural ability.

Benefit: Any creature paralyzed by your special attack can confer paralysis to other creatures that touch it. Any creature touching a creature that you have paralyzed is immediately affected as if you had delivered a paralyzing attack upon it (using the same save DC to resist, if allowed).

If a creature successfully saves against your contagious paralysis attack, it can't be affected again by that attack for 24 hours.

This feat is from *Libris Mortis: The Book of Undead.*

DEATH FROST SPELL [METAMAGIC]

Your mastery of necromantic magic combined with your understanding of the strange energies that suffuse the ruins of Karran-Kural allow you to enhance necromancy spells so that they inflict cold damage in addition to their normal effects.

Prerequisites: Spell Focus (necromancy), must have spent at least 1 day in the ruins of Karran-Kural.

Benefit: A Death Frost spell inflicts an extra 2d6 points of cold damage against any creature affected by the spell. If the spell allows a saving throw to partially or completely resist its effects, the same saving throw applies to the extra cold damage. For example, *ghoul touch* allows a Fortitude save to resist its effects completely, and therefore a successful save against a Death Frost *ghoul touch* negates both the extra cold damage and the spell's regular effects. If the enhanced spell has lingering effects, the extra cold damage occurs only at the onset of the spell's effects. Spells enhanced by Death Frost gain the cold descriptor. A Death Frost spell uses up a spell slot one level higher than the spell's actual level.

EVIL BRAND [VILE]

The character is physically marked forever as a servant of an evil power greater than herself or as a villain who does not care who knows that she seeks only death, destruction, and misery for others. The symbol is unquestionable in its perversity, depicting a depravity so unthinkable that all who see it know beyond a doubt that the bearer is forever in the sway of the blackest powers.

Benefit: Evil creatures automaticaly recognize the symbol now emblazoned upon the character as a sign of her utter depravity or discipleship to a powerful patron, although the specific identity of the patron is not revealed. She gains a +2 circumstance bonus on Diplomacy and Intimidate checks made against evil creatures.

This feat is from the *Book of Vile Darkness.*

FLESH OF THE ICE TOMB [GENERAL]

Your exposure to the strange energies that suffuse the ruins of Karran-Kural and long hours of near masochistic exposure to extreme cold have left your death-tainted flesh highly resistant to cold. You easily resist the damage caused by even extreme or magical cold.

Prerequisites: Tomb-Tainted Soul, Endurance, must have spent at least 1 day in the ruins of Karran-Kural.

Benefit: Treat all cold damage you suffer as nonlethal damage. Your body constantly feels cold and clammy.

IMPROVED FIENDISH SERVANT [GENERAL]

You gain the service of a fiendish animal servitor.

Prerequisites: Fiendish servant class feature.

Benefits: You can call an ape, black bear, boar, crocodile, dire badger, dire bat, dire weasel, heavy warhorse, leopard, monitor lizard, constrictor snake, Large viper snake, or wolverine as a fiendish servant. In addition, the servant gains the fiendish creature template (see *Monster Manual,* pages 107–108). The fiendish servant otherwise conforms to the rules in the *Dungeon Master's Guide* (page 183).

This feat is from *Champions of Ruin.*

IMPROVED MULTIATTACK [GENERAL]

You are particularly adept at using all of your natural weapons at once.

Prerequisites: Three or more natural weapons, Multiattack.

Benefit: Your secondary attacks with natural weapons have no penalty on the attack roll. You still add only 1/2 your Strength bonus, if any, to damage dealt.

Normal: Without this feat, your secondary natural attacks are made at a –5 penalty (or a –2 penalty if you have the Multiattack feat).

This feat is from *Draconomicon: The Book of Dragons.*

IMPROVED PARALYSIS [MONSTROUS]

You are better at paralyzing your victims.

Prerequisites: Undead type, paralysis extraordinary ability.

Benefit: When your natural attacks threaten to paralyze your foe, add a +4 bonus to the save DC.

This feat is from *Libris Mortis: The Book of Undead.*

IMPROVED SNATCH [GENERAL]

You can make snatch attacks against bigger opponents than other creatures can.

Prerequisite: Snatch.

Benefit: As the Snatch feat (see page 304 of the *Monster Manual*), except you can grab a creature two size categories smaller than you with your bite or claw attack.

This feat is from *Draconomicon: The Book of Dragons.*

MULTISNATCH [GENERAL]

You can grapple enemies more firmly with only one of your natural attacks.

Prerequisites: Str 17, Snatch.

Benefit: When grappling an opponent with only the part of your body that made the attack, you take only a –10 penalty on grapple checks to maintain the hold.

Normal: Without this feat, you take a –20 penalty on grapple checks to maintain a hold with only one part of your body.

This feat is from *Draconomicon: The Book of Dragons.*

PRACTICED MAGIC [GENERAL]

Your spell-like abilities are more powerful.

Prerequisite: Spellcraft 4 ranks, spell-like abilities.

Benefit: Your caster level for your spell-like abilities increases by +4. This can't increase your caster level for spell-like abilities beyond your Hit Dice. However, even if you can't benefit from the full bonus immediately, if you later gain noncaster-level Hit Dice you may be able to apply the rest of the bonus.

If you have spellcasting ability from multiple sources (from gained templates or from a character class) you must choose which set of spell-like abilities gain the feat's effect.

This does not affect how often you can use your spell-like abilities in a day. It only increases your caster level, which would help you penetrate spell resistance, increases the duration and damage of some spells, and so on.

Special: You may select this feat multiple times. Each time you choose it, you must apply it to a different set of spell-like abilities.

QUICKEN BREATH [METABREATH]

You can loose your breath weapon with but a thought.

Prerequisites: Con 19, breath weapon.

Benefit: Using your breath weapon is a free action. When you use this feat, add +4 to the number of rounds you must wait before using your breath weapon again.

This feat is from *Draconomicon: The Book of Dragons.*

Special: You cannot use this feat and the Maximize Breath feat (detailed in *Draconomicon*) at the same time.

TEMPEST BREATH [METABREATH]

You can make your breath weapon strike with the force of a windstorm.

Prerequisites: Str 13, breath weapon, Power Attack, size Large or larger.

Benefit: When you use your breath weapon, in addition to its normal effects, creatures in the area are affected as though struck by wind effects. The force of the wind depends on your size, as indicated below. For the effects of high winds, see Table 3–24 on page 95 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide.*

Dragon Size	Wind Force
Large	Severe
Huge	Windstorm
Gargantuan	Hurricane
Colossal	Tornado

Because your breath weapon has an instantaneous duration, creatures ignore the checked effect unless they are airborne (in which case they are blown back 1d6×5 feet).

When you use this feat, add +1 to the number of rounds you must wait before using your breath weapon again.

This feat is from *Draconomicon: The Book of Dragons.*

TOMB-TAINTED SOUL [GENERAL]

Your soul is tainted by the foul touch of undeath.

Prerequisite: Nongood alignment.

Benefit: You are healed by negative energy and harmed by positive energy as if you were an undead creature. This feat gives no other penalties or benefits of the undead type.

This feat is from *Libris Mortis: The Book of Undead.*

SPELLS

ICEFANE CORPSE

Necromancy [Cold]

Level: Sor/Wiz 3

Components: V, S, M

Casting Time: 1 standard action

Range: Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)

Area: One undead creature

Duration: 1 round/level

Saving Throw: Fortitude negates (harmless)

Spell Resistance: Yes (harmless)

You infuse the affected undead with a powerful burst of necromantic cold. Affected undead gain the following benefits:

- One of the undead creature's natural attacks becomes infused with supernatural cold, and inflicts 1d6 additional points of cold damage on a hit.
- Fire resistance 10.
- Any time the undead suffers cold damage, it is instead healed for an amount of hit points equal to the damage it would have suffered. Any resistance to cold that the undead creature might have does not reduce the amount of healing that it receives when exposed to cold damage.

Material Component: A wight's thumbnail.

NECROTIC MIST

Necromancy [Cold]
Level: Sor/Wiz 6
Components: V, S, M
Casting Time: 1 standard action
Range: Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)
Effect: Fog spreads in 20-ft. radius, 20 ft. high
Duration: 1 round/level
Saving Throw: Fortitude partial
Spell Resistance: Yes

A chill black mist seeps from the ground. The mist carries with it an unwholesome chill. It slows and freezes living creatures caught in its grasp, while at the same time healing undead.

Living creatures in the cloud suffer 2d6 points of cold damage per round on your turn (no save). Upon entering the cloud or at the beginning of each round spent within the cloud, a living creature must make a Fortitude saving throw or become slowed.

Undead within the cloud heal 5 hit points of damage per round.

The mist obscures all sight, including darkvision, beyond 5 feet. A creature within 5 feet has concealment (attacks have a 20% miss chance). Creatures farther away have total concealment (50% miss chance, and the attacker can't use sight to locate the target).

Material Component: A small piece of a tombstone dedicated to a creature that became undead after being buried for at least 1 month.

RIME

Necromancy [Cold]
Level: Sor/Wiz 1
Components: V, S, M
Casting Time: 1 standard action
Range: Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)
Target: One living creature
Duration: 1 round/level
Saving Throw: Fortitude negates
Spell Resistance: Yes

You infuse the target's body with the unwholesome chill of the grave. This chill dulls the creature's reactions and weakens its stamina. If the saving throw fails, the target suffers a –4 penalty to Dexterity and a –4 penalty on Fortitude saves.

Material Component: A pinch of dirt from a grave dug during a winter month.

SHADOW DAGGER

Illusion (Shadow)
Level: Brd 3, Sor/Wiz 3
Components: V, S
Casting Time: 1 standard action
Range: 0 ft.
Effect: One shadowy masterwork dagger
Duration: 1 round/level (D)
Saving Throw: Will negates; see text
Spell Resistance: No

A shadowy masterwork dagger appears in your hand. On subsequent rounds, you can wield the dagger as though it was a real masterwork dagger. Each time the dagger hits, it deals normal damage and forces the target to make a Will save. If the Will save fails, the shadow dagger deals an additional 1d6 points of damage per caster level (maximum 10d6).

SHADOW PUPPETEER

Illusion (Shadow)
Level: Brd 3, Sor/Wiz 4
Components: V, S, M
Casting Time: 1 standard action
Range: 20-foot-radius emanation centered on you
Duration: 1 round/level (D)
Saving Throw: Will negates; see text
Spell Resistance: Yes

You can manipulate the shadows around you, giving them sinister, monstrous forms. All creatures within range, except those specified by you, must make a successful Will save or be clawed and bitten for 2d6 points of damage +1 point of damage per caster level (maximum +15). Affected creatures within range must make a new Will save each round at the beginning of your turn or take damage.

This spell needs light to function and deals no damage in areas of total darkness.

Material Component: A candle.

Dementia Battleaxe

MAGIC ITEMS

WEAPONS

Alakast: This magic quarterstaff was a gift from Nidrama to Surabar Spellmason, a gift intended to give the wizard an edge against the demonic legions under Nabthatoron's com-

mand. Several decades after Surabar's death, a group of bandits stole *Alakast* from the wizard's tomb. These tomb robbers met a grisly end only a few days later on the Demonskar's rim, and for some time *Alakast* lay forgotten in these ruins until it was discovered by a coven of half-fey green hags (see Chapter Five).

Alakast is fashioned of pale, almost white wood, and close inspection of the wood grain reveals strange flowing runes that spell out its name in Celestial. *Alakast* is a *+1 evil outsider bane quarterstaff*—both ends of the quarterstaff bear this enchantment. *Alakast* radiates moderate good if such is detected for, and it penetrates damage reduction as if it were a good aligned weapon.

Moderate conjuration; CL 10th; Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *summon monster I*; Price 20,000 gp.

Dementia (Weapon Quality): Dementia weapons usually appear charcoal gray in color. A creature critically hit by a *dementia* weapon must make a successful DC 16 Will save or be *confused* for 7 rounds (as the *confusion* spell).

Moderate enchantment (compulsion); CL 7th; Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *confusion*; Price +2 bonus.

Mindbite: This intelligent *+4 defending guisarme* is a potent weapon. Not actually evil, it has served Dyr'ryd for many years, and is mostly indifferent to his cruelty. Unlike most magic weapons, this guisarme resizes to best fit its wielder. *Mindbite* has Intelligence 14, Wisdom 14, Charisma 10, an Ego of 14 and is Neutrally aligned. It can speak Common, Demodand, and Ignan, has darkvision 60 ft., and can hear. *Mindbite* can *detect magic* at will and *daze monster* three times a day; it can also use *feeblemind* and *confusion* once a day each. The guisarme has a dry voice and a wit to match. It enjoys a good battle, although it grows impatient with characters that don't share at least one aspect of neutrality in their alignment.

Strong evocation; CL 15th; Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *detect magic, daze monster, feeblemind, confusion, shield* or *shield of faith*; Price 90,000 gp.

Star of Justice: According to the faithful of St. Cuthbert, this mace was touched by St. Cuthbert himself in ages past, and even today it serves as a conduit for his advice and a focus for his omens.

The *Star of Justice* is a *+1 holy heavy mace* that can be used once per week to cast a *divination* spell. The divinations granted by the *Star of Justice* manifest as spoken prophecies or riddles voiced from the user's mouth but not in the user's voice. The sound of the voice is that of an older human man with a gravely voice; a voice said by the faithful of Cauldron to be none other than St. Cuthbert's.

Moderate divination [good]; CL 7th; Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *divination, holy smite*, creator must be good; Price 28,312 gp.

RINGS

Ring of Thirteen: The Cagewright leaders wear matching magic rings designed to protect them from detection and harm. A *ring of thirteen* is a *ring of protection +2* that also grants its wearer with constant *protection from good, nondetection,* and *endure elements* spells. These rings function only for evil creatures; a non-evil creature who wears a *ring of thirteen* gains a negative level for as long as the ring is worn. This negative level never results in actual level loss.

Strong abjuration; CL 15th; Forge Ring, *protection from good, nondetection, endure elements*, creator must be evil; Price 54,000 gp.

WONDROUS ITEMS

Amulet of the Planes, Lesser: A *lesser amulet of the planes* functions as an *amulet of the planes*, save that it can be used only once per day.

Strong conjuration; CL 15th; Craft Wondrous Item, *plane shift*; Price 24,000 gp.

Black Jug: Three times per day, when the proper command word is spoken, this hideous iron jug fills with enough nutritious but foul-tasting brown gruel to feed 30 Medium or smaller creatures or 15 Large creatures. The jug weighs 40 pounds empty and 75 pounds full.

Moderate conjuration; CL 10th; Craft Wondrous Item, *create food and water*; Price: 32,400 gp.

Blackstone Rune: This rune is a complex sigil drawn on a small, glossy stone. On command, a *blackstone rune* allows its bearer to *plane shift* between the Plane of Shadow and the Material Plane (in either direction), along with up to 50 pounds of objects. A *blackstone rune* can be used three times before its magic fades.

This item originally appeared in the *Fiend Folio*.

Moderate conjuration; CL 9th; Craft Wondrous Item, *plane shift*; Market Price 3,300 gp.

Lantern of Guidance: A miniature bullseye lantern chained to a 4-foot length of darkwood, a *lantern of guidance* never goes out except within areas of magical darkness—neither the strongest wind nor full immersion in water can douse its silvery flame. Yet its true power lies in its ability to unerringly guide the lantern-bearer toward one of three specific locations. This functions as a *find the path* spell; the lantern's light always shines in the correct direction of travel, and the lantern-bearer has an instinctive sense of any physical actions to take (such as avoiding trip wires or speaking passwords to avoid magic glyphs). Up to three locations can be programmed into a *lantern of guidance* when it is created. If the lantern-bearer brings the lantern to the first location, it immediately switches to the second location and leads the bearer in that direction. Likewise, when the lantern-bearer reaches the second location, the lantern immediately switches to the third location. Once the third location is reached, the lantern loses its guidance ability forever.

It's not immediately apparent from looking at the lantern, but because it's a fairly small lantern connected to a sturdy handle by a short length of chain, it's an effective heavy flail. The lantern's creators knew that its light would often take the lantern-bearer into harm's way, so they enhanced the item to function as a +2 *heavy flail*. This property remains even after the *lantern of guidance* has successfully guided a bearer to all three of its pre-set locations.

Strong divination; CL 12th; Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *find the path*; Price 10,000 gp.

Serpent's Eye: This 2-inch-diameter spherical black orb has a golden slitlike band, giving it the appearance of a reptilian eye. When grasped, the *serpent's eye* allows the owner to use *foresight* (as the spell) once per day. The *serpent's eye* has 50 charges when created.

Strong divination; CL 17th; Craft Wondrous Item, *foresight*; Price 30,000 gp.

Simulacrum Suit: A *simulacrum suit* is a potent magical disguise that can be used to defeat even the most minute inspection. When created, the user must collect a body part from a donor creature, as if she were preparing to cast *simulacrum*. The creator then builds a rough costume that approximates the donor creature's shape, size, and appearance, incorporating the body part into the costume in some manner. The donor creature must be an aberration, animal, dragon, fey, giant, humanoid, magical beast, monstrous humanoid, ooze, plant, or vermin, and cannot have more Hit Dice than the creator's caster level.

Once created, a *simulacrum suit* may be worn by any creature that is within at least one size category of the suit. Thus, a *simulacrum suit* of a human could be worn by a Small, Medium, or Large creature. When a creature wears a *simulacrum suit*, he is physically transformed into that creature as if by a *polymorph* spell. Once the suit is worn, the powerful magic cloaks itself from detection. Divination spells cannot detect the magic of a worn *simulacrum suit*, and even *true seeing* is defeated by the suit's potent warding. For all this, however, the suit can still be recognized as a disguise with a successful Spot check made against the wearer's Disguise check. The suit does grant a +10 circumstance bonus on the wearer's Disguise check, but if an observer detects the ruse he can tell that the wearer is disguising his appearance somehow.

A creature can remove a *simulacrum suit* from a helpless target with a full-round action by pulling forcefully on the person's flesh and clothing. The wearer of a *simulacrum suit* may remove it as a full-round action that provokes an attack of opportunity.

An unworn *simulacrum suit* looks like a deflated skin of the creature it represents.

Strong illusion; CL 13th; Craft Wondrous Item, *simulacrum, limited wish*; Price 60,000 gp.

Sphere of the Unseen: This variant of an elemental gem is tied to the Elemental Plane of Air. When the glowing glass sphere is broken, an invisible stalker, breathdrinker, or huge air elemental appears as if summoned by a *summon monster* spell. The creature summoned is chosen by the user at the moment of activation. The summoned elemental is under the control of the creature that broke the sphere and remains for 13 rounds.

Strong conjuration; CL 13th; Craft Wondrous Item, *summon monster VII*; Price 4,550 gp.

MINOR ARTIFACT

Amaranth Elixir: This magic elixir was used by the spell weavers to augment their slave laborers and make them easier to control. It greatly enhances a creature's Strength, but damages his Wisdom. The *Amaranth Elixir* in the fountain is permanently active, but remains so for just an hour if taken away in a container. The exact effect the *Amaranth Elixir* has on the drinker depends on his size.

Drinker's size	Strength	Wisdom
Diminutive or smaller	no effect	no effect
Tiny	+2	–1
Small	+4	–2
Medium	+8	–4
Large	+4	–2
Huge	+2	–1
Gargantuan or bigger	no effect	no effect

The bonuses to Strength granted by the *Amaranth Elixir* are enhancement bonuses. The *Amaranth Elixir's* effects can theoretically last forever, although there's a 25% chance the effect ends each time the sun sets. When this happens, the user becomes fatigued.

MAJOR ARTIFACT

Tree of Shackled Souls: This artifact is the culmination of all the Cagewrights' scheming. Built to bear thirteen *soulcages*—and the Shackleborn imprisoned within them—the *Tree of Shackled Souls* resembles a massive, intricately spiked, adamantine thorn bush.

Attached to each branch is a *soulcage*. They sway gently as the seismic energy fueling the artifact courses through the device, as well as through the very air of the chamber. At the time of this adventure, each *soulcage* holds one of the Shackleborn. Their life energies combine with the raw elemental power of the volcano to form the matrix necessary to establish the massive portal to Carceri. The tree acts as a conduit and focus for that power. The Shackleborn are vital to the process, but their use is now passed; all that remains in the cages are their lifeless bodies; only a *wish* or *miracle* can restore them to life. Destroying the *soulcages* or removing the bodies does not stop the portal from forming.

The *Tree of Shackled Souls* is constructed from adamantine with a mithral core. It has hardness 20 and 1,500 hit points. It also radiates a massive *dimension lock* effect to a radius of a quarter-mile (see page 221 of the *Player's Handbook*). Any divination spells that attempt to reveal information directly about the tree automatically fail. Finally, the Cagewrights enhanced the tree to generate a stabilizing effect on the earth and stone surrounding it to a quarter-mile. This aura prevents tremors or other seismic activity from affecting this or any of the chambers within the Fiery Sanctum.

The *Tree's* primary function is to act as a conduit for establishing a permanent gate to the plane of Carceri. Doing so requires a complex ritual to be performed over the course of several hours; as this adventure begins, the Cagewrights have just finished this ritual. At this point the tree functions on its own, slowly building up its power over the course of several more hours before it finally tears open the gate to Carceri. Dyr'ryd remains in the chamber to observe the process and make sure nothing goes wrong, but even if he and the rest of the Cagewrights are slain, the portal is still created if the PCs do nothing to stop it. The exact amount of time required for the tree to finish this process is variable; you should time this event for maximum excitement in your campaign.

The characters can prevent the tree from completing the construction of the Carcerian gate in one of two ways, by destroying it or by using the *dispersal collar* found in area **C14** in the Fiery Sanctum.

Destroying the Tree: If the PCs can get through its hardness, they can destroy the tree with physical and magical attacks. Doing so prevents the creation of the portal, but has cataclysmic results nevertheless, as detailed at the end of Chapter Ten.

Shackle the Tree: The Cagewrights built a failsafe device to contain the tree's energy should they need to postpone the ritual for some reason. They constructed a *dispersal collar* that, when fitted around any of the tree's branches or trunk, disperses the energy stored within the *Tree* harmlessly and gradually. In theory, this would allow the Cagewrights to restart the ritual of planar binding at a later date, but the PCs can use the device to harmlessly defuse the situation. The *dispersal collar* is in area **C14** of the Fiery Sanctum, guarded by Moltenwing.

Once attached, the *dispersal collar* takes 30 minutes to disperse the energy. It does so by emitting blinding light; anyone who looks at the *Tree* during this time must make a successful DC 30 Fortitude save or be permanently blinded.

PRESTIGE CLASSES

THE SHACKLED CITY

As you run the Shackled City Adventure Path, your players get to interact with several secret societies. Two of these societies (the Chisel and the Striders of Fharlanghn) are allied groups, and the PCs will have several opportunities to join these organizations if they wish. Membership in the Chisel or the Striders has its benefits, among which is access to two new prestige classes—the high handcrafter and the pathwarden.

HIGH HANDCRAFTER

The so-called high handcrafters are the leaders of the Chisel, a secret organization inspired by the ancient hero Surabar Spellmason. Although all high handcrafters recognize the authority of the Foreman as main leader of the organization, the Chisel promotes freedom of thought and responsible action among all its members. According to this philosophy all the high handcrafters, including the Foreman, consider themselves peers. Less than a dozen high handcrafters are known to exist, and new ones are appointed exclusively in a mysterious hideout known as the Hall of Carvings, near the village of Redgorge.

The Chisel considers excellence in any kind of craft a way to achieve a superior state of efficiency and morality. High handcrafters are expected to be intelligent, able, and versatile artisans more than powerful adventurers. Following the philosophy of excellence and responsibility in their actions, the high handcrafters gain substantial benefits, which affect their other classes as well. Moreover, the high handcrafters gain access to the Hall of Carvings and the unconditional support of their peers. High handcrafters can come from any background, and the expert NPC class is frequently found among them.

Hit Die: d6.

REQUIREMENTS

To qualify to become a high handcrafter, a character must fulfill the following criteria.

Alignment: Any good.

Skills: Craft (any) 10 ranks, Craft (any other) 6 ranks, Knowledge (architecture and engineering) 5 ranks.

Feats: Skill Focus in one of the Craft skills used to meet the Craft requirement.

Languages: Terran.

Special: Must be sponsored by an active member of the Chisel, who must lead the aspiring character to the Hall of Carvings in Redgorge to meditate before the Earth Pool for an hour.

CLASS SKILLS

The high handcrafter's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Craft (any) (Int), Knowledge (architecture and engineering) (Int), Knowledge (history) (Int), Knowledge (the planes) (Int), and Profession (Wis). Additionally, his exceptional dedication and versatility allows him to choose six additional skills as high handcrafter class skills.

Skill Points at Each Level: 6 + Int modifier.

CLASS FEATURES

All of the following are class features of the high handcrafter prestige class.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: A high handcrafter is proficient with all simple weapons and light armor.

Improved Skill Focus (Ex): When a high handcrafter takes the Skill Focus feat, he gains a +4 bonus on the selected skill rather than a +3 bonus.

Planned Save (Ex): A high handcrafter gains a +1 bonus on saving throws made against something expected. For example, if a high handcrafter makes a Spellcraft check to identify a spell as it is being cast, he gains the bonus to his save against it. The same bonus applies when the high handcrafter is doing an obviously dangerous task,

THE HIGH HANDCRAFTER

Class Level	Base Attack	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save
1st	+0	+2	+0	+2
2nd	+1	+3	+0	+3
3rd	+2	+3	+1	+3
4th	+3	+4	+1	+4
5th	+3	+4	+1	+4

such as opening a nasty-looking treasure chest. He also gains the bonus against monster special attacks he understands and expects. If a high handcrafter were fighting a medusa, he'd get his planned save bonus against her gaze attack. At higher levels, the bonus for a planned save becomes +2 (at 3rd level) and +3 (at 5th level).

Rebuke/Command Earth (Su): At 2nd level, the high handcrafter gains the ability to rebuke or command earth creatures as a cleric of level equal to twice his high handcrafter level (times per day equal to 3 plus Charisma modifier). If he possesses this ability from any other class levels (such as by having cleric levels and access to the Earth domain) his high handcrafter levels stack with that class for the purposes of determining the effects of this ability.

Craft Earth Talisman (Su): At 3rd level, the high handcrafter gains the ability to craft an *earth talisman* and infuse it with magic channeled from the Elemental Plane of Earth. Crafting an *earth talisman* is treated similarly to the procedure for crafting a wondrous item. Creating the talisman requires three days of work, and the high handcrafter must spend 100 experience points and 1,400 gp in raw materials. The cost in experience points and gold to craft an *earth talisman* is approximately 30% less than the cost required to make an identical item with Craft Wondrous Item, since only the creator can use the item in question.

When the high handcrafter completes the construction, he selects two of the following spells: *heat metal, make whole, resist energy, shatter, soften earth and stone,* or *stone shape.* From this point on, he may use the *earth talisman* to cast each of these spells at a caster level equal to twice his high handcrafter level, once per day each. The talisman itself appears as a small chisel, often worn around the neck on a fine chain. It does not take up a magic item slot, but the talisman must be firmly grasped in one hand to activate one of its powers.

An *earth talisman* functions only for the high handcrafter who made it. A high handcrafter can only have one talisman at a time; if he wants to change the talisman's abilities, he must destroy his current talisman and start anew.

***Summon Earth Elemental* (Sp):** At 4th level, a high handcrafter gains the spell-like ability to summon one of the following monsters as if he were casting *summon monster VI*: one Large earth elemental, 1d3 Medium earth elementals, or 1d4+1 earth mephits.

Improved Earth Talisman (Su): At 5th level, the high handcrafter can improve his *earth talisman.* This requires 30 days of work and the expenditure of 1,000 experience points and 15,000 gp in raw materials.

When the high handcrafter completes the construction, he adds two of the following spells to the list of spells he can cast using his *earth talisman*: *fabricate, lesser planar binding* (creatures with the earth subtype only), *major creation, transmute mud to rock, transmute rock to mud,* and *wall of stone.* Each of these spells may be cast once per day.

An improved *earth talisman* grants its wearer a +2 competence bonus to all Craft checks.

HIGH HANDCRAFTER LORE

Characters with Knowledge (local) can research high handcrafters to learn more about them. When a character makes a skill check, read or paraphrase the following, including the information from lower DCs.

DC 10: "High Handcrafters are members of a secret society of craftsmen and merchants. No one really knows where their actual interests lie."

DC 15: "The secret society led by the High Handcrafters is known as the Chisel. This group was created by one of Cauldron's founders. Some say that they dabble in elemental magic and worship earth elementals."

DC 20: "Although the High Handcrafters are merchants and craftsmen, most are also accomplished spellcasters. It's said that most of the successful merchants in Cauldron are members."

DC 30: "The Chisel was founded by Surabar Spellmason, the man who conquered the Demonskar and founded both Cauldron and Redgorge. The High Handcrafters are the leader of this organization, which is based somewhere in Redgorge, in a place called the 'Hall of Carvings'. They often specialize in earth magic, and you can recognize a member by the strange triangular talismans they wear."

PATHWARDEN

The dangerous, uncivilized frontier that surrounds Cauldron has seen the deaths of countless travelers, pilgrims, refugees, and explorers. The Striders of Fharlanghn are no strangers to such places, and do their best to protect those who must travel the wildlands while at the same time ensuring that evil does not gain a foothold in the far corners of the world. They patrol the places no one else dares, and keep safe the remote paths and roadways of the frontier.

In this organization, there are those who take this charge as more than mere duty—they elevate it to a way of

Special	Spells per Day/Spells Known
Improved Skill Focus +4, planned save +1	—
Rebuke/command earth	+1 level of existing spellcasting class or bonus feat
Craft earth talisman, planned save +2	—
Summon earth elemental	+1 level of existing spellcasting class or bonus feat
Improved earth talisman, planned save +3	+1 level of existing spellcasting class or bonus feat

life. These are the pathwardens. Pathwardens both guide and moderate the expansion of civilization into the wild. The life of a pathwarden is one of constant change as they wander the wilderness seeking to fulfill their duties.

Clerics of Fharlanghn, bards, rangers, and rogues are the most common pathwardens, since the powers and abilities of this prestige class compliment them quite well. Druids, sorcerers, and wizards frequently join the pathwardens, but the strict skill and feat requirements often prevent such characters from joining until much later in their careers.

Hit Die: d6

REQUIREMENTS

To qualify to become a pathwarden, a character must fulfill all the following criteria.

Alignment: Any non-evil.

Skills: Gather Information 6 ranks, Knowledge (geography) 6 ranks, Listen 10 ranks, Spot 10 ranks, Survival 6 ranks.

Feats: Run, Track.

Special: Before becoming a pathwarden, a character must have joined the Striders of Fharlanghn. She must also be sponsored by a member of the Striders.

CLASS SKILLS

The pathwarden's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Climb (Str), Concentration (Con), Heal (Wis), Hide (Dex), Jump (Str), Knowledge (geography) (Int), Knowledge (nature) (Int), Listen (Wis), Move Silently (Dex), Search (Int), Spot (Wis), Survival (Wis), and Swim (Str).

Skill Points at Each Level: 4 + Int modifier.

CLASS FEATURES

All of the following are class features of the pathwarden prestige class.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: Pathwardens are proficient with all simple weapons, shortbows, and longbows. They are proficient in the use of all light armor, but not shields.

Fast Movement (Ex): At 1st level, and then again at 3rd level and 5th level, a pathwarden's base land speed increases by +5 feet. This benefit applies only when she is wearing no armor or light armor and is not carrying a medium or heavy load.

Sure Stride (Ex): A pathwarden has an uncanny knack for picking out the easiest route through areas of uneven ground. Difficult terrain, such as rubble, an uneven cave floor, or thick undergrowth does not hamper a pathwarden's movement. She may run or charge across difficult terrain.

Bonus Feat/Increased Spellcasting: At 2nd level, and then again at 4th level, a pathwarden may choose to gain a bonus feat or increase her spellcasting abilities.

If she chooses a bonus feat, she must select the bonus feat from the following list: Acrobatic, Alertness, Animal Affinity, Athletic, Diehard, Endurance, Far Shot, Great Fortitude, Improved Critical (longbow or shortbow), Improved Initiative, Improved Precise Shot, Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes, Manyshot, Natural Spell, Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Rapid Shot, Run, Shot on the Run, Skill Focus (in any pathwarden class skill), Stealthy, Toughness, or Weapon Focus (longbow or shortbow).

If she chooses to improve spellcasting, she gains new spells per day and an increase in caster level (and spells known, if applicable) as if she had also gained a level in a spellcasting class to which she belonged before adding the prestige class level. She does not, however, gain any other benefit a character of that class would have gained. If she had more than one spellcasting class before becoming a pathwarden, she must decide which class to add the level to for the purpose of determining spells per day, caster level, and spells known.

Nature's Grace (Ex): At 3rd level, a pathwarden moves with a fluid grace that is haunting to behold. She gains a +2 dodge bonus to her Armor Class and a +2 insight bonus on Reflex saving throws on any round during which she moves at least 30 feet.

Introspection (Su): At 5th level, a pathwarden can seek out a specific location of great beauty or latent power. By entering an introspective meditative state at that site and expending a small amount of experience points, the pathwarden can infuse her spirit and body with that site's magical energies, gaining a permanent benefit in the process.

Introspection requires eight uninterrupted hours of meditation. At the end of this time, she must expend 1,000 XP. The benefit gained by introspection is a permanent supernatural special quality. A pathwarden may choose to replace this special quality at any time by performing a new introspection at a different site.

The types of introspection benefits a pathwarden can gain depend on the site, as follows.

Animal: Meditation in the den of a living animal of at least CR 7 grants a +2 inherent bonus to Dexterity.

Cavern: Meditation in a cavern at least a mile underground grants darkvision to a range of 60 feet.

Demonskar: Meditation within the Demonskar grants spell resistance equal to 10 + your character level against spells and spell-like abilities cast by demons.

THE PATHWARDEN

Class Level	Base Attack	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1st	+0	+2	+2	+0	Fast movement +5, sure stride
2nd	+1	+3	+3	+0	Bonus Feat or Increased Spellcasting
3rd	+2	+3	+3	+1	Fast movement +10, nature's grace
4th	+3	+4	+4	+1	Bonus Feat or Increased Spellcasting
5th	+3	+4	+4	+1	Fast Movement +15, introspection

Dragon's Lair: Meditation in a dragon's lair while the dragon is alive and present grants a +1 increase to your natural armor bonus. The dragon must be at least CR 7, and must remain within 60 feet of you at all times during the meditation.

Glacier: Meditation on a glacier grants cold resistance 30.

Lake: Meditation while afloat on a lake of at least 1,000 feet in depth grants a +2 insight bonus on all Will saving throws.

Long Shadows: Meditation at the base of the Spire of Long Shadows grants immunity to level drain attacks.

Mountain: Meditation on the peak of a mountain of at least 12,000 feet elevation grants a +2 inherent bonus to Constitution.

Ocean: Meditation while afloat on the ocean and out of sight of land grants a +2 insight bonus on all Fortitude saving throws.

River: Meditation while afloat on a river that's at least 100 miles long grants a +2 insight bonus on all Reflex saving throws.

Shatterhorn: Meditation within the ruins of Shatterhorn grants immunity to poison.

Storm: Meditation on a mountaintop or treetop grants electricity resistance 30.

Tree: Meditation at the base of the largest tree in a 100-mile radius (minimum height of 100 feet) grants a +2 inherent bonus to Strength.

Volcano: Meditation in the caldera of a volcano grants fire resistance 30.

You can invent new effects for unique locations as you see fit.

PATHWARDEN LORE

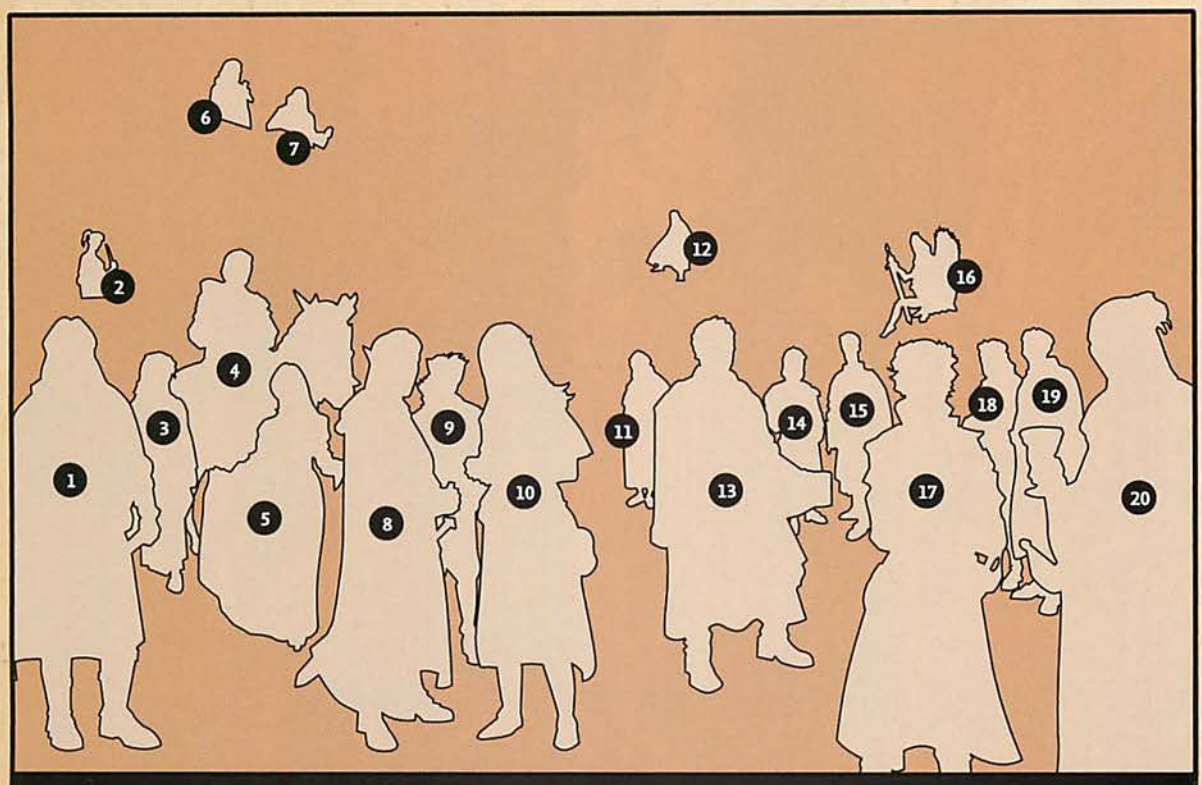
Characters with Knowledge (religion) can research pathwardens to learn more about them. When a character makes a skill check, read or paraphrase the following, including the information from lower DCs.

DC 10: "The Striders of Fharlanghn are a loosely organized group who watch the horizons for signs of evil and danger. Some of their members focus their vigil on the frontiers at the edge of civilization—these custodians are called pathwardens."

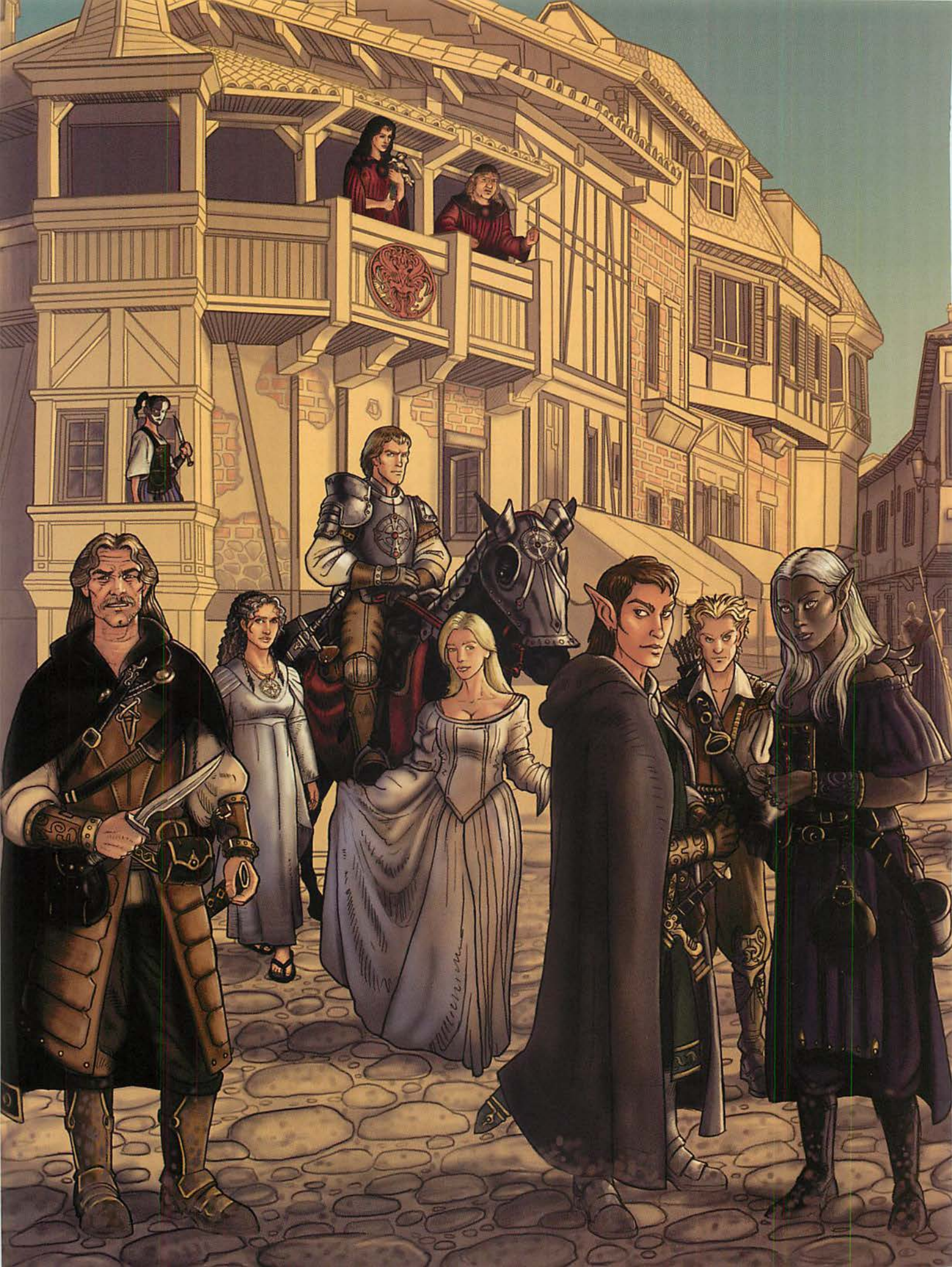
DC 15: "A pathwarden's interests coincide with the religious teachings of Fharlanghn and with many druidic circles, yet not all of their number are druids or worshipers of Fharlanghn."

DC 20: "Pathwardens are shockingly fleet of foot. They can move about with great ease, even in the most tangled of terrain. They've got a knack for dodging out of harm as well."

DC 30: "The most powerful pathwardens are able to form a mystical bond with areas of great beauty or latent power in the natural world. In so doing, they can draw upon these locations to enhance their bodies or souls."



1. Maavu Arlintal
2. Jil
3. Jenya Urikas
4. Alek Tercival
5. Celeste
6. Embril Aloustinai
7. Ike Iverson
8. Fellian Shard
9. Fario Ellegoth
10. Shensen Tesseril
11. Crazy Jared
12. Orbius Vhalantru
13. Severen Navalant
14. Skylar Krewis
15. Terseon Skellerang
16. Nidrama
17. Cora Lathenmire
18. Zachary Aslaxin II
19. Todd Vanderboren
20. Annah Taskerhill



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CREATURE STATISTICS

THE SHACKLED CITY

This appendix contains complete statistics for all the NPCs and unique monsters that appear in this campaign, except for monsters that appear in the *Monster Manual* and are not significantly modified in this adventure.

Several NPCs in this adventure have prestige classes that are detailed in books other than the *Dungeon Master's Guide* or this book. These other books are not required to run this adventure because all pertinent statistics and abilities for these NPCs are included here. For reference purposes, each NPC entry indicates the original source of any such prestige classes.

Aabhaca, kuo-toa monk 5: CR 7; Medium monstrous humanoid (aquatic); HD 2d8+4 plus 5d8+10; hp 47; Init +2; Spd 30 ft., swim 50 ft.; AC 25, touch 17, flat-footed 23; Base Atk +5; Grp +7; Atk +8 melee (1d8+2, unarmed strike) or +7 melee (1d6+3, shortspear) or +7 ranged (1d6+2, shortspear); Full Atk +8 melee (1d8+2, unarmed strike) and +2 melee (1d4+1, bite), or +6/+6 melee (1d8+2, unarmed strike) and +2 melee (1d4+1, bite), or +7 melee (1d6+3, shortspear) and +2 melee (1d4+1, bite), or +7 ranged (1d6+2, shortspear); SA stunning fist 5/day (DC 17); SQ adhesive, amphibious, immunity to poison and paralysis, keen sight, light blindness, resistance to electricity 10, slippery, evasion, still mind, ki strike (magic), slow fall 20 ft., purity of body; AL LE; SV Fort +6, Ref +9, Will +11 (+13 vs. enchantments); Str 15, Dex 15, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 18, Cha 8.

Skills: Escape Artist +10, Hide +12, Listen +16, Move Silently +12, Search +4, Sense Motive +7, Spot +14, Swim +10.

Feats: Alertness, Deflect Arrows, Dodge, Mobility, Stunning Fist, Weapon Focus (unarmed strike).

Languages: Aquan, Kuo-Toan, Undercommon.

Possessions: Shortspear, *bracers of armor +2*, canoe.

Adrick Garthûn, male dwarf fighter 5/rogue 5: CR 10; Medium humanoid (dwarf); HD 5d10+5d6+20; hp 68; Init +2; Spd 20 ft.; AC 18, touch 12, flat-footed 16; Base Atk +8; Grp +12; Atk +14 melee (1d10+7/×3, *+1 dwarven waraxe*) or +10 ranged (1d8/19–20, light crossbow); Full Atk +14/+9 melee (1d10+7/×3, *+1 dwarven waraxe*) or +10 ranged (1d8/19–20, light crossbow); SA sneak attack +2d6; SQ darkvision 60 ft., dwarf traits, evasion, trap sense +1, trapfinding, uncanny dodge; AL LE; SV Fort +7 (+11 against poison), Ref +7, Will +4; Str 18, Dex 15, Con 14, Int 11, Wis 11, Cha 14.

Skills: Appraise +5, Balance +4, Climb +8, Diplomacy +4, Hide +7, Intimidate +11, Jump +10, Listen +5, Move Silently +7, Sense Motive +5, Spot +5, Swim +8, Tumble +7.

Feats: Cleave, Dodge, Great Cleave, Iron Will, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (dwarven waraxe), Weapon Specialization (dwarven waraxe).

Languages: Common, Dwarven.

Possessions: *+1 studded leather armor, +1 light steel shield, +1 dwarven waraxe, belt of giant strength +2*, light crossbow with 10 bolts, leather half-mask set with a black diamond (1,000 gp).

Advanced Devourer: CR 19; Huge undead (extraplanar); HD 36d12; hp 234; Init +4; Spd 30 ft; AC 25, touch 7, flat-footed 25; Base Atk +18; Grp +39; Atk +29 melee (2d6+13, claw); Full Atk +29 melee (2d6+13, 2 claws); Space/Reach 15 ft./15 ft.; SA energy drain (DC 36), spell-like abilities, trap essence (DC 36); SQ darkvision 60 ft., spell deflection, spell resistance 21, undead traits; AL NE; SV Fort +13, Ref +12, Will +23; Str 36, Dex 8, Con —, Int 16, Wis 16, Cha 23.

Skills: Climb +52, Concentration +39, Diplomacy +8, Jump +52, Listen +42, Move Silently +38, Sense Motive +42, Spot +42.

Feats: Ability Focus (energy drain), Ability Focus (trap essence), Blind-Fight, Combat Casting, Combat Expertise, Great Fortitude, Improved Disarm, Improved Initiative, Improved Natural Attack (claw), Improved Trip, Lightning Reflexes, Quicken Spell-Like Ability (confusion), Weapon Focus (claw).

Advanced Flesh Golem: CR 15; Huge construct; HD 27d10+40; hp 188 each; Init +2; Spd 30 ft.; AC 23, touch 10, flat-footed 23; Base Atk +20; Grp +41; Atk +31 melee (4d6+13, slam); Full Atk +31 melee (4d6+13, 2 slams); Space/Reach 15 ft./15 ft.; SA berserk; SQ construct traits, damage reduction 5/adamantine, darkvision 60 ft., immunity to magic, low-light vision; AL N; SV Fort +8, Ref +10, Will +8; Str 37, Dex 14, Con —, Int —, Wis 11, Cha 1.

Advanced Mohrg (yuan-ti pureblood): CR 11; Medium undead; HD 20d12; hp 148; Init +10; Spd 30 ft.; AC 25, touch 16, flat-footed 19; Base Atk +10; Grp +17; Atk/Full Atk +17 melee (1d6+10, slam) or +17 melee touch (paralysis, tongue); SA create spawn, improved grab, paralyzing touch (DC 25); SQ darkvision 60 ft., undead traits; AL CE; SV Fort +6, Ref +14, Will +13; Str 25, Dex 23, Con —, Int 11, Wis 12, Cha 13.

Skills: Climb +19, Hide +28, Listen +16, Move Silently +28, Spot +22, Swim +11.

Feats: Alertness, Contagious Paralysis, Dodge, Improved Initiative, Improved Paralysis, Lightning Reflexes, Mobility.

Advanced Spell Weaver: CR 18; Medium monstrous humanoid; HD 18d8–18; hp 86; Init +3; Spd 30 ft.; AC 31, touch 18, flat-footed 27; Base Atk +18; Grp +16; Atk +17 melee (1d4–2/19–20, masterwork dagger); Full Atk +17/+12/+7/+2 melee (1d4–2/19–20, masterwork dagger); SA spell-like abilities, spells; SQ chromatic disk, darkvision 60 ft., immunity to mind-affecting effects, shielded mind, spell weaving, spell resistance 21, telepathy; AL N; SV Fort +5, Ref +14, Will +14; Str 6, Dex 19, Con 8, Int 22, Wis 18, Cha 23; *Monster Manual II* 187.

Skills: Concentration +12, Knowledge (arcana) +27, Knowledge (history) +17, Knowledge (the planes) +27, Listen +25, Spellcraft +27, Spot +25, Use Magic Device +27.

Feats: Combat Casting, Empower Spell, Enlarge Spell, Extend Spell, Heighten Spell, Skill Focus (Concentration), Spell Focus (evocation)[B], Spell Focus (necromancy)[B], Spell Penetration[B], Widen Spell.

Chromatic Disk (Su): This 6-inch-diameter indestructible disk holds ten additional spell levels of energy that the spell weaver can tap and use as it wishes—the spell weaver could, for example, cast two extra 5th-level spells in a day, or three 3rd-level spells and one 1st-level spell, or any other combination of extra spell levels that adds to ten, so long as no single spell is higher than 5th level. (Two 0-level spells are the equivalent of one 1st-level spell for this purpose.) The spell weaver must hold the disk in one of its hands to tap this energy. The disk recharges itself to full power every night at midnight. A spell powered by the disk is cast as though the caster had the Spell Focus feat for the spell in question. Only a spell weaver can use a chromatic disk. If any other creature touches the disk or attempts to use it, it explodes, dealing 4d10 points of damage to everything within a 30-foot radius.

Shielded Mind (Ex): Attempts by creatures of other races to communicate telepathically with the spell weaver or to read its mind always fail. A creature making such an attempt must succeed on a DC 17 Will save or be affected as if by a *confusion* spell (caster level 20th) for 1d6 days. The effect can be dispelled or removed with a *heal* spell. This effect does not occur if the spell weaver voluntarily initiates telepathic communication.

Spell Weaving (Su): A spell weaver can cast more than one spell simultaneously, as long as the sum of the spell levels is six or less. It could, for example, cast one 6th-level (or higher) spell, one 4th-level and one 2nd-level spell, one 3rd-level and three 1st-level spells, or three 2nd-level spells. (A single 0-level spell occupies one arm.) Casting a 6th-level or higher level spell requires all six of the spell weaver's arms.

Spell-Like Abilities (caster level 20th): Always active—*see invisibility*; at will—*detect magic, invisibility*; 1/day—*plane shift* (Will DC 21).

Telepathy (Su): Spell weavers can communicate with each other telepathically at a range of up to 1,000 miles. (There are no other living spell weavers within telepathic range of the spell weaver encountered in this adventure.)

Sorcerer Spells Known (caster level 20th; 6/8/8/7/7/7/7/6/6/6; +22 ranged touch): 0—*acid splash, dancing lights, detect magic, disrupt undead, mage hand, message, open/close, ray of frost, read magic*; 1st—*charm person* (DC 17), *magic missile, protection from evil, ray of enfeeblement, shield*; 2nd—*detect thoughts* (DC 18), *eagle's splendor, mirror image, scorching ray, spider climb*; 3rd—*fireball* (DC 20), *fly, gaseous form, haste*; 4th—*confusion* (DC 20), *enervation, fire shield, Otiluke's resilient sphere* (DC 21); 5th—*baleful polymorph* (DC 21), *cone of cold* (DC 22), *telekinesis, wall of force*; 6th—*disintegrate* (DC 22), *greater dispel magic, Otiluke's freezing sphere* (DC 23); 7th—*finger of death* (DC 24), *greater teleport, prismatic spray* (DC 24); 8th—*horrid wilting* (DC 25), *mind blank, polar ray*; 9th—*Bigby's crushing hand, energy drain, wish*.

Possessions: *Bracers of armor +8, ring of protection +4*, masterwork dagger, forked metal rod (focus for *plane shift* spell).

Alek Tercival, male human aristocrat 5/paladin 4: CR 8; Medium humanoid; HD 5d8+4d10+9; hp 58; Init +1; Spd 20 ft. (30 ft. base); AC 20, touch 11, flat-footed 19; Base Atk +7; Grp +8; Atk +10 melee (1d8+2/19–20, *+1 holy longsword*) or +8 ranged (1d8+2/×3, composite longbow); Full Atk +10/+5 melee (1d8+2/19–20, *+1 holy longsword*) or +8/+3 ranged (1d8+2/×3, composite longbow); SA smite evil 1/day, turn undead; SQ aura of courage, aura of good, *detect evil*, divine grace, divine health, lay on hands (8 hp/day); AL LG; SV Fort +6, Ref +3, Will +3; Str 12, Dex 13, Con 12, Int 13, Wis 6, Cha 15.

Skills: Bluff +10, Diplomacy +18, Disguise +2 (+4 acting), Gather Information +10, Handle Animal +6, Intimidate +4, Knowledge (nobility and royalty) +7, Knowledge (religion) +7, Listen +2, Ride +11, Spot +2, Swim +5.

Feats: Combat Expertise, Improved Disarm, Mounted Combat, Ride-By Attack, Weapon Focus (longsword).

Languages: Common, Gnome.

Possessions: *+1 holy longsword* (light generator), *+1 banded mail*, masterwork large metal shield (with St. Cuthbert's symbol), composite longbow (Str +1) with 12 arrows, *cloak of resistance +1, ring of sustenance*, 12 gp in belt pouch.

Alleybasher, human rogue 2: CR 2; Medium humanoid; HD 2d6+2 plus 3; hp 14 each; Init +7; Spd 30 ft.; AC 16, touch 13, flat-footed 13; Base Atk +1; Grp +1; Atk or Full Atk +3 melee (1d6+1/18–20, masterwork rapier) or +4 ranged (1d6/×3, shortbow); SA sneak attack +1d6; SQ evasion, trapfinding; AL LE; SV Fort +1, Ref +6, Will –1; Str 12, Dex 16, Con 12, Int 14, Wis 8, Cha 13.

Skills: Balance +5, Bluff +6, Climb +6, Diplomacy +3, Disable Device +8, Escape Artist +8, Hide +8, Intimidate +3, Jump +3, Listen +4, Move Silently +8, Open Lock +8, Search +7, Spot +4, Tumble +8.

Feats: Improved Initiative, Toughness.

Languages: Common, Gnome, Halfling.

Possessions: Studded leather, masterwork rapier, shortbow with 20 arrows, red sash.

Alurad Sorizan, male human cleric 6/fighter 2/blackguard 8 (Erythnul): CR 16; Medium humanoid (human); HD 6d8+12 plus 2d10+4 plus 8d10+16; hp 164; Init +0;

Spd 20 ft. (base 30 ft.); AC 26, touch 12, flat-footed 24; Base Atk +14; Grp +18; Atk +20 melee (1d10+5/17–20, *+1 bastard sword of mighty cleaving*) or +14 ranged (1d4+4/19–20 plus poison, dagger); Full Atk +20/+15/+10 melee (1d10+5/17–20, *+1 bastard sword of mighty cleaving*) or +14 ranged (1d4+4/19–20 plus poison, dagger); SA poison use, rebuke undead 4/day (1d20+3, affects 2d6+13 HD), smite good 2/day (+1 to attack, +8 damage), sneak attack +2d6, spells; SQ detect good, evasion, fiendish servant; AL CE; SV Fort +17, Ref +5, Will +12; Str 18, Dex 10, Con 14, Int 8, Wis 14, Cha 12.

Skills: Bluff +9, Diplomacy +3, Disguise +1 (+3 acting), Hide +18, Intimidate +9, Knowledge (religion) +4.

Feats: Cleave, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (bastard sword), Improved Critical (bastard sword), Improved Fiendish Servant, Improved Sunder, Iron Will, Persuasive, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (bastard sword).

Language: Common.

Blackguard Spells Prepared (caster level 8): 1st—*corrupt weapon, cure light wounds, magic weapon*; 2nd—*eagle's splendor, inflict moderate wounds* (DC 14); 3rd—*cure serious wounds*; 4th—*freedom of movement.*

Cleric Spells Prepared (caster level 6): 0—*cure minor wounds, detect magic, detect poison, light, read magic*; 1st—*bless, divine favor, doom* (DC 13), *protection from good*[D] (DC 13), *shield of faith*; 2nd—*align weapon, bull's strength, cure moderate wounds, death knell* (DC 14), *invisibility*[D]; 3rd—*invisibility purge, nondetection*[D] (DC 15).

D: Domain spell. Domains: Evil (cast evil spells at +1 caster level), Trickery (Bluff, Disguise, and Hide are class skills).

Possessions: *+2 improved shadow full plate, +2 heavy steel shield, +1 bastard sword of mighty cleaving, ring of evasion, Ring of Thirteen, 2 potions of extended bear's endurance, 2 potions of heroism,* 3 poisoned daggers (deathblade poison; injury, Fortitude DC 20 resists; initial damage 1d6 Con, secondary damage 2d6 Con), cloak and gloves made of stitched human skin, iron key.

Ancient Will-o'-Wisps: CR 11; Small aberration (air); HD 25d8+100; hp 212 each; Init +15; Spd fly 50 ft. (perfect); AC 31, touch 31, flat-footed 20; Base Atk +18; Grp +9; Atk/Full Atk +30 melee touch (4d6 electricity); SQ darkvision 60 ft., immunity to magic, natural invisibility; AL CE; SV Fort +11, Ref +18, Will +18; Str 1, Dex 33, Con 18, Int 17, Wis 18, Cha 10.

Skills: Bluff +28, Diplomacy +2, Disguise +0 (+2 acting), Intimidate +2, Listen +34, Search +31, Spot +34, Survival +18 (+20 following tracks).

Feats: Alertness, Blind-Fight, Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Flyby Attack, Improved Natural Attack (touch), Improved Initiative, Mobility, Spring Attack, Weapon Finesse[B].

Ardeth Webb, female tiefling monk 6/tattooed monk 10: CR 17; Medium outsider (native); HD 16d8+32; hp 119; Init +5; Spd 80 ft.; AC 28, touch 24, flat-footed 23; Base Atk +11; Grp +21; Atk +20 melee (2d8+8, unarmed strike); Full Atk +19/+19/+14/+9 melee (2d8+8, unarmed strike); SA *darkness* 1/day (CL 16th), ki strike (magic); SQ darkvision 60 ft., evasion, immunity to disease, immunity to poison, immunity to aging, purity of body, slow fall 30 ft., still mind, spell resistance 25, tattoos (crane, phoenix, scorpion, tiger, wasp); AL LE; SV Fort +14, Ref +17, Will +16; Str 22, Dex 20, Con 14, Int 16, Wis 18, Cha 8.

Skills: Balance +18, Escape Artist +17, Hide +26, Jump +39, Knowledge (religion) +12, Listen +22, Move Silently +24, Spot +23, Tumble +26, Use Rope +7 (+9 with bindings).

Feats: Combat Expertise, Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Endurance, Improved Disarm, Improved Grapple, Improved Unarmed Strike, Mobility, Spring Attack, Weapon Focus (unarmed strike).

Languages: Abyssal, Common, Demodand, Draconic, Infernal.

Tattoos (Su or Sp): Ardeth's tattoos are infused with magical energy. Unless the effect of a tattoo is continuous, activating one is a move action that does not provoke an attack of opportunity. Tattoos that activate as a spell-like ability function at caster level 10.

Crane: Immune to nonmagical disease, poison, and aging penalties.

Phoenix: Gains constant SR 25.

Scorpion: Force an opponent attacking her to use his lowest ability score modifier instead of his Strength or Dexterity modifier when making his attack roll. Ardeth must activate this tattoo on her opponent's turn, before the success or failure of the attack is determined. She must be aware of the attack and not flat-footed to use this ability; 5/day.

Tiger: While fighting unarmed, gain +1 bonus on attack rolls and deal +1d6 damage per hit; 10 rounds; 5/day.

Wasp: *Haste* on self; 10 rounds, 5/day.

Possessions: *Belt of giant strength +4, boots of health +2* (as *amulet of health +2*), *gloves of Dexterity +4, headband of Wisdom +2* (as *periapt of wisdom +2*), *amulet of mighty fists +2, bracers of armor +4, cloak of arachnida, ring of minor fire resistance, Ring of Thirteen, 3 potions of cure serious wounds.*

Artus Shemwick, male human rogue 5: CR 5; Medium humanoid; HD 5d6; hp 20; Init +2; Spd 30 ft.; AC 14, touch 12, flat-footed 14; Base Atk +3; Grp +2; Atk or Full Atk +6 melee (1d4–1, masterwork punching dagger); SA sneak attack +3d6; SQ evasion, trapfinding, trap sense +2, uncanny dodge; AL CN; SV Fort +1, Ref +6, Will +2; Str 8, Dex 14, Con 10, Int 17, Wis 13, Cha 14.

Skills: Appraise +14, Bluff +10, Diplomacy +12, Forgery +11, Gather Information +12, Intimidate +4, Knowledge (local) +11, Knowledge (nobility and royalty) +11, Listen +5, Profession (cook) +9, Sense Motive +9, Sleight of Hand +16, Spot +5, Use Magic Device +10.

Feats: Skill Focus (Appraise), Skill Focus (Sleight of Hand), Weapon Finesse.

Languages: Human, Elven, Gnome, Halfling

Possessions: Leather armor, masterwork punching dagger, *Heward's handy haversack*, 4 doses of giant wasp poison, 1 dose of striped toadstool, merchant's scale, masterwork thieves' tools, 100 cp, 290 sp, 536 gp, and 10 pp.

Note: Artus has numerous stashes of additional gold, gems, and art objects throughout the city (totaling 4,300 gp) to help him purchase more expensive objects, but he'll need 1d6 hours to access these additional funds if he needs them.

Aszithef, female haraknin fighter 7/rogue 6: CR 16; Medium outsider (evil, extraplanar, fire, lawful shapechanger); HD 4d8+7d10+6d6+68; hp 149; Init +8; Spd 30 ft.; AC 30, touch 15, flat-footed 27; Base Atk +15; Grp +22; Atk +25 melee (2d6+14/17–20 plus 1d6 cold plus 1d6 fire, *Coldburn*) or +20 ranged (1d8+4/×3, masterwork composite longbow); Full Atk +25/+20/+15 melee (2d6+14/17–20 plus 1d6 cold plus 1d6 fire, *Coldburn*) or +20/+15/+10 ranged (1d8+4/×3, masterwork composite longbow); SA breath weapon, command fiendish hound, sneak attack +3d6; SQ alternate form, darkvision 60 ft., evasion, scent, trap sense +2, trapfinding, uncanny dodge; AL LE; SV Fort +13, Ref +13, Will +8; Str 24, Dex 18, Con 18, Int 13, Wis 10, Cha 6; *Fiend Folio* 26.

Skills: Balance +6, Climb +18, Hide +23, Intimidate +4, Jump +20, Listen +15, Move Silently +22, Search +7, Spot +15, Survival +6 (+14 when tracking by scent), Tumble +23.

Feats: Combat Expertise, Dodge, Improved Critical (greatsword), Improved Initiative, Mobility, Power Attack, Spring Attack, Track[B], Weapon Focus (greatsword), Weapon Specialization (greatsword), Whirlwind Attack.

Languages: Common, Draconic, Giant, Ignan, Infernal.

Breath Weapon (Su): Cone of fire, 30 feet, every 2d4 rounds, damage 1d4+1, Reflex DC 20 half. A haraknin's breath weapon ignites flammable materials within the cone. It can use its breath weapon while biting.

Command Fiendish Hound (Sp): Aszithef can use *greater command* at will against hell hounds and Nessian warhounds.

Alternate Form (Su): Aszithef can transform into a hell hound or back as a move action at will, as if by *alter self*. She prefers to fight in humanoid form.

Possessions: *+2 mithral breastplate, Coldburn* (*+2 flaming frost greatsword*), masterwork composite longbow (+5 Str bonus), 20 arrows, *+1 animated large steel shield, gauntlets of ogre power, ioun stone* (pink rhomboid; +2 Dex), *ring of protection +2*, 2 *potions of cure serious wounds*, red-lacquered armband set with a diamond (2,000 gp), 120 pp.

Aushanna, advanced erinyes: CR 9; Medium outsider (baatezu, evil, extraplanar, lawful); HD 12d8+60; hp 114; Init +5; Spd 30 ft., fly 50 ft. (good); AC 23, touch 15, flat-footed 18; Base Atk +12; Grp +21; Atk +17 melee (1d8+5/19–20, longsword) or +18 ranged (1d8+6/×3 plus 1d6 fire, *+1 flaming composite longbow*) or +17 ranged (entangle, rope); Full Atk +17/+12/+7 melee (1d8+5/19–20, longsword) or +16/+16/+11/+6 ranged (1d8+6/×3 plus 1d6 fire, *+1 flaming composite longbow* with Rapid Shot feat) or +17 ranged (entangle, rope); SA entangle, spell-like abilities; SQ damage reduction 5/good, darkvision 60 ft., immunity to fire and poison, resistance to acid 10 and cold 10, see in darkness, spell resistance 20, telepathy 100 ft., true seeing; AL LE; SV Fort +13, Ref +13, Will +12; Str 21, Dex 21, Con 21, Int 14, Wis 18, Cha 20.

Skills: Concentration +20, Diplomacy +10, Escape Artist +17, Hide +20, Knowledge (dungeoneering) +17, Knowledge (the planes) +17, Listen +19, Move Silently +20, Search +17, Sense Motive +19, Spot +19, Survival +4 (+6 following tracks), Use Rope +5 (+7 with bindings).

Feats: Dodge, Flyby Attack, Mobility, Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Rapid Shot, Shot on the Run.

Languages: Celestial, Draconic, Infernal.

Spell-Like Abilities (caster level 12th): At will—*greater teleport* (self + 50 pounds of objects), *charm monster* (DC 19), *minor image* (DC 17), *unholy blight* (DC 19).

Possessions: *+1 flaming composite longbow* (+5 Str bonus) with 40 arrows, longsword, rope.

Beppo, male human commoner 3: CR 2; Medium humanoid (human); HD 3d4; hp 8; Init –1; Spd 30 ft. (5 ft. when moving fruit cart); AC 9, touch 9, flat-footed 9; Base Atk +1; Grp +0; Atk +0 melee (1d6–1, club); Full Atk +0 melee (1d6–1, club); SA —; SQ —; AL LG; SV Fort +1, Ref +0, Will +4; Str 8, Dex 9, Con 10, Int 11, Wis 13, Cha 12.

Skills: Appraise +5, Decipher Script +2, Knowledge (local) +3, Profession (foodmonger) +9.

Feats: Diligent, Iron Will, Skill Focus (Profession [merchant]).

Possessions: Club, fruit cart.

Bloodbloater: CR 1; Diminutive ooze (aquatic, swarm); HD 2d10+12; hp 22; Init +1; Spd 5 ft., swim 30 ft.; AC 11, touch 11, flat-footed 10; Base Atk +1; Grp +1; Atk or Full Atk swarm (1d6 plus 1 Str damage); Space/Reach 10 ft./0 ft.; SA blood drain, distraction (DC 10); SQ amphibious, blindsight 60 ft., fire vulnerability, ooze traits, swarm traits; AL N; SV Fort +6, Ref +1, Will –5; Str 10, Dex 13, Con 22, Int —, Wis 1, Cha 1; *Fiend Folio* 16.

Skills: Swim +8.

Blood Drain (Ex): On each round a bloodbloater swarm does at least 1 point of damage to a victim, it also drains blood and causes 1 point of temporary Strength damage.

Breathdrinker: CR 7; Medium Elemental (air, extraplanar); HD 8d8+24; hp 64; Init +6 (+2 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative); Spd fly 80 ft. (perfect); AC 16 (+2 Dex, +4 natural), touch 12, flat-footed 14; Base Atk +6; Grp +6; Atk +6 melee (2d4, wind scythe); SA fear gaze, steal breath; SQ air mastery, damage reduction 10/magic, elemental traits, invisibility; AL CE; SV Fort +5, Ref +8, Will +3; Str 11, Dex 15, Con 16, Int 14, Wis 13, Cha 14.

Skills: Hide +12, Move Silently +10, Search +12, Spot +9, Survival +9.

Feats: Ability Focus (fear gaze), Flyby Attack, Track.

Fear Gaze (Su): Anyone within 30 feet of a breathdrinker who meets the creature's gaze must make a DC 18 Will save or be paralyzed with fear for 1d4 rounds.

Steal Breath (Su): As a full-round action, a breathdrinker can force a helpless, breathing creature to make a DC 17 Fortitude save or take 1d6 points of Constitution damage. The breathdrinker heals 5 point of damage for each Constitution point lost by the victim.

Air Mastery (Ex): Any airborne creature takes a –1 penalty on attack and damage rolls against a breathdrinker.

Invisibility (Su): A breathdrinker can use *invisibility* on itself at will as a free action (caster level 8th).

Cauldronite Citizen, commoner 1: CR 1/2; Medium humanoid (human); HD 1d4+3; hp 7 each; Init +0; Spd 30 ft.; AC 10, touch 10, flat-footed 10; Base Atk +0; Grp +0; Atk/Full Atk +0 melee (1d3, unarmed strike); AL LN; SV Fort +2, Ref +0, Will +0; Str 11, Dex 11, Con 11, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 10.

Skills: Craft (varies) +4, Profession (varies) +4, Swim +4.

Feats: Great Fortitude, Toughness.

Languages: Common.

Calmus Vel, male human cleric 8 (Wee Jas): CR 8; Medium humanoid (human); HD 8d8+24; hp 63; Init –1; Spd 20 ft.; AC 20, touch 9, flat-footed 20; Base Atk +6, Grp +7; Atk +9 melee (1d8+2, *+1 heavy mace*); Full Atk +9/+4 melee (1d8+2, *+1 heavy mace*); SQ rebuke undead, spells, spontaneous casting (inflict); SW —; AL LE; SV Fort +9, Ref +3, Will +9; Str 13, Dex 8, Con 17, Int 10, Wis 17, Cha 12.

Skills: Concentration +13, Heal +14, Knowledge (religion) +11.

Feats: Combat Casting, Improved Counterspell, Lightning Reflexes, Weapon Focus (heavy mace).

Languages: Common.

Spells Prepared (caster level 8th); 0—*cure minor wounds* (2), *detect magic* (2), *read magic*, *guidance*; 1st—*cause fear*[D] (DC 14), *cure light wounds* (2), *comprehend languages*, *divine favor*, *shield of faith*; 2nd—*bear's endurance*, *bull's Strength*, *cure moderate wounds*, *death knell*[D] (DC 15), *hold person* (DC 15); 3rd—*dispel magic*[D], *cure serious wounds* (2), *magic vestment*, *protection from energy*; 4th—*cure critical wounds*, *death ward*[D], *greater magic weapon*.

D: Domain spell. Domains: Death (death touch 1/day, damage 7d6), Magic (use magic items as 4th-level wizard).

Possessions: *+1 full plate*, *+1 light shield*, *+1 heavy mace*, *periapt of Wisdom +2*, *cloak of resistance +2*, scroll of *mirror image*.

Captured Skulk: CR 4; Medium Construct; HD 3d10+20 (raggamoffyn) and 2d8 (skulk); hp 36 (raggamoffyn) and 9 (skulk); Init +2; Spd 30 ft.; AC 17, touch 12, flat-footed 15; Base Atk +1; Grp +3; Atk or Full Atk +3 melee (1d6+2/18–20, rapier) or +3 ranged (1d8/19–20, light crossbow); SA —; SQ construct traits, darkvision 60 ft., innate nondetection, peerless camouflage, shared damage, trackless path; AL N; SV Fort +1, Ref +3, Will +3; Str 14, Dex 15, Con 11, Int 11, Wis 15, Cha 6; *Monster Manual II* 204.

Skills: Hide +22, Move Silently +14.

Feats: Stealthy, Weapon Finesse[B].

Language: Common, Undercommon.

Innate Nondetection (Su): Skulks are difficult to detect using divination spells such as *clairaudience/clairvoyance*, *locate creature*, detection spells, and items such as *crystal balls*. If a divination is attempted upon a skulk, the caster of the divination must succeed at a caster level check (1d20 + caster level) against DC 20.

Peerless Camouflage (Ex): Skulks can move at full speed (and can even run) while hiding, suffering no penalties on Hide checks due to movement.

Shared Damage (Ex): An attack on the captured skulk deals half damage to the raggamoffyn and half damage to the skulk.

Trackless Path (Ex): The DCs of any Survival check to follow the trail of a skulk is increased by 10.

Possessions: Rapier.

Caryatid Column: CR 6; Medium Construct; HD 6d10+20; hp 53; Init +3; Spd 30 ft.; AC 22 (+3 Dex, +9 natural), touch 13, flat-footed 19; Base Atk +4; Grp +9; Atk +12 melee (1d10+9, *+2 bastard sword*); SQ break weapon, column form, construct traits, hardness 8, magic weapon; AL N; SV Fort +2, Ref +5, Will –3; Str 20, Dex 16, Con —, Int 6, Wis 1, Cha 1; *Fiend Folio* 30.

Skills: Diplomacy –3, Sense Motive +4.

Feats: Improved Sunder, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (bastard sword).

Break Weapon (Su): Any melee weapon or magical ranged weapon striking a caryatid column must make a DC 13 Fortitude save or shatter without effect. Nonmagical missiles shatter automatically.

Column Form (Ex): When at rest, a caryatid columns looks like an ordinary pillar and does not radiate magic.

Magic Weapon: A caryatid column's *+2 bastard sword* merges with it in its column form. If taken from the caryatid's hands, the weapon reverts to a nonmagical, useless stone form.

Cherrit, male halfling sorcerer 6: CR 6; Small humanoid; HD 6d4+6; hp 21 Init +3; Spd 20 ft.; AC 14, touch 14, flat-footed 11; Base Atk +3; Grp –2; Atk/Full Atk +3 melee (1d2–1 nonlethal, unarmed strike) or +3 melee (spell effect, melee touch) or +6 ranged (spell effect, ranged touch); SA spells; SQ halfling traits; AL CE; SV Fort +4, Ref +6, Will +7; Str 8, Dex 16, Con 12, Int 8, Wis 13, Cha 16.

Skills: Concentration +6, Climb +1, Hide +7, Jump –5, Listen +3, Move Silently +5, Spellcraft +3.

Feats: Dodge, Spell Focus (evocation), Eschew Materials.

Languages: Common, Halfling.

Sorcerer Spells Known (6/7/6/4; caster level 6; ranged touch +7): 0—*arcane mark*, *dancing lights*, *detect magic*, *light*, *ray of frost*, *read magic*, *touch of fatigue* (DC 13); 1st—*burning hands* (DC 15), *mage armor*, *magic missile*, *shield*; 2nd—*invisibility*, *web* (DC 15); 3rd—*fireball* (DC 17).

Possessions: None. Cherrit had an owl familiar, but the kuo-toas ate it.

Chorlyndyr, male human sorcerer 4: CR 4; Medium humanoid; HD 4d4+4; hp 18; Init +6; Spd 30 ft.; AC 17, touch 12, flat-footed 15; Base Atk +2; Grp +2; Atk or Full Atk +3 melee (1d4/19–20, masterwork dagger); SA spells; SQ summon familiar (lizard); AL NE; SV Fort +3, Ref +4, Will +6; Str 10, Dex 14, Con 12, Int 11, Wis 13, Cha 16.

Skills: Bluff +6, Climb +3, Concentration +8, Listen +3, Spellcraft +5, Spot +5.

Feats: Alertness (as long as familiar is in arm's reach), Dodge, Improved Initiative, Still Spell.

Languages: Common, Draconic.

Sorcerer Spells Known (caster level 4th, 6/7/4, +4 ranged touch): 0—*acid splash*, *detect magic*, *light*, *mage hand*, *ray of frost*, *read magic*; 1st—*mage armor*, *magic missile*, *summon monster I*; 2nd—*Melf's acid arrow*.

Possessions: Masterwork dagger, *amulet of natural armor +1*, *cloak of resistance +1*.

Common Raggamoffyn: CR 3; Medium Construct; HD 3d10+20; hp 36; Init +2; Spd 30 ft., fly 30 ft. (clumsy); AC 17, touch 12, flat-footed 15; Base Atk +2; Grp +4; Atk or Full Atk +4 melee (1d6+3, slam); SA control host, improved grab, suffocate, wrap; SQ darkvision 60 ft., construct traits;

AL N; SV Fort +1, Ref +3, Will +3; Str 14, Dex 15, Con —, Int 10, Wis 15, Cha 17; Monster Manual II 174.

Skills: Hide +10, Move Silently +10.

Feat: Dodge, Stealthy.

Control Host (Su): A raggamoffyn can attempt to take control over any creature it has wrapped. This functions like *dominate monster* (DC 14, caster level 18). As a free action, the raggamoffyn may relinquish control over its host by physically and mentally disengaging itself from the host's body.

Improved Grab (Ex): The raggamoffyn must hit with its slam attack to use this ability. If it gets a hold, it can wrap itself around the target.

Suffocate (Ex): A common raggamoffyn can asphyxiate a creature it has wrapped by drawing the air from its lungs. This automatically deals 1d4 points of damage per round to a wrapped creature.

Wrap (Ex): The raggamoffyn can wrap itself around a grappled target as a standard action, forming a skin-tight layer around the wrapped creature. Attacks on the raggamoffyn deal half damage to it and half to the wrapped victim. Once it has wrapped a creature, it can attempt to control it.

Coryston Pike, female human rogue 1/sorcerer 2: CR 3; Medium humanoid; HD 1d6+1 plus 2d4+2; hp 17 (currently 5); Init +2; Spd 20 ft. (limps); AC 12, touch 12, flat-footed 10; Base Atk +1; Grp +0; Atk +0 melee (1d3–1 nonlethal, unarmed strike); SA sneak attack +1d6, spells; SQ summon familiar, trapfinding; AL NG; SV Fort +3, Ref +4, Will +3; Str 8, Dex 15, Con 13, Int 12, Wis 10, Cha 14.

Skills: Bluff +6, Concentration +5, Disable Device +6, Disguise +6, Gather Information +6, Hide +6, Knowledge (arcana) +3, Knowledge (local) +5, Move Silently +6, Open Lock +6, Sense Motive +4, Spellcraft +3, Tumble +6.

Feats: Great Fortitude, Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot.

Languages: Common, Elven.

Spells Known (6/5; caster level 2): 0—*daze* (DC 12), *detect magic, mage hand, ray of frost, read magic*; 1st—*disguise self, magic missile.*

Crater Lake Monster, advanced half-fiend morkoth: CR 13; Large outsider (aquatic, extraplanar); HD 21d8+126; hp 220; Init +9; Spd swim 50 ft., fly 50 ft. (average); AC 27, touch 16, flat-footed 22; Base Atk +15; Grp +25; Atk +20 melee (1d8+6/19–20, claw); Full Atk +20 melee (1d8+6/19–20, 2 claws) and +15 melee (2d6+3, bite); Space/Reach 10 ft./5 ft.; SA hypnotism, smite good (1/day +20 damage against good target), spell-like abilities; SQ damage reduction 10/magic, darkvision 60 ft., immunity to poison, resistance to acid 10, resistance to cold 10, resistance to electricity 10, resistance to fire 10, spell reflection, spell resistance 31; AL CE; SV Fort +12, Ref +13, Will +16; Str 22, Dex 20, Con 23, Int 18, Wis 18, Cha 19; *Monster Manual II* 152.

Skills: Balance +7, Concentration +18, Hide +28, Intimidate +16, Knowledge (arcana) +28, Knowledge (nature) +16, Knowledge (the planes) +16, Listen +28, Spellcraft +30, Spot +28, Swim +38, Tumble +17, Use Magic Device +19.

Feats: Blind-Fight, Dodge, Improved Critical (claw), Improved Initiative, Improved Natural Attack (claw), Lightning Reflexes, Mobility, Skill Focus (Hide)[B], Skill Focus (Use Magic Device).

Languages: Abyssal.

Hypnotism (Su): The morkoth can hypnotize any number of creatures within 20 feet. Any creature in this area must make a DC 24 Will saving throw or stand motionless and watch the morkoth. Hypnotized creatures are helpless against the morkoth's attacks but may attempt a new saving throw at the same DC each round that the morkoth attacks it. Hypnosis is a mind-affecting compulsion effect.

Spell Reflection (Su): Any spell effect resisted by the morkoth's spell resistance reflects the spell back upon the caster. In this case, the caster becomes the target or point of origin for the spell's effect, as appropriate. If the morkoth is the subject of a *dispel magic*, its spell reflection ability is suppressed for 1 round.

Spell-Like Abilities (caster level 21): 3/day—*darkness, poison* (DC 18), *unholy aura* (DC 22); 1/day—*desecrate, unholy blight* (DC 18), *contagion* (DC 17), *blasphemy* (DC 21), *horrid wilting* (DC 22), *summon monster IX* (fiends only), *destruction* (DC 21).

Possessions: *Ring of protection +2, bracers of armor +2, wand of cure moderate wounds* (22 charges), *wand of lightning bolt* (18 charges).

Damaged Pulverizer Automaton: CR 3; Medium Construct; HD 5d10+20; hp 47 (currently 28); Init +0; AC 21, touch 10, flat-footed 21; Base Atk +3; Grp +6; Atk or Full Atk +6 melee (1d6+4, slam); SA sonic shriek; SQ blindsight 40 ft., construct traits, unreliable; AL N; SV Fort +1, Ref +1, Will +0; Str 17, Dex 11, Con —, Int —, Wis 9, Cha 4; *Monster Manual II* 27.

Sonic Shriek (Ex): Once per round as a standard action, a pulverizer can loose a 30-foot cone of sonic energy. Everything in this area takes 1d8 sonic damage and must make a DC 12 Fortitude save or be stunned for 1 round. The save DC is Constitution-based.

Unreliable (Ex): At the beginning of each round in which an automaton attempts to act, roll 1d20. On a result of 11 or better, it acts normally; otherwise, it takes no action.

Dark Creeper: CR 3; Small humanoid (dark one); HD 1d8+1; hp 5; Init +3; Spd 30 ft.; AC 17, touch 14, flat-footed 14; Base Atk +0; Grp –3; Atk or Full Atk +2 melee (1d3+1/19–20, dagger) or +3 ranged (1d3+1/19–20, dagger); SA sneak attack +2d6; SQ blindsight 60 ft., light vulnerability, evasion, shadow cloak; AL CN; SV Fort +1, Ref +7, Will +2; Str 12, Dex 17, Con 13, Int 10, Wis 15, Cha 10; *Fiend Folio* 38.

Skills: Hide +6 (+14 in shadowy areas), Listen +3, Move Silently +4 (+8 in shadowy areas), Sleight of Hand +4, Spot +3, Tumble +4.

Feats: Lightning Reflexes.

Languages: Common, Dark One, Undercommon.

Light Vulnerability (Ex): When exposed to sunlight or its magical equivalent, dark creepers suffer a –2 morale penalty on attack rolls, damage rolls, saving throws, ability checks, and skill checks.

Shadow Cloak (Su): Three times per day, a dark creeper can wrap itself in a cloak of shadows that grants it concealment from its foes. In shadows or darkness, the dark creeper gains total concealment (a 50% miss chance from attackers). In bright light, it gains partial concealment (20% miss chance). Darkvision does not reduce the amount of concealment. Creatures that can see in magical darkness suffer no miss chance.

Possessions: Black cloak, 4 small daggers, pouch containing 1d6 × 10 cp and 1d6 × 5 sp.

Dark Myrakul, male half-fiend human lichfiend cleric 18 (Graz'zt): CR 23; Medium undead; HD 18d12; hp 141; Init +2; Spd 30 ft., fly 30 ft. (average); AC 30, touch 12, flat-footed 28; Base Atk +13; Grp +17; Atk +21 melee (2d4+10/19–20/×4, *+4 keen vorpal adamantine scythe*) or +17 melee (1d4+4, claw) or +17 melee touch (1d8+5* plus insanity, touch); Full Atk +21/+16/+11 melee (2d4+10/19–20/×4, *+4 keen vorpal adamantine scythe*) and +12 melee (1d6+2, bite) or +17 melee (1d4+4, 2 claws) and +12 melee (1d6+2, bite) or +17 melee touch (1d8+5* plus insanity, touch); SA fear aura, insanity, rebuke undead 7/day (1d20+6; affects 2d6+22 HD), smite good 1/day (+18 damage), spell-like abilities, spells; SQ damage reduction 15/bludgeoning and magic, darkvision 60 ft., immunity to cold, electricity, mind-affecting attack, poison, and polymorph, resistance to acid 10, cold 10, electricity 10, fire 10, and sonic 10, spell resistance 28, turn resistance +4; AL CE; SV Fort +11, Ref +8, Will +16; Str 18, Dex 14, Con —, Int 18, Wis 20, Cha 18.

*A DC 23 Will save reduces the damage by half. The save DC is Charisma-based.

Skills: Concentration +21, Diplomacy +25, Heal +26, Hide +6, Knowledge (religion) +25, Knowledge (the planes) +25, Listen +13, Move Silently +6, Search +12, Spellcraft +25, Spot +13.

Feats: Craft Construct, Craft Magic Arms and Armor, Craft Wondrous Item, Evil Brand*, Greater Spell Penetration, Hover, Quicken Spell-Like Ability (poison), Spell Penetration.

*This feat is detailed on page 49 of the *Book of Vile Darkness*. It grants a +2 circumstance bonus on Diplomacy and Intimidate checks made against evil creatures.

Languages: Abyssal, Common, Demodand, Draconic, Infernal.

Fear Aura (Su): Creatures of less than 5 HD in a 60-foot radius that look at a lichfiend must succeed on a DC 23 Will save or be affected as though by a *fear* spell (caster level 18th). A creature that successfully saves cannot be affected again by the lichfiend's fear aura for 24 hours. The save DC is Charisma-based.

Insanity (Sp): Any living creature the lich hits with its touch attack must succeed on a DC 23 Will save or be affected as if by an *insanity* spell (caster level 18th). *Remove curse* does not remove *insanity*, but a *greater restoration*, *heal*, *limited wish*, *miracle*, or *wish* spell can restore the character. The save DC is Charisma-based.

Spell-Like Abilities (caster level 18th): 3/day—*darkness*, quickened *poison* (DC 17), *unholy aura* (DC 22); 1/day—*blasphemy* (DC 21), *contagion* (DC 17), *desecrate*, *destruction* (DC 21), *horrid wilting* (DC 22), *summon monster IX*, *unhallow*, *unholy blight* (DC 18).

Spells Prepared (caster level 18; +15 ranged touch): 0—*create water* (3), *cure minor wounds*, *detect magic*, *read magic*; 1st—*bane* (DC 16), *cause fear*[D] (DC 16), *deathwatch*, *divine favor* (2), *doom* (2, DC 16), *entropic shield*; 2nd—*align weapon*, *eagle's splendor*, *death knell*[D] (DC 17), *hold person* (DC 17), *owl's wisdom*, *silence* (2, DC 17); 3rd—*animate dead*[D], *bestow curse* (2, DC 18), *contagion* (2, DC 18), *create food and water*, *deeper darkness*; 4th—*discern lies* (DC 19), *divine power*, *freedom of movement*, *greater magic weapon* (already cast), *sending*, *spell immunity*, *unholy blight*[D] (DC 19); 5th—*flame strike* (2, DC 20), *slay living*[D] (DC 20), *spell resistance* (2), *true seeing*; 6th—*antilife shell*, *banishment*, *create undead*[D], *greater dispel magic* (2); 7th—*destruction*[D] (2, DC 22), *summon monster VII* (2); 8th—*create greater undead*[D], *fire storm* (DC 23), *greater spell immunity*, *summon monster VIII*; 9th—*energy drain* (+15 ranged touch, DC 24), *implosion* (DC 24), *wail of the banshee*[D] (DC 24).

D: Domain spell. Domains: Death (death touch 1/day; +17 melee touch), Evil (cast evil spells at +1 caster level).

Possessions: *+4 chainmail of sonic resistance*, *+1 keen vorpal adamantine scythe* (with *greater magic weapon* cast on it), *amulet of natural armor +3*, silver unholy symbol of Graz'zt (500 gp), pouch containing 6 black onyx gems (500 gp each; material components for *animate dead*, *create undead*, and *create greater undead* spells), iron keys to cell doors (in areas **7** and **9** of Skullrot).

Daxavalt and Kerg, male dwarf fighter 6: CR 6; Medium humanoid (dwarf); HD 6d10+18; hp 62, 60; Init +1; Spd 20 ft.; AC 19, touch 11, flat-footed 18; Base Atk +6; Grp +9; Atk +12 melee (1d8+7/×3, *+2 dwarven urgrosh*) or +7 ranged (1d10/19–20, heavy crossbow); Full Atk +10/+5 melee (1d8+7/×3, *+2 dwarven urgrosh*) and +10 melee (1d6+5/×3, *+2 dwarven urgrosh*) or +10 ranged (1d8/19–20, light crossbow); SQ darkvision 60 ft., dwarf traits; AL LE; SV Fort +8 (+12 against poison), Ref +3, Will +3; Str 16, Dex 13, Con 16, Int 8, Wis 12, Cha 8.

Skills: Intimidate +4, Jump –4.

Feats: Cleave, Dodge, Great Cleave, Power Attack, Two-Weapon Fighting, Weapon Focus (dwarven urgrosh), Weapon Specialization (dwarven urgrosh).

Languages: Common, Dwarven.

Possessions: Masterwork full plate armor, *+2 dwarven urgrosh*, heavy crossbow with 10 bolts, pouch containing 2d6 gems (worth 100 gp each).

Decrihni Baiul, male human fighter 5/cleric 9 (Adimarchus): CR 14; Medium humanoid (human); HD 5d10+5 plus 9d8+9; hp 99; Init +0; Spd 20 ft.; AC 23, touch 12, flat-footed 23; Base Atk +11; Grp +15; Atk +18 melee (2d4+10/19–20, *+2 spell storing spiked chain*); Full Atk +18/+13/+8 melee (2d4+10/19–20, *+2 spell storing spiked chain*); SA rebuke/command undead, spells; SQ —; AL CE; SV Fort +11, Ref +6, Will +10; Str 18, Dex 10, Con 12, Int 13, Wis 16, Cha 8.

Skills: Climb +7, Concentration +10, Craft (weaponsmith) +9, Intimidate +7, Jump +1, Knowledge (the planes) +13, Perform (keyboard instrument) +2, Spellcraft +10.

Feats: Combat Expertise, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (spiked chain), Improved Critical (spiked chain), Improved Disarm, Improved Trip, Lightning Reflexes, Quicken Spell, Weapon Focus (spiked chain), Weapon Specialization (spiked chain).

Cleric Spells Prepared (caster level 9th; +11 ranged touch): 0—*cure minor wounds* (2), *detect magic, detect poison, guidance, read magic*; 1st—*cure light wounds* (2), *detect law, divine favor, protection from good*[D], *shield of faith*; 2nd—*bear's endurance, cure moderate wounds, darkness, hold person* (DC 15), *shatter*[D] (DC 15), *sound burst* (DC 15); 3rd—*cure serious wounds, magic circle against good*[D], *prayer, searing light, stone shape*; 4th—*cure critical wounds, divine power, unholy blight*[D] (DC 17); 5th—*dispel law*[D], quickened *divine favor*.

*Domain spell. Domains: Chaos (cast chaos spells at +1 caster level), Evil (cast evil spells at +1 caster level).

Possessions: *+3 full plate, +2 spell storing spiked chain*, cold iron spiked chain, *gauntlets of ogre power, ring of protection +2, potion of invisibility*, scroll of *righteous might*, 23 gp.

Demonflesh Golem: CR 18; Huge construct (extraplanar); HD 24d10+40; hp 229; Init +3; Spd 50 ft., fly 100 ft. (average); AC 33, touch 7, flat-footed 33; Base Atk +18, Grp +36; Atk +27 melee (2d6+10, slam) and +29 melee (2d6+12/19–20, claw); Full Atk +27 melee (2d6+10, slam) and +29 melee (2d6+12/19–20, claw) or +27 melee (1d6+10 plus daze, tail lash); Space/Reach 15 ft./15 ft. (25 ft. with tail); SA claw graft, fear gaze, spell-like abilities, whip tail graft; SQ construct traits, damage reduction 15/adamantine and good, immune to electricity, immunity to magic, fast leg graft, resistance to acid 20, resistance to cold 20, resistance to fire 20, see invisibility; AL CE; SV Fort +8, Ref +7, Will +9; Str 31, Dex 8, Con —, Int 8, Wis 12, Cha 13; *Fiend Folio* 86.

Skills: Climb +29, Jump +28.

Feats: Cleave, Combat Reflexes, Great Cleave, Improved Critical (claw), Improved Initiative, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (claw), Weapon Focus (slam), Weapon Focus (tail lash).

Claw Graft (Ex): A demonflesh golem's left arm can attack independently of its control; this allows the golem to effectively attack with this claw as a free action. The clawed arm has a Strength score of 35, attacks at the golem's full base attack bonus (plus its higher Strength bonus), and gains its full Strength bonus on damage rolls.

Fear Gaze (Su): Range 30 ft., DC 19 Will save or be paralyzed with fear for 1d4 rounds.

Whip Tail Graft (Ex): As a full-round action, a demonflesh golem can direct its tail to attack one creature within 25 feet. Wounds from the tail burn fiercely, causing the creature struck to be dazed for 1 round unless it makes a DC 11 Fortitude save.

Spell-Like Abilities (caster level 20th): 3/day—*darkness, poison* (DC 15), *unholy aura* (DC 19); 1/day—*destruction* (DC 18), *horrid wilting* (DC 19), *unholy blight* (DC 15). Caster level 20th.

Immunity to Magic (Ex): A demonflesh golem is immune to all spells, spell-like abilities, and supernatural effects, except as follows. A death effect slows it for 1d6 rounds. A spell with the chaotic or evil descriptor breaks any slow effect on the golem and cures 1 point of damage for each 3 points of damage it would otherwise deal. It is fully affected by spells with the law or good descriptor, unless its construct traits make it immune to the spell's effects.

Dhorlot the Dragon-Father, male young adult black dragon: CR 9; Large dragon (water); HD 16d12+48; hp 150; Init +0; Spd 60 ft., fly 150 ft. (poor), swim 60 ft.; AC 24, touch 9, flat-footed 24; Base Atk +16; Grp +24; Atk +20 melee (2d6+4, bite); Full Atk +20 melee (2d6+4, bite), +17 melee 1d8+2, 2 claws), +17 melee (1d6+2, 2 wings), +18 melee (1d8+6, tail slap); Space/Reach 10 ft./5 ft. (bite 10 ft.); SA breath weapon (80-ft. line, damage 10d4 acid, Reflex DC 21 half), *darkness*, frightful presence (DC 19), spells; SQ blindsense 60 ft., DR 5/magic; darkvision 120 ft., immunities (acid, sleep, and paralysis), keen senses, low-light vision, SR 17, water breathing; AL CE; SV Fort +13, Ref +10, Will +11; Str 19, Dex 10, Con 17, Int 12, Wis 13, Cha 12.

Skills: Bluff +9, Climb +20, Diplomacy +8, Hide +8, Intimidate +19, Listen +17, Move Silently +16, Search +17, Knowledge (nature) +7, Spot +17, Swim +10.

Feats: Improved Bull Rush, Improved Sunder, Multiattack, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (bite), Weapon Focus (tail slap).

Spells Known (caster level 1st): 0—*daze* (DC 11), *detect magic, touch of fatigue* (DC 11), *read magic*; 1st—*obscuring mist, shield*.

Drakthar the Bloodmonger, underpowered bugbear vampire: CR 4; Medium undead (augmented humanoid); HD 3d12; hp 19; Init +7; Spd 30 ft.; AC 25, touch 13, flat-footed 22; Base Atk +2; Grp +7; Atk +8 melee (1d8+5, morningstar); Full Atk +8 melee (1d8+5, morningstar) and +2 melee (1d6+2 plus energy drain, slam); SA blood drain, children of the night, dominate, energy drain; SQ alternate form, darkvision 60 ft., damage reduction 10/silver and magic, fast healing 5, gaseous form, putrefy corpse, resist cold 10 and electricity 10, scent, spider climb, turn resistance +4; AL CE; SV Fort +1, Ref +8, Will +2; Str 21, Dex 16, Con —, Int 12, Wis 12, Cha 13.

Skills: Bluff +9, Climb +7, Hide +14, Listen +14, Move Silently +16, Search +9, Sense Motive +9, Spot +14.

Feats: Alertness, Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes, Weapon Focus (morningstar).

Languages: Common, Goblin.

Blood Drain (Ex): Drakthar can suck the blood from a living victim with his fangs by making a successful grapple check. If he pins his foe, he drains blood, dealing 1d4 points of Constitution drain each round the pin is maintained. On each successful attack, he gains 5 temporary hit points.

Children of the Night (Su): Once per day, Drakthar can call forth 1d4+1 bat swarms (*Monster Manual* 237), 1d6+1 rat swarms (Monster Manual page 239), or 3d6 wolves (*Monster Manual* 283) as a standard action. The creatures arrive in 2d6 rounds and serve Drakthar for up to 1 hour.

Putrefy Corpse (Su): This ability replaces the standard vampire's create spawn ability. Any creature slain by Drakthar's energy drain ability or reduced to 0 Constitution by Drakthar's blood drain ability putrefies after 24 hours, becoming a wet heap of black, maggot-ridden flesh. A body in this state cannot be raised. *Gentle repose* forestalls the putrefaction for the duration of the spell.

Dominate (Su): Drakthar can crush an opponent's will by gazing into his or her eyes. This is similar to a gaze attack, except that Drakthar must use a standard action, and those merely looking at him are unaffected. Anyone the vampire targets must succeed on a DC 12 Will save or fall instantly under Drakthar's influence as though by a *dominate person* spell (CL 12th). The ability has a range of 30 feet.

Energy Drain (Su): Living creatures hit by Drakthar's slam attack gains one negative level. For each negative level bestowed, Drakthar gains 5 temporary hit points.

Alternate Form (Su): Drakthar can assume the form of a bat, dire bat, wolf, or dire wolf as a standard action, as the *polymorph* spell (CL 12th) except that he does not regain hit points for changing form. While in his alternate form, Drakthar loses his slam attack and dominate ability, but he gains the natural weapons and extraordinary special attacks of his new form. He can remain in that form until he assumes another one or until the next sunrise.

Fast Healing (Ex): Drakthar heals 5 points of damage each round so long as he has at least 1 hit point. If reduced to 0 hit points, he automatically assumes gaseous form and attempts to escape. He must reach his coffin within 2 hours or be utterly destroyed. Any additional damage dealt to Drakthar while he's in gaseous form has no effect. Once at rest in his coffin, Drakthar is helpless. He regains 1 hit point after 1 hour, then is no longer helpless and resumes healing at a rate of 5 hit points per round.

Gaseous Form (Su): As a standard action, Drakthar can assume *gaseous form* at will as the spell (CL 5th), but he can remain gaseous indefinitely and has a fly speed of 20 feet with perfect maneuverability.

Spider Climb (Ex): Drakthar can climb sheer surfaces as though with a *spider climb* spell.

Possessions: Leather armor, light wooden shield, morningstar.

Drakthar's Throne: CR 3; Medium undead; HD 6d12; hp 39; Init +2; Spd 30 ft.; AC 14, touch 12, flat-footed 12; Base Atk +3; Grp +5; Atk +5 melee (1d6+2, slam); Full Atk +5 melee (1d6+2, 2 slams); SA —; SQ blindsight 60 ft., damage reduction 10/bludgeoning, immune to cold, undead traits; AL NE; SV Fort +2, Ref +4, Will +5; Str 15, Dex 15, Con —, Int —, Wis 10, Cha 1.

Dread Guard: CR 3; Small construct; HD 5d10+10; hp 37; Init +0; Spd 20 ft. (can't run); AC 18, touch 11, flat-footed 18; Base Atk +3; Grp +6; Atk +8 melee (1d6+3/×3, gnome hooked hammer); Full Atk +6 melee (1d6+3/×3, gnome hooked hammer) and +6 melee (1d4+1/×4, gnome hooked hammer); SA —; SQ cold resistance 10, construct traits, fire resistance 10; AL N; SV Fort +1, Ref +1, Will +2; Str 17, Dex 11, Con —, Int 6, Wis 13, Cha 2; *Monster Manual II* 87.

Skills: Spot +9.

Feats: Exotic Weapon (gnome hooked hammer), Two-Weapon Fighting.

Possessions: Masterwork gnome hooked hammer.

Dugobras, male fire giant expert 5: CR 12; Large giant (fire); HD 15d8+5d6+160; hp 258; Init +0; Spd 40 ft.,; AC 22, touch 9, flat-footed 22; Base Atk +14; Grp +29; Atk +25 melee (2d8+17/×3, *+1 warhammer*) or +24 melee (1d4+11, slam) or +13 ranged (2d8+11 plus 2d6 fire, red-hot anvil fragment); Full Atk +25/+20/+15 melee (2d6+17/×3, *+1 warhammer*) or +24 melee (1d4+11, 2 slams) or +13 ranged (2d6+10 plus 2d6 fire, red-hot anvil fragment); Space/Reach 10 ft./10 ft.; SA rock throwing; SQ immunity to fire, low-light vision, rock catching, vulnerability to cold; AL NE; SV Fort +18, Ref +6, Will +10; Str 32, Dex 10, Con 26, Int 15, Wis 12, Cha 13.

Skills: Climb +20, Craft (alchemy) +7, Craft (armorsmithing) +12, Craft (blacksmithing) +23, Disable Device +7, Intimidate +19, Jump +20, Knowledge (religion) +7, Listen +6, Spot +19, Use Magic Device +14.

Feats: Cleave, Great Cleave, Improved Bull Rush, Improved Sunder, Power Attack, Skill Focus (Craft blacksmithing), Skill Focus (Use Magic Device).

Languages: Common, Giant, Ignan.

Possessions: *+1 warhammer, +3 chain shirt*, dagger, *wand of displacement* (14 charges), *wand of cure serious wounds* (22 charges), *wand of dispel magic* (18 charges).

Dyr'ryd, advanced shator demodand: CR 19; Large outsider (evil, extraplanar); HD 19d8+76; hp 180; Init +2; Spd 30 ft., fly 70 ft. (poor); AC 28, touch 15, flat-footed 26; Base Atk +19; Grp +29; Atk +28 melee (2d6+13/×3, *Mindbite*) or +20 ranged touch (paralysis, slime spit); Full Atk +28/+23/+18/+13 melee (2d6+13/×3, *Mindbite*) and +23 melee (2d6+5 plus paralysis, bite) or +20 ranged (paralysis, slime spit); Space/Reach 10 ft./10 ft. (20 ft. with *Mindbite*); SA paralyzing slime, spell-like abilities, spells, *summon demodand*; SQ darkvision 120 ft., damage reduction 15/good, immune to acid, cold, fire, mind-affecting effects, and poison, scent, see invisibility, spell resistance 30, two-faced; AL NE; SV Fort +15, Ref +13, Will +14; Str 23, Dex 15, Con 18, Int 16, Wis 16, Cha 22; *Fiend Folio* 45.

Skills: Bluff +28, Concentration +26, Diplomacy +30, Disguise +17 (+19 to act in character), Gather Information +8, Hide +9, Intimidate +30, Knowledge (arcana) +25, Knowledge (local) +14, Knowledge (the planes) +25, Listen +16, Move Silently +13, Search +25, Sense Motive +25, Spot +16.

Feats: Alertness, Cleave, Combat Expertise, Combat Reflexes, Improved Trip, Multiattack, Power Attack.

Languages: Abyssal, Common, Demodand, Infernal.

Paralyzing Slime (Ex): Lasts for 3d6 rounds; Fortitude save (DC 23) negates. His maximum range when spitting slime is 30 feet.

Spell-Like Abilities (caster level 15th): At will—*detect magic, clairaudience/clairvoyance, fear* (DC 20), *invisibility, spider climb, tongues*; 3/day—*cloudkill* (DC 21), *fog cloud,*

ray of enfeeblement, stinking cloud (DC 19); 2/day—*dispel magic*; 1/day—*mass charm monster* (DC 24).

Summon Demodand (Sp): 1/day, 1d2 shators (30% chance of success) or either 1d4 kelubars or 1d6 farastus (70% chance of success).

Two-Faced (Ex): Once per round, the demodand's second face can take an additional standard action independent of the actions taken by the rest of the body. The action is limited to the following tasks: casting a spell, activating a spell-like ability, activating a magic item, or attempting a skill or ability check requiring a mental ability score (Intelligence, Wisdom, or Charisma).

Sorcerer Spells Known (6/8/8/6/4; caster level 8th; save DC 16 + spell level): 0—*dancing lights, daze* (DC 16), *flare* (DC 16), *ghost sound* (DC 16), *read magic, mage hand, open/close, ray of frost*; 1st—*enlarge, grease* (DC 17), *mage armor, magic missile, true strike*; 2nd—*bull's Strength, invisibility, see invisibility*; 3rd—*displacement, haste*; 4th—*stone shape*.

Possessions: *Mindbite, gauntlet of extend spell* (functions as *metamagic rod of extend spell*, but worn as a gauntlet), *medallion of thoughts, ring of evasion, Ring of Thirteen*.

Elite Half-Orc Guards, fighter 8 (3): CR 8; Medium humanoid (orc); HD 8d10+16; hp 64; Init +1; Spd 20 ft.; AC 23, touch 11, flat-footed 22; Base Atk +8, Grp +12; Atk +15 melee (1d10+7/19–20/×3, *+1 dwarven waraxe*); Full Atk +15/+10 melee (1d10+7/19–20/×3, *+1 dwarven waraxe*); SQ darkvision 60 ft.; AL LE; SV Fort +8, Ref +3, Will +5; Str 19, Dex 13, Con 14, Int 8, Wis 12, Cha 6.

Skills: Jump +15.

Feats: Cleave, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (dwarven waraxe), Greater Weapon Focus (dwarven waraxe), Improved Critical (dwarven waraxe), Iron Will, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (dwarven waraxe), Weapon Specialization (dwarven waraxe).

Languages: Common, Orc.

Possessions: *+1 full plate, +1 heavy shield, +1 dwarven waraxe, gauntlets of ogre power*, 200 gp.

Embril Aloustinai, female human wizard 5/cleric 9/mystic theurge 5 (Nerull): CR 19; Medium humanoid (human); HD 5d4+5 plus 9d8+9 plus 5d4+5; hp 66; Init +0; Spd 30 ft.; AC 12, touch 12, flat-footed 12; Base Atk +10; Grp +10; Atk +10 melee (1d3 nonlethal, unarmed strike); Full Atk +10/+5 melee (1d3 nonlethal, unarmed strike); SA rebuke undead 10/day (1d20+5, affects 2d6+12 HD), spells; SQ —; AL CE; SV Fort +9, Ref +7, Will +20; Str 10, Dex 11, Con 12, Int 19, Wis 23, Cha 16.

Skills: Bluff +9, Concentration +23, Craft (alchemy) +12, Decipher Script +12, Diplomacy +14, Disguise +9 (+11 acting), Hide +6, Intimidate +5, Knowledge (arcana) +16, Knowledge (religion) +12, Knowledge (the planes) +9, Sense Motive +10, Spellcraft +22.

Feats: Brew Potion, Craft Wand, Extra Turning, Greater Spell Focus (necromancy), Improved Counterspell, Lightning Reflexes, Quicken Spell, Scribe Scroll, Spell Focus (necromancy), Spell Penetration.

Languages: Common, Abyssal, Elven.

Wizard Spells Prepared (caster level 10th; +10 ranged touch): 0—*detect magic, light, mage hand, read magic*; 1st—*mage armor, magic missile* (2), *shield, unseen servant*; 2nd—*cat's grace, scorching ray* (2), *see invisibility, web* (DC 16); 3rd—*dispel magic, haste, hold person* (DC 17), *lightning bolt* (DC 17); 4th—*crushing despair* (DC 18), *enervation, shout* (DC 18), *stoneskin*; 5th—*magic jar* (DC 21, already cast), *teleport*.

Spellbook: 0—all; 1st—*comprehend languages, mage armor, magic missile, obscuring mist, protection from good, shield, Tenser's floating disk, unseen servant*; 2nd—*arcane lock, cat's grace, knock, locate object, Melf's acid arrow, owl's wisdom, scorching ray, see invisibility, web*; 3rd—*arcane sight, dispel magic, fly, haste, hold person, lightning bolt, phantom steed, tongues*; 4th—*crushing despair, enervation, fear, lesser geas, shout, stoneskin, wall of fire*; 5th—*baleful polymorph, break enchantment, cone of cold, feeblemind, Leomund's secret chest, magic jar, teleport, wall of stone*.

Cleric Spells Prepared (caster level 14th; +10 ranged touch): 0—*cure minor wounds* (2), *detect poison, guidance, purify food and drink, resistance*; 1st—*bane* (DC 14), *cure light wounds* (2), *disguise self*[D], *divine favor* (2), *hide from undead, shield of faith*; 2nd—*bear's endurance, cure moderate wounds* (2), *death knell*[D] (DC 20), *desecrate, silence* (DC 18), *sound burst* (DC 18), *undetectable alignment*; 3rd—*animate dead*[D], *cure serious wounds, invisibility purge, magic circle against good, prayer, protection from energy*; 4th—*cure critical wounds* (3), *death ward*[D], *neutralize poison, sending*; 5th—*commune, plane shift* (DC 21), *slay living*[D] (DC 23), *spell resistance, true seeing*; 6th—*blade barrier* (DC 22), *greater dispel magic, heal, harm* (DC 24), *mislead*[D]; 7th—*destruction*[D] (2, DC 25), *greater scrying* (DC 23).

D: Domain spell. Domains: Death (death touch 1/day; damage 9d6), Trickery (Bluff, Disguise, and Hide are class skills).

Possessions: *Headband of intellect +4, periapt of wisdom +6, wand of enervation* (16 charges), *mantle of faith, Ring of Thirteen, potion of owl's wisdom*, platinum bracelet with 13 cage-shaped charms (750 gp), *magic jar* gem (750 gp), silver unholy symbol (500 gp), tiny *Leomund's secret chest* replica (50 gp), pouch of diamond dust (*stoneskin* spell component; 250 gp).

Farastu Demodand: CR 11; Medium outsider (evil, extraplanar); HD 11d8+22; hp 71; Init +5; Speed 40 ft.; AC 25, touch 11, flat-footed 24; Base Atk +11; Grp +23; Atk +15 melee (1d4+4, claw); Full Atk +15 melee (1d4+4, 2 claws) and +10 melee (1d6+2, bite); SA adhesive slime, improved grab, rage, spell-like abilities, *summon demodand*; SQ damage reduction 10/good, darkvision 60 ft. immune to acid and poison, outsider traits, resistance to cold 10 and fire 10, scent, spell resistance 23; AL NE; SV Fort +9, Ref +8, Will +8; Str 19, Dex 13, Con 14, Int 8, Wis 12, Cha 16; *Fiend Folio* 42.

Skills: Climb +22, Concentration +13, Diplomacy +6, Hide +12, Intimidate +16, Listen +14, Move Silently +12, Search +10, Sense Motive +12, Spot +14.

Feats: Alertness, Cleave, Improved Initiative, Power Attack.

Languages: Abyssal, Demodand.

Adhesive Slime (Ex): The black slime farastus exude grant them a +8 racial bonus on grapple checks and disarm checks. A weapon that strikes a farastu becomes stuck fast unless the wielder succeeds on a DC 17 Reflex save. Prying off a stuck weapon requires a DC 17 Strength check. Oil dissolves the farastu's adhesive slime; it requires 10 minutes to renew its adhesive coating. It can also dissolve its slime at will, and the substance breaks down 1 minute after the creature dies.

Rage (Ex): The farastu can fly into a rage three times per day, much like a barbarian. The farastu gains +4 Strength, +4 Constitution, +2 Will saves, and –2 AC. Its statistics change as follows: hp +22; AC 23, touch 9, flat-footed 22; Base Atk +13; Grp +25; Atk +17 melee (1d4+6, claw); Full Atk +17 melee (1d4+6, 2 claws) and +12 melee (1d6+3, bite); SV Fort +11, Will +10; Str 23, Con 18; Climb +24. The rage lasts for 7 rounds, but the farastu can end it earlier if it desires. It is not fatigued at the end of its rage.

Spell-Like Abilities (caster level 11th): At will—*detect magic, clairaudience/clairvoyance, fear* (DC 17), *invisibility, tongues*; 3/day—*fog cloud, ray of enfeeblement*; 2/day—*dispel magic.*

Summon Demodand (Sp): Once per day, a farastu can attempt to summon 1d4 farastus with a 30% chance of success.

Fetor Abradius, male human, wizard 7/loremaster 7: CR 14; Medium humanoid (human); HD 14d4+28; hp 64; Init +5; Spd 30 ft.; AC 20, touch 14, flat-footed 19; Base Atk +6, Grp +5; Atk +5 melee (1d4–1/19–20, dagger); Full Atk +5/+0 melee (1d4–1/19–20, dagger); SA spells; SQ applicable knowledge, dodge trick, greater lore +13, lore of true stamina, more newfound arcana; AL NE; Fort +11, Ref +8, Will +14; Str 8, Dex 13, Con 14, Int 22, Wis 12, Cha 10.

Skills: Concentration +19, Decipher Script +23, Knowledge (arcana) +26, Knowledge (nature) +23, Knowledge (religion) +23, Knowledge (the planes) +23, Spellcraft +25 (+27 with scrolls), Use Magic Device +11 (+13 with scrolls).

Feats: Craft Wondrous Item, Death Frost Spell (see Appendix 2), Empower Spell, Greater Spell Focus (necromancy), Improved Initiative, Quicken Spell, Scribe Scroll, Skill Focus (Knowledge [arcana]), Spell Focus (necromancy).

Languages: Common, Abyssal, Demodand, Infernal, Spell Weaver.

Wizard Spells Prepared (caster level 14th); 0—*detect magic* (2), *light, mage hand*; 1st—*alarm**, *comprehend languages, mage armor**, *magic missile, rime* (DC 19), *shield*; 2nd—*blindness/deafness* (2, DC 20), *command undead, bear's endurance*, death frost *magic missile, mirror image, see invisibility*; 3rd—*halt undead* (DC 21), *haste, lightning bolt* (DC 19), *vampiric touch* (2); 4th—*confusion* (DC 20), *dimension door* (2), *enervation*, death frost *lightning bolt* (DC 19); 5th—*dominate person* (DC 21), empowered *lightning bolt* (DC 19), death frost *enervation*, empowered *vampiric touch*; 6th—*circle of death* (DC 24), *disintegrate* (DC 22), *greater dispel magic, necrotic mist*; 7th—*greater teleport*, quickened *lightning bolt* (DC 19).

*This spell is already cast.

Spellbooks: Fetor's spellbooks contain those spells he has prepared plus the following: 0—all cantrips; 1st—*charm person, comprehend languages, identify*; 3rd—*icefane corpse*; 4th—*animate dead, scrying*; 5th—*cone of cold, teleport, wall of stone*; 6th—*create undead*; 7th—*control undead, finger of death, forcecage.*

Familiar: Because Fetor has seven loremaster levels that do not contribute to a familiar's power, he chooses not to keep one, seeing it more as a vulnerability than an asset.

Possessions: *Ring of counterspells (dispel magic), metamagic rod of lesser empower spell, ring of protection +2, headband of intellect +2, amulet of natural armor +2, cloak of resistance +3, potion of cure serious wounds*, scroll of *dominate person*, scroll of *dimension door*, dagger, spell component pouch, spellbooks, 300 gp.

Fiendish Centaur ranger 2: CR 6; Large monstrous humanoid; HD 6d8+18; hp 43; Init +4; Spd 50 ft.; AC 16, touch 13, flat-footed 12; Base Atk +6; Grp +17; Atk +15 melee (3d6+7, masterwork greatsword) or +13 ranged (2d6+5/×3, masterwork composite longbow [+5 Str]); Full Atk +15/+10 melee (3d6+7, masterwork greatsword) and +9 melee (1d6+2, 2 hooves) or +13/+8 ranged (2d6+5/×3, masterwork composite longbow [+5 Str]); SA archery combat style, smite good (+6 damage) 1/day, favored enemy human +2; SQ darkvision 60 ft., damage reduction 5/magic, resistance to cold 5, resistance to fire 5, spell resistance 11, wild empathy +1; AL NE; SV Fort +7, Ref +11, Will +7; Str 20, Dex 18, Con 17, Int 8, Wis 17, Cha 9.

Skills: Listen +5, Move Silently +8, Spot +8, Survival +9.

Feats: Dodge, Rapid Shot[B], Weapon Focus (hoof), Weapon Focus (greatsword), Track[B].

Languages: Abyssal, Elven.

Possessions: Large masterwork greatsword, Large masterwork composite (+5 Str) longbow, 20 arrows.

Fiendish Dire Bear: CR 9; Large magical beast; HD 12d8+51; hp 105; Init +1; Spd 40 ft.; AC 17, touch 10, flat-footed 16; Base Atk +9; Grp +23; Atk +19 melee (2d4+10, claw); Full Atk +19 melee (2d4+10, 2 claws) and +13 melee (2d8+5, bite); SA improved grab, smite good (+12 damage) 1/day; SQ darkvision 60 ft., damage reduction 10/magic, low-light vision, resistance to cold 10, resistance to fire 10, scent, spell resistance 17; AL NE; SV Fort +10, Ref +10, Will +13; Str 31, Dex 13, Con 19, Int 2, Wis 12, Cha 10.

Skills: Listen +10, Spot +10, Swim +13.

Feats: Alertness, Endurance, Run, Toughness, Weapon Focus (claw).

Fiendish Dire Lion: CR 7; Large magical beast; HD 8d8+24; hp 60; Init +2; Spd 40 ft.; AC 15, touch 11, flat-footed 13; Base Atk +6; Grp +17; Atk +13 melee (1d6+7, claw); Full Atk +13 melee (1d6+7, 2 claws) and +7 melee (1d8+3, bite); SA improved grab, pounce, rake 1d6+3, smite good (+8 damage) 1/day; SQ darkvision 60 ft., damage reduction 5/magic, low-light vision, resistance to cold 10, resistance to fire 10, scent, spell resistance 13; AL NE; SV Fort +9, Ref +8, Will +7; Str 25, Dex 15, Con 17, Int 2, Wis 12, Cha 10.

Skills: Hide +2, Listen +7, Move Silently +5, Spot +7.

Feats: Alertness, Run, Weapon Focus (claw).

Fiendish Giant Eagle: CR 4; Large magical beast; HD 4d10+4; hp 26; Init +3; Spd 10 ft., fly 80 ft. (average); AC 15, touch 12, flat-footed 12; Base Atk +4; Grp +12; Atk +7 melee (1d6+4, claw); Full Atk +7 melee (1d6+4, 2 claws) and +2 melee (1d8+2, bite); SA smite good (+4 damage) 1/day; SQ darkvision 60 ft., damage reduction 5/magic, evasion, low-light vision, resistance to cold 5, resistance to fire 5, spell resistance 9; AL NE; SV Fort +5, Ref +7, Will +3; Str 18, Dex 17, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 14, Cha 10.

Skills: Knowledge (nature) +2, Listen +6, Sense Motive +4, Spot +15, Survival +3.

Feats: Alertness, Flyby Attack.

Fiendish Girallon: CR 7; Large magical beast; HD 7d10+20; hp 58; Init +3; Spd 40 ft., climb 40 ft.; AC 16, touch 12, flat-footed 15; Base Atk +7; Grp +17; Atk +12 melee (1d4+6, claw); Full Atk +12 melee (1d4+6, 4 claws) and +7 melee (1d8+3, bite); SA rend 2d4+9, smite good (+7 damage) 1/day; SQ darkvision 60 ft., damage reduction 5/magic, low-light vision, resistance to cold 5, resistance to fire 5, scent, spell resistance 12; AL NE; SV Fort +7, Ref +8, Will +5; Str 22, Dex 17, Con 14, Int 2, Wis 12, Cha 7.

Skills: Climb +14, Move Silently +8, Spot +6.

Feats: Iron Will, Toughness (2).

Fiendish Owlbear: CR 5; Large magical beast; HD 5d10+25; hp 52; Init +1; Spd 30 ft.; AC 15, touch 10, flat-footed 14; Base Atk +5; Grp +14; Atk +9 melee (1d6+5, claw); Full Atk +9 melee (1d6+5, 2 claws) and +5 melee (1d8+2, bite); SA improved grab, smite good (+5 damage) 1/day; SQ darkvision 60 ft., damage reduction 5/magic, resistance to cold 5, resistance to fire 5, scent, spell resistance 10; AL NE; SV Fort +9, Ref +5, Will +2; Str 21, Dex 12, Con 21, Int 2, Wis 12, Cha 10.

Skills: Listen +8, Spot +8.

Feats: Alertness, Track.

Fiendish Umber Hulk: CR 9; Large aberration (extraplanar); HD 8d8+35; hp 71; Init +1; Spd 20 ft., burrow 20 ft.; AC 18, touch 10, flat-footed 17; Base Atk +6; Grp +16; Atk +11 melee (2d4+6, claw); Full Atk +11 melee (2d4+6, 2 claws) and +9 melee (2d8+3, bite); SA confusing gaze, smite good 1/day (+8 damage); SQ darkvision 60 ft., damage reduction 5/magic, resistance to cold 10, resistance to fire 10, spell resistance 13, tremorsense 60 ft.; AL CE; SV Fort +8, Ref +3, Will +6; Str 23, Dex 13, Con 19, Int 11, Wis 11, Cha 13.

Skills: Climb +12, Jump +5, Listen +11.

Feats: Multiattack, Power Attack, Toughness.

Fiendish Wyvern: CR 7; Large dragon; HD 7d12+14; hp 59; Init +1; Spd 20 ft., fly 60 ft. (poor); AC 18, touch 10, flat-footed 17; Base Atk +7; Grp +15; Atk +10 melee (1d6+4 plus poison, sting) or +10 melee (2d6+4, talon) or +10 melee (2d8+4, bite); Full Atk +10 melee (1d6+4 plus poison, sting) and +8 melee (2d8+4, bite) and +8 melee (1d8+2, 2 wings) and +8 melee (2d6+4, 2 talons); SA improved grab, poison, smite good (+7 damage) 1/day; SQ darkvision 60 ft., damage reduction 5/magic, immunity to sleep and paralysis, low-light vision, resistance to cold 5, resistance to fire 5, scent, spell resistance 12; AL NE; SV Fort +7, Ref +6, Will +6; Str 19, Dex 12, Con 15, Int 6, Wis 12, Cha 9.

Skills: Hide +7, Listen +13, Move Silently +11, Spot +16.

Feats: Ability Focus (poison), Alertness, Flyby Attack, Multiattack[B].

Finch, male halfling rogue 5/sorcerer 6: CR 11; Small humanoid; HD 5d6+6d4+11; hp 45; Init +7; Spd 20 ft.; AC 16, touch 14, flat-footed 13; Base Atk +6; Grp +0; Atk +10 melee (1d4–2/19–20, short sword); Full Atk +10 melee (1d4–2/19–20, short sword); SA sneak attack +3d6; SQ evasion, halfling traits, trap sense +1, trapfinding, uncanny dodge; AL LE; SV Fort +5, Ref +10, Will +7 (+9 against fear); Str 6, Dex 17, Con 13, Int 12, Wis 10, Cha 16.

Skills: Balance +5, Bluff +9, Climb +8, Concentration +7, Diplomacy +5, Disguise +5 (+7 acting in character), Hide +15, Gather Information +13, Intimidate +5, Jump +4, Knowledge (local) +7, Listen +6, Move Silently +11, Search +7, Sleight of Hand +8, Spellcraft +7, Spot +5, Tumble +13.

Feats: Acrobatic, Combat Casting, Improved Initiative, Weapon Finesse.

Languages: Common, Draconic, Halfling.

Spells Known (7/7/6/3; caster level 6th; +10 ranged touch): 0—*acid splash, dancing lights, detect magic, mage hand, open/close, ray of frost, read magic*; 1st—*alarm, magic missile, ray of enfeeblement, shield*; 2nd—*invisibility, scorching ray*; 3rd—*displacement*.

Possessions: Small short sword, leather armor, *wand of hold person* (30 charges), *cape of the mountebank, ioun stone* (dusty rose prism grants +1 insight bonus to AC), *slippers of spider climbing*, pouch containing 32 gp (all minted with the jester emblem of the Last Laugh guild), keys to all locked doors in the safe house, key to the chest in area **B8**.

Flamewarders, male and female haraknin fighter 5/rogue 5: CR 13; Medium outsider (evil, extraplanar, fire, lawful shapechanger); HD 4d8+12 plus 5d10+15 plus 5d6+15; hp 108; Init +7; Spd 40 ft.; AC 25, touch 14, flat-footed 25; Base Atk +12; Grp +17; Atk +19 melee (1d12+10/×3, *+1 greataxe*) or +16 ranged (1d8+5/×3, masterwork composite longbow [+5 Str]); Full Atk +19/+14/+9 melee (1d12+10/×3, *+1 greataxe*) or +16/+11/+6 ranged (1d8+5/×3, masterwork composite longbow [+5 Str]); SA breath weapon, sneak attack +3d6; SQ darkvision 60 ft., evasion, fire subtype, scent, trap sense +1, trapfinding, uncanny dodge; AL LE; SV Fort +13, Ref +13, Will +8; Str 20, Dex 16, Con 16, Int 6, Wis 12, Cha 4.

Skills: Hide +18, Jump +17, Listen +13, Move Silently +18, Spot +13, Survival +7 (+15 when tracking by scent), Tumble +11.

Feats: Acrobatic, Cleave, Great Cleave, Improved Bull Rush, Improved Initiative, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (greataxe), Weapon Specialization (greataxe).

Languages: Common, Infernal.

Breath Weapon (Su): Cone of fire, 30 feet, every 2d4 rounds, damage 1d4+1, Reflex DC 20 half. A haraknin's

breath weapon ignites flammable materials within the cone. It can use its breath weapon while biting.

Possessions: +2 chain shirt, +1 adamantine greataxe, masterwork composite longbow (+5 Str bonus), 30 arrows, *ring of protection +1, potion of blur, potion of bull's strength, 2 potions of cure serious wounds, potion of protection from energy (cold), oil of greater magic weapon +3,* red-lacquered gold armband set with an emerald (1,000 gp), 25 pp, 100 gp.

Fleshripper, fiendish dire badger: CR —; Medium magical beast (augmented animal, extraplanar); HD 9d8+36 plus 3; hp 92; Init +3; Spd 30 ft., burrow 10 ft.; AC 21, touch 13, flat-footed 18; Base Atk +6; Grp +9; Atk +9 melee (1d6+3, claw); Full Atk +9 melee (1d6+3, 2 claws) and +4 melee (1d8+1, bite); SA blood bond (+2 on attack rolls, checks, and saves if he sees Alurad being threatened or harmed), rage, smite good 1/day (+9 damage against good foe); SQ damage reduction 5/magic, darkvision 60 ft., empathic link, improved evasion, low-light vision, resistance to cold 10 and fire 10, scent, speak with blackguard, SR 14; AL CE; SV Fort +10, Ref +9, Will +7; Str 17, Dex 17, Con 19, Int 8, Wis 12, Cha 10.

Skills: Listen +9, Spot +9.

Feats: Alertness, Improved Natural Attack (bite, claw), Toughness, Track[B].

Rage (Ex): If Fleshripper takes damage in combat, it flies into a rage on its next turn. Alurad can snap Fleshripper out of its rage with a successful DC 20 Handle Animal check, but it cannot end its rage voluntarily. While raging, its statistics are as follows: hp 110; AC 19, touch 11, flat-footed 16; Grp +11; Atk +11 melee (1d6+5, claw); Full Atk +11 melee (1d6+5, 2 claws) and +6 melee (1d8+2, bite); SV Fort +12; Str 21, Con 23.

Forest Sloth: CR 11; Large animal; HD 14d8+70; hp 147; Init +5; Spd 40 ft., climb 60 ft.; AC 21, touch 14, flat-footed 16; Base Atk +8; Grp +19; Atk +15 melee (2d4+7, claw); Full Atk +15 melee (2d4+7, 2 claws) plus +10 melee (2d8+3, bite); Space/Reach 10 ft./10 ft.; SA improved grab, swallow whole; SQ darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision, poison immunity, scent; AL N; SV Fort +12, Ref +12, Will +4; Str 25, Dex 20, Con 21, Int 2, Wis 12, Cha 9.

Skills: Climb +15, Listen +9, Move Silently +10, Spot +9.

Feats: Alertness, Improved Bull Rush, Improved Overrun, Power Attack, Track.

Improved Grab (Ex): A forest sloth that hits a Medium or smaller opponent with both claws can start a grapple as a free action. If the sloth gets a hold, it automatically hits with its bite attack and can try to swallow the opponent in the next round.

Swallow Whole (Ex): A forest sloth can swallow an opponent up to Small size. A victim in the sloth's gullet takes 2d4+7 points of bludgeoning damage plus 1d8 points of acid damage each round. The AC of the sloth's gullet is 13; dealing 25 points of damage to it allows a swallowed creature to escape.

Freija Doorgan, female human conjurer 15: CR 15; Medium humanoid (human); HD 15d4+48; hp 95; Init +2; Spd 30 ft.; AC 18, touch 14, flat-footed 16; Base Atk +7; Grp +6; Atk +7 melee (1d4–1, masterwork dagger) or +10 ranged (1d8/19–20, masterwork light crossbow); Full Atk +7/+2 melee (1d4–1, masterwork dagger) or +10 ranged (1d8/19–20, masterwork light crossbow); SA spells; SQ empathic link, scry on familiar, share spells, weasel familiar named Hirt; AL NE; SV Fort +12, Ref +9, Will +11; Str 8, Dex 14, Con 16, Int 22, Wis 10, Cha 13.

Skills: Concentration +21, Decipher Script +16, Knowledge (arcana) + 24, Knowledge (architecture & engineering) +14, Knowledge (geography) +10, Knowledge (history) +24, Knowledge (the planes) +18, Spellcraft +26.

Feats: Augment Summoning, Craft Staff, Craft Wand, Craft Wondrous Item, Forge Ring, Great Fortitude, Greater Spell Focus (conjuration), Scribe Scroll, Spell Focus (conjuration), Spell Penetration, Toughness.

Languages: Common, Demodand, Draconic.

Wizard Spells Prepared (caster level 15th; prohibited schools divination and illusion; +9 ranged touch; save DC 16 + spell level, conjuration 18 + spell level): 0—*acid splash, dancing lights, open/close, ray of frost, touch of fatigue* (DC 16); 1st—*grease* (DC 19), *magic missile* (3), *obscuring mist, ray of enfeeblement, shield;* 2nd—*glitterdust* (DC 20), *Melf's acid arrow, scorching ray, spider climb, web* (2, DC 20), *whispering wind;* 3rd—*dispel magic, displacement, fireball* (2, DC 19), *protection from energy, stinking cloud* (DC 21); 4th—*charm monster* (DC 20), *confusion* (DC 20), *dimension door, Evard's black tentacles, ice storm, wall of fire;* 5th—*cloudkill* (2, DC 23), *feeblemind* (DC 21), *telekinesis, teleport, wall of stone;* 6th—*acid fog, chain lightning* (DC 22), *disintegrate* (DC 22), *greater dispel magic, summon monster VI;* 7th—*forcecage, prismatic spray* (DC 23), *summon monster VII;* 8th—*horrid wilting* (DC 24), *summon monster VIII.*

Spellbook: 0—all except *detect magic, detect poison, read magic, ghost sound;* 1st—*cause fear, grease, mage armor, magic missile, obscuring mist, ray of enfeeblement, shield;* 2nd—*glitterdust, Melf's acid arrow, scorching ray, spider climb, summon swarm, web, whispering wind;* 3rd—*dispel magic, displacement, fireball, protection from energy, stinking cloud, summon monster III;* 4th—*charm monster, confusion, dimension door, Evard's black tentacles, ice storm, summon monster IV, wall of fire;* 5th—*cloudkill, feeblemind, summon monster V, telekinesis, teleport, wall of stone;* 6th—*acid fog, chain lightning, disintegrate, greater dispel magic, summon monster VI;* 7th—*forcecage, prismatic spray, summon monster VII;* 8th—*horrid wilting, summon monster VIII.*

Possessions: Masterwork dagger, masterwork light crossbow, 20 bolts, *belt of health +2* (as *amulet of health +2*), *headband of intellect +4, bracers of armor +4, cloak of resistance +2, periapt of proof against poison, ring of counterspells* (*dispel magic*), *Ring of Thirteen, wand of enervation* (25 charges), *wand of magic missile* (9th level, 50 charges), scroll of *fly*, scroll of *dimension door*, scroll of *summon monster VIII*, 5 gems (100 gp each), 100 pp.

Gaflon, nerra varoot rogue 4: CR 5; Medium outsider (extraplanar); HD 1d8+4d6+5; hp 24; Init +6; Spd 30 ft.; AC 15, touch 12, flat-footed 13; Base Atk +4; Grp +5; Atk +7 melee (1d8+2/19-20, +2 wounding shard longsword) or +8 ranged (1d4+2/19-20, +2 wounding shard dagger); SA sneak attack +2d6, spell-like abilities; SQ darkvision 60 ft., cold resistance 5, electricity resistance 5, evasion, fire resistance 5, mirror jump, reflective

spell resistance 13, sonic vulnerability, trapfinding, trap sense +1, uncanny dodge; AL N; SV Fort +4, Ref +8, Will +5; Str 12, Dex 15, Con 13, Int 11, Wis 14, Cha 17; *Fiend Folio* 130.

Skills: Bluff +9, Climb +8, Diplomacy +9, Disguise +9 (+12 acting), Gather Information +7, Intimidate +5, Knowledge (the planes) +4, Listen +8), Move Silently +8, Open Locks +9, Sense Motive +8, Sleight of Hand +8, Spot +8.

Feats: Exotic Weapon Proficiency (shard longsword)[B], Exotic Weapon Proficiency (shard dagger)[B], Improved Initiative, Weapon Focus (shard longsword).

Languages: Common, Nerra.

Spell-like Abilities (caster level 12th): 3/day—*disguise self*; 1/day—*mirror image*.

Mirror Jump (Su): A nerra can move through mirrored and reflective surfaces at will (similar to shadow walk, but traveling is through the Plane of Mirrors). This way, they can move between mirrors up to one mile away.

Reflective Spell Resistance (Sp): Targeted spells that fail to overcome a nerra's SR are reflected back to the caster. Gaze attacks are also reflected back to the source, and the nerra is immune to their effects.

Sonic Vulnerability (Ex): A nerra takes 150% damage from sonic attacks.

Possessions: *+2 wounding shard longsword*, *+2 wounding shard dagger*, lockpicks, 8 blue quartzes (100 gp value each) in pouch.

Gau Kleeoch, female minotaur barbarian 11: CR 15; Large monstrous humanoid; HD 6d8+24 plus 11d12+44; hp 181; Init +1; Spd 40 ft.; AC 25, touch 12, flat-footed 25; Base Atk +17; Grp +29; Atk +27 melee (2d6+14 plus 2d6/15–20, *+2 vicious falchion*) or +24 melee (1d8+8, gore); Full Atk +27/+22/+17/+12 melee (2d6+14 plus 2d6/15–20, *+2 vicious falchion*) and +19 melee (1d8+4, gore); Space/Reach 10 ft./10 ft.; SA powerful charge 4d6+12, greater rage 3/day; SQ damage reduction 2/—, darkvision 60 ft., fast movement, improved uncanny dodge, natural cunning, scent, trap sense +3; AL NE; SV Fort +15, Ref +9, Will +7; Str 27, Dex 12, Con 18, Int 7, Wis 8, Cha 12.

Skills: Intimidate +5, Listen +13, Search +5, Spot +5.

Feats: Cleave, Great Fortitude, Improved Bull Rush, Improved Critical (falchion), Power Attack, Weapon Focus (falchion).

Languages: Common, Giant.

Greater Rage (Ex): hp 232; AC 23, touch 10, flat-footed 22; Grp +32; Atk +30 melee (2d6+18 plus 2d6/15–20, *+2 vicious falchion*) or +27 melee (1d8+11, gore); Full Atk +30/+25/+20/+15 melee (2d6+18 plus 2d6/15–20, *+2 vicious falchion*) and +22 melee (1d8+11, gore); SV Fort +18, Will +10; Str 33, Con 24.

Possessions: *+2 elven chain*, *+2 vicious falchion*, *gauntlets of ogre power*, *amulet of natural armor +1*, *Ring of Thirteen*, *winged boots*, *potion of cure serious wounds*, 35 pp, 20 gp.

Ghath, male hill giant barbarian 10: CR 17; Large giant; HD 12d8+72 plus 10d12+60; hp 263; Init +3; Spd 40 ft. (base 50 ft.); AC 26, touch 10, flat-footed 26; Base Atk +19; Grp +30; Atk +27 melee (2d8+10/17–20, adamantine greatsword) or +25 melee (1d4+7, slam) or +19 ranged (2d6+7, rock); Full Atk +27/+22/+17/+12 melee (2d8+10/17–20, adamantine greatsword) or +25 melee (1d4+7, 2 slams) or +19 ranged (2d6+7, rock); Space/Reach 10 ft./10 ft.; SA rage 3/day, rock throwing; SQ DR 2/—, improved uncanny dodge, light fortification (25% chance to ignore critical hit), low-light vision, rock catching, trap sense +3; AL CE; SV Fort +25, Ref +12, Will +13; Str 25, Dex 12, Con 23, Int 6, Wis 10, Cha 7.

Skills: Climb +8, Intimidate +6, Jump +23, Listen +8, Spot +8.

Feats: Cleave, Improved Bull Rush, Improved Critical (greatsword), Improved Initiative, Improved Sunder, Iron Will, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (greatsword).

Language: Giant.

Rage (Ex): hp 307; AC 24, touch 8, flat-footed 24; Grp +32; Atk +29 melee (2d8+13/17–20, adamantine greatsword) or +27 melee (1d4+9, slam); Full Atk +29/+24/+19/+14 melee (2d8+13/17–20, adamantine greatsword) or +27 melee (1d4+9, 2 slams); SV Fort +27, Will +15; Str 29, Con 27; Climb +10, Jump +25. At the end of his rage, Ghath is fatigued for the duration of the encounter.

Possessions: *+2 light fortification hide armor*, adamantine greatsword, *ring of force shield*, *ring of improved jumping*, *amulet of health +4*, *gloves of Dexterity +2*, *cloak of resistance +4*, *potion of fly*, *potion of cure serious wounds*, leather bag (contains 4 throwing rocks, a bowl and spoon, a chunk of cheese, a drinking horn, a haunch of meat, and 3,250 gp).

Gnoll Hunters, male gnoll ranger 3: CR 4; Medium humanoid (gnoll); HD 5d8+15; hp 37 each; Init +3; Spd 30 ft.; AC 18, touch 13, flat-footed 15; Base Atk +4; Grp +7; Atk/Full Atk +8 ranged (1d8+3 plus black adder venom/×3, masterwork longbow) or +8 melee (1d8+4, masterwork battleaxe); SA archery combat style, favored enemy (animal +2); SQ darkvision 60 ft., wild empathy +1; AL NE; SV Fort +9, Ref +6, Will +2; Str 17, Dex 16, Con 16, Int 8, Wis 12, Cha 6.

Skills: Hide +9, Listen +6, Move Silently +6, Spot +7, Swim +6.

Feats: Endurance[B], Point Blank Shot, Rapid Shot[B], Skill Focus (Hide), Track[B].

Possessions: Masterwork longbow (+3 Str bonus), 5 arrows poisoned with black adder venom, 15 arrows, masterwork spear, masterwork studded leather armor, 3 doses black adder venom.

Gortio, male kelubar tarterean doppelganger rogue 9: CR 14; Medium monstrous humanoid (shapechanger); HD 4d8+9d6+13; hp 62; Init +4; Spd 30 ft.; AC 23, touch 14, flat-footed 19; Base Atk +10; Grp +12; Atk +15 melee (1d4+2/×3, masterwork punch dagger); Full Atk +15/+10 melee (1d4+2/x3, masterwork punch dagger) and +9 melee (1d6+1 plus 1d6 acid, slam); SA acidic slime, detect thoughts (DC 17), sneak attack +5d6, spell-like abilities, stench (DC 17); SQ change shape, darkvision 120 ft., evasion, freedom of movement, immunity to acid and poison, immunity to sleep and charm effects, improved uncanny dodge, resistance to cold 10 and fire 10, trapfinding, trap sense +3, uncanny dodge; SV Fort +5, Ref +14, Will +10; Str 14, Dex 18, Con 12, Int 15, Wis 16, Cha 21.

Skills: Balance +5, Bluff +28 (+32 when reading minds), Diplomacy +20, Disguise +26 (+28 acting, +36 when using change shape), Hide +14, Intimidate +16, Jump +3, Listen +7, Move Silently +14, Sense Motive +12, Spot +6, Tumble +19, Use Magic Device +21.

Feats: Combat Expertise, Improved Disarm, Improved Feint, Improved Trip, Weapon Finesse.

Spell-Like Abilities (caster level 13th, +14 ranged touch): At will—*detect magic, clairaudience/clairvoyance, fear* (DC 19), *invisibility, Melf's acid arrow, spider climb, tongues*; 3/day—*fog cloud, ray of enfeeblement*; 2/day—*acid fog, dispel magic.*

Possessions: *+1 glamered chain shirt*, masterwork punch dagger, *Heward's handy haversack, wand of cure moderate wounds* (18 charges), *wand of glibness* (12 charges), *wand of invisibility* (22 charges), *wand of silence* (10 charges), *wand of scorching ray* (15 charges), *wand of shield* (7 charges).

Gotrrod, male young red dragon: CR 7; Large dragon (fire); HD 13d12+39; hp 121; Init +0; Spd 40 ft., fly 150 ft. (poor); AC 21, touch 9, flat-footed 21; Base Atk +13; Grp +24; Atk +20 melee (2d6+7, bite); Full Atk +20 melee (2d6+7, bite), +14 melee (1d8+3, 2 claws), +14 melee (1d6+3, 2 wings), +14 melee (1d8+10, tail slap); Space/Reach 10 ft./5 ft (10 ft. with bite); SA breath weapon (40-ft. cone, 6d10 fire, Reflex DC 19 half), spells; SQ darkvision 120 ft., blindsense 60 ft., immunity to fire, sleep, and paralysis, keen senses, low-light vision, vulnerability to cold; AL CE; SV Fort +11, Ref +8, Will +9; Str 25, Dex 10, Con 17, Int 12, Wis 13, Cha 12.

Skills: Appraise +17, Concentration +10, Intimidate +17, Knowledge (local) +17, Listen +17, Search +17, Sense Motive +17, Spellcraft +8, Spot +17.

Feats: Flyby Attack, Hover, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (bite), Wingover.

Languages: Common, Draconic.

Spells Known (6/5, caster level 1st): 0—*detect magic, ghost sound* (DC 11), *open/close, read magic*; 1st—*cure light wounds, mage armor.*

Grayhaunt Marauders, male half-orc fighter 8: CR 8; Medium humanoid (half-orc); HD 8d10+16; hp 59 each; Init +2; Spd 20 ft. (base 30 ft.); AC 19, touch 12, flat-footed 17; Base Atk +8; Grp +11; Atk +13 melee (1d8+6/×3, masterwork orc double axe) or +12 ranged (1d8+4/×3, composite longbow with *+1 seeking arrow*); Full Atk +11/+6 melee (1d8+6/×3, masterwork orc double axe) and +11 melee (1d8+4/×3, masterwork orc double axe) or +12/+7 ranged (1d8+4/×3, composite longbow with *+1 seeking arrow*); SQ darkvision 60 ft., half-orc traits; AL LE; SV Fort +8, Ref +4, Will +3; Str 17, Dex 15, Con 14, Int 6, Wis 12, Cha 8.

Skills: Intimidate +10, Listen +3, Spot +3.

Feats: Alertness, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (orc double axe), Improved Critical (orc double axe), Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Two-Weapon Fighting, Weapon Focus (orc double axe), Weapon Specialization (orc double axe).

Languages: Common, Orc.

Possessions: *+2 breastplate*, masterwork orc double axe, composite longbow (+3 Str) with 25 *+1 seeking arrows*, *lesser bracers of archery*, ivory hunting horn (100 gp), backpack (holds a whetstone, a waterskin, flint and steel, 50 feet of hemp rope, a cooking pot, 3d20 gp in a pouch, and 1d6 days of trail rations).

Grehlia Cairnis, female human rogue 2/cleric 11 (Vecna)/assassin 1: CR 14; Medium humanoid (human); HD 3d6+3 plus 11d8+11; hp 84; Init +2; Spd 30 ft.; AC 24, touch 14, flat-footed 22; Base Atk +9; Grp +12; Atk +15 melee (1d6+5 plus poison, *+2 spiked gauntlets*) or +12 ranged (1d6+3/×3, *+1 composite shortbow* [+2 Str]); Full Atk +15/+10 melee (1d6+5 plus poison, *+2 spiked gauntlets*) or +12/+7 ranged (1d6+3/×3, *+1 composite shortbow* [+2 Str]); SA death attack (DC 13), rebuke undead, sneak attack +2d6, spells; SQ evasion, poison use, trapfinding; AL NE; SV Fort +10, Ref +12, Will +13; Str 16, Dex 14, Con 13, Int 10, Wis 18, Cha 8.

Skills: Concentration +15, Craft (sculpting) +9, Disguise +4, Forgery +5, Hide +9, Jump +6, Listen +9, Move Silently +9, Sense Motive +9, Spellcraft +1, Spot +9, Tumble +12.

Feats: Ability Focus (death attack), Acrobatic, Empower Spell, Greater Spell Focus (necromancy), Spell Focus (necromancy), Weapon Focus (spiked gauntlets).

Cleric Spells Prepared (caster level 11th): 0—*cure minor wounds* (2), *detect magic* (2), *light* (2); 1st—*bane* (DC 15), *command* (DC 15), *cure light wounds* (2), *divine favor* (2), *protection from good*[D]; 2nd—*aid, align weapon, cure moderate wounds* (2), *hold person* (DC 16), *identify*[D]; 3rd—*cure serious wounds* (3), *daylight, dispel magic*[D], *prayer*; 4th—*air walk, cure critical wounds, divine power, poison* (DC 18), *unholy blight*[D] (DC 18); 5th—*dispel good*[D], *flame strike* (DC 19), *slay living* (DC 21); 6th—*antimagic field*[D], *harm* (DC 22).

*Domain spell. Domains: Evil (cast evil spells at +1 caster level), Magic (use magic items as 5th-level wizard).

Possessions: *+3 chain shirt, +2 light steel shield, +2 spiked gauntlets, +1 composite shortbow* (+2 Str bonus), *belt of ogre power* (as *gauntlets of ogre power*), *periapt of Wisdom +2, cloak of resistance +2, ring of protection +2*, scroll of *bear's endurance*, scroll of *harm*, 4 doses giant wasp poison (DC 18; 1d6 Dex/1d6 Dex), 10 pp, 34 gp.

Goblin adept 4: CR 3; Small humanoid (goblinoid); HD 4d6–4; hp 14; Init +1; Spd 30 ft.; AC 12, touch 12, flat-footed 11; Base Atk +2; Grp –3; Atk or Full Atk +2 melee (1d4–1, shortspear) or +4 ranged (1d4–1, shortspear); SA spells; SQ darkvision 60 ft., goblin traits, summon familiar (rat); AL NE; SV Fort +2, Ref +2, Will +6; Str 8, Dex 13, Con 9, Int 12, Wis 14, Cha 6.

Skills: Concentration +6, Hide +5, Listen +4, Move Silently +5, Ride +5, Spellcraft +8, Spot +4.

Feats: Alertness, Brew Potion.

Languages: Common, Goblin.

Adept Spells Prepared (caster level 4th, +4 ranged touch): 0—*detect magic, ghost sound* (DC 12), *read magic*; 1st—*bless, burning hands* (DC 13), *sleep* (DC 13); 2nd—*scorching ray.*

Possessions: Shortspear, *potion of cure light wounds, potion of aid, potion of invisibility.*

Goblin Skirmisher, warrior 1: CR 1/3; Small humanoid (goblinoid); HD 1d8+1; hp 5; Init +1; Spd 30 ft.; AC 15, touch 12, flat-footed 14; Base Atk +1; Grp –3; Atk or Full Atk +2 melee (1d6, morningstar) or +3 ranged (1d4, javelin); SA —; SQ darkvision 60 ft., goblin traits;

AL NE; SV Fort +3, Ref +1, Will –1; Str 11, Dex 13, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 9, Cha 6.

Skills: Hide +6, Listen +2, Move Silently +6, Ride +5, Spot +2.

Feats: Alertness.

Languages: Goblin.

Possessions: Leather armor, light wooden shield, morningstar, five javelins, pouch containing 1d6 sp and 1d6 cp.

Goblin Sneak, rogue 1: CR 1; Small humanoid (goblinoid); HD 1d6+1; hp 7; Init +3; Spd 30 ft.; AC 16, touch 14, flat-footed 13; Base Atk +0; Grp –3; Atk or Full Atk +2 melee (1d4+1/19–20, shortsword) or +4 ranged (1d6/19–20, light crossbow); SA sneak attack +1d6; SQ darkvision 60 ft., goblin traits, trapfinding; AL NE; SV Fort +1, Ref +5, Will +1; Str 12, Dex 17, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 13, Cha 6.

Skills: Balance +5, Climb +5, Disable Device +5, Hide +9, Jump +5, Move Silently +9, Listen +5, Open Lock +5, Search +5, Spot +5, Tumble +5.

Feats: Dodge.

Languages: Goblin.

Possessions: Leather armor, short sword, light crossbow with 10 bolts, pouch of 2d6 gp and 2d6 sp.

Grell: CR 3; Medium aberration; HD 5d8+10; hp 32; Init +2; Spd 5 ft., fly 30 ft. (perfect); AC 16, touch 12, flat-footed 14; Base Atk +3; Grp +20 (includes +16 racial bonus); Atk +4 melee (1d4+1 plus paralysis, tentacle); Full Atk +4 melee (1d4+1 plus paralysis, 10 tentacles) and –1 melee (2d4, bite); SA improved grab, paralysis; SQ blindsight 60 ft., flight, immune to electricity and paralysis, tentacle regeneration; AL NE; SV For +3, Ref +3, Will +4; Str 12, Dex 15, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 11, Cha 9.

Skills: Hide +10, Listen +4, Move Silently +10, Spot +4.

Feats: Flyby Attack, Stealthy.

Improved Grab (Ex): To use this ability, the grell must hit with a tentacle.

Paralysis (Ex): Any creature hit by a grell's tentacle must make a DC 14 Fortitude save or be paralyzed for 4 rounds.

Flight (Ex): A grell's body is unusually buoyant. This buoyancy allows it to fly, and grants it a permanent *feather fall* effect with personal range.

Tentacle Regeneration (Ex): An opponent can attack a grell's tentacles as if they were weapons—see Sunder, in Chapter 8 of the *Player's Handbook*. A grell's tentacles have 10 hit points. If the grell is currently grappling a target with that tentacle, it usually uses another limb to make its attack of opportunity against the sunder attempt. Severing a grell's tentacles deals damage to the creature equal to half the limb's hit points. A grell regrows severed limbs within a day.

Half-Fey Green Hag rogue 2: CR 9; Medium fey; HD 11d6+11; hp 49 each; Init +4; Spd 30 ft., fly 60 ft. (good), swim 30 ft.; AC 27, touch 16, flat-footed 23; Base Atk +10; Grp +13; Atk +13 melee (1d6+3, claw); Full Atk +13 melee (1d6+3, 2 claws); SA sneak attack +1d6, spell-like abilities, weakness, mimicry; SQ darkvision 90 ft., evasion, immune to enchantment spells and effects, low-light vision, spell resistance 18, trapfinding; AL CE; SV Fort +6, Ref +14, Will +8; Str 17, Dex 19, Con 12, Int 15, Wis 15, Cha 22; *Fiend Folio* 89 (half-fey template).

Skills: Bluff +16, Concentration +13, Craft (weaving) +14, Diplomacy +8, Disguise +16 (+18 acting), Hide +16, Intimidate +8, Knowledge (arcana) +14, Knowledge (the planes) +14, Listen +16, Spot +16, Swim +15.

Feats: Ability Focus (weakness), Alertness, Great Fortitude, Improved Natural Attack (claw).

Languages: Common, Giant.

Individual Spell-like Abilities (caster level 11th): At will—*charm person* (DC 17), *dancing lights, disguise self, ghost sound* (DC 16), *invisibility, pass without trace, tongues, water breathing*; 3/day—*detect law, protection from law*; 1/day—*confusion** (DC 20), *dominate person** (DC 21), *eyebite** (DC 22), *faerie fire**, *hypnotism* (DC 18), *sleep** (DC 17), *suggestion** (DC 19).

*Indicates a hag's selected half-fey spell-like ability for the day.

Covey Spell-like Abilities (caster level 11th): 3/day—*animate dead, bestow curse* (DC 19), *control weather, dream, forcecage, mind blank, mirage arcana* (DC 21), *polymorph, veil* (DC 22), *vision*. These abilities can be used as a full-round action by all three hags if they are within 10 feet of one another.

Weakness (Su): A green hag's successful touch attack deals 2d4 points of Strength damage (Fortitude negates, DC 22).

Mimicry (Su): Green hags can imitate the sound of animals found in the jungles surrounding the Demonskar.

Possessions: Each of the hags wears a matching *ring of protection +2*. Olomasta also carries the covey's *hag eye*.

Half-orc fighter 8: CR 8; Medium humanoid (orc); HD 8d10+16; hp 59 each; Init +6; Spd 20 ft.; AC 19, touch 12, flat-footed 17; Base Atk +8; Grp +11; Atk +13 melee (1d8+6/19–20/×3, *+1 orc double axe*) or +11 ranged (1d8/19–20, masterwork light crossbow); Full Atk +11/+6 melee (1d8+6/19–20/×3, *+1 orc double axe*) and +11 melee (1d8+4/×3, *+1 orc double axe*) or +11 ranged (1d8/19–20, masterwork light crossbow); SQ darkvision 60 ft., half-orc traits; AL LE; SV Fort +8, Ref +4, Will +3; Str 17, Dex 15, Con 14, Int 6, Wis 12, Cha 8.

Skills: Intimidate +10, Listen +3, Spot +3.

Feats: Alertness, Blind-Fight, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (orc double axe), Improved Critical (orc double axe), Improved Initiative, Two-Weapon Fighting, Weapon Focus (orc double axe), Weapon Specialization (orc double axe).

Languages: Common, Orc.

Possessions: *+1/+1 orc double axe*, masterwork light crossbow, 20 bolts, *+2 chainmail*, 2 *potions of cure moderate wounds*.

Hammerer Automaton: CR 4; Medium construct; HD 3d10+20; hp 36; Init +0; Spd 20 ft.; AC 21, touch 10, flat-footed 21; Base Atk +2; Grp +9; Atk or Full Atk +9 melee (2d8+10, slam); SA —; SQ construct traits, unreliable; AL N; SV Fort +1, Ref +1, Will +0; Str 25, Dex 11, Con —, Int —, Wis 9, Cha 4; *Monster Manual II* 27.

Unreliable (Ex): At the beginning of each round in which an automaton attempts to act, roll 1d20. On a

result of 11 or better, it acts normally; otherwise, it takes no action.

Harpoon Spider: CR 4; Large Aberration; HD 5d8+20; hp 42; Init +4; Spd 40 ft., climb 20 ft.; AC 16, touch 13, flat-footed 12; Base Atk +3; Grp +10; Atk +5 melee (1d8+3 plus poison, bite) or +6 ranged (1d4+1 plus harpooning, fang); Full Atk +5 melee (1d8+3 plus poison, bite) or +6 ranged (1d4+1 plus harpooning, 2 fangs); Space/Reach 10 ft./5 ft.; SA harpooning, poison; SQ darkvision 120 ft., evasion, spines, web movement; SV Fort +5, Ref +7, Will +5; Str 17, Dex 19, Con 18, Int 14, Wis 12, Cha 9; *Monster Manual III* 80.

Skills: Balance +8, Climb +16, Hide +8, Jump +21, Spot +7, Tumble +13.

Feats: Combat Reflexes, Improved Trip[B], Lightning Reflexes.

Languages: Common and Undercommon.

Harpooning (Ex): As ranged attacks, a harpoon spider can fire one or two of its fangs up to 20 feet (no range increment). The spider can fire at two different targets if it chooses. A successful hit deals 1d4+1 points of damage as the harpoon hooks the target's flesh and exudes a thick glue. The spider can reel in a harpoon as a free action; treat this as a trip attack (+10 bonus) against any creature attached to the fang. Failure indicates the harpoon rips free (and deals another 1d4+1 points of damage to the victim). Success indicates that the victim is pulled off its feet and dragged back to the spider, who can immediately make a free bite attack against the victim. A harpoon spider can only pull a creature smaller than itself in this manner. Attempts to retract a creature of its own size or larger automatically cause the fang to rip free.

Poison (Ex): Injury, Fortitude DC 16, initial damage 1d6 Dex, secondary damage 2d6 Dex.

Spines (Ex): Any creature striking a harpoon spider with a melee or natural weapon must make a DC 16 Reflex save or take 1d6 points of piercing damage from the creature's spines. Reach weapons allow a character to avoid this peril. The spines also deal an extra 1d6 points of damage on a successful grapple check. As a full round action, a harpoon spider can pick up a Medium or smaller helpless creature with its legs and impale the body on its spines, dealing 2d6 points of piercing damage. It can carry up to 2 Medium, 8 Small, 32 Tiny, or 128 Diminutive or smaller creatures in this manner.

Web Movement (Ex): Although they cannot spin webs themselves, harpoon spiders can climb around and through webs with ease using their climb speed. They are immune to the effects of the *web* spell.

Hexavog, six-armed advanced kelubar demodand: CR 19; Large outsider (evil, extraplanar); HD 22d8+132; hp 234; Init +5; Spd 30 ft., fly 60 ft. (average); AC 39, touch 10, flat-footed 38; Base Atk +22; Grp +35; Atk +30 melee (1d8+9 plus 1d6 acid, claw); Full Atk +30 melee (1d8+9 plus 1d6 acid, 6 claws) and +28 melee (1d8+4 plus 1d6 acid, bite); Space/Reach 10 ft./10 ft.; SA acidic slime, sneak attack +8d6, spell-like abilities, stench, summon demodand; SQ damage reduction 15/good, darkvision 60 ft., evasion, immune to acid, cold, fire, and poison, outsider traits, spell resistance 25, uncanny dodge; AL NE; SV Fort +21, Ref +14, Will +15; Str 28, Dex 12, Con 22, Int 14, Wis 15, Cha 18; *Fiend Folio* 44 (modified).

Skills: Bluff +29, Concentration +31, Diplomacy +31, Disguise +4 (+6 acting), Gather Information +29, Intimidate +31, Knowledge (the planes) +27, Listen +27, Perform (sing) +16, Sense Motive +27, Spot +27, Survival +2 (+4 on other planes).

Feats: Ability Focus (stench), Great Fortitude, Improved Initiative, Improved Natural Armor, Improved Natural Attack (claw), Multiattack, Quicken Spell-Like Ability (fear), Quicken Spell-Like Ability (Melf's acid arrow).

Languages: Abyssal, Common, Demodand, Infernal, Terran.

Acidic Slime (Ex): Each of Hexavog's claw and bite attacks deals +1d6 points of acid damage. On a successful critical hit, this burst of acid deals +1d10 points of acid damage instead.

Stench (Ex): All creatures (except demodands) within 30 feet of Hexavog must succeed on a DC 29 Fortitude save or be nauseated as long as the creature remains in the area and for 10 rounds thereafter. A successful save means that the creature is immune to Hexavog's stench for 1 day. The save DC is Constitution-based and includes the Ability Focus (stench) feat.

Spell-Like Abilities (caster level 13th, +22 ranged touch): At will—*detect magic, clairvoyance/clairaudience, fear* (DC 18), *invisibility, Melf's acid arrow, spider climb, tongues*; 3/day—*fog cloud, ray of enfeeblement*; 2/day—*acid fog, dispel magic.*

Summon Demodand (Sp): Once per day, Hexavog can attempt to summon 1d2 kelubars (40% chance of success) or 1d4 farastus (60% chance of success).

Possessions: *Bracers of armor +7, amulet of natural armor +3.*

Hillfolk, human fighter 2: CR 2; Medium humanoid; HD 2d10+4; hp 19 each; Init +1; Spd 20 ft.; AC 18, touch 11, flat-footed 17; Base Atk +2; Grp +5; Atk or Full Atk +7 melee (1d8+2/19–20, masterwork longsword); SA —; SQ —; AL CN; SV Fort +7, Ref +3, Will +1; Str 16, Dex 13, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 10.

Skills: Climb +2, Jump +2, Swim –7.

Feats: Great Fortitude, Lightning Reflexes, Quick Draw, Weapon Focus (longsword).

Languages: Common.

Possessions: Chainmail, masterwork large steel shield, masterwork longsword, *potion of cure moderate wounds*, red sash.

Hill Baboons: CR 2; Medium animal; HD 3d8+9; hp 22 each; Init +2; Spd 40 ft., climb 30 ft.; AC 15, touch 13, flat-footed 12 Base Atk +2; Grp +6; Atk or Full Atk +6 melee (1d6+6, bite); SA —; SQ low-light vision, scent; AL N; SV Fort +6, Ref +6, Will +1; Str 19, Dex 16, Con 16, Int 2, Wis 10, Cha 6; *Monster Manual* 268 (elite baboon, advanced).

Skills: Climb +12, Listen +4, Spot +4.

Feats: Alertness, Improved Natural Armor.

Hlanamm the Spearmaster, male kuo-toa rogue 5: CR 7; Medium monstrous humanoid (aquatic); HD 2d8+4 plus 5d6+10; hp 41; Init +2; Spd 20 ft., swim 50 ft.;

AC 23, touch 12, flat-footed 21; Base Atk +5; Grp +8; Atk +10 melee (1d6+4, *+1 shortspear*) or +9 ranged (1d6+4, *+1 shortspear*); Full Atk +10 melee (1d6+4, *+1 shortspear*) or +9 ranged (1d6+4, *+1 shortspear*); SA sneak attack +3d6; SQ adhesive, amphibious, evasion, immunity to poison and paralysis, keen sight, light blindness, resistance to electricity 10, slippery, trap sense +1, trapfinding, uncanny dodge; AL NE; SV Fort +3, Ref +9, Will +7; Str 16, Dex 15, Con 15, Int 10, Wis 16, Cha 8.

Skills: Climb +10, Craft (weaponsmith) +8, Escape Artist +9, Hide +9, Jump +12, Listen +7, Move Silently +9, Search +4, Spot +9, Swim +9, Tumble +11.

Feats: Alertness, Dodge, Point Blank Shot, Weapon Focus (shortspear).

Possessions: *+1 returning shortspear*, masterwork studded leather armor, masterwork heavy wooden shield.

Hookface, male mature adult red dragon: CR 18; Huge dragon (fire); HD 25d12+150; hp 312; Init +0; Spd 40 ft., fly 150 ft. (poor); AC 34, touch 10, flat-footed 32; Base Atk +25; Grp +45; Atk +35 melee (2d8+12, bite); Full Atk +35 melee (2d8+12, bite), +30 melee (2d6+6, 2 claws), +30 melee (1d8+6, 2 wings), and +30 melee (2d6+18, tail slap); Space/Reach 15 ft./10 ft. (15 ft. with bite); SA breath weapon (50 ft. cone, 14d10 fire, Reflex DC 28 half), crush (2d8+18, DC 28), frightful presence (210-ft. radius, HD 24 or fewer, Will DC 26 negates), spell-like abilities, spells; SQ blindsense 60 ft., damage reduction 10/magic, darkvision 120 ft., immunity to fire, immunity to magic sleep effects and paralysis, low-light vision, spell resistance 23, vulnerability to cold; AL CE; SV Fort +24, Ref +20, Will +22, Str 35, Dex 10 (currently 14), Con 23, Int 18, Wis 19, Cha 18.

Skills: Appraise +32, Bluff +9, Concentration +24, Diplomacy +22, Intimidate +27, Jump +40, Knowledge (arcana) +21, Knowledge (geography) +15, Knowledge (history) +15, Knowledge (nature) +12, Knowledge (the planes) +12, Knowledge (religion) +15, Listen +32, Search +29, Sense Motive +14, Spellcraft +17, Spot +32.

Feats: Adroit Flyby Attack, Cleave, Flyby Attack, Improved Snatch, Multisnatch, Power Attack, Quicken Breath, Snatch, Wingover.

Languages: Draconic.

Spell-Like Abilities (caster level 9th): 7/day—*locate object*.

Spells Known (6/7/7/7/5; caster level 9th; +38 touch): 0—*arcane mark, dancing lights, detect magic, ghost sound* (DC 14), *guidance, mage hand, read magic, resistance*; 1st—*alarm, magic missile, protection from good, shield, shocking grasp*; 2nd—*cat's grace, cure moderate wounds, darkness, sound burst* (DC 15); 3rd—*dispel magic, protection from energy, stinking cloud* (DC 16); 4th—*fire shield, greater invisibility*.

Possessions: *Cloak of resistance +4, pale blue rhomboid ioun stone, minor ring of cold resistance, ring of feather falling, bag of holding* (type I).

Ike Iverson, male human cleric 13 (Wee Jas): CR 13; Medium humanoid; HD 13d8+13; hp 75; Init –1; Spd 30 ft.; AC 24, touch 9, flat-footed 24; Base Atk +9, Grp +11; Atk +15 melee (1d10+5/19–20, *+3 spell storing bastard sword*); Full Atk +15/+10 melee (1d10+5/19–20, *+3 spell storing bastard sword*); SA rebuke undead, spells, spontaneous casting (inflict); SQ —; AL LE; SV Fort +11, Ref +5, Will +15; Str 14, Dex 8, Con 12, Int 13, Wis 20, Cha 10.

Skills: Concentration +17, Diplomacy +8, Heal +13, Knowledge (religion) +17, Spellcraft +17.

Feats: Combat Casting, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (bastard sword), Power Attack, Quicken Spell, Tomb-Tainted Soul, Weapon Focus (bastard sword).

Languages: Common, Infernal.

Cleric Spells Prepared (caster level 13th): 0—*cure minor wounds* (2), *detect magic* (2), *guidance, read magic*; 1st—*bane* (DC 16), *cause fear*[D] (DC 16), *comprehend languages, divine favor, obscuring mist* (2), *sanctuary* (DC 16), *shield of faith*; 2nd—*bear's endurance, bull's strength, death knell*[D] (DC 17), *hold person* (2, DC 17), *resist energy, silence* (DC 17), *spiritual weapon*; 3rd—*dispel magic*[D], *magic vestment* (4), *protection from energy*; 4th—*air walk, death ward*[D], *dismissal* (DC 19), *divine power, greater magic weapon* (2); 5th— quickened *divine favor, flame strike* (DC 20), *righteous might, slay living*[D] (DC 20), quickened *shield of faith*; 6th—*antimagic field*[D], *harm* (DC 21), *heroes' feast*; 7th—*destruction*[D] (DC 22), quickened *inflict serious wounds* (DC 22).

D: Domain spell. Domains: Death (death touch 1/day, damage 7d6), Magic (use magic items as 6th-level wizard).

Possessions: *+1 light fortification full plate* (*+3 light fortification full plate* with *magic vestment*), masterwork light shield (*+3 light shield with magic vestment*), *+1 spell storing bastard sword* (contains *hold person*; *+3 spell storing bastard sword* with *greater magic weapon*), *periapt of wisdom +2, cloak of resistance +2*, scroll of *invisibility*, scroll of *mirror image*, scroll of *teleport, boots of striding and springing, ring of counterspells* (*dispel magic*), silver holy symbol marked with verses of anathema worth 500 gp, master key to all locks in the Cathedral of Wee Jas.

Jared, male human bard 10: CR 10; Medium humanoid; HD 10d6; hp 33; Init +1; Spd 30 ft.; AC 15, touch 11, flat-footed 14; Base Atk +7; Grp +8; Atk/Full Atk +8 melee (1d3+1 nonlethal, unarmed strike); SA countersong, fascinate, suggestion; SQ bardic knowledge +12, inspire competence, inspire courage +2, inspire greatness; AL CG; SV Fort +5, Ref +8, Will +8; Str 12, Dex 13, Con 10, Int 14, Wis 8, Cha 21.

Skills: Concentration +13, Decipher Script +15, Diplomacy +22, Knowledge (history) +15, Knowledge (local) +15, Knowledge (nobility and royalty) +15, Perform (oratory) +18, Sense Motive +12, Spellcraft +15.

Feats: Craft Magic Arms and Armor, Eschew Materials, Extend Spell, Great Fortitude, Iron Will.

Languages: Common, Draconic, Dwarven.

Spells Known (3/5/4/3/1; caster level 10th): 0—*dancing lights, detect magic, mage hand, message, read magic, summon instrument*; 1st—*comprehend languages, disguise self, lesser confusion* (DC 16), *silent image* (DC 16); 2nd—*eagle's splendor, enthrall* (DC 17), *minor image* (DC 17), *tongues*; 3rd—*confusion* (DC 18), *glibness, lesser geas* (DC 18), *major image* (DC 18); 4th—*hallucinatory terrain* (DC 19), *legend lore*.

Possessions: Chain shirt, *rod of splendor*.

Jil, female human rogue 5/assassin 1 (Chapters One and Two): CR 6; Medium humanoid; HD 6d6+6; hp 27; Init +6; Spd 30 ft.; AC 15, touch 12, flat-footed 15;

Base Atk +3; Grp +3; Atk or Full Atk +6 melee (1d6/19–20 plus poison, masterwork short sword) or +6 melee (1d3+1 nonlethal, *+1 whip*) or +6 ranged (1d6/×3, masterwork shortbow); SA sneak attack +4d6, death attack (DC 14); SQ trapfinding, evasion, trap sense, uncanny dodge, poison use; AL NE; SV Fort +2, Ref +8, Will +0; Str 11, Dex 14, Con 12, Int 16, Wis 9, Cha 12.

Skills: Balance +4, Bluff +10, Diplomacy +13, Disable Device +10, Disguise +10 (+12 acting), Escape Artist +11, Hide +11, Jump +2, Move Silently +11, Open Lock +11, Sense Motive +8, Spot +7, Tumble +11, Use Magic Device +9.

Feats: Combat Expertise, Improved Initiative, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (whip), Weapon Finesse.

Languages: Common, Draconic, Elven, Gnome.

Assassin Spells Known (1; caster level 1st): 1st—*obscuring mist, true strike.*

Possessions: Masterwork studded leather armor, *+1 whip*, masterwork short sword, masterwork shortbow with 20 arrows, *wand of silence* (15 charges), *potion of cure moderate wounds*, arcane scroll of *undetectable alignment*, sword sheath with poison reservoir (coats blade with blue whinnis poison when the weapon is drawn; holds 3 applications), black cloak and clothing, leather gloves, pouch containing 30 gp (minted with the jester emblem of The Last Laugh guild).

Jil, female human rogue 5/assassin 8 (Chapter Eight): CR 13; Medium humanoid; HD 13d6+13; hp 66; Init +6; Spd 30 ft.; AC 19, touch 15, flat-footed 14; Base Atk +9; Grp +9; Atk +16 melee (1d6/19–20 plus poison, masterwork short sword) or +16 melee (1d3+1 nonlethal plus trip attack, *+1 whip*) or +16 ranged (1d6/×3, masterwork shortbow); Full Atk +16/+11 melee (1d6/19–20 plus poison, masterwork short sword) or +16/+11 melee (1d3+1 nonlethal plus trip attack, *+1 whip*) or +16/+11 ranged (1d6/×3, masterwork shortbow); SA death attack (DC 23), hide in plain sight, poison use, sneak attack +7d6, spells; SQ evasion, improved uncanny dodge, trap sense +1, trapfinding, uncanny dodge; AL NE; SV Fort +4 (+8 against poison), Ref +12, Will +2; Str 11, Dex 22, Con 12, Int 16, Wis 9, Cha 12.

Skills: Balance +16, Bluff +17, Diplomacy +13, Disable Device +11, Disguise +17 (+19 acting), Escape Artist +15, Forgery +11, Hide +27, Intimidate +10, Jump +2, Move Silently +22, Open Lock +14, Sense Motive +11, Spellcraft +4, Spot +11, Tumble +14, Use Magic Device +12.

Feats: Combat Expertise, Improved Disarm, Improved Initiative, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (whip), Silent Spell, Weapon Finesse.

Languages: Common, Draconic, Elven, Gnome.

Assassin Spells Known (4/4/4/1; caster level 8th); 1st—*disguise self* (DC 14), *detect poison, obscuring mist, true strike*; 2nd—*illusory script, pass without trace, spider climb, undetectable alignment*; 3rd—*deep slumber* (DC 16), *magic circle against good, misdirection, nondetection*; 4th—*dimension door, freedom of movement, greater invisibility.*

Possessions: *+1 shadow studded leather armor, +1 whip*, masterwork shortbow with 20 arrows, *gloves of Dexterity +6, wand of silence* (6 charges), masterwork short sword, sword sheath with poison reservoir (coats blade with deathblade poison when the weapon is drawn; Fortitude DC 20 negates, initial 1d6 Con, secondary 2d6 Con; holds 3 applications), black cloak and clothing, pouch containing 20 sp and 45 gp (all minted with the jester emblem of the Last Laugh guild).

Kalareem Nerra: CR 3; Medium-Size Outsider (extraplanar); HD 3d8+6; hp 19; Init +3; Spd 30 ft.; AC 18, touch 13, flat-footed 15; Base Atk +3; Grp +4; Atk +9 melee (1d8+3/19-20, *+2 wounding shard longsword*); Full Atk +5 melee (1d8+3/19-20, 2 *+2 wounding shard longswords*); SA shard spray, spell-like abilities; SQ cold resistance 10, darkvision 60 ft., electricity resistance 10, fire resistance 10, mirror jump, reflective spell resistance 15, sonic vulnerability; AL N; SV Fort +5, Ref +6, Will +5; Str 13, Dex 16, Con 15, Int 10, Wis 14, Cha 13; *Fiend Folio* 128.

Skills: Bluff + 7, Diplomacy +6, Disguise +7 (+9 to act in character), Hide +9, Intimidate +7, Knowledge (arcana) +6, Knowledge (the planes) +6, Listen +8, Move Silently +9, Sense Motive +7, Spot +8.

Feats: Exotic Weapon Proficiency (shard longsword)[B], Two Weapon Fighting, Weapon Finesse, Weapon Focus (shard longsword)[B].

Languages: Common, Nerra.

Spell-like Abilities (caster level 12th): 1/day—*mirror image.*

Shard Spray (Su): Three times per day a kalareem can release a spray of mirror shards (30 ft. cone, slashing damage 3d4 plus 2 points of cumulative bleeding damage per round).

Mirror Jump (Su): A nerra can move through mirrored and reflective surfaces at will (similar to *shadow walk*, but traveling through the Plane of Mirrors). This way, they can move between mirrors up to one mile away.

Reflective Spell Resistance (Sp): Spells that fail to overcome a nerra's SR are reflected back to the caster.

Sonic Vulnerability (Ex): A nerra takes 150% damage from sonic attacks.

Possessions: Two *+2 wounding shard longswords.*

Kallev, female tiefling fighter 3: CR 4; Medium outsider (native); HD 3d10+6 plus 3; hp 30; Init +2; Spd 30 ft.; AC 16, touch 12, flat-footed 14; Base Atk +3; Grp +5; Atk or Full Atk +7 melee (1d10+3/×3, masterwork halberd); SA *darkness* 1/day (CL 3rd); SQ darkvision 60 ft., resist cold 5, electricty 5, and fire 5, tiefling traits; AL CE; SV Fort +5, Ref +3, Will +1; Str 15, Dex 15, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 10.

Skills: Bluff +2, Climb +5, Hide +6, Intimidate +4.

Feats: Blind-Fight, Dodge, Toughness, Weapon Focus (halberd).

Languages: Common, Infernal.

Possessions: *+1 studded leather armor*, masterwork halberd, *potion of cure moderate wounds, brooch of shielding* (24 points remaining).

Kaurophon, male half-fiend human sorcerer 11: CR 14; Medium outsider (augmented humanoid, extraplanar); HD 11d4+33; hp 65; Init +3; Spd 30 ft., fly 30 ft. (average); AC 18 (with *mage armor*), touch 13, flat-footed 15; Base Atk +5; Grp +6; Atk +6 melee (1d4+1, claw); Full Atk +6 melee (1d4+1, 2 claws) and +1 melee (1d6, bite);

SA spells, spell-like abilities, smite good +11 1/day; SQ damage reduction 5/magic, darkvision 60 ft., immunity to poison, resistance to acid 10, resistance to cold 10, resistance to electricity 10, resistance to fire 10, spell resistance 21; AL CE; SV Fort +6, Ref +6, Will +8; Str 12, Dex 17, Con 16, Int 14, Wis 12, Cha 21.

Skills: Bluff +19, Concentration +17, Diplomacy +7, Intimidate +7, Knowledge (arcana) +16, Knowledge (the planes) +9, Spellcraft +18.

Feats: Dodge, Mobility, Spell Focus (Evocation), Spell Penetration.

Languages: Common, Abyssal, Infernal

Spell-Like Abilities (caster level 11th): 3/day—*darkness, poison* (DC 19). 1/day—*blasphemy, contagion* (DC 18), *desecrate, unholy blight* (DC 19).

Spells Known (6/8/7/7/7/5; caster level 11th): 0—*acid splash, arcane mark, dancing lights, detect magic, mage hand, message, ray of frost, resistance, touch of fatigue* (DC 15); 1st—*disguise self, identify, mage armor, protection from evil, shield*; 2nd—*bear's endurance, cat's grace, glitterdust* (DC 16), *invisibility, mirror image*; 3rd—*dispel magic, displacement, fireball* (DC 18), *haste*; 4th—*dimension door, greater invisibility, scrying*; 5th—*cone of cold* (DC 21), *telekinesis.*

Possessions: *Cloak of Charisma +2, wand of magic missile* (9th level, 22 charges), *wand of web* (18 charges), *bag of holding II*, large silver mirror (for *scrying* spells), scroll of *disintegrate*, scroll of *mass suggestion, lesser amulet of the planes.*

Kazmojen, male half-troll/half-dwarf fighter 3: CR 5; Medium giant; HD 3d10+18; hp 39; Init +1; Spd 20 ft.; AC 23, touch 11, flat-footed 22; Base Atk +3; Grp +8; Atk +10 melee (1d8+7/×3, masterwork dwarven urgrosh) or +8 melee (1d6+4, claw) or +4 ranged (1d6+5, throwing axe); Full Atk +6 melee (1d8+4/×3, masterwork dwarven urgrosh) and +2 melee (1d6+2/×3, masterwork dwarven urgrosh) and +2 melee (1d4+2, bite) or +8 melee (1d6+4, 2 claws) and +2 melee (1d4+2, bite) or +4 ranged (1d6+5, throwing axe); SA rend 2d4+7; SQ darkvision 60 ft., dwarf traits, fast healing 5, scent; AL LE; SV Fort +9, Ref +2, Will +4; Str 20, Dex 12, Con 23, Int 8, Wis 13, Cha 4.

Skills: Intimidate +1.

Feats: Cleave, Iron Will, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (dwarven urgrosh).

Languages: Common, Dwarven, Undercommon.

Rend (Ex): If Kazmojen hits with two claw attacks against a single opponent, he latches onto his opponent's body. This deals an additional 2d4+7 points of damage.

Possessions: Full plate, masterwork dwarven urgrosh, 4 throwing axes, pouch of 180 gp and three keys (to the chests in area **M11**).

Kelubar Demodand: CR 13; Medium outsider (evil, extraplanar); HD 13d8+39; hp 104; Init +5; Speed 30 ft., fly 60 ft. (average); AC 27, touch 11, flat-footed 27; Base Atk +13; Grp +18; Atk +18 melee (1d4+5 plus 1d6 acid, claw); Full Atk +18 melee (1d4+5 plus 1d6 acid, 2 claws) and +16 melee (1d6+2 plus 1d6 acid, bite); SA acidic slime, sneak attack +4d6, spell-like abilities, stench, summon demodand; SQ damage reduction 15/good, darkvision 60 ft., evasion, immune to fire, acid, cold, and poison, outsider traits, poison immunity, spell resistance 25, uncanny dodge; AL NE; SV Fort +11, Ref +9, Will +10; Str 20, Dex 13, Con 17, Int 14, Wis 15, Cha 18; *Fiend Folio* 44.

Skills: Bluff +24, Concentration +19, Diplomacy +28, Disguise +4 (+6 acting), Gather Information +6, Hide +9, Intimidate +22, Knowledge (local) +18, Knowledge (the planes) +18, Listen +18, Move Silently +9, Sense Motive +22, Spot +18, Survival +2 (+4 on other planes).

Feats: Dodge, Improved Initiative, Mobility, Multiattack, Spring Attack.

Languages: Common, Abyssal, Demodand.

Acidic Slime (Ex): The slime secreted by a kelubar adds 1d6 points of acid damage to its melee attacks. On a successful critical hit, it deals an additional 1d10 points of acid damage.

Stench (Ex): All creatures (except other demodands) within 30 feet of a kelubar must make a successful Fortitude save (DC 19) or be nauseated as long as the creature remains in the area, and for 10 rounds after the creature leaves. A successful save means that the creature is immune to that kelubar's stench for one day.

Summon Demodand (Sp): A kelubar demodand can attempt to summon 1d2 kelubars with a 40% chance of success.

Spell-Like Abilities (caster level 13th): At will—*detect magic, clairaudience/clairvoyance, fear* (DC 18), *invisibility, Melf's acid arrow, spider climb, tongues*; 3/day—*fog cloud, ray of enfeeblement*; 2/day—*acid fog, dispel magic.*

Kennock Brage, male human sorcerer 10: CR 10; Medium humanoid (human); HD 10d4+40; hp 76; Init +5; Spd 30 ft.; AC 15, touch 12, flat-footed 14; Base Atk +5, Grp +6; Atk/Full Atk +7 melee (1d4+1/19–20, dagger); SA spells; SQ immune to fear, immune to poison, SR 25; AL NE; SV Fort +7, Ref +4, Will +9; Str 12, Dex 13, Con 18, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 20.

Skills: Bluff +18, Diplomacy +7, Disguise +5 (+7 acting), Intimidate +7, Concentration +17, Spellcraft +13.

Feats: Empower Spell, Greater Spell Focus (evocation), Improved Initiative, Spell Focus (evocation), Spell Penetration.

Languages: Common.

Possessions: Dagger, *bracers of armor +2, ring of protection +1, amulet of natural armor +1, cloak of Charisma +2, lesser rod of silent spell, potion of cure serious wounds*, 250 gp.

Spells Known (6/8/7/7/6/4; caster level 10; +6 ranged touch); 0—*acid splash, arcane mark, detect magic, ghost sound* (DC 15), *light, mage hand, message, open/close, read magic*; 1st—*charm person* (DC 16), *disguise self, magic missile, ray of enfeeblement, shield*; 2nd—*knock, mirror image, see invisibility, scorching ray*; 3rd—*displacement, haste, lightning bolt* (DC 19); 4th—*greater invisibility, ice storm*; 5th—*cone of cold* (DC 19).

Familiar: Kennock has a raven familiar, but he knows how powerful the PCs are and does not expose it to the dangers of this encounter.

Spells From Ike Iverson: The benefits of these spells are included in the statistics above: *air walk, heroes' feast, mass bear's endurance, mass bull's strength, protection from*

energy (fire) (ignore first 120 points of fire damage), *spell resistance, status.*

Keygan Ghelve, male gnome expert 3/wizard 1: CR 3; Small humanoid; HD 3d6+3 plus 1d4+1; hp 17; Init +1; Spd 20 ft.; AC 12, touch 12, flat-footed 11; Base Atk +2; Grp –3; Atk or Full Atk +2 melee (1d3–1/19–20, dagger) or +4 ranged (1d6/19–20, light crossbow); SA spells; SQ gnome traits, low-light vision, summon familiar; AL LN; SV Fort +2, Ref +2, Will +5; Str 8, Dex 12, Con 12, Int 13, Wis 10, Cha 11.

Skills: Appraise +4, Craft (alchemy) +6, Craft (locksmithing) +11, Disable Device +7, Knowledge (local) +4, Listen +7, Open Lock +10, Profession (locksmith) +6, Search +4, Spot +3.

Feats: Scribe Scroll, Skill Focus (Craft [locksmithing]), Skill Focus (Open Lock).

Languages: Common, Gnome, Undercommon.

Wizard Spells Prepared (caster level 1, illusion specialist, prohibited schools: conjuration and necromancy): 0—*detect magic, ghost sound* (DC 12), *mage hand*; 1st—*alarm, color spray* (DC 13), *hold portal.*

Spellbook: 0—*dancing lights, detect magic, ghost sound, open/close, light, mage hand, mending, prestidigitation, read magic*; 1st—*alarm, disguise self, color spray, detect secret doors, hold portal, mage armor, reduce person, summon monster I, unseen servant.*

Possessions: Dagger, light crossbow with 10 bolts, magnifying glass, 3-foot stilts with extra-long pants, vest sewn with pockets holding 12 keys (these open all locked doors, windows, and containers in Ghelve's Locks).

Khetru, male haraknin fighter 5/rogue 5: CR 13; Medium outsider (evil, extraplanar, fire, lawful shapechanger); HD 4d8+5d10+5d6+42; hp 108; Init +7; Spd 30 ft.; AC 25, touch 13, flat-footed 23; Base Atk +12; Grp +17; Atk +19 melee (1d12+10/×3, *+1 great*axe) or +16 ranged (1d8+5/×3, masterwork composite longbow [+5 Str]); Full Atk +19/+14/+9 melee (1d12+10/×3, *+1 greataxe*) or +16/+11/+6 ranged (1d8+5/×3, masterwork composite longbow [+5 Str]); SA breath weapon, command fiendish hound, sneak attack +3d6; SQ alternate form, darkvision 60 ft., evasion, fire subtype, scent, trap sense +1, trapfinding, uncanny dodge; AL LE; SV Fort +12, Ref +12, Will +7; Str 20, Dex 16, Con 16, Int 6, Wis 12, Cha 4.

Skills: Hide +16, Jump +22, Listen +13, Move Silently +16, Spot +13, Survival +8 (+16 when tracking by scent), Tumble +8.

Feats: Acrobatic, Cleave, Great Cleave, Improved Bull Rush, Improved Initiative, Power Attack, Track[B], Weapon Focus (greataxe), Weapon Specialization (greataxe).

Languages: Common, Infernal.

Breath Weapon (Su): Cone of fire, 30 feet, every 2d4 rounds, damage 1d4+1, Reflex DC 20 half. A haraknin's breath weapon ignites flammable materials within the cone. It can use its breath weapon while biting.

Command Fiendish Hound (Sp): Khetru can use *greater command* at will against hell hounds and Nessian warhounds.

Alternate Form (Su): Khetru can transform into a hell hound or back as a move action at will, as if by *alter self.* He prefers to fight in humanoid form.

Possessions: *+2 chain shirt, +1 adamantine greataxe,* masterwork composite longbow (+5 Str bonus), 30 arrows, *ring of protection +1, potion of blur, potion of bull's strength, 2 potions of cure serious wounds, potion of protection from energy (cold), oil of greater magic weapon +3,* red-lacquered gold armband set with an emerald (1,000 gp), 25 pp, 100 gp.

Khyron Bonesworn, male human cleric 10 (Nerull): CR 10; Medium humanoid; HD 10d8+10; hp 67; Init –1; Spd 20 ft. (base 30 ft.); AC 20, touch 9, flat-footed 20; Base Atk +7; Grp +8; Atk +9 melee (1d8+2, *+1 unholy heavy mace*) or +6 ranged; Full Atk +9/+4 melee (1d8+2, *+1 unholy heavy mace*) and +6/+1 ranged; SA spells, rebuke undead 6/day; AL NE; SV Fort +8, Ref +2, Will +10; Str 12, Dex 8, Con 13, Int 10, Wis 16, Cha 16.

Skills: Bluff +11, Concentration +6, Diplomacy +13, Disguise +5 (for acting in character), Hide –1, Intimidate +5, Knowledge (religion) +8, Spellcraft +5.

Feats: Combat Casting, Greater Spell Focus (enchantment, necromancy), Spell Focus (enchantment, necromancy).

Language: Common.

Cleric Spells Prepared (caster level 10th): 0—*cure minor wounds, detect magic, detect poison, light, read magic, resistance*; 1st—*bane* (DC 16), *disguise self*[D], *divine favor, doom* (DC 16), *entropic shield, shield of faith*; 2nd—*bear's endurance, death knell* (DC 17), *hold person* (DC 17), *invisibility*[D], *resist energy, silence* (DC 17); 3rd—*animate dead*[D], *dispel magic, invisibility purge, magic circle against good, magic vestment*; 4th—*cure critical wounds, death ward*[D], *divine power, freedom of movement*; 5th—*greater command* (DC 20), *slay living*[D] (DC 20), *spell resistance.*

D: Domain spell. Domains: Death (death touch 1/day), Trickery (Bluff, Disguise, and Hide are class skills).

Possessions: *+1 full plate* with armor spikes, masterwork heavy steel shield (bears symbol of Nerull), *+1 unholy heavy mace,* spiked gauntlets, holy symbol of Nerull, *wand of cure moderate wounds* (9 charges), scroll of *flame strike,* scroll of *raise dead, potion of bull's strength.*

Kopru: CR 6; Medium monstrous humanoid (aquatic); HD 8d8; hp 36; Init +2; Spd 5 ft., swim 40 ft.; AC 15, touch 12, flat-footed 13; Base Atk +8; Grp +10; Atk +10 melee (1d6+2, tail slap); Full Atk +10 melee (1d6+2, tail slap) and +8 melee (1d4+1, 2 claws) and +8 melee (1d4+1, bite); SA constrict 3d6+3, dominate person, improved grab; SQ darkvision 60 ft.; AL CE; SV Fort +2, Ref +8, Will +9; Str 15, Dex 14, Con 11, Int 11, Wis 12, Cha 10; *Monster Manual II* 134.

Skills: Concentration +8, Escape Artist +11, Move Silently +6, Search +4, Swim +10.

Feats: Iron Will, Multiattack, Skill Focus (Escape Artist).

Languages: Aquan, Common.

Dominate Person (Su): Once per day, a kopru can produce an effect like that of a *dominate person* spell (caster level 10th, Will save DC 14), except that the range is 180 feet and the duration is eight days.

Improved Grab (Ex): To use this ability, the kopru must hit with its tail slap. If it gets a hold, it can constrict.

Kravichak Riolgh, male derro sorcerer 13: CR 16; Small monstrous humanoid; HD 3d8+12 plus 13d4+52;

hp 110; Init +9; Spd 50 ft., fly 90 ft. (good); AC 29, touch 19, flat-footed 23; Base Atk +9; Grp +4; Atk +11 melee (1d3/19–20, *+1 dagger*) or +17 ranged (1d3/19–20, *+1 dagger*); Full Atk +11/+11/+6 (1d3/19–20, *+1 dagger*) or +11 ranged (1d3/19–20, *+1 dagger*); SA poison use, sneak attack +1d6, spells, spell-like abilities; SQ darkvision 60 ft., madness, spell resistance 15, vulnerability to sunlight; AL CE; SV Fort +9, Ref +13, Will +20; Str 8, Dex 20, Con 18, Int 12, Wis 4, Cha 28.

Skills: Concentration +23, Bluff +13, Hide +11, Knowledge (the planes) +6, Listen +3, Move Silently +11, Spellcraft +12.

Feats: Blind-Fight, Empower Spell, Improved Initiative, Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Weapon Focus (ray).

Languages: Dwarven, Undercommon.

Spell-Like Abilities (caster level 3rd): At will—*darkness, ghost sound*; 1/day—*daze* (DC 19), *sound burst* (DC 21).

Sorcerer Spells Known (6/8/7/7/8/7/5*; caster level 13th; +16 ranged touch): 0—*acid splash, arcane mark, dancing lights, detect magic, detect poison, mage hand, prestidigitation, ray of frost, resistance*; 1st—*feather fall, grease* (DC 20), *magic missile, ray of enfeeblement, shield*; 2nd—*detect thoughts* (DC 21), *scorching ray, spectral hand, touch of idiocy, web*; 3rd—*dispel magic, fireball* (DC 22), *ray of exhaustion* (DC 22), *haste*; 4th—*confusion* (DC 23), *enervation, greater invisibility, scrying*; 5th—*baleful polymorph* (DC 24), *telekinesis, teleport*; 6th—*disintegrate* (DC 25), *mass suggestion* (DC 25).

*Note that Kravichak has already cast some of his spells; his normal daily spell use is 6/9/8/8/8/8/5. His fifth-level spells have been adjusted for one *teleport* spell; if he must cast multiple *teleports* to get to the meeting room, make sure to adjust his available spells appropriately.

Possessions: *+1 dagger, amulet of health +2, cloak of Charisma +4, gloves of Dexterity +2, bracers of armor +4, metamagic rod of lesser empower, ring of protection +2,* two *potions of cure serious wounds,* scroll of *blight,* scroll of *insanity,* scroll of *Mordenkainen's magnificent mansion,* scroll of *teleport, wand of invisibility* (50 charges), *wand of fly* (28 charges), 123 pp, 64 gp.

Kravichak's Berserkers, male and female derro barbarian 10: CR 13; Small monstrous humanoid; HD 3d8+6 plus 10d12+20; hp 108; Init +7; Spd 60 ft.; AC 25, touch 16, flat-footed 21; Base Atk +13; Grp +12; Atk +20 melee (1d10+5/×3 plus poison, *+1 greataxe*); Full Atk +20/+20/+15/+10 melee (1d10+5/×3 plus poison, *+1 greataxe*); SA poison use, rage 3/day, sneak attack +1d6, spell-like abilities; SQ damage reduction 2/—, fast movement, illiteracy, improved uncanny dodge, madness, spell resistance 15, trap sense +3, uncanny dodge, vulnerability to sunlight; AL CE; SV Fort +11, Ref +11, Will +10; Str 16, Dex 16, Con 14, Int 9, Wis 3, Cha 16.

Skills: Climb +12, Hide +12, Listen +8, Move Silently +8, Survival +6.

Feats: Blind-Fight, Cleave, Improved Initiative, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (greataxe).

Languages: Undercommon.

Rage (Ex): hp 134; AC 22, touch 13, flat-footed 19; Grp +14; Atk +21 melee (1d10+8/×3 plus poison, *+1 greataxe*); Full Atk +21/+16/+11 melee (1d10+8/×3 plus poison, *+1 greataxe*); SV Fort +13, Will +12; Str 20, Con 18; Climb +14.

Poison: The berserkers have coated their weapons with Large scorpion venom (Fortitude save DC 18, 1d6/1d6 Str damage).

Spell-Like Abilities (caster level 3rd): At will—*darkness, ghost sound*; 1/day—*daze* (DC 19), *sound burst* (DC 21).

Possessions: *+2 chain shirt, +1 greataxe, amulet of natural armor +1, cloak of resistance +1, ring of protection +1, potion of bear's endurance, potion of bull's strength, potion of cat's grace,* two *potions of cure serious wounds,* 3d6 assorted gems (100 gp each), 125 pp.

Krojen and Tyrrx, male half-iron golem half-orc fighter 13: CR 16; Medium construct; HD 13d10+20; hp 129, 113; Init +4; Spd 30 ft. (can't run); AC 33, touch 10, flat-footed 33; Base Atk +13; Grp +21; Atk +24 melee (1d8+14/19–20/×3, *+3 adamantine battleaxe*); Full Atk +24/+19/+14 melee (1d8+14/19–20/×3, *+3 adamantine battleaxe*); SA breath weapon; SQ construct traits, damage reduction 10/adamantine, magic immunity, rust vulnerability; AL NE; SV Fort +12, Ref +6, Will +6; Str 27, Dex 10, Con —, Int 3,Wis 11, Cha 1.

Skills: Climb +16, Jump +16.

Feats: Cleave, Great Cleave, Great Fortitude, Greater Weapon Focus (battleaxe), Greater Weapon Specialization (battleaxe), Iron Will, Improved Initiative, Improved Critical (battleaxe), Lightning Reflexes, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (battleaxe), Weapon Specialization (battleaxe).

Breath Weapon (Su): As a free action, an iron half-golem can emit a cloud of poisonous gas from its limbs in a 10-foot cone. The cloud lasts 1 round, and the half-golem can emit another cloud once every 1d4+1 rounds (Fortitude DC 16; initial 1d4 Con; secondary 3d4 Con). The save DC is Constitution-based.

Immunity to Magic (Ex): An iron half-golem is immune to any spell or spell-like ability that allows spell resistance. In addition, certain spells function differently against the creature, as noted here. A magical attack that deals electricity damage slows an iron half-golem (as the *slow* spell) for 3 rounds, with no saving throw. A magical attack that deals fire damage breaks any slow effect on the golem and heals 1 point of damage for each 3 points of damage the attack would otherwise deal. If the amount of healing would cause the golem to exceed its full normal hit points, it gains any excess as temporary hit points.

Rust Vulnerability (Ex): An iron half-golem is affected by rust attacks, such as that of a rust monster or a *rusting grasp* spell.

Possessions: *+4 studded leather armor, +1 tower shield, +3 adamantine battleaxe.*

Kuo-toa Soldier, male kuo-toa rogue 1: CR 3; Medium monstrous humanoid (aquatic); HD 2d8+4 plus 1d6+2; hp 19; Init +2; Spd 20 ft., swim 50 ft.; AC 20, touch 12, flat-footed 18; Base Atk +2; Grp +5; Atk/Full Atk +7 melee (1d6+3/18–20, masterwork rapier) or +6 ranged (1d4/19–20, masterwork hand crossbow); SA sneak attack +1d6; SQ adhesive, amphibious, immunity

to poison and paralysis, keen sight, light blindness, resistance to electricity 10, slippery, trapfinding; AL NE; SV Fort +2, Ref +7, Will +6; Str 16, Dex 15, Con 15, Int 12, Wis 16, Cha 6; *Monster Manual* 163.

Skills: Escape Artist +7, Hide +6, Listen +8, Move Silently +6, Search +5, Spot +10, Swim +9, Tumble +6.

Feats: Alertness, Weapon Focus (hand crossbow), Weapon Focus (rapier).

Languages: Aquan, Kuo-Toan, Undercommon.

Possessions: Masterwork heavy steel shield with adhesive, masterwork rapier, masterwork hand crossbow with 10 bolts.

Kuo-toa Whip, male kuo-toa cleric 2: CR 3; Medium monstrous humanoid (aquatic); HD 4d8+8 plus 3; hp 29; Init +1; Spd 15 ft., swim 35 ft.; AC 26, touch 11, flat-footed 25; Base Atk +3; Grp +6; Atk or Full Atk +7 melee (1d8+2, masterwork morningstar); SA lightning bolt, spells, rebuke/command undead; SQ adhesive, amphibious immunity to poison and paralysis, keen sight, light blindness, resistance to electricity 10, slippery; AL NE; SV Fort +5, Ref +6, Will +10; Str 16, Dex 12, Con 15, Int 10, Wis 19, Cha 8.

Skills: Concentration +6, Escape Artist +3, Listen +6, Search +4, Spellcraft +4, Spot +12, Swim –1.

Feats: Alertness, Lightning Reflexes, Toughness.

Languages: Aquan, Kuo-Toan, Undercommon.

Cleric Spells Prepared (caster level 2nd); 0—*cure minor wounds, detect magic, read magic, mending*; 1st—*doom* (DC 15), *entropic shield, protection from good*[D], *shield of faith*.

D: Domain spell. Domains: Destruction (smite once per day for +4 attack, +2 damage), Evil (cast Evil spells at +1 caster level).

Possessions: *+1 banded mail*, heavy wooden shield, masterwork morningstar, scroll of *bear's endurance*, scroll of *cure moderate wounds*.

Kyan Winterstrike, female elf wizard 1/fighter 6/arcane archer 8: CR 15; Medium humanoid; HD 1d4+1 plus 6d10+6 plus 8d8+8; hp 75; Init +9; Spd 60 ft.; AC 30, touch 17, flat-footed 25; Base Atk +14; Grp +15; Atk +16 melee (1d8+2/19–20, *+1 longsword*) or +26 ranged (1d8+6/×3 plus 1d6 cold, *+1 frost longbow* with *+4 arrow*); Full Atk +16/+11/+6 melee (1d8+2/19–20, *+1 longsword*) or +24/+24/+19/+14 ranged (1d8+5/×3 plus 1d6 cold, *+1 frost longbow* with *+4 arrow*); SA enhance arrow +4, hail of arrows, imbue arrow, phase arrow, seeker arrow, spells; SQ bat familiar, elf traits, low-light vision; AL CN; SV Fort +15, Ref +16, Will +8; Str 12, Dex 20, Con 12, Int 13, Wis 8, Cha 10.

Skills: Craft (bowmaking) +19, Handle Animal +6, Hide +13, Knowledge (arcana) +5, Listen +14, Move Silently +13, Ride +11, Search +3, Spellcraft +5, Spot +11.

Feats: Alertness[B], Combat Expertise, Dodge, Improved Initiative, Mobility, Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Rapid Shot, Scribe Scroll, Weapon Focus (longbow), Weapon Specialization (longbow).

Languages: Common, Draconic, Elven.

Enhance Arrow (Su): Every nonmagical arrow Kyan shoots becomes magical, gaining a +4 enhancement bonus.

Hail of Arrows (Sp): Once per day, in lieu of her regular attacks, Kyan can fire an arrow at each and every target within range, to a maximum of eight targets. Each attack uses her primary attack bonus (+26 ranged), and each enemy may only be targeted by a single arrow.

Imbue Arrow (Sp): Kyan gains the ability to place an area spell upon an arrow. When the arrow is fired, the spell's area is centered on where the arrow lands, even if the spell could normally be centered only on the caster. This ability allows Kyan to use the arrow's range instead of the spell's range. It takes a standard action to cast the spell and fire the arrow. The arrow must be fired in the round the spell is cast, or the spell is wasted.

Phase Arrow (Sp): Once per day, Kyan can fire an arrow at a target known to her within range, and the arrow travels to the target in a straight path, passing through any nonmagical barrier or wall in its way (a wall of force, wall of fire, or similar barrier stops the arrow). This ability negates cover, concealment, and armor modifiers, but otherwise the attack is rolled normally. Using this ability is a standard action (and firing the arrow is part of the action).

Seeker Arrow (Sp): Kyan can launch an arrow once per day at a target known to her within range, and the arrow travels to the target, even around corners. This ability negates cover and concealment modifiers, but otherwise the attack is rolled normally. Using this ability is a standard action (and firing the arrow is part of the action).

Wizard Spells Prepared (caster level 1st; 10% chance of spell failure): 0—*detect magic, light, read magic*; 1st—*expeditious retreat, shield*.

Spellbook: 0—all; 1st—*burning hands, expeditious retreat, mage armor, mount, ray of enfeeblement, shield*.

Possessions: Mithral chain shirt, silver cage pendant (*lesser amulet of the planes*; see Appendix), *+1 longsword*, *+1 frost longbow*, four quivers with 25 arrows each (100 arrows total), *cloak of resistance +3, greater bracers of archery, Ring of Thirteen*, 2 *potions of barkskin (+5)*, 2 *potions of cure light wounds*, spellbook, silver headdress (250 gp).

Kyria, female human expert 2: CR 1; Medium humanoid; HD 2d6; hp 7; Init +0; Spd 30 ft.; AC 11, touch 11, flat-footed 10; Base Atk +1; Grp +1; Atk or Full Atk +1 melee (1d4/19–20, dagger); SA —; SQ —; AL NG; SV Fort +0, Ref +1, Will +2; Str 11, Dex 12, Con 10, Int 9, Wis 8, Cha 13.

Skills: Appraise +4, Craft (seamstress) +7, Diplomacy +6, Knowledge (local) +4, Sense Motive +4, Spot +7.

Feats: Skill Focus (Craft—seamstress), Skill Focus (Spot).

Possessions: Dagger.

Kymzo, advanced steam mephit: CR 5; Small outsider (fire); HD 6d8+6; hp 36; Init +7; Spd 30 ft., fly 50 ft. (average); AC 18, touch 14, flat-footed 15; Base Atk +6; Grp +1; Atk +5 melee (1d3–1, claw); Full Atk +5 melee (1d3–1, 2 claws); SA breath weapon, spell-like abilities, summon mephit; SQ damage reduction 5/magic, darkvision 60 ft., fast healing 2, immunity to fire, vulnerability to cold; AL NE; SV Fort +7, Ref +8, Will +6; Str 8, Dex 17, Con 14, Int 12, Wis 13, Cha 17.

Skills: Balance +5, Bluff +12, Climb –1 (+1 with ropes), Diplomacy +14, Disguise +12 (+14 acting), Escape Artist +14

(+15 with ropes), Hide +16, Intimidate +5, Listen +10, Move Silently +12, Spot +10, Use Rope +12 (+14 with bindings).

Feats: Agile, Improved Initiative, Toughness.

Breath Weapon (Su): Cone of steam 10 ft., fire damage 1d4, Reflex half DC 16. Living creatures that fail their saves get a –4 penalty to AC and a –2 penalty to attacks for 3 rounds.

Spell-like Abilities: Once per hour, Kymzo can use *blur* (CL 6). Once per day, he can create a boiling rainstorm (20-ft. square, 2d6 fire damage, Reflex half DC 15, CL 6). This ability is the equivalent of a 2nd-level spell.

Last Laugh Harlequin, male human monk 6/assassin 2: CR 8; Medium humanoid (human); HD 6d8+2d6+16; hp 56 each; Init +3; Spd 50 ft.; AC 17, touch 17, flat-footed 14; Base Atk +5; Grp +6; Atk +7 melee (1d8+1, unarmed strike) or +9 ranged (1d4+2, sling with *+1 bullet*) or +9 ranged (1d2+1 plus poison, masterwork shuriken); Full Atk +5/+5 melee (1d8+1, unarmed strike) or +9 ranged (1d4+2, sling with *+1 bullet*) or +9 ranged (1d2+1 plus poison, masterwork shuriken); SA death attack (DC 12), flurry of blows, ki strike (magic), poison use, sneak attack +1d6, stunning fist 4/day (DC 17); SQ evasion, purity of body, slow fall 30 ft., still mind, uncanny dodge; AL LE; SV Fort +6 (+7 against poison), Ref +11, Will +8; Str 12, Dex 16, Con 15, Int 10, Wis 16, Cha 8.

Skills: Balance +8, Climb +4, Disable Device +2, Disguise +3, Escape Artist +8, Hide +11, Jump +18, Listen +5, Move Silently +11, Open Lock +5, Search +2, Spot +5, Tumble +12, Use Rope +5 (involving bindings).

Feats: Combat Reflexes[B], Dodge, Improved Trip[B], Improved Unarmed Strike[B], Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Stunning Fist[B], Weapon Focus (unarmed strike).

Language: Common.

Possessions: Sling with 20 *+1 bullets*, 5 masterwork shuriken (coated with large scorpion venom; Fortitude DC 18 negates, initial and secondary 1d6 Str), *amulet of health +2*, *potion of mage armor*, *potion of shield of faith (+2)*, monk's outfit, 1 sp (minted with a jester emblem; used to bypass the magical ward in area **B8**).

Last Laugh Thugs, male human rogue 2/warrior 2: CR 3; Medium humanoid; HD 2d6+2d8+4; hp 25 each; Init +2; Spd 30 ft.; AC 14, touch 12, flat-footed 12; Base Atk +3; Grp +5; Atk/Full Atk +6 melee (2d4+3/18–20, falchion) or +5 ranged (1d6+2/×3, composite shortbow); SA sneak attack +1d6; SQ evasion, trapfinding; AL NE; SV Fort +4, Ref +5, Will +1; Str 15, Dex 15, Con 13, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 8.

Skills: Climb +5, Disable Device +4, Disguise +2, Hide +6, Gather Information +3, Intimidate +2, Jump +5, Knowledge (local) +4, Listen +7, Move Silently +6, Open Lock +5, Search +4, Spot +7, Tumble +6.

Feats: Alertness, Point Blank Shot, Weapon Focus (falchion).

Language: Common.

Possessions: Leather armor, falchion, composite shortbow (+2 Str), quiver of 20 arrows, pouch of 2d6 gp and 2d6 sp (all minted with the jester emblem of the Last Laugh guild).

Lriznisith, advanced chasme demon: CR 15; Large outsider (chaotic, extraplanar, evil, tanar'ri); HD 18d8+108; hp 199; Init +6; Spd 30 ft., fly 50 ft. (perfect); AC 29, touch 15, flat-footed 23; Base Atk +18; Grp +27; Atk +22 melee (2d6+5/19–20, claw); Full Atk +22 melee (2d6+5/19–20, 2 claws) and +20 melee (1d6+2, bite) and +20 melee (1d6+2, gore); Space/Reach 10 ft./10 ft.; SA drone, fear aura, spell-like abilities, wounding; SQ damage reduction 10/good, immune to electricity, immune to poison, resistance to acid 10, resistance to cold 10, resistance to fire 10, spell resistance 23, *summon tanar'ri*, telepathy 100 ft.; AL CE; SV Fort +17, Ref +17, Will +12; Str 20, Dex 22, Con 22, Int 14, Wis 12, Cha 18; *Book of Vile Darkness* 172.

Skills: Concentration +27, Hide +23, Intimidate +25, Knowledge (arcana) +12, Knowledge (the planes) +12, Listen +22, Move Silently +27, Search +23, Spot +22, Survival +22 (+24 on other planes).

Feats: Dodge, Flyby Attack, Improved Critical (claw), Improved Natural Attack (claw), Mobility, Multiattack, Power Attack.

Languages: Abyssal, Celestial, Draconic.

Drone (Su): As a full-round action, Lriznisith can beat his wings to create a droning buzz in a 60-foot spread. Each creature in the area must make a DC 23 Will save or fall asleep for 2d10 rounds. Although the ability otherwise functions like the *sleep* spell, there is no Hit Dice limit for this effect. Demons and creatures that are immune to *sleep* effects are immune to a chasme's drone. The save DC is Charisma-based.

Fear Aura (Su): As a free action, Lriznisith can create an aura of fear in a 5-foot radius. All creatures in this area must make a DC 23 Will save or become panicked. If the save is successful, that creature cannot be affected again by Lriznisith's fear aura for 24 hours. The save DC is Charisma-based.

Wounding (Ex): A wound resulting from any of Lriznisith's attacks continues to bleed for an additional 1 point of damage per round thereafter. Multiple wounds result in cumulative damage. The bleeding can be stopped by a successful DC 10 Heal check or the application of a magical healing effect.

Summon Tanar'ri (Sp): Once per day, Lriznisith can attempt to summon 1d4 rutterkins or 1 chasme with a 40% chance of success. This ability is the equivalent of a 3rd-level spell.

Spell-Like Abilities (caster level 10th; +24 ranged touch): At will—*contagion* (DC 18), *darkness*, *desecrate*, *detect good*, *dispel magic*, *fly*, *insect plague*, *ray of enfeeblement*, *protection from good*, *see invisibility*, *telekinesis* (DC 19), *greater teleport* (self plus 50 pounds of gear only), *wave of grief* (DC 16); 1/day—*circle of nausea* (DC 17), *unholy aura* (DC 22).

Note: Chasmes are detailed in the *Book of Vile Darkness*. If you don't have access to this book, the stats above should be enough to run an encounter with Lriznisith. Even though a few of the demon's spell-like abilities (*circle of nausea* and *wave of grief*) and the details on one of the demons it can summon (rutterkin) are also detailed in that book, the chasme's other abilities should still be enough to menace the PCs.

Mangh-Mictho, male kuo-toa cleric 8: CR 9; Medium monstrous humanoid (aquatic); HD 10d8+30; hp 75; Init +1; Spd 15 ft., swim 35 ft.; AC 26, touch 11, flat-footed 25; Base Atk +8; Grp +10; Atk +11 melee (1d10+3, pincer staff); Full Atk +11/+6 melee (1d10+3, pincer staff); SA lightning bolt, pincer staff, spells, rebuke/command undead; SQ amphibious, immunity to poison and paralysis, keen sight, light blindness, resistance to electricity 10, slippery; AL NE; SV Fort +9, Ref +6, Will +14; Str 15, Dex 12, Con 16, Int 10, Wis 21, Cha 8.

Skills: Concentration +15, Escape Artist +6, Jump –8, Listen +7, Search +4, Spellcraft +11, Spot +11, Swim +6.

Feats: Alertness, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (pincer staff), Spell Focus (evocation), Spell Focus (necromancy), Weapon Focus (pincer staff).

Cleric Spells Prepared (caster level 8); 0—*cure minor wounds* (2), *detect magic* (2), *read magic*, *resistance*; 1st—*cure light wounds* (2), *divine favor*, *entropic shield*, *magic weapon*, *protection from good*[D], *shield of faith*; 2nd—*bear's endurance*, *bull's strength*, *darkness*, *owl's wisdom*, *shatter*[D] (DC 18); 3rd—*bestow curse* (DC 19), *contagion*[D] (DC 19), *deeper darkness*, *dispel magic* (2); 4th—*control water*, *cure critical wounds*, *divine power*, *unholy blight*[D] (DC 20).

D: Domain spell. Domains: Destruction (smite once per day for +4 attack, +8 damage), Evil (cast evil spells at +1 caster level).

Possessions: *+1 mithral full plate*, pincer staff, holy symbol.

Maple, female halfling rogue 1: CR 1; Small humanoid; HD 1d6+1; hp 5; Init +7; Spd 20 ft.; AC 14, touch 14, flat-footed 11; Base Atk +0; Grp –5; Atk +0 melee (1d2–1 nonlethal, unarmed strike); SA sneak attack +1d6; SQ trapfinding; AL N; SV Fort +2, Ref +6, Will +0; Str 8, Dex 17, Con 12, Int 13, Wis 8, Cha 14.

Skills: Appraise +3, Climb +1, Disable Device +7, Escape Artist +7, Hide +11, Jump +1, Listen +3, Move Silently +9, Open Lock +7, Sleight of Hand +7, Search +5, Tumble +7.

Feat: Improved Initiative.

Languages: Common, Goblin, Halfling.

Maavu Arlintal, Male Human expert 5/wizard 4/high handcrafter 1: CR 9; Medium humanoid; HD 6d6+4d4+10; hp 43; Init +0; Spd 30 ft.; AC 13, touch 10, flat-footed 13; Base Atk +5; Grp +5; Atk or Full Atk +5 melee (1d4/19–20, dagger); SA spells; SQ summon familiar (none currently), improved skill focus +4, planned save +1; AL CG; SV Fort +5, Ref +2, Will +11; Str 11, Dex 11, Con 13, Int 15, Wis 12, Cha 14.

Skills: Bluff +11, Concentration +8, Craft (alchemy) +19, Craft (weaving) +12, Diplomacy +18, Gather Information +13, Knowledge (architecture and engineering) +7, Knowledge (local) +7, Knowledge (the planes) +7, Listen +7, Profession (merchant) +10, Ride +5, Sense Motive +3, Spot +5, Spellcraft +8.

Feats: Brew Potion, Negotiator, Scribe Scroll, Skill Focus (Craft [alchemy]), Skill Focus (Craft [weaving]), Skill Focus (Diplomacy).

Languages: Common, Terran.

Wizard Spells Prepared (caster level 4th, +5 touch or ranged touch): 0—*detect magic*, *mage hand*, *mending*, *open/close*; 1st—*comprehend languages*, *expeditious retreat*, *shield*, *shocking grasp*; 2nd—*bear's endurance*, *glitterdust* (DC 14), *spider climb*.

Spellbook: all prepared plus 0—all; 1st—*alarm*, *detect secret doors*, *identify*, *silent image*, *unseen servant*; 2nd—*knock*, *locate object*, *see invisibility*.

Possessions: Dagger, traveler's outfit, *bracers of armor +3*, *Heward's handy haversack* with food and wine for three days, two *potions of gaseous form*, *elixir of hiding*, scroll of *expeditious retreat*, 45 gp and 5 pearls (worth 100 gp each).

Medusa rogue 10 (4): CR 14; Medium monstrous humanoid; HD 6d8+30 plus 10d6+50; hp 157, 150, 142, 129; Init +6; Spd 30 ft.; AC 25, touch 16, flat-footed 19; Base Atk +13; Grp +14; Atk +22 melee (1d6+4/17–20, *+3 short sword*) or +19 melee (1d4+1 plus poison, snakes) or +20 ranged (1d6/×3, masterwork shortbow); Full Atk +20/+15/+10 melee (1d6+4/17–20, *+3 short sword*) and +20 melee (1d6+4/17–20, *+3 short sword*) and +14 melee (1d4+1 plus poison, snakes) or +20/+15/+10 ranged (1d6/×3, masterwork shortbow); SA petrifying gaze (DC 22), poison (DC 18), sneak attack +5d6; SQ darkvision 60 ft., improved evasion, improved uncanny dodge, trap sense +3, uncanny dodge; AL LE; SV Fort +10, Ref +18, Will +8; Str 12, Dex 23, Con 20, Int 12, Wis 10, Cha 24.

Skills: Balance +8, Bluff +26, Diplomacy +9, Disguise +14 (+16 acting), Escape Artist +14, Hide +25, Intimidate +17, Jump +3, Move Silently +25, Search +8, Spot +15, Tumble +21, Use Rope +6 (+8 bindings).

Feats: Ability Focus (petrifying gaze), Improved Critical (short sword), Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Two-Weapon Fighting, Weapon Finesse.

Languages: Common, Yuan-ti.

Possessions: *+2 chain shirt*, 2 short swords (*+3 short swords* with *greater magic weapon* spells), masterwork shortbow, 20 arrows.

Meerthan Eliothlorn, male half-elf wizard 14: CR 14; Medium humanoid; HD 14d4+14; hp 43; Init +5; Spd 30 ft.; AC 18, touch 12, flat-footed 17; Base Atk +7; Grp +6; Atk +7 melee (1d4–1/×3, masterwork punch dagger); Full Atk +7/+2 melee (1d4–1/×3, masterwork punch dagger); SA spells; SQ *contingency*, permanent spell effects, summon familiar (bat named Mior); AL N; SV Fort +8, Ref +8, Will +14; Str 8, Dex 13, Con 12, Int 18, Wis 10, Cha 14.

Skills: Concentration +18, Diplomacy +4, Disguise +20, Gather Information +8, Knowledge (arcana) +15, Knowledge (geography) +9, Knowledge (history) +9, Knowledge (local) +9, Knowledge (religion) +7, Knowledge (the planes) +7, Listen +6, Search +7, Spellcraft +23, Spot +3.

Feats: Alertness (as long as Mior is in arm's reach), Craft Wondrous Items, Extend Spell, Improved Initiative, Investigator, Iron Will, Quicken Spell, Scribe Scroll, Spell Penetration.

Languages: Common, Dwarven, Elven, Gnome.

Wizard Spells Prepared (caster level 14th, +8 ranged touch): 0—*detect magic*, *mage hand*, *message* (2); 1st—*charm person* (DC 15), *magic missile* (2), *silent image* (DC 15), *unseen servant*; 2nd—*detect thoughts* (2, DC 16), *minor image* (DC 16), *scorching ray* (2); 3rd—*clairaudience/clairvoyance*, *dispel magic*, *fireball* (DC 17), *fly*, *tongues*; 4th—*dimension*

door, fear (DC 18), *lesser geas* (DC 18), *locate creature, scrying* (DC 18); 5th—*Rary's telepathic bond*, quickened *shield, teleport*; 6th—*legend lore*, quickened *mirror image*, extended *major creation*; 7th—extended *geas/quest* (DC 20), *project image* (DC 21).

Spellbook: all prepared plus 0—all; 1st—*alarm, disguise self, feather fall, identify, mage armor, mount, shield, Tenser's floating disc, ventriloquism*; 2nd—*arcane lock, continual flame, false life, invisibility, knock, locate object, resist energy*; 3rd—*arcane sight, daylight, illusory script, major image, nondetection, secret page, suggestion*; 4th—*detect scrying, hallucinatory terrain, minor creation, remove curse*; 5th—*break enchantment, major creation, overland flight, permanency, persistent image, prying eyes, sending*; 6th—*analyze dweomer, contingency, programmed image*; 7th—*greater arcane sight, limited wish, teleport object, vision.*

Contingency: If brought below 20 hit points, a *dimension door* activates to allow Meerthan a chance to escape.

Permanent Spell Effects: *arcane sight, comprehend languages, Rary's telepathic bond* with several Strider agents, *read magic.*

Possessions: masterwork dagger, *bracers of armor +4, cloak of resistance +3, hat of disguise, ring of force shield, ring of protection +1, lesser rod of maximize metamagic, wand of invisibility* (23 charges), 2 *potions of cure moderate wounds*, scrying mirror worth 1,000 gp.

Melagorn Thureq, male half-elf wizard (necromancer) 9: CR 9; Medium humanoid; HD 9d4+12; hp 38; Init +3; Spd 30 ft.; AC 15, touch 13, flat-footed 12; Base Atk +4; Grp +3; Atk/Full Atk +4 melee (1d4–1/19–20, masterwork dagger) or +7 ranged (1d8/19–20, light crossbow); SA spells; SQ half-elf traits, toad familiar named Glortus; AL CE; SV Fort +4, Ref +6, Will +7; Str 8, Dex 16, Con 12, Int 17, Wis 13, Cha 10.

Skills: Concentration +13, Knowledge (arcana) +14, Knowledge (history) +11, Spellcraft +14.

Feats: Alertness (when Glortus is in arm's reach), Brew Potion, Combat Casting, Greater Spell Focus (necromancy), Scribe Scroll, Spell Focus (necromancy), Spell Penetration.

Languages: Common, Elven, Draconic, Orc.

Wizard Spells Prepared (caster level 9th; prohibited schools conjuration, illusion): 0—*detect magic, open/close, read magic, touch of fatigue* (DC 15); 1st—*disguise self, expeditious retreat, magic missile, ray of enfeeblement* (2), *shield*; 2nd—*false life, fog cloud, resist energy, spectral hand, Tasha's hideous laughter* (DC 14), *touch of idiocy*; 3rd—*lightning bolt* (DC 15), *ray of exhaustion* (DC 17), *suggestion, vampiric touch* (2); 4th—*bestow curse* (DC 19), *enervation* (2); 5th—*feeblemind* (DC 18), *waves of fatigue* (DC 20).

Spellbook: As above plus 0—all except for conjuration and illusion); 1st—*cause fear, chill touch, detect undead, identify*; 2nd—*blindness/deafness, command undead, ghoul touch*; 3rd—*gentle repose, fly, halt undead*; 4th—*animate dead, contagion, fear*; 5th—*magic jar, symbol of pain.*

Possessions: Masterwork dagger, masterwork light crossbow with 20 bolts, *bracers of armor +2, headband of intellect +2, potion of haste, potion of invisibility.*

Mergala, female elf rogue 3: CR 3; Medium humanoid; HD 3d6; hp 11; Init +3; Spd 30 ft.; AC 17, touch 13, flat-footed 14; Base Atk +2; Grp +3; Atk or Full Atk +4 melee (1d6+1/18–20, rapier) or +6 ranged (1d8+1/×3, composite longbow); SA sneak attack +2d6; SQ elf traits, evasion, trap sense +1, trapfinding; AL CE; SV Fort +1, Ref +6, Will +3; Str 12, Dex 17, Con 11, Int 10, Wis 14, Cha 8.

Skills: Disable Device +6, Escape Artist +9, Hide +9, Listen +8, Move Silently +9, Open Lock +9, Spot +8, Tumble +9.

Feats: Dodge, Mobility.

Possessions: *+1 studded leather*, masterwork rapier, masterwork composite longbow (+1 Str) with 20 arrows, *potion of spider climb*, 2 *potions of cure light wounds.*

Moltenwing (Garathrynakh), male mature adult pyroclastic dragon: CR 16; Huge dragon (extraplanar); HD 25d12+150; hp 312; Init +0; Spd 60 ft., fly 100 ft. (poor), climb 40 ft., burrow 45 ft.; AC 35, touch 11, flat-footed 35; Base Atk +25; Grp +44; Atk +36 melee (2d8+13, bite); Full Atk +36 melee (2d8+13, bite), +34 melee (2d6+8, 2 claws), +34 melee (1d8+8, 2 wings), +36 melee (2d6+18, tail slap), or +36 melee (2d8+18, crush); SA breath weapon, frightful presence (Will DC 25, 210 ft.), spell-like abilities; SQ blindsense 60 ft., damage resistance 15/magic, fast healing 3, immunity to fire, sleep, paralysis, and sonic, keen senses, spell resistance 26; AL NE; SV Fort +23, Ref +17, Will +20; Str 33, Dex 10, Con 23, Int 16, Wis 17, Cha 16; *Draconomicon* 183.

Skills: Appraise +31, Bluff +31, Concentration +34, Diplomacy +5, Intimidate +31, Knowledge (the planes) +31, Listen +31, Search +31, Sense Motive +31, Spot +31.

Feats: Cleave, Fast Healing*, Flyby Attack, Great Cleave, Hover, Improved Bull Rush, Multiattack, Power Attack, Wingover.

*This epic feat gives Moltenwing fast healing 3.

Languages: Common, Draconic, Infernal.

Breath Weapon (Su): 50-ft. cone of superheated ash and sonic force, 14d6 half fire and half sonic, Reflex DC 28 half; or 100-ft. disintegrating line, death, Fort DC 28 negates.

Spell-Like Abilities (caster level 17th): 3/day—*produce flame, sound burst* (DC 15); 1/day—*pyrotechnics* (DC 15), *shatter* (DC 15), *shout* (DC 17), *wall of fire* (DC 17).

Possessions: *Amulet of mighty fists +2, cloak of resistance +3* (worn rolled up as a collar), *ring of protection +3, ring of evasion.*

MTA Agent, male and female gnome wizard (illusionist) 3: CR 3; Small humanoid; HD 3d4+9; hp 17; Init +1; Spd 20 ft.; AC 12 (20 with spells active), touch 12, flat-footed 11 (19 with spells active); Base Atk +1; Grp –5; Atk +0 melee (1d4–2 club) or +4 ranged (1d6, light crossbow); Full Atk –1 melee (1d4–2 club) or +4 ranged (1d6, light crossbow); SA —; SQ gnome traits, spell-like abilities; AL LG; SV Fort +3, Ref +2, Will +7; Str 6, Dex 13, Con 14, Int 15, Wis 14, Cha 10.

Skills: Concentration +8, Gather Information +2, Knowledge (arcana) +8, Knowledge (local) +8, Spellcraft +10.

Feats: Iron Will, Scribe Scroll, Toughness.

Spell-Like Abilities (caster level 1st): 1/day—*dancing lights, ghost sound* (DC 11), *prestidigitation, speak with animals* (burrowing animal only).

Wizard Spells Prepared (caster level 3rd): 0—*detect magic, flare* (DC 12), *ghost sound* (DC 13), *mage hand, message*; 1st—*color spray* (DC 14), *mage armor, magic missile, shield*; 2nd—*blur, web* (2) (DC 13).

Spellbook: all prepared spells plus 0—all except necromancy, conjuration; 1st—*expeditious retreat, hypnotism, silent image.*

Possessions: Masterwork light crossbow with 10 bolts, club, *potion of cure light wounds*, scroll of *dispel magic*, *wand of magic missile* (20 charges), scroll of *fly*, scroll of *haste*, spellbook.

Mud Slaad: CR 6; Medium outsider (chaotic, extraplanar); HD 6d8+12; hp 39; Init +6; Spd 30 ft.; AC 16, touch 12, flat-footed 14; Base Atk +6; Grp +9; Atk +9 melee (2d6+3, bite); Full Atk +9 melee (2d6+3, bite) and +7 melee (1d4+1, 2 claws); SA cringe, disease, sonic screech, *summon slaad*; SQ darkvision 60 ft., fast healing 3, feign death, immune to sonic, resistance to acid 5, cold 5, electricity 5, and fire 5; AL CN; SV Fort +7, Ref +7, Will +3; Str 17, Dex 15, Con 15, Int 6, Wis 6, Cha 8; *Fiend Folio* 157.

Skills: Climb +12, Jump +12, Hide +11, Listen +7, Move Silently +11, Spot +7.

Feats: Dodge, Improved Initiative, Multiattack.

Cringe (Su): As a standard action, a mud slaad can cower in fear. This is a mind-affecting effect. Any opponent attempting to strike or otherwise directly attack the cringing mud slaad, even with a targeted spell, must attempt a DC 12 Will save. If the save succeeds, the opponent can attack normally and is immune to the effect of that mud slaad's cringe for 24 hours. If the save fails, the opponent can't follow through with the attack, that part of the attacker's action is lost, and the attacker can't directly attack that mud slaad for as long as it continues to cringe. If the mud slaad stops cringing and then cringes again, the opponent may attempt a new Will save to attack it.

Disease (Ex): Any creature hit by a mud slaad's bite attack must succeed at a DC 15 Fortitude Save or be infected with a disease that transforms the victim over the next week into a mud slaad. The infected creature can attempt a new save each day to throw off the infection, but after seven days the change is complete.

Feign Death (Ex): If an opponent strikes a mud slaad and reduces it to 10 or fewer hit points, it can immediately attempt to feign death. This ability happens on the opponent's turn. Any creature that witnesses a mud slaad that is feigning death, including those creatures that watch it fall, can make a DC 22 Sense Motive check to determine if the slaad's death is genuine. A cursory check will not reveal that the slaad's death is feigned, and even a Heal or Search check isn't guaranteed to discover the deception, so adroit is the mud slaad at stilling its breathing and reducing its heart rate. A successful DC 22 check with either skill is required to reveal that the mud slaad still lives.

Sonic Screech (Su): Once per day a mud slaad can emit a tremendous screech. Every creature within 30 feet must succeed at a DC 15 Fortitude save or take 5d6 points of sonic damage.

Summon Slaad (Sp): Once per day, a mud slaad can attempt to summon one mud slaad with a 40% chance of success, or one red slaad with a 20% chance of success.

Muggo, male hill giant: CR 7; Large giant; HD 12d8+48; hp 111; Init –1; Spd 30 ft. in hide armor; AC 20, touch 8, flat-footed 20; Base Atk +9; Grp +22; Atk +18 melee (2d8+14, greatclub) or +17 melee (1d4+9, slam) or +8 ranged (1d6+9, rock); Full Atk +18/+13 melee (2d8+14, greatclub) or +17 melee (1d4+9, 2 slams) or +8 ranged (1d6+9, rock); SA rock throwing; SQ low-light vision, rock catching; AL CE; SV Fort +12, Ref +3, Will +3; Str 29, Dex 8, Con 19, Int 6, Wis 8, Cha 7.

Skills: Climb +9, Jump +9, Listen +3, Spot +6.

Feats: Cleave, Improved Bull Rush, Improved Sunder, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (greatclub).

Possessions: Hide armor, greatclub.

Myaruk, male human lich cleric (Vecna) 7/thaumaturgist 4: CR 13; Medium undead (augmented humanoid); HD 11d12; hp 71; Init +1; Spd 30 ft.; AC 25, touch 11, flat-footed 24; Base Atk +7; Grp +8; Atk +8 melee touch (1d8+5 negative energy plus paralysis, Will DC 16 half); Full Atk +8 melee touch (1d8+5 negative energy plus paralysis, Will DC 16 half); SA fear aura (DC 16), paralyzing touch, spells; SQ +4 turn resistance, contingent conjuration, damage reduction 15/bludgeoning and magic, extended summoning, immunity to cold, electricity, polymorph, and mind-affecting attacks, improved ally; AL CE; SV Fort +6, Ref +4, Will +15; Str 13, Dex 12, Con —, Int 16, Wis 22, Cha 13.

Skills: Concentration +14, Diplomacy +17, Hide +9, Knowledge (arcana) +13, Knowledge (religion) +17, Knowledge (the planes) +17, Listen +14, Move Silently +9, Search +11, Sense Motive +18, Spellcraft +19, Spot +14.

Feats: Augment Summoning, Craft Wondrous Item, Spell Focus (conjuration), Spell Focus (necromancy), Spell Penetration.

Contingent Conjuration: The first time Myaruk is attacked in melee, a xill (*Monster Manual* 259) is automatically summoned, appearing at the beginning of the next turn from the attacking creature.

Cleric Spells Prepared (caster level 11th): 0—*detect magic* (2), *mending, read magic, resistance, virtue*; 1st—*bless* (2), *comprehend languages, deathwatch, detect evil, entropic shield, protection from good*[D], *shield of faith*; 2nd—*aid, darkness, death knell* (DC 19), *desecrate*[D], *hold person* (DC 18), *silence* (DC 18), *spiritual weapon*; 3rd—*clairaudience/clairvoyance*[D], *deeper darkness, dispel magic, protection from energy, summon monster III* (2); 4th—*dismissal* (DC 20), *divine power, summon monster IV* (2), *unholy blight*[D] (DC 20); 5th—*slay living* (DC 22), *summon monster V* (2), *true seeing*[D]; 6th—*find the path*[D], *harm* (DC 23), *summon monster VI.*

D: Domain spell. Domains: Evil (cast evil spells at +1 caster level), Knowledge (cast divination spells at +1 caster level; all Knowledge skills are class skills.

Possessions: *+1 full plate, periapt of Wisdom +2, potion of invisibility, wand of inflict serious wounds* (13 charges remaining), scroll of *plane shift*, four vials of unholy water, silver dust (worth 100 gp), 250 gp ointment for *true seeing* spell.

Nabthatoron, Lord of the Demonskar, elite male glabrezu: CR 14; Huge outsider (chaotic, evil, native, tanar'ri); HD 12d8+120; hp 174; Init +2; Spd 40 ft.; AC 32, touch 10, flat-footed 30; Base Atk +12; Grp +31; Atk +22 melee (2d8+11, pincer); Full Atk +22 melee (2d8+11, 2 pincers) and 2 claws +20 melee (1d6+5) and bite +20 melee (1d8+5); Space/Reach 15 ft./15 ft.; SA improved grab, spell-like abilities; SQ damage reduction 10/good, darkvision 60 ft., immunity to electricity and poison, resistance to acid 10, cold 10, and fire 10, spell resistance 21, telepathy 100 ft., true seeing; AL CE; SV Fort +18, Ref +10, Will +10; Str 33, Dex 14, Con 31, Int 19, Wis 14, Cha 25.

Skills: Bluff +22, Concentration +25, Diplomacy +11, Intimidate +24, Knowledge (arcana) +19, Knowledge (history) +19, Knowledge (the planes) +19, Listen +17, Move Silently +17, Search +19, Sense Motive +17, Spellcraft +21, Spot +17.

Feats: Combat Expertise, Combat Reflexes, Improved Trip, Multiattack, Power Attack.

Languages: Abyssal, Celestial, Common, Draconic, Terran.

Spell-Like Abilities (caster level 14th): At will—*chaos hammer* (DC 21), *confusion* (DC 21), *dispel magic, mirror image, reverse gravity* (DC 24), *greater teleport* (self plus 50 pounds of objects only), *unholy blight* (DC 19); 1/day—*power word stun*; 1/month—*wish* (granted to mortal humanoid).

Exiled (Ex): As long as Nabthatoron remains exiled, he loses the extraplanar subtype and gains the native subtype on the Material Plane. He cannot be banished, dismissed, or otherwise forced to leave this plane. Likewise, he cannot voluntarily choose to leave this plane with a spell like *plane shift*. Teleport spells, although technically allowing for instantaneous travel to the astral plane, still function for Nabthatoron. As long as he's exiled, Nabthatoron cannot use *summon tanar'ri*.

Possessions: *Amulet of mighty fists +1, ring of force shield.*

Nidrama, fallen movanic deva, fighter 6: CR 16; Medium outsider (extraplanar, good); HD 6d8+24 plus 6d10+24; hp 108; Init +7; Spd 40 ft., fly 90 ft. (good); AC 23, touch 15, flat-footed 20; Base Atk +12; Grp +17; Atk +19 melee (2d6+10 plus 1d6 fire, *+1 flaming burst greatsword*); Full Atk +19/+14/+9 melee (2d6+10 plus 1d6 fire, *+1 flaming burst greatsword*); SA spell-like abilities; SQ celestial traits, damage reduction 10/evil, darkvision 60 ft., divine equilibrium, fire resistance 20, heavenly deflection, immune to acid, immune to cold, immune to electricity, soothing presence of nature, spell resistance 19; AL CG; SV Fort +14, Ref +10, Will +13; Str 20, Dex 16, Con 18, Int 17, Wis 19, Cha 24; *Fiend Folio* 57.

Skills: Balance +14, Concentration +13, Diplomacy +18, Handle Animal +19, Intimidate +20, Jump +7, Knowledge (history) +13, Knowledge (religion) +13, Knowledge (the planes) +13, Listen +13, Sense Motive +13, Spellcraft +12, Spot +13, Tumble +9.

Feats: Cleave, Improved Critical (greatsword), Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Power Attack, Practiced Magic, Quicken Spell-Like Ability (bless weapon), Weapon Focus (greatsword), Weapon Specialization (greatsword).

Languages: Celestial, Common, Draconic, Infernal.

Spell-Like Abilities (caster level 12th): At will—*aid, continual flame, create food and water, death ward, detect evil, discern lies* (DC 21), *polymorph, prayer, protection from arrows*; 3/day—quickened *bless weapon, cure serious wounds, daylight, divination, ethereal jaunt, neutralize poison, plane shift* (DC 22), *remove curse, remove disease, remove fear*; 1/day—*raise dead*.

Divine Equilibrium (Ex): Nidrama is immune to the effect of negative or positive planar energy traits.

Heavenly Deflection (Su): Once per round, Nidrama can deflect ranged attacks, rays or single target spells with her *+1 flaming burst greatsword*. To do this, she must succeed in a Reflex save (DC 20 plus enhancement bonus of the attack or spell level).

Soothing Presence of Nature (Ex): Animals and plants may attack Nidrama only if magically compelled.

Possessions: *+1 flaming burst greatsword, ring of protection +2, boots of teleportation.*

Nulin "Fish" Wiejeron, male human rogue 5/fighter 2/assassin 8: CR 15; Medium humanoid (human); HD 13d6+12 plus 2d10+2; hp 82; Init +4; Spd 40 ft.; AC 25, touch 16, flat-footed 21; Base Atk +11; Grp +13; Atk +19 melee (1d6+5/15–20, *+3 rapier*) or +15 ranged (1d6+2/×3, composite shortbow [+2 Str]); Full Atk +19/+14/+9 melee (1d6+5/15–20, *+3 rapier*) or +15/+10/+5 ranged (1d6+2/×3, composite shortbow [+2 Str]); SA death attack (DC 20), poison use, sneak attack +7d6, spells; SQ evasion, hide in plain sight, improved uncanny dodge, trap sense +1, trap-finding; AL NE; SV Fort +9 (+13 against poison), Ref +14, Will +5; Str 14, Dex 18, Con 12, Int 14, Wis 10, Cha 12.

Skills: Balance +6, Bluff +13, Climb +5, Diplomacy +3, Disguise +19 (+21 acting), Escape Artist +11, Gather Information +13, Hide +26, Intimidate +11, Jump +11, Listen +12, Move Silently +26, Search +11, Spot +12, Tumble +18.

Feats: Dodge, Combat Reflexes, Great Fortitude, Improved Critical (rapier), Iron Will, Mobility, Spring Attack, Weapon Finesse, Weapon Focus (rapier).

Languages: Abyssal, Common, Demodand.

Assassin Spells Known (4/4/3/1; caster level 8th): 1st—*detect poison, feather fall, jump, true strike*; 2nd—*alter self, invisibility, spider climb, undetectable alignment*; 3rd—*deep slumber* (DC 15), *deeper darkness, magic circle against good, misdirection*; 4th—*dimension door, greater invisibility, locate creature.*

Possessions: *+3 shadow silent chain shirt, +1 mithral buckler, +3 rapier,* composite shortbow (+2 Str bonus), 30 arrows, *amulet of health +2, gloves of Dexterity +2, boots of striding and springing, goggles of night, hat of disguise, Ring of Thirteen, 2 potions of cure serious wounds, potion of haste, wand of displacement* (10 charges), 2 gems (500 gp each), 3 gems (100 gp each).

Orak Stonehaven, male dwarf fighter 4: CR 4; Medium humanoid; HD 4d10+12; hp 35; Init +1; Spd 20 ft.;

AC 11, touch 11, flat-footed 10; Base Atk +4; Grp +6; Atk or Full Atk +6 melee (1d6+2/3, handaxe); SA —; SQ darkvision 60 ft., dwarf traits; AL LN; SV Fort +7 (+9 against poison), Ref +2, Will +2; Str 14, Dex 13, Con 17, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 6.

Skills: Intimidate +4, Listen +3, Spot +3.

Feats: Dodge, Mobility, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (dwarven waraxe), Weapon Specialization (dwarven waraxe).

Languages: Common, Dwarven, Orc.

Possessions: Handaxe, eye patch set with a small ruby worth 200 gp.

Orgo Blacksword, male fiendish half-orc fighter 9: CR 11; Medium humanoid (orc); HD 9d10+18; hp 67; Init +1; Spd 20 ft.; AC 20, touch 11, flat-footed 19; Base Atk +9, Grp +14; Atk +17 melee (1d12+10/19–20/×3, *+1 greataxe*); Full Atk +17/+12 melee (1d12+10/19–20/×3, *+1 greataxe*); SA smite good 1/day (+9 melee damage); SQ damage reduction 10/magic, resistance to cold and fire 10, SR 14; AL LE; Fort +8, Ref +6, Will +6; Str 21, Dex 13, Con 14, Int 8, Wis 12, Cha 6.

Skills: Climb +12.

Feats: Cleave, Great Cleave, Greater Weapon Focus (greataxe), Improved Critical (greataxe), Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (greataxe), Weapon Specialization (greataxe).

Languages: Infernal, Orc.

Possessions: *+1 full plate, +1 greataxe, gauntlets of ogre power, amulet of natural armor +1, potion of cure serious wounds*, 250 gp.

Patch, male half-orc commoner 1/rogue 1: CR 1; Medium humanoid; HD 1d4 plus 1d6; hp 7; Init +2; Spd 30 ft.; AC 12, touch 12, flat-footed 10; Base Atk +0; Grp +3; Atk or Full Atk +3 melee (1d4+3/19–20, dagger); SA sneak attack +1d6; SQ darkvision 60 ft., trapfinding; AL N; Fort +0, Ref +4, Will –1; Str 16, Dex 15, Con 10, Int 10, Wis 8, Cha 11.

Skills: Hide +4, Listen +0, Move Silently +4, Open Lock +4, Profession +1, Spot +0.

Feat: Dodge.

Languages: Common, Orc.

Possessions: Dagger, small leather sack* (containing 45 gp, 72 sp, 90 cp, and a set of masterwork thieves' tools given to him by Revus Twindaggers).

*This item is hidden in Patch's room in the Lantern Street Orphanage and requires a successful DC 15 Search check to find.

Phiuhl: CR 11; Large aberration (extraplanar); HD 9d8+36; hp 76; Init +9; Spd 40 ft., fly 30 ft. (perfect); AC 16, touch 14, flat-footed 11; Base Atk +6; Grp +10; Atk +6 melee (1d10 fire, heat touch); Full Atk +6 melee (1d10 fire, 2 heat touches); Space/Reach 10 ft./10 ft.; SA death gas, desiccate, heat aura; SQ damage reduction 10/magic, darkvision 60 ft., gaseous form, immune to acid, fire, and poison, inscrutable mind, resistance to electricity 20, spell resistance 21; AL NE; SV Fort +7, Ref +8, Will +6; Str 11, Dex 20, Con 19, Int 10, Wis 11, Cha 10; *Fiend Folio* 135.

Skills: Hide +9, Move Silently +13, Spot +8.

Feats: Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Improved Initiative, Weapon Focus (heat touch).

Language: Phiuhl.

Death Gas (Ex): Any creature susceptible to poison within 50 feet must make a DC 18 Fortitude save or take 1d10 Constitution damage immediately and another 1d10 Constitution damage 1 minute later (unless another DC 18 Fortitude save is made). Those who save against the death gas are immune to that phiuhl's gas for one day.

Desiccate (Su): Any character in a square occupied by a phiuhl at the end of the phiuhl's turn must make a DC 18 Fortitude save or gain two negative levels. The saving throw to remove one of these negative levels is DC 18.

Heat Aura (Ex): Anyone within 30 feet of a phiuhl must make a DC 18 Fortitude save or take 1d6 fire damage.

Gaseous Form (Ex): Immune to critical hits and sneak attack damage. A phiuhl cannot run, but it can fly (slowly) and is subject to winds. It cannot wear armor, manipulate solid objects, or enter water or other liquids. It can pass through small holes or narrow openings, and can occupy squares occupied by enemies.

Inscrutable Mind (Ex): Any creature attempting to establish a telepathic link with a phiuhl must make a DC 14 Will save or suffer the effects of *feeblemind* (caster level 9th).

Prickles, juvenile howler: CR 2; Medium outsider (chaotic, evil, extraplanar); HD 4d8+4; hp 29; Init +7; Spd 60 ft.; AC 18, touch 13, flat-footed 15; Base Atk +4; Grp +12; Atk +8 melee (2d6+4, bite); Full Atk +8 melee (2d6+4, bite) and +3 melee (1d4+2, 1d4 quills); Space/Reach 5 ft./5 ft.; SA quills, howl; SQ darkvision 60 ft.; AL CE; SV Fort +5, Ref +7, Will +6; Str 19, Dex 17, Con 13, Int 6, Wis 14, Cha 8.

Skills: Climb +11, Hide +10, Listen +11, Move Silently +10, Search +5, Spot +11.

Feats: Alertness, Improved Initiative.

Pyllrak Shyraat, male durzagon: CR 4; Medium outside (evil, lawful); HD 5d8+10; hp 32; Init +6; Spd 30 ft.; AC 13, touch 12, flat-footed 11; Base Atk +5; Grp +7; Atk +7 melee (1d6+2, claw); Full Atk +7 melee (1d6+2, 2 claws) and +2 melee (1d6+1, bite) and +2 melee (1d3+1 plus poison, beard); SA beard, poison, spell-like abilities; SQ damage reduction 5/magic, darkvision 120 ft., duergar traits, immune to paralysis, phantasms, and poison, light sensitivity, outsider traits, resistant to acid 10, cold 10, electricity 10, and fire 10, spell resistance 15; AL LE; SV Fort +6, Ref +6, Will +4; Str 15, Dex 14, Con 15, Int 14, Wis 11, Cha 8; *Monster Manual II* 124.

Skills: Appraise +10, Bluff +7, Craft (metalworking) +10, Craft (stoneworking) +10, Diplomacy +11, Intimidate +1, Listen +11, Move Silently +14, Search +10, Sense Motive +8, Spot +11.

Feats: Alertness[B], Improved Initiative, Power Attack.

Beard (Ex): If a durzagon hits a single opponent with both claw attacks, it automatically hits with its beard as well.

Poison (Ex): DC 14 Fortitude save, initial 1d4 Strength damage, secondary 1d2 points Strength drain.

Spell-Like Abilities (Sp): 3/day—*darkness*; 1/day—*desecrate, enlarge person* (self only), *invisibility, unholy blight* (DC 13). Caster level 10th.

Light Sensitivity (Ex): A durzagon is dazzled in bright sunlight or within the radius of a *daylight* spell.

Possessions: Small bone box containing 180 gp, *bag of holding* (Type 1) containing four torches, four tindertwigs, a 50-foot length of hemp rope, a *potion of cure moderate wounds*, and a *potion of alter self*.

Ruphus Laro, male human cleric 2 (St. Cuthbert): CR 2; Medium humanoid; HD 2d8; hp 12; Init –1; Spd 30 ft.; AC 13, touch 9, flat-footed 13; Base Atk +1; Grp +1; Atk or Full Atk +1 melee (1d8, heavy mace); SA spells, turn undead 3/day; SQ —; AL LN; SV Fort +3, Ref –1, Will +4; Str 11, Dex 9, Con 10, Int 11, Wis 13, Cha 11.

Skills: Concentration +5, Diplomacy +2, Heal +9, Knowledge (religion) +3.

Feats: Combat Casting, Skill Focus (heal).

Language: Common.

Cleric Spells Prepared (caster level 2): 0—*detect magic, guidance, light, resistance*; 1st—*bless, enlarge person*[D], *magic weapon, sanctuary*.

D: Domain spell. Domains: Law (cast law spells at +1 caster level), Strength (1/day gain +2 bonus to Str for 1 round).

Possessions: Chain shirt, heavy mace, cloak, clerical vestments, amulet (holy symbol of St. Cuthbert).

Saagogoi, male kuo-toa monk 3/assassin 3: CR 8; Medium monstrous humanoid (aquatic); HD 5d8+10 plus 3d6+6; hp 49; Init +3; Spd 30 ft., swim 50 ft.; AC 21, touch 15, flat-footed 21; Base Atk +6; Grp +7; Atk +9 melee (1d6+1, unarmed strike) or +10 melee (1d4+1 plus poison, dagger) or +10 ranged (1d4+1 plus poison, dagger); Full Atk +7/+7/+2 melee (1d6+1, unarmed strike) or +10/+5 melee (1d4+1 plus poison, dagger) or +10 ranged (1d4+1 plus poison, dagger); SA death attack (DC 15), sneak attack +2d6, stunning fist (DC 15); SQ evasion, still mind, uncanny dodge, amphibious, immunity to poison and paralysis, keen sight, light blindness, resistance to electricity 10, slippery; AL LE; SV Fort +5, Ref +12, Will +8; Str 13, Dex 17, Con 14, Int 16, Wis 14, Cha 6.

Skills: Disguise +2, Escape Artist +11, Hide +14, Jump +10, Listen +15, Move Silently +14, Search +7, Spot +19, Swim +9, Tumble +9.

Feats: Alertness, Blind-Fight, Combat Reflexes, Stunning Fist, Weapon Finesse, Weapon Focus (dagger).

Languages: Aquan, Kuo-Toa, Undercommon.

Assassin Spells Known (3/1; caster level 3rd): 1st—*feather fall, jump, true strike*; 2nd—*darkness, invisibility*.

Possessions: *Slippers of spider climbing*, 5 poisoned daggers (shadow essence; Fort DC 17; 1 Str drain/2d6 Str).

Salsinath, Ssythar Nahazir's snake familiar: CR —; Tiny viper; HD 17; hp 36; Init +7; Spd 15 ft., climb 15 ft., swim 15 ft.; AC 22, touch 15, flat-footed 19; Base Atk +12; Grp +1; Atk/Full Atk +17 melee (1 plus poison, bite); Space/Reach 2-1/2 ft./0 ft.; SA deliver touch spells, poison; SQ empathic link, improved evasion, scent, speak with snakes, speak with master; AL CE; SV Fort +5, Ref +11, Will +13; Str 4, Dex 17, Con 11, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 2.

Skills: Balance +11, Bluff +5, Climb +11, Concentration +16, Hide +15, Knowledge (arcana) +16, Knowledge (history) +16, Knowledge (religion) +6, Listen +13, Spellcraft +6, Spot +13, Swim +5, Use Magic Device +6.

Feat: Improved Initiative, Weapon Finesse[B].

Shator Demodand: CR 16; Large outsider (evil, extraplanar); HD 15d8+60; hp 127; Init +2; Spd 30 ft., fly 70 ft. (poor); AC 28, touch 15, flat-footed 26; Base Atk +15; Grp +25; Atk +22 melee (2d6+11, +2 *guisarme*) or +20 melee (1d6+6 plus paralysis, claw); Full Atk +22/+17/+12 melee (2d6+11, +2 *guisarme*) or +20 melee (1d6+6 plus paralysis, 2 claws) and +18 melee (2d6+3 plus paralysis, bite); Space/Reach 10 ft./10 ft. (20 ft. with +2 *guisarme*); SA paralyzing slime, spell-like abilities, spells, summon demodand; SQ darkvision 120 ft., damage reduction 15/good, freedom of movement, immune to acid, immune to cold, immune to fire, immune to mind-affecting effects, immune to poison, outsider traits, scent, see invisibility, spell resistance 30; AL NE; SV Fort +13, Ref +11, Will +12; Str 23, Dex 15, Con 18, Int 16, Wis 16, Cha 21; *Fiend Folio* 45.

Skills: Bluff +20, Concentration +19, Diplomacy +24, Disguise +20 (+22 acting), Gather Information +7, Hide +17, Intimidate +25, Knowledge (arcana) +18, Knowledge (local) +18, Knowledge (the planes) +18, Listen +20, Move Silently +17, Search +17, Sense Motive +21, Spot +20, Survival +3 (+5 following tracks or on other planes).

Feats: Alertness, Combat Expertise, Combat Reflexes, Improved Trip, Multiattack, Spell Penetration.

Languages: Abyssal, Common, Demodand, Infernal.

Paralyzing Slime (Ex): Fortitude save (DC 21) or become paralyzed for 3d6 rounds. A shator may spit a globule of slime as a +17 ranged touch attack with a range of 30 feet.

Spell-Like Abilities (caster level 15th): At will—*detect magic, clairaudience/clairvoyance, fear* (DC 19), *invisibility, spider climb, tongues*; 3/day—*cloudkill* (DC 20), *fog cloud, ray of enfeeblement* (+17 ranged touch), *stinking cloud* (DC 18); 2/day—*dispel magic*; 1/day—*mass charm monster* (DC 23).

Sorcerer Spells Known (6/8/7/6/4, caster level 8th; +17 ranged touch): 0—*dancing lights, daze* (DC 15), *flare* (DC 15), *ghost sound, read magic, mage hand, open/close, ray of frost*; 1st—*charm person* (DC 16), *mage armor, magic missile, obscuring mist, true strike*; 2nd—*bull's strength, detect thoughts* (DC 17), *Tasha's hideous laughter* (DC 17); 3rd—*blink, fireball* (DC 18); 4th—*confusion* (DC 19).

Summon Demodand (Sp): Once per day, a shator can attempt to summon 1d2 shators with a 30% chance of success, or either 1d4 kelubars or 1d6 farastus (shator's choice) with a 70% chance of success.

Shebeleth Regidin, male human cleric 10 (Adimarchus)/loremaster 7: CR 17; Medium humanoid (human); HD 10d8+40 plus 7d4+28; hp 120; Init +0; Spd 30 ft.; AC 25, touch 12, flat-footed 23; Base Atk +10; Grp +9; Atk +10 melee (1d8, +1 *morningstar*) or +11 ranged (1d8/19–20, masterwork light crossbow); Full Atk +10/+5 melee (1d8, +1 *morningstar*) or +11 ranged (1d8/19–20, masterwork light crossbow); SA rebuke undead, spells; SQ dodge trick, greater lore, lore +9, newfound arcana,

secrets of inner strength, secret knowledge of avoidance; AL NE; SV Fort +15, Ref +12, Will +22; Str 8, Dex 12, Con 18, Int 14, Wis 22, Cha 12.

Skills: Bluff +14, Concentration +24, Diplomacy +3, Disguise +12 (+14 acting), Gather Information +11, Intimidate +3, Knowledge (arcana) +15, Knowledge (history) +15, Knowledge (the planes) +16, Perform (string instruments) +11, Spellcraft +15.

Feats: Craft Magic Arms and Armor, Craft Wondrous Item, Empower Spell, Lightning Reflexes, Scribe Scroll, Skill Focus (Knowledge—the planes), Widen Spell.

Languages: Common, Abyssal, Demodand, Infernal.

Cleric Spells Prepared (caster level 17th): 0—*cure minor wounds, detect magic* (2), *light, read magic, resistance*; 1st—*bane* (DC 17), *cure light wounds* (2), *detect good, doom* (2, DC 17), *protection from good*[D], *shield of faith*; 2nd—*align weapon, cure moderate wounds* (2), *death knell* (DC 18), *invisibility*[D], *resist energy, status, undetectable alignment*; 3rd—*bestow curse, cure serious wounds, dispel magic, magic circle against good, nondetection*[D], *searing light* (2); 4th—*confusion*[D] (DC 20), *cure critical wounds* (2), *death ward, greater magic weapon, sending* (2); 5th—*break enchantment, dispel good*[D], *flame strike* (2, DC 21), empowered *searing light, spell resistance*; 6th—*blade barrier* (2, DC 22), *greater dispel magic, harm* (2, DC 22), *mislead*[D]; 7th—*blasphemy*[D], *destruction* (2, DC 23), empowered *flame strike* (DC 21); 8th—empowered *blade barrier* (DC 22), widened *flame strike* (DC 21), *polymorph any object*[D] (DC 24); 9th—*summon monster IX, time stop*[D].

*Domain spell. Domains: Evil (cast evil spells at +1 caster level), Trickery (Bluff, Disguise, Hide are class skills).

Possessions: *+3 mithral breastplate, +1 small wooden shield, +1 morningstar*, masterwork light crossbow, 20 bolts, *belt of health +4* (as *amulet of health +2*), *gloves of Dexterity +2, periapt of Wisdom +4, cloak of resistance +2, dusty rose prism ioun stone, ring of minor fire resistance, Ring of Thirteen, metamagic rod of empower, oil of magic vestment (+4), potion of fly*, scroll of *mass cure moderate wounds*, scroll of *dimensional anchor*, scroll of widened *flame strike*, scroll of *invisibility purge*, scroll of *plane shift*, holy symbol, three gems (100 pp each).

Silent Wolf Goblin: CR 3; Small humanoid (goblin); HD 3d6+3; hp 16; Init +3; Spd 30 ft.; AC 16, touch 14, flat-footed 13; Base Atk +2; Grp –1; Atk +4 melee (1d6+1/19–20, masterwork longsword) or +6 ranged (1d6/19–20, light crossbow); Full Atk +2 melee (1d6+1/19–20, masterwork longsword) and +2 melee (1d4/19–20, masterwork short sword) or +6 ranged (1d6/19–20, light crossbow); SA favored enemy (dwarves +2), sneak attack +1d6; SQ darkvision 60 ft., goblin traits, trapfinding, wild empathy +0; AL NE; SV Fort +4, Ref +8, Will +0; Str 12, Dex 17, Con 13, Int 12, Wis 10, Cha 6.

Skills: Balance +5, Hide +13, Jump +3, Listen +6, Move Silently +13, Ride +11, Search +6, Spot +6, Survival +5, Tumble +8.

Feats: Alertness, Dodge, Track[B], Two-Weapon Fighting[B].

Languages: Common, Goblin.

Possessions: Masterwork leather armor, masterwork longsword, masterwork short sword, light crossbow with 10 bolts, *potion of cure light wounds, potion of bull's strength, potion of cat's grace.*

Skaven Umbermead, male halfling wizard (diviner) 7: CR 7; Medium humanoid; HD 7d4+7; hp 26; Init +2; Spd 20 ft.; AC 14 (17 with *mage armor*), touch 13, flat-footed 12 (15 with *mage armor*); Base Atk +3; Grp –3; Atk or Full Atk +3 melee (1d4–2, masterwork dagger); SA spells; SQ cat familiar (named Pywakit), halfling traits; AL NE; SV Fort +4, Ref +5, Will +8; Str 6, Dex 14, Con 13, Int 18, Wis 14, Cha 10.

Skills: Climb +0, Concentration +11, Craft (metalworking) +14, Hide +6, Knowledge (arcana) +17, Jump –6, Knowledge (religion) +14, Listen +6, Move Silently +9, Spellcraft +14, Spot +4.

Feats: Alertness (as long as Pywakit is within arm's reach), Combat Expertise, Craft Wondrous Item[B], Scribe Scroll[B], Skill Focus (Knowledge—arcana), Spell Focus (evocation).

Languages: Abyssal, Common, Draconic, Elven, Gnoll, Halfling.

Wizard Spells Prepared (caster level 7, +3 melee touch, +6 ranged touch, prohibited schools enchantment): 0—*detect poison, ghost sound* (DC 14), *mage hand, prestidigitation*; 1st—*burning hands* (DC 16), *chill touch* (DC 15), *comprehend languages, hold portal, magic missile, true strike*; 2nd—*detect thoughts* (DC 16), *ghoul touch, invisibility, scorching ray, see invisibility*; 3rd—*clairaudience/clairvoyance, displacement, lightning bolt* (DC 18), *vampiric touch*; 4th—*arcane eye, phantasmal killer* (DC 18), *shout* (DC 19).

Spellbook: Skaven's spellbook contains all the spells he has prepared, plus the following: 0—all cantrips (except *daze*); 1st—*alarm, arcane lock, detect secret doors, detect undead, identify, mage armor, silent image, unseen servant*; 2nd—*arcane lock, blindness/deafness, blur, locate object, scare, spider climb, summon monster II, whispering wind*; 3rd—*dispel magic, gentle repose, sepia snake sigil, tongues, water breathing*; 4th—*fear, locate creature, scrying.*

Possessions: Masterwork dagger, *bracers of armor +1, goggles of minute seeing, slippers of spider climbing, pearl of power* (1st level), *wand of mage armor* (40 charges), *wand of control water* (50 charges), *potion of cure moderate wounds, potion of gaseous form*, six *elixirs of hiding*, leather pouch containing 58 gp and 4 pp, key ring (contains keys to the winches at areas **K3** and **K11**, the key to area **K20**, and keys to areas **K24** and **K25**).

Skulk: CR 2; Medium humanoid (skulk); HD 2d8; hp 9; Init +2; Spd 30 ft.; AC 12, touch 12, flat-footed 10; Base Atk +1; Grp +1; Atk or Full Atk +3 melee (1d6/18–20, rapier) or +3 ranged (1d8/19–20, light crossbow); SA —; SQ innate nondetection, peerless camouflage, trackless path; AL CE; SV Fort +0, Ref +5, Will –1; Str 11, Dex 14, Con 11, Int 11, Wis 8, Cha 6; *Fiend Folio* 154.

Skills: Hide +22, Move Silently +14.

Feats: Stealthy, Weapon Finesse[B].

Language: Common, Undercommon.

Innate Nondetection (Su): Skulks are difficult to detect using divination spells such as *clairaudience/clairvoyance*,

locate creature, detection spells, and items such as *crystal balls*. If a divination is attempted upon a skulk, the caster of the divination must succeed at a caster level check (1d20 + caster level) against DC 20.

Peerless Camouflage (Ex): Skulks can move at full speed (and can even run) while hiding, suffering no penalties on Hide checks due to movement.

Trackless Path (Ex): The DCs of any Survival check to follow the trail of a skulk is increased by 10.

Possessions: Rapier, light crossbow with 20 bolts, 2 thunderstones, dark cloak.

Skulvyn: CR 4; Large Outsider (aquatic, chaotic, evil, extraplanar); HD 4d8+8; hp 26; Init +3; Spd 10 ft., swim 50 ft.; AC 18, touch 12, flat-footed 15; Base Atk +4; Grp +12; Atk +7 melee (1d4+4 plus wounding, tail lash); Full Atk +7 melee (1d4+4, 4 tail lashes) and bite +5 melee (1d8+2, bite) and +5 melee (1d6+2, 2 claws); Space/Reach 10 ft./10 ft.; SA slow aura, wounding; SQ damage reduction 5/good, darkvision 60 ft., scent, spell resistance 12; AL CE; SV Fort +6, Ref +7, Will +3; Str 18, Dex 16, Con 15, Int 5, Wis 8, Cha 11; *Fiend Folio* 54.

Skills: Hide –1 (+7 in water), Listen +6, Move Silently +10, Spot +6, Swim +19.

Feats: Combat Reflexes, Multiattack.

Languages: Abyssal.

Slow Aura (Su): Living creatures that come within 30 feet of a skulvyn must succeed at a DC 12 Will save or become *slowed* for 4 rounds; a creature that makes this save is immune to the skulvyn's aura for 24 hours.

Wounding (Ex): Wounds resulting form a skulvyn's tail lash attacks bleed for an additional 1 point of damage per round thereafter. Multiple wounds from such attacks result in cumulative bleeding loss; the bleeding can only be stopped by a successful DC 15 Heal check or the application of any healing spell.

Skylar Krewis, male human fighter 4: CR 4; Medium humanoid; HD 4d10+8; hp 30; Init +1; Spd 30 ft.; AC 17, touch 11, flat-footed 16; Base Atk +4; Grp +6; Atk or Full Atk +8 melee (1d8+5/19-20, *+1 longsword*); AL LG; SV Fort +6, Ref +4, Will +1; Str 15, Dex 12, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 11, Cha 10.

Skills: Climb +8, Jump +6, Ride +7, Swim +6.

Feats: Cleave, Endurance, Lightning Reflexes, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (longsword), Weapon Specialization (longsword).

Language: Common.

Possessions: *+1 longsword*, dagger, breastplate, buckler, two *potions of cure light wounds*, *potion of sanctuary* (CL 3rd), two *potions of cure moderate wounds*, 7 gp in pouch.

Slouva, fiendish annis barbarian 11: CR 19; Large monstrous humanoid; HD 7d8+21 plus 11d12+33; hp 173; Init +1; Spd 50 ft.; AC 30, touch 10, flat-footed 29; Base Atk +18; Grp +30; Atk +27 melee (1d8+10, claw); Full Atk +27 melee (1d8+10, 2 claws) and +25 melee (1d6+6, bite); Space/Reach 10 ft./10 ft.; SA greater rage 3/day, improved grab, rake +27 melee (1d6+10), rend 2d6+14, smite good 1/day (+18 damage), spell-like abilities; SQ damage reduction 2/—, damage reduction 10/magic, darkvision 60 ft., fast movement, improved uncanny dodge, resistance to cold 10 and fire 10, spell resistance 23, trap sense +3; AL CE; SV Fort +14, Ref +11, Will +9; Str 26, Dex 12, Con 16, Int 13, Wis 13, Cha 10.

Skills: Climb +19, Bluff +8, Diplomacy +2, Disguise +0 (+2 acting), Hide +5, Intimidate +13, Jump +19, Listen +21, Spot +21.

Feats: Alertness, Blind-Fight, Great Fortitude, Improved Natural Armor, Improved Natural Attack (claw), Lightning Reflexes, Multiattack.

Languages: Abyssal, Common, Giant.

Greater Rage (Ex): Slouva can fly into a rage three times per day. While raging, her statistics are as follows: hp 227; AC 28, touch 8, flat-footed 27; Grp +33; Atk +30 melee (1d8+13, claw); Full Atk +30 melee (1d8+13, 2 claws) and +28 melee (1d6+7, bite); SA rake +30 melee (1d6+13), rend 2d6+18; SV Fort +17, Will +11; Str 32, Con 22.

Spell-Like Abilities (caster level 8th): 3/day—*disguise self*, *fog cloud*.

Possessions: *+4 mithral breastplate*, *amulet of mighty fists +2*, *chime of opening* (43 charges), *black jug* (command word "urvalak"), cold iron ladle (can be wielded as a cold iron club).

Spawn of Kyuss: CR 5; Medium undead; HD 4d12+3; hp 29; Init –1; Spd 30 ft.; AC 11, touch 9, flat-footed 11; Base Atk +2; Grp +6; Atk or Full Atk +6 melee (1d6+6 and Kyuss's gift, slam) or +1 ranged touch (Kyuss's gift); SA create spawn, fear aura, Kyuss's gift; SQ curative transformation, fast healing 5, turn resistance +2, undead traits; AL CE; SV Fort +1, Ref +0, Will +4; Str 18, Dex 9, Con —, Int 6, Wis 11, Cha 15; *Monster Manual II* 186.

Skills: Hide +5, Jump +7, Move Silently +5, Spot +3.

Feats: Stealthy, Toughness.

Create Spawn (Su): Once per round as a free action, a spawn of Kyuss can transfer a worm from its own body to that of an opponent. It can do this whenever it hits with a slam attack, but it can also make the transfer by means of a successful melee touch attack or ranged touch attack, hurling a worm at a foe from a distance of up to 10 feet. Each worm is a Fine vermin with an AC of 10 and 1 hit point. It can be killed with normal damage or by the touch of silver. On the spawn's next action, the worm burrows into its host's flesh. (A creature with a natural armor bonus of +5 or higher is immune to this burrowing effect.) The worm makes its way toward the host's brain, dealing 1 point of damage per round for 1d4+1 rounds. At the end of that period, it reaches that brain. While the worm is inside a victim, a *remove curse* or *remove disease* effect destroys it, and a *dispel evil* or *neutralize poison* effect delays its progress for 10d6 minutes. A successful DC 20 Heal check extracts the worm and kills it. Once the worm reaches the brain, it deals 1d2 points of Intelligence damage per round until it either is killed (by *remove curse* or *remove disease*) or slays its host (death occurs at 0 Intelligence). A Small, Medium, or Large creature slain by a worm rises as a new spawn of Kyuss 1d6+4 rounds later; a Tiny or smaller creature quickly putrefies; and a Huge or

larger creature becomes a normal zombie of the appropriate size. Newly created spawn are not under the control of their parent, but they usually follow whatever spawn of Kyuss created them.

Fear Aura (Su): A spawn of Kyuss continuously radiates a fear effect. This ability functions like a *fear* spell (caster level 7th; Will save DC 14), except that it affects all creatures within a 40-foot radius. Any creature that makes a successful saving throw against the effect cannot be affected again by the fear aura of that spawn of Kyuss for 24 hours.

Kyuss's Gift (Su): Any creature hit by a spawn of Kyuss's slam attack must succeed at a DC 12 Fortitude save or contract a supernatural disease. The incubation period is 1 day, and the disease deals 1d6 point of Constitution damage and 1d4 points of Wisdom damage (see Disease in the DUNGEON MASTER'S *Guide*). These effects manifest as rotting flesh and dementia. An affected creature gets only half the benefits of natural and magical healing, though a *remove disease* removes the affliction.

Curative Transformation (Ex): One *remove curse* or *remove disease* effect, or a more powerful version of either of these effects, transforms a spawn of Kyuss into a normal zombie.

Spell Weaver Skeleton: CR 5; Medium undead; HD 10d12; hp 78 each; Init +8; Spd 30 ft.; AC 16, touch 14, flat-footed 12; Base Atk +6; Grp +5; Atk +5 melee (1d4–1, claw); Full Atk +5 melee (1d4–1, 4 claws); SQ damage reduction 5/bludgeoning, immunity to cold; AL NE; SV Fort +3, Ref +7, Will +7; Str 9, Dex 18, Con —, Int —, Wis 10, Cha 1.

Feat: Improved Initiative.

Ssythar Nahazir, male halfblood yuan-ti sorcerer 10: CR 12; Medium monstrous humanoid; HD 7d8+7 plus 10d4+10; hp 72 (86 with *false life* spell); Init +5; Spd 30 ft. (60 ft. with *expeditious retreat*); AC 29 (31 within 30 ft. of altar), touch 14 (16 within 30 ft. of altar), flat-footed 27 (29 within 30 ft. of altar); Base Atk +12; Grp +14; Atk +15 melee (1d6+2/18–20, masterwork scimitar) or +14 ranged (1d8+2/×3, masterwork composite longbow); Full Atk +15/+10/+5 melee (1d6+2/18–20, masterwork scimitar) and +9 melee (1d6+1 plus poison, bite) or +14/+9/+4 ranged (1d8+2/×3, masterwork composite longbow); SA poison (Fort DC 14, 1d6/1d6 Con), produce acid, spell-like abilities, spells; SQ alternate form, chameleon power, darkvision 60 ft., detect poison, immunity to possession and mind affecting effects when within 30 ft. of altar, scent, spell resistance 16 (spell resistance 25 against good when within 30 ft. of altar); AL CE; SV Fort +6 (+10 within 30 ft. of altar), Ref +10 (+14 within 30 ft. of altar), Will +16 (+20 within 30 ft. of altar); Str 15, Dex 14, Con 13, Int 18, Wis 18, Cha 22.

Skills: Bluff +17, Concentration +17, Diplomacy +8, Disguise +6 (+8 acting), Intimidate +8, Hide +12 (+22 when using chameleon power), Knowledge (arcana) +20, Knowledge (history) +19, Knowledge (religion) +14, Listen +16, Spellcraft +12, Spot +16, Use Magic Device +15 (+17 scrolls).

Feats: Alertness[B], Blind-Fight[B], Combat Expertise, Dodge, Empower Spell, Heighten Spell, Improved Initiative, Quicken Spell.

Languages: Common, Abyssal, Draconic, Elven, Giant, Infernal, Terran, Yuan-ti.

Spell-Like Abilities (caster level 8th): 3/day—*animal trance* (DC 18), *cause fear* (DC 17), *entangle* (DC 17); 1/day—*deeper darkness, neutralize poison* (DC 20), *suggestion* (DC 19).

Sorcerer Spells Known (6/7/6/7/6/4; caster level 10th; +14 ranged touch) save DC 14 + spell level): 0—*acid splash, daze* (DC 14), *detect magic, disrupt undead, ghost sound* (DC 14), *message, open/close, read magic, touch of fatigue* (DC 14); 1st—*disguise self, expeditious retreat, mage armor, magic missile, shield*; 2nd—*command undead, false life, see invisibility, scorching ray*; 3rd—*displacement, lightning bolt* (DC 17), *slow* (DC 17); 4th—*enervation, Evard's black tentacles*; 5th—*teleport*.

Possessions: Masterwork scimitar, masterwork composite longbow (+2 Str bonus), 20 arrows, empowered *wand of idiocy* (as per the empowered *touch of idiocy* spell; 12 charges), *wand of poison* (Fortitude DC 16 negates; 8 charges), *potion of barkskin (+3)*, scroll of *crushing despair*, scroll of *dominate person, cloak of Charisma +2, Ring of Thirteen*, silver cage pendant (15 gp), pouch of 10 pp.

Starbrow, Keygan's rat familiar: CR —; Tiny magical beast; HD 3; hp 8; Init +2; Spd 15 ft., climb 15 ft., swim 15 ft.; AC 14, touch 14, flat-footed 12; Base Atk +2; Grp –10; Atk or Full Atk +6 melee (1d3–4, bite); SA —; SQ low-light vision, scent, improved evasion, share spells, empathic link; AL LN; SV Fort +2, Ref +4, Will +6; Str 2, Dex 15, Con 10, Int 6, Wis 12, Cha 2.

Skills: Appraise +1, Balance +10, Climb +12, Disable Device +4, Hide +18, Knowledge (local) +1, Listen +8, Move Silently +10, Search +1, Spot +3, Swim +10.

Feats: Alertness, Weapon Finesse (bite)[B].

Languages: Common, Gnome, Undercommon.

Stone Spike: CR 2; Medium elemental (earth); HD 3d8+12; hp 25; Init –1; Spd 20 ft.; AC 18, touch 10, flat-footed 18; Base Atk +2; Grp +6; Atk +6 melee (1d8+4, slam); Full Atk +6 melee (1d8+4, 2 slams); SA —; SQ darkvision 60 ft., elemental traits; AL N; SV Fort +7, Ref +1, Will +1; Str 18, Dex 8, Con 19, Int 4, Wis 11, Cha 11; *Monster Manual II* 191.

Skills: Listen +6, Spot +4.

Feats: Alertness, Power Attack.

Languages: Dwarven, Terran.

Street Thug, human warrior 2: CR 1; Medium Humanoid; HD 2d8+2 plus 3; hp 14; Init +0; Spd 30 ft.; AC 11, touch 10, flat-footed 11; Base Atk +1; Grp +2; Atk or Full Atk +2 melee (1d6+1/19–20, short sword); SA —; SQ —; AL CN; SV Fort +4, Ref +0, Will –1; Str 13, Dex 10, Con 12, Int 9, Wis 9, Cha 9.

Skills: Climb +3, Intimidate +2.

Feats: Quick Draw, Toughness.

Language: Common.

Possessions: Short sword, padded armor, pouch containing 1d6 sp and 2d6 cp.

Stygian Marauders, tiefling fighter 2/rogue 10 (6): CR 13; Medium outsider (native); HD 2d10+2 plus

10d6+10; hp 72 each; Init +8; Spd 30 ft.; AC 20, touch 14, flat-footed 16; Base Atk +9; Grp +11; Atk +12 melee (1d8+3/19–20, *+1 longsword*) or +14 ranged (1d8+1/×3, masterwork longbow with *+1 dementia arrow*); Full Atk +12/+7 melee (1d8+3/19–20, *+1 longsword*) or +14/+9 ranged (1d8+1/×3, masterwork longbow with *+1 dementia arrow*); SA *darkness* 1/day, sneak attack +5d6; SQ darkvision 60 ft., improved evasion, improved uncanny dodge, resistance to cold 5, resistance to electricity 5, resistance to fire 5, trap sense +3, trapfinding; AL CE; Fort +7, Ref +11, Will +2; Str 15, Dex 18, Con 13, Int 12, Wis 8, Cha 10.

Skills: Balance +6, Bluff +12, Climb +7, Diplomacy +2, Disguise +10 (+12 acting in character), Hide +16, Intimidate +17, Jump +4, Listen +9, Ride +19, Spot +9, Tumble +14.

Feats: Improved Initiative, Mounted Archery, Mounted Combat, Quick Draw, Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Ride-By Attack.

Languages: Abyssal, Common, Infernal.

Possessions: *+1 studded leather armor, +1 light steel shield, +1 longsword*, masterwork longbow, 20 *dementia arrows*, tanglefoot bag, *potion of cure moderate wounds, potion of neutralize poison.*

Tarkilar, male gnoll huecuva cleric 4: CR 7; Medium undead; HD 6d12+3; hp 42; Init +0; Spd 20 ft.; AC 21, touch 10, flat-footed 21; Base Atk +4; Grp +9; Atk or Full Atk +10 melee (2d4+8, *+1 spiked chain*); SA huecuva blight, spells, rebuke/command undead,; SQ darkvision 60 ft., turn resistance +2, damage reduction 10/silver, divine conversion; AL CE; SV Fort +7, Ref +1, Will +7; Str 20, Dex 10, Con —, Int 7, Wis 17, Cha 13.

Skills: Knowledge (arcana) +0, Knowledge (religion) +0, Listen +5, Spot +6.

Feats: Craft Wondrous Item, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (spiked chain), Toughness.

Languages: Gnoll

Divine Conversion: A cleric who becomes a huecuva loses access to the domains he had in life and replaces them with the Death and Evil domains.

Huecuva Blight (Su): Victims hit with a successful attack must succeed at a DC 14 Fortitude save or fall prey to the huecuva blight. The incubation period is one day, and it immediately causes 1d2 points of temporary Strength and temporary Constitution damage after the incubation period. An infected victim must make a saving throw each day or take another 1d2 points of temporary Strength and temporary Constitution damage. The effects of huecuva blight are cumulative each day until the victim reaches 0 Constitution (and dies), makes two consecutive successful saves, or receives magical treatment (such as a *remove disease* spell).

Cleric Spells Prepared (caster level 4): 0—*detect magic* (2), *guidance, read magic, resistance*; 1st—*cause fear*[D] (DC 14), *doom* (DC 14), *divine favor, entropic shield, obscuring mist*; 2nd—*desecrate*[D], *bull's Strength, hold person* (DC 15), *silence* (DC 15).

*Domain Spell. Domains: Death (death touch 1/day, damage 4d6), Evil (cast evil spells at +1 caster level).

Possessions: *+1 spiked chain* (wired directly to his arms—removal takes 10 minutes and Tarkilar cannot be disarmed), *+1 chainmail* (wired directly to his flesh and bones—removing it takes 1 hour of work), *wand of inflict moderate wounds* (35 charges), garnet-studded gold holy symbol of Erythnul (425 gp).

Tarterian Gauth: CR 8; Medium aberration; HD 6d8+18; hp 45; Init +6; Spd 5 ft., fly 20 ft. (good); AC 19, touch 12, flat-footed 17; Base Atk +4; Grp +4; Atk or Full Atk +6 ranged touch (eye rays) and –1 melee (1d6, bite); SA adhesive slime, eye rays (DC 15), rage 3/day, spell-like abilities, stunning gaze; SQ all-around vision, darkvision 60 ft., flight, freedom of movement, immune to acid and poison, resistance to cold 5 and fire 5, scent; AL LE; SV Fort +5, Ref +4, Will +9; Str 10, Dex 14, Con 16, Int 15, Wis 15, Cha 15; see Appendix 1.

Skills: Hide +11, Knowledge (arcana) +11, Listen +4, Search +15, Spot +17.

Feats: Alertness[B], Flyby Attack, Improved Initiative, Iron Will.

Languages: Beholder, Common.

Rage (Ex): hp 57; AC 17, touch 10, flat-footed 15; Grp +6; Atk or Full Atk +6 ranged touch (eye rays) and +1 melee (1d6+2, bite); SV Fort +7, Will +11; Str 14, Con 20.

Spell-Like Abilities (caster level 11th): At will—*detect magic, clairaudience/clairvoyance, fear* (DC 16), *invisibility, tongues*; 3/day—*fog cloud, ray of enfeeblement*; 2/day—*dispel magic.*

Thearynn Louvel, male human conjurer 15: CR 15; Medium humanoid; HD 15d4+45; hp 68; Init +5; Spd 30 ft.; AC 13, touch 13, flat-footed 12; Base Atk +7; Grp +7; Atk +8 melee (1d6, masterwork quarterstaff) or +8 ranged touch (spell); Full Atk +8/+3 melee (1d6, masterwork quarterstaff) or +8 ranged touch (spell); SA spells; SQ empathic link, share spells, weasel familiar; AL NE; SV Fort +10, Ref +10, Will +8; Str 10, Dex 12, Con 16, Int 20, Wis 8, Cha 13.

Skills: Concentration +21, Decipher Script +14, Knowledge (arcana) +23, Knowledge (dungeoneering) +18, Knowledge (history) +18, Knowledge (the planes) +22, Listen +1, Spellcraft +25, Spot +1.

Feats: Alertness (as long as familiar is in arm's reach), Augment Summoning, Craft Rod, Craft Wand, Dodge, Great Fortitude, Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes, Scribe Scroll, Silent Spell, Spell Focus (conjuration), Spell Focus (illusion).

Wizard Spells Prepared (caster level 15th; prohibited schools evocation and necromancy; +9 ranged touch): 0—*acid splash* (2), *detect magic, open/close, prestidigitation*; 1st—*charm person* (DC 16), *expeditious retreat, grease* (DC 17), *mage armor, shield* (2), *ventriloquism*; 2nd—*darkvision, Melf's acid arrow* (2), *mirror image, see invisibility, Tasha's hideous laughter* (DC 17); 3rd—*dispel magic, displacement, fly, protection from energy, slow* (DC 18), *stinking cloud* (DC 19); 4th—*charm monster* (DC 19), *dimension door, Evard's black tentacles* (2), *greater invisibility, phantasmal killer* (DC 20); 5th—*baleful polymorph* (DC 20), *cloudkill* (DC 21), *dominate person* (DC 20), *feeblemind* (DC 20), *telekinesis, wall of stone*; 6th—*acid fog, greater dispel magic, summon*

monster VI, true seeing; 7th—*phase door, reverse gravity*, silent *summon monster VI*; 8th—*incendiary cloud* (DC 23), *summon monster VIII*.

Spellbook: 0—all except *dancing lights, disrupt undead, flare, light, ray of frost, touch of fatigue*; 1st—*charm person, expeditious retreat, grease, mage armor, obscuring mist, shield, ventriloquism*; 2nd—*darkvision, fog cloud, glitterdust, Melf's acid arrow, mirror image, see invisibility, Tasha's hideous laughter*; 3rd—*dispel magic, displacement, fly, protection from energy, slow, stinking cloud*; 4th—*charm monster, dimension door, Evard's black tentacles, greater invisibility, illusory wall, phantasmal killer, solid fog*; 5th—*baleful polymorph, cloudkill, dominate monster, feeblemind, permanency, telekinesis, wall of stone*; 6th—*acid fog, greater dispel magic, permanent image, summon monster VI, true seeing*; 7th—*insanity, phase door, plane shift, reverse gravity*; 8th—*incendiary cloud, maze, summon monster VIII*.

Possessions: Masterwork quarterstaff, *amulet of health +2, headband of intellect +2, bead of force, boots of levitation, iridescent spindle ioun stone, ring of protection +2, Ring of Thirteen, greater extend metamagic rod*, scroll of *summon monster V*, scroll of *summon monster VII, wand of web* (25 charges), *wand of summon swarm* (10 charges), ointment for *true seeing* (250 gp), spellbooks.

Thifirane Rhiavadi, female human transmuter 13: CR 13; Medium humanoid (human); HD 13d4+13; hp 51; Init +6; Spd 30 ft.; AC 14, touch 14, flat-footed 12; Base Atk +6; Grp +6; Atk +6 melee (1d4/19–20, dagger) or +8 ranged (eye ray); Full Atk +6/+1 melee (1d4/19–20, dagger) or +8/+3 ranged (eye ray); SA spells, eye ray; SQ *contingency*, scry on familiar, weasel familiar named Sular; AL NE; SV Fort +5, Ref +6 (+8 with familiar), Will +10; Str 10, Dex 14, Con 12, Int 18, Wis 14, Cha 10 .

Skills: Concentration +17, Decipher Script +17, Knowledge (arcane) +18, Knowledge (history) +17, Knowledge (nobility and royalty) +14, Knowledge (the planes) +18, Spellcraft +18.

Feats: Brew Potion[B], Combat Casting, Craft Wondrous Item[B], Improved Initiative, Point Blank Shot, Scribe Scroll[B], Spell Focus (evocation, transmutation), Spell Penetration.

Languages: Abyssal, Common, Draconic, Infernal, Undercommon.

Contingency (Sp): Thifirane has cast a *contingency* spell on herself, activating a *lesser globe of invulnerability* during the first round of combat during her action. If her familiar is within 5 feet of her, it gains the benefits of the spell as well.

Eye Ray (Su): Thifirane has one of Vhalantru's small beholder eyes grafted to her forehead. Once per round as a free action, she can fire a ray from the eye that duplicates the effect of an *inflict moderate wounds* spell, dealing 2d8+10 points of damage to the target (Will DC 12 half). The eye ray has a caster level of 13th and a range of 150 feet.

Wizard Spells Prepared (caster level 13th; +8 ranged touch; prohibited schools enchantment, necromancy): 0—*detect magic, flare* (DC 15), *light, mending, read magic*; 1st—*enlarge person, expeditious retreat, mage armor, magic missile, shield, unseen servant* (already cast); 2nd—*alter self, bear's endurance, cat's grace, fox's cunning, scorching ray, see invisibility*; 3rd—*fly, haste, lightning bolt* (DC 18), *nondetection* (2, both already cast), *slow* (DC 18); 4th—*Evard's black tentacles, fire shield, Otiluke's resilient sphere* (DC 19), *Rary's mnemonic enhancer, shout* (DC 19), *stoneskin*; 5th—*baleful polymorph* (DC 20), *Mordenkainen's private sanctum* (already cast), *teleport, wall of force*; 6th—*disintegrate* (DC 21), *greater dispel magic, mislead*; 7th—*ethereal jaunt, forcecage*.

Spellbook: as above plus 0—all except enchantment and necromancy; 1st—*feather fall, Nystul's magic aura, reduce person*; 2nd—*arcane lock, darkvision, knock*; 3rd—*fireball, greater magic weapon, protection from energy*; 4th—*dimensional anchor, fire trap, greater invisibility, mass reduce person, scrying*; 5th—*break enchantment, lesser planar binding, permanency, sending*; 6th—*chain lightning, contingency, flesh to stone, stone to flesh*; 7th—*greater teleport, limited wish, sequester, simulacrum, statue*.

Possessions: Dagger, *ring of protection +2, hat of Charisma +2* (functions as a *cloak of Charisma +2*), *ring of mind shielding, wand of magic missile* (7th-level caster; 30 charges), arcane scroll of *greater dispel magic* (cast at 12th level), scroll of *stone to flesh*, scroll of *prismatic spray*, dagger, silver cage pendant (doubles as shield guardian amulet), pouch of spell components (including 600 gp worth of diamond dust for *nondetection* and *stoneskin* spells), small ivory plaque (50 gp; material component for *Rary's mnemonic enhancer*), small ivory statuette of herself set with precious gems (1,500 gp; focus for *contingency* spell).

Ti'irok Coalfire, male fire giant fighter 8: CR 18; Large giant (fire); HD 15d8+90 plus 8d10+48; hp 249; Init +4; Spd 30 ft.; AC 30, touch 11, flat-footed 30; Base Atk +19; Grp +34; Atk +32 melee (3d6+20 plus 1d6 fire/17–20, *Blackfire*) or +29 melee (1d4+11, slam) or +19 ranged (2d6+11 plus 2d6 fire, rock); Full Atk +32/+27/+22/+17 melee (3d6+20 plus 1d6 fire/17–20, *Blackfire*) or +29 melee (1d4+11, 2 slams) or +18/+13/+8/+3 ranged (2d6+11 plus 2d6 fire, rock); Space/Reach 10 ft./10 ft.; SA rock throwing; SQ immunity to fire, low-light vision, rock catching, vulnerability to cold; AL LE; SV Fort +21, Ref +7, Will +11; Str 32, Dex 11, Con 22, Int 13, Wis 14, Cha 11.

Skills: Climb +20, Craft +19, Intimidate +17, Jump +20, Spot +19.

Feats: Cleave, Great Cleave, Improved Bull Rush, Improved Critical (greatsword), Improved Initiative, Improved Overrun, Improved Sunder, Iron Will, Leadership, Power Attack, Quick Draw, Weapon Focus (greatsword), Weapon Specialization (greatsword).

Languages: Common, Giant, Infernal.

Possessions: *+3 moderate fortification full plate, Blackfire (+2 flaming burst unholy greatsword), gloves of Dexterity +2, helm of telepathy, ring of protection +2*, 2 emeralds (1,000 gp each), 500 gp.

Tongueater, male werebaboon half-orc (afflicted lycanthrope) barbarian 3: CR 5; Medium humanoid (orc, shapechanger); HD 3d12+9 plus 1d8+3; hp 41; Init +7; Spd 50 ft.; AC 19, touch 13, flat-footed 19; Base Atk +3; Grp +8; Atk +10 melee (2d4+7/18–20, masterwork falchion); Full Atk +10 melee (2d4+7/18–20, masterwork

falchion) and +3 melee (1d6+2, bite); SA rage 1/day; SQ alternate form, damage reduction 5/silver, fast movement, lycanthropic empathy, low-light vision, scent, trap sense +1, uncanny dodge; AL LE; SV Fort +8, Ref +6, Will +3; Str 20, Dex 17, Con 17, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 6.

Skills: Climb +11, Control Shape +7, Intimidate +4, Listen +9, Spot +2.

Feats: Alertness[B], Improved Initiative, Iron Will[B], Weapon Focus (falchion).

Languages: Common.

Half-orc Form: As hybrid form but with the following changes: hp 37; Init +5; AC 16, touch 11, flat-footed 16; Grp +6; Atk +8 melee (2d4+4/18–20, masterwork falchion); SV Fort +7, Ref +4; Str 16, Dex 13, Con 15; Climb +9.

Baboon Form: As hybrid form but with the following changes: Spd 50 ft., climb 30 ft.; AC 16, touch 13, flat-footed 16; Atk +8 melee (1d6+7, bite).

Possessions: Masterwork studded leather, masterwork falchion, *Heward's handy haversack*, four *potions of cure light wounds*, *potion of jump*, *potion of blur*, *potion of magic fang*, *potion of enlarge person* (at 5th level), key ring (opens all locked doors in the Lucky Monkey), Ebon Triad holy symbol.

Town Guards, male and female half-orc fighter 2: CR 2; Medium humanoid (orc); HD 2d10+4; hp 15; Init +1; Spd 20 ft.; AC 16, touch 11, flat-footed 15; Base Atk +2; Grp +5; Atk or Full Atk +7 melee (1d10+4/×3, masterwork halberd); SA —; SQ darkvision 60 ft.; AL LN or LE; SV Fort +5, Ref +1, Will +0; Str 17, Dex 13, Con 14, Int 6, Wis 10, Cha 10.

Skills: Intimidate +3, Sense Motive +1.

Feats: Alertness, Combat Reflexes, Weapon Focus (halberd).

Possessions: Breastplate, buckler, masterwork halberd, shortbow with 20 arrows, 2d4 gp.

Triel Eldurast, female human fighter 4/cleric 3: CR 7; Medium humanoid; HD 4d10+4 plus 3d8+3; hp 46; Init +1; Spd 20 ft.; AC 20, touch 11, flat-footed 19; Base Atk +6; Grp +10; Atk +12 melee (1d10+8/19–20, *+1 silver heavy flail*); Full Atk +12/+7 melee (1d10+8/19–20, *+1 silver heavy flail*); SA spells, rebuke undead; SQ —; AL LE; SV Fort +8, Ref +3, Will +6; Str 18, Dex 12, Con 13, Int 10, Wis 14, Cha 17.

Skills: Concentration +4, Craft (metalworking) +7, Intimidate +10, Knowledge (arcana) +3, Knowledge (religion) +3, Spellcraft +3.

Feats: Cleave[B], Combat Casting, Craft Wondrous Item, Leadership, Power Attack, Quick Draw[B], Weapon Focus (heavy flail)[B], Weapon Specialization (heavy flail)[B].

Languages: Common, Gnoll.

Cleric Spells Prepared (caster level 3rd): 0—*cure minor wounds* (2), *guidance*, *mending*; 1st—*cure light wounds*, *divine favor*, *magic weapon*[D], *shield of faith*; 2nd—*bull's Strength*, *silence* (DC 14), *shatter*[D] (DC 14).

D: Domain Spell. Domains: Destruction (smite 1/day, +4 on attack, +3 on damage), War (proficiency and Weapon Focus with heavy flail).

Possessions: *+1 silver heavy flail*, *+1 spiked full plate*, 3 *wands of control water* (50 charges each), *wand of cure serious wounds* (7 charges), 2 *potions of cure light wounds*, scroll of *cure moderate wounds* and *hold person*, everburning torch, silver holy symbol of Hextor, leather pouch containing 30 gp and 4 pp, key ring.

Tulrak Gar-Hurk, male half-orc rogue 3/fighter 7: CR 10; Medium humanoid (half-orc); HD 3d6+7d10+30; hp 96; Init +2; Spd 30 ft.; AC 21, touch 13, flat-footed 19; Base Atk +9, Grp +17; Atk +22 melee (2d6+17/17–20, *+3 greatsword*); Full Atk +22/+17 melee (2d6+17/17–20, *+3 greatsword*); SA sneak attack +2d6; SQ darkvision 60 ft., evasion, immune to fear, immune to poison, SR 25, trapfinding, trap sense +1, AL NE; SV Fort +9, Ref +7, Will +6; Str 26, Dex 14, Con 17, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 6.

Skills: Appraise +6, Balance +3, Climb +20, Hide +7, Jump +22, Listen +6, Move Silently +7, Spot +6, Tumble +7.

Feats: Blind Fight, Cleave, Dodge, Power Attack, Improved Critical (greatsword), Iron Will, Weapon Focus (greatsword), Weapon Specialization (greatsword).

Languages: Common.

Imbued Spells (caster level 13): 1—*cure light wounds*, *shield of faith*; 2nd—*cure moderate wounds*.

Possessions: *+1 chain shirt* (*+3 chain shirt* with *magic vestment*), *+1 greatsword* (*+3 greatsword* with *greater magic weapon*), *gauntlets of ogre power*, *ring of protection +1*, *amulet of natural armor +1*, *ring of counterspells* (*dispel magic*), *potion of cure serious wounds*, 250 gp.

Spells From Ike Iverson: The benefits of these spells are included in the statistics above: *air walk*, *greater magic weapon*, *heroes' feast*, *imbue with spell ability*, *magic vestment*, *mass bear's endurance*, *mass bull's strength*, *protection from energy (fire)* (ignore first 120 points of fire damage), *spell resistance*, *status*.

Tyrannosaurus Skeleton: CR 8; Huge undead; HD 18d12; hp 117; Init +6; Spd 40 ft.; AC 18, touch 10, flat-footed 16; Base Atk +9; Grp +18; Atk or Full Atk +16 melee (2d6+13); Space/Reach 15 ft./10 ft.; SA —; SQ damage reduction 5/bludgeoning, immune to cold; AL NE; SV Fort +6, Ref +8, Will +6; Str 28, Dex 14, Con —, Int —, Wis 10, Cha 1.

Feat: Improved Initiative.

Velasia, Wee Jas cleric, female human cleric 7: CR 7; Medium humanoid (human); HD 7d8+7; hp 40; Init +1; Spd 20 ft.; AC 20, touch 11, flat-footed 19; Base Atk +5; Grp +7; Atk +9 melee (1d8+4/×3, *+1 spear*) or +8 melee touch (spell); Full Atk +9 melee (1d8+4/×3, *+1 spear*) or +8 melee touch (spell); SA spells, rebuke undead; SQ —; AL LE; SV Fort +6, Ref +3, Will +8; Str 14, Dex 12, Con 13, Int 10, Wis 16, Cha 8.

Skills: Concentration +11, Knowledge (religion) +10, Spellcraft +10.

Feats: Spell Focus (necromancy), Toughness, Weapon Focus (unarmed strike), Weapon Focus (spear).

Languages: Common.

Spells Prepared (caster level 7th): 0—*cure minor wounds*, *detect magic*, *guidance*, *light*, *read magic*, *purify food and drink*; 1st—*cause fear*[D] (DC 15), *cure light wounds*, *divine favor*, *detect evil*, *sanctuary*, *shield of faith*; 2nd—*bear's endurance*, *cure moderate wounds*, *death knell*[D] (DC 16), *lesser*

restoration, silence (DC 15); 3rd—*contagion* (DC 17), *cure serious wounds, dispel magic*[D], *protection from fire*; 4th—*death ward*[D], *divine power*.

D: Domain Spell. Domains: Death (death touch 1/day, damage 7d6), Magic (use magic items as 3rd-level wizard).

Possessions: *+1 full plate, +1 spear*, scroll of *flame strike*, scroll of *plane shift*, scroll of *cure serious wounds*, scroll of *speak with dead*, scroll of *dispel magic*.

Velior Thazo, male half-fiend human cleric 7 (Erythnul)/rogue 3: CR 12; Medium outsider (augmented humanoid, native); HD 7d8+3d6+20; hp 63; Init +7; Spd 20 ft., fly 20 ft. (average); AC 24, touch 13, flat-footed 21; Base Atk +7; Grp +12; Atk +14 melee (1d8+6, *+1 morningstar*) or +11 ranged (1d8/19–20, masterwork light crossbow); Full Atk +14 melee (1d8+6, *+1 morningstar*) and +7 melee (1d6+2, bite) or +11 ranged (1d8/19–20, masterwork light crossbow); SA smite good 1/day for +10 damage, sneak attack +2d6, spells, spell-like abilities, rebuke undead 10/day; SQ DR 5/magic, darkvision 60 ft., evasion, immunity to poison, resistance to acid 10, cold 10, electricity 10, and fire 10, SR 17, trap sense +1, trapfinding; AL CE; SV Fort +8, Ref +10, Will +10; Str 20, Dex 17, Con 14, Int 12, Wis 18, Cha 12.

Skills: Bluff +7, Concentration +12, Diplomacy +7, Escape Artist +6, Heal +8, Hide +9, Intimidate +7, Knowledge (arcana) +5, Knowledge (local) +7, Knowledge (religion) +7, Listen +10, Move Silently +6, Spellcraft +5, Spot +10, Tumble +6.

Feats: Combat Casting, Extra Turning, Flyby Attack, Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes, Weapon Focus (morningstar)[B].

Languages: Abyssal, Common, Infernal.

Cleric Spells Prepared (caster level 7th): 0—*cure minor wounds, detect magic, guidance, light, read magic, resistance*; 1st—*command* (DC 15), *cure light wounds, divine favor, doom* (DC 15), *protection from good*[D], *shield of faith*; 2nd—*bear's endurance, bull's Strength, hold person* (DC 16), *sound burst* (DC 16), *spiritual weapon*[D]; 3rd—*cure serious wounds, dispel magic, magic vestment*[D], *searing light*; 4th—*cure critical wounds, summon monster IV, unholy blight*[D] (DC 18).

D: Domain spell. Domains: Evil (cast evil spells at +1 caster level), War (Weapon Focus as bonus feat).

Spell-Like Abilities (caster level 10th): 3/day—*darkness, poison* (DC 15); 1/day—*contagion* (DC 15), *desecrate, unholy blight* (DC 15).

Possessions: *+2 breastplate, +1 large steel shield, +1 morningstar* ("Bloodfever"), *periapt of Wisdom +2, gauntlets of ogre power, potion of alter self*, holy symbol of Erythnul.

Vervil Ashmantle, male tiefling sorcerer 11: CR 12; Medium outsider (native); HD 11d4+22; hp 48 (70 with *bear's endurance*); Init +6; Spd 30 ft.; AC 16, touch 14, flat-footed 14; Base Atk +5; Grp +7; Atk or Full Atk +7 melee (1d4+2/19–20, dagger); SA *darkness* 1/day, spells; SQ darkvision 60 ft., rat familiar named Miltan, resistance to cold 5, electricity 5, and fire 5; AL CE; SV Fort +7, Ref +5, Will +9; Str 14, Dex 14, Con 14, Int 13, Wis 11, Cha 18.

Skills: Bluff +18, Concentration +16, Spellcraft +15.

Feats: Combat Casting, Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Spell Penetration.

Languages: Abyssal, Common, Orc.

Sorcerer Spells Known (6/7/7/7/7/4; save DC 14 + spell level; +7 ranged touch): 0—*acid splash, arcane mark, daze* (DC 14), *detect magic, mage hand, detect poison, flare* (DC 14), *light, read magic*; 1st—*charm person* (DC 15), *disguise self, mage armor, magic missile, shield*; 2nd—*bear's endurance, Melf's acid arrow, mirror image, scorching ray, summon swarm*; 3rd—*displacement, fireball* (DC 17), *fly, suggestion* (DC 17); 4th—*enervation, greater invisibility, wall of fire*; 5th—*baleful polymorph* (DC 19), *teleport*.

Possessions: Dagger, *amulet of natural armor +2*, black platinum *ring of counterspells* (*feeblemind*), *ring of protection +2*, red gem-studded robe (worth 1,500 gp), *wand of fireball* (5th level; 22 charges), 3 *potions of cure moderate wounds*, scroll of *cloudkill*, scroll of *phantasmal killer*.

Vhalantru, advanced beholder: CR 14; Large aberration; HD 15d8+90; hp 157; Init +7; Spd 5 ft., fly 20 ft. (good); AC 32, touch 14, flat-footed 29; Base Atk +11; Grp +15; Atk or Full Atk +13 ranged touch (eye rays) and +5 melee (2d4, bite); Space/Reach 10 ft./5 ft.; SA eye rays (DC 21), spell resistance 20 (from *scarab*); SQ all-around vision, antimagic cone, darkvision 60 ft., flight; AL LE; SV Fort +13, Ref +8, Will +12; Str 10, Dex 16, Con 22, Int 20, Wis 12, Cha 19.

Skills: Bluff +18, Diplomacy +15, Hide +17, Intimidate +8, Knowledge (arcana) +23, Listen +21, Search +27, Spot +25.

Feats: Alertness[B], Flyby Attack, Great Fortitude, Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Persuasive, Skill Focus (Bluff).

Languages: Common, Elven, Infernal, Undercommon.

Possessions: *Bracers of armor +3, ring of protection +2, ring of mind shielding, scarab of protection* (can absorb up to 6 more energy drain, death, or negative energy attacks), *simulacrum suit*. Vhalantru wears his bracers, rings, and scarab on his eyestalks.

Vhalantru, shator tarterian advanced beholder: CR 17; Large aberration; HD 15d8+90; hp 157; Init +7; Spd 5 ft., fly 20 ft. (good); AC 32, touch 14, flat-footed 29; Base Atk +11; Grp +18; Atk or Full Atk +13 ranged touch (eye rays) and +8 melee (2d4+4 plus paralysis, bite); Space/Reach 10 ft./5 ft.; SA eye rays (DC 24), paralyzing slime, spell-like abilities, spell resistance 20 (from *scarab*); SQ all-around vision, antimagic cone, darkvision 120 ft., flight, freedom of movement, immune to acid, mind-affecting attacks, and poison, resistance to cold 20 and fire 20, scent, see invisibility; AL LE; SV Fort +13, Ref +8, Will +12; Str 16, Dex 16, Con 22, Int 20, Wis 12, Cha 25.

Skills: Bluff +21, Diplomacy +18, Hide +17, Intimidate +11, Knowledge (arcana) +23, Listen +21, Search +27, Spot +25.

Feats: Alertness[B], Flyby Attack, Great Fortitude, Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Persuasive, Skill Focus (Bluff).

Languages: Common, Elven, Infernal, Undercommon.

Paralyzing Slime (Ex): Creatures struck in melee by Vhalantru's bite attack must succeed on a Fortitude saving throw (DC 23) or be paralyzed for 3d6 rounds. Vhalantru can choose to spit a globule of slime as a ranged

touch attack with a range of 30 feet, with the same effect. The save DC is Constitution-based.

Spell-Like Abilities (caster level 15th): At will—*detect magic, clairaudience/clairvoyance, fear* (DC 21), *invisibility, spider climb, tongues*; 3/day—*cloudkill* (DC 22), *fog cloud, ray of enfeeblement, stinking cloud* (DC 20); 2/day—*dispel magic*; 1/day—*mass charm monster* (DC 25).

Possessions: *Bracers of armor +3, ring of protection +2, ring of mind shielding, scarab of protection* (can absorb up to 6 more energy drain, death, or negative energy attacks). Vhalantru wears his bracers, rings, and scarab on his eyestalks.

Vhalantru, smoking eye fiendish advanced beholder: CR 21; Huge aberration (extraplanar); HD 33d8+198; hp 346; Init +6; Spd 5 ft., fly 20 ft. (good); AC 28, touch 10, flat-footed 28; Base Atk +24; Grp +39; Atk/Full Atk +26 ranged touch (eye ray) and +27 melee (2d6+6, bite); Space/Reach 15 ft./10 ft.; SA eye rays (DC 32), smite good 1/day (+20 damage); SQ all-around vision, antimagic cone, damage reduction 10/magic, darkvision 60 ft., flight, resistance to cold 10, resistance to fire 10, spell resistance 25; AL CE; SV Fort +19, Ref +15, Will +23; Str 18, Dex 14, Con 23, Int 17, Wis 15, Cha 18.

Skills: Hide +30, Knowledge (arcana) +39, Listen +38, Search +41, Spot +40.

Feats: Ability Focus (eye ray), Alertness[B], Combat Expertise, Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Flyby Attack, Great Fortitude, Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes, Mobility, Spring Attack, Weapon Focus (ray).

Languages: Common, Elven, Infernal, Undercommon.

Eye Rays: The effects of Vhalantru's eye rays manifest at caster level 14.

Note: Although Vhalantru had the Tarterian creature template, slightly different Feats, and was missing his *inflict moderate wounds* eyestalk the last time the PCs fought him, his rebirth on Occipitus has removed the prior template, altered his feat selection, and restored his missing eyestalk.

Viirdran Daraqor, male drow fighter 7/evoker 5/eldritch knight 3: CR 16; Medium humanoid (elf); HD 7d10 plus 5d4 plus 3d6; hp 78 (108 with bear's endurance); Init +6; Spd 30 ft.; AC 29, touch 18, flat-footed 23; Base Atk +12; Grp +14; Atk +20 melee (1d6+4/15–20, adamantine rapier or masterwork cold iron rapier) or +19 ranged (1d4, masterwork hand crossbow); Full Atk +20/+15/+10 melee (1d6+4/15–20, adamantine rapier or masterwork cold iron rapier) or +19 ranged (1d4, masterwork hand crossbow); SA spells; SQ darkvision 120 ft., elf traits, light blindness, spell-like abilities, spell resistance 26, weasel familiar; AL CE; SV Fort +9, Ref +12, Will +6 (+8 against spells and spell-like abilities); Str 15, Dex 22, Con 10, Int 16 (20 with *fox's cunning*), Wis 8, Cha 12.

Skills: Climb +12, Concentration +12, Craft (alchemy) +17, Intimidate +11, Jump +12, Knowledge (arcana) +14 (+16 with *fox's cunning*), Listen +3, Ride +18, Search +5 (+7 with *fox's cunning*), Spellcraft +16 (+18 with fox's *cunning*), Spot +3.

Feats: Alertness[B], Brew Potion, Combat Expertise, Dodge, Improved Critical (rapier), Improved Disarm, Mobility, Quick Draw, Scribe Scroll, Spring Attack, Weapon Finesse, Weapon Focus (rapier), Weapon Specialization (rapier), Whirlwind Attack.

Languages: Abyssal, Common, Drow Sign Language, Elven, Undercommon.

Light Blindness (Ex): Abrupt exposure to bright light (such as sunlight or a *daylight* spell) blinds Viirdran for 1 round. On subsequent rounds, he is dazzled as long as he remains in the affected area.

Spell-Like Abilities (caster level 15th): 1/day—*dancing lights, darkness, faerie fire.*

Wizard Spells Prepared (5/6/5/4/2; caster level 7th; +18 ranged touch): 0—*acid splash, detect magic, mage hand, ray of frost, read magic*; 1st—*expeditious retreat, mage armor, magic missile* (2), *shield, true strike*; 2nd—*fox's cunning, scorching ray, see invisibility, spider climb, web* (DC 15); 3rd—*fireball* (DC 16), *fly, haste, protection from energy*; 4th—*enervation, ice storm.*

Spellbook: 0—all; 1st—*alarm, expeditious retreat, feather fall, jump, mage armor, magic missile, shield, true strike*; 2nd—*alter self, fox's cunning, scorching ray, see invisibility, shatter, spider climb, web*; 3rd—*fireball, fly, greater magic weapon, haste, hold person, lightning bolt, protection from energy*; 4th—*dimension door, enervation, ice storm, stoneskin, wall of ice.*

Possessions: Adamantine rapier, masterwork cold iron rapier, masterwork hand crossbow, 10 bolts, silver cage pendant (*lesser amulet of the planes*; see Appendix), *gloves of Dexterity +4, Ring of Thirteen, bead of force, potion of barkskin (+3), potion of bear's endurance*, scroll of *Bigby's interposing hand*, scroll of *greater magic weapon*, scroll of *wall of ice*, 2 flasks of alchemist's fire, tanglefoot bag, spell component pouch, spellbook emblazoned with lightning bolt patterns and protected by *fire trap* (1d4+7 fire damage; Reflex DC 17 half; Search DC 29; Disable Device DC 29).

Vittriss Bale, male adult green dracolich: CR 16; Huge undead (air); HD 20d12, hp 130; Init +1; Spd 40 ft., swim 40 ft., fly 150 ft. (poor); AC 30, touch 8, flat-footed 29; Base Atk +20; Grp +38; Atk +28 melee (4d6+10 plus 1d6 cold, bite), Full Atk +28 melee (4d6+10 plus 1d6 cold, bite) and +28 melee (2d6+5 plus 1d6 cold, 2 claws) and +28 melee (1d8+5+1d6 cold, 2 wings) and +28 melee (2d6+15+1d6 cold, tail slap); Space/Reach 15ft./10ft. (bite 15 ft.); SA breath weapon, control undead, frightful presence, paralyzing gaze, paralyzing touch, spell-like abilities, spells; SQ damage reduction 5/bludgeoning and magic, darkvision 120 ft., immune to acid, cold, electricity, sleep, paralysis, and polymorph, invulnerability, low-light vision, spell resistance 24, undead, water breathing; AL LE; SV Fort +12, Ref +13, Will +14; Str 31, Dex 12, Con —, Int 16, Wis 15, Cha 22; *Draconomicon* 146.

Skills: Bluff +29, Concentration +17, Diplomacy +13, Disguise +6 (+8 acting), Hide +0, Intimidate +31, Knowledge (arcana) +26, Knowledge (nature) +26, Listen +25, Move Silently +20, Search +23, Sense Motive +11, Spot +25, Swim +18.

Feats: Flyby Attack, Hover, Improved Multiattack, Improved Natural Attack (bite), Multiattack, Power Attack, Tempest Breath.

Languages: Common, Infernal, Draconic, Spell Weaver.

Breath Weapon (Su): 50-ft. cone, damage 12d6 acid, Reflex DC 26 half. The save DC is Charisma-based.

Control Undead (Sp): Once every three days, Vittriss Bale can use *control undead* as the spell (caster level 15th). Vittriss cannot cast other spells while this ability is in effect.

Frightful Presence (Ex): 180-ft. radius, HD 19 or less, Will DC 26 negates.

Invulnerability (Su): If Vittriss Bale is slain, his spirit immediately returns to his phylactery, from where it may attempt to possess a suitable corpse.

Paralyzing Gaze (Su): Paralysis for 2d6 rounds, 40 ft., Fortitude DC 26 negates. The save DC is Charisma-based. If the saving throw is successful, the character is forever immune to the gaze of this particular dracolich.

Paralyzing Touch (Su): A creature struck by any of Vittriss Bale's physical attacks must make a DC 26 Fortitude save or be paralyzed for 2d6 rounds.

Spell-Like Abilities (caster level 6th): 3/day—*suggestion* (DC 19).

Sorcerer Spells Known (6/7/5; caster level 5th): 0—*arcane mark, detect magic, mage hand, open/close, message, read magic*; 1st—*alarm, mage armor, shield, ray of enfeeblement*; 2nd—*mirror image, spider climb.*

Vorkaire, adult black dragon: CR 11; Large dragon (water); HD 19d12+76; hp 194; Init +0; Spd 60 ft, fly 150 ft. (poor), swim 60 ft.; AC 27, touch 9, flat-footed 27; Base Atk +19; Grp +29; Atk +25 melee (2d6+6, bite); Full Atk +25 melee (2d6+6, bite) and +20 melee (1d8+3, 2 claws), and +19 melee (1d6+3, 2 wings) and +20 melee (1d8+9, tail slap); SA breath weapon (80 ft. line of acid, 12d4 points of damage, Reflex half DC 23), frightful presence (DC 20), spell-like abilities, spells; SQ damage reduction 5/magic, immunity to acid, sleep and paralysis, spell resistance 18, blindsense 60 ft., keen senses, darkvision 120 ft., water breathing; AL CE; SV Fort +15, Ref +11, Will +12; Str 23, Dex 10, Con 19, Int 12, Wis 13, Cha 12.

Skills: Intimidate +23, Knowledge (the planes) +23, Listen +23, Search +23, Sense Motive +23, Spot +23, Survival +12;

Feats: Flyby Attack, Power Attack, Track, Weapon Focus (claw), Weapon Focus (bite), Weapon Focus (tail slap), Wingover.

Languages: Abyssal, Draconic.

Spell-Like Abilities (caster level 6th): 1/day—*corrupt water, darkness* (radius 60 ft.).

Spells Known (6/6; caster level 3rd): 0—*detect magic, detect poison, ghost sound, guidance, read magic*; 1st—*mage armor, ray of enfeeblement, shield.*

Wee Jas Assassins, male and female human rogue 5/assaasin 2 (3): CR 7; Medium humanoid (human); HD 7d6+7; hp 31; Init +3; Spd 30 ft.; AC 17, touch 13, flat-footed 14; Base Atk +4; Grp +5; Atk +9 melee (1d4+3 plus poison/19–20, *+1 dagger*) or +8 ranged (1d4+2 plus poison/19–20, dagger); Full Atk +9 melee (1d4+3 plus poison/19–20, *+1 dagger*) or +8 ranged (1d4+2 plus poison/19–20, dagger); SA death attack (DC 13), poison use, spells, sneak attack +4d6; SQ evasion, uncanny dodge, trapfinding, trap sense +1; AL LE; SV Fort +2, Ref +10, Will +1; Str 14, Dex 16, Con 12, Int 13, Wis 10, Cha 8.

Skills: Balance +13, Bluff +9, Diplomacy +1, Disguise +7, Hide +13, Intimidate +9, Jump +12, Listen +8, Move Silently +13, Spot +10, Tumble +15.

Feats: Dodge, Point Blank Shot, Weapon Finesse, Weapon Focus (dagger).

Languages: Abyssal, Common.

Assassin Spells Known (2; caster level 2nd): 1st—*jump, obscuring mist, true strike.*

Possessions: *+1 dagger, +1 studded leather armor, potion of invisibility*, 5 daggers, 6 doses of giant wasp poison (1d6 Dex/1d6 Dex; Fort DC 18).

White-Eye, male wererat human fighter 4: CR 6; Medium humanoid (human, shapechanger); HD 4d10+4 plus 1d8+2; hp 37; Init +2; Spd 30 ft.; AC 14, touch 12, flat-footed 12; Base Atk +4; Grp +6; Atk/Full Atk +6 melee (1d4+2 nonlethal, unarmed strike); SA —; SQ alternate form, low-light vision, rat empathy, scent; AL CE; SV Fort +7; Ref +5; Will +3; Str 15, Dex 15, Con 13, Int 12, Wis 10, Cha 10.

Skills: Climb +5, Disable Device +4, Hide +5, Intimidate +4, Move Silently +5, Open Lock +5, Swim +12.

Feats: Dodge, Iron Will, Mobility, Multiattack, Weapon Finesse, Weapon Focus (claw), Weapon Focus (bite), Weapon Specialization (claw)

Hybrid Form: As human form, except: Init +5; AC 17, touch 15, flat-footed 12; Atk +10 melee (1d4+4, claw); Full Atk +10 melee (1d4+4, 2 claws) and +8 melee (1d6+1 and curse of lycanthropy and disease, bite); SA curse of lycanthropy, disease; SQ alternate form, DR 5/silver, lycanthropic empathy, low-light vision, rat empathy, scent; SV Fort +8, Ref +8, Will +3; Str 15, Dex 21, Con 15, Int 12, Wis 9, Cha 10.

Skills: As human form, except: Climb +16, Disable Device +7, Hide +8, Move Silently +8, Open Lock +8, Swim +15.

Dire Rat Form: As hybrid form, except: Small humanoid (human, shapechanger); Spd 40 ft., climb 20 ft.; AC 18, touch 16, flat-footed 13; Atk +11 melee (1d3+4, claw); Full Atk +11 melee (1d3+4, 2 claws) and +9 melee (1d4+1 and curse of lycanthropy and disease, bite).

Skills: As hybrid form, except: Hide +12.

Xail, bone water naga sorcerer 3: CR 11; Large undead; HD 10d12; hp 65; Init +7; Spd 30 ft., swim 50 ft.; AC 18, touch 12, flat-footed 15; Base Atk +7; Grp +15; Atk or Full Atk +10 melee (2d6+4 plus poison, bite); Space/Reach 10 ft./5 ft.; SA poison, spells; SQ damage reduction 5/bludgeoning, darkvision 60 ft., immune to cold, spell resistance 22, telepathy 250 ft., undead traits; AL LE; SV Fort +3, Ref +8, Will +12; Str 18, Dex 16, Con —, Int 10, Wis 19, Cha 20; *Serpent Kingdoms* 74.

Skills: Bluff +11, Concentration +10, Diplomacy +7, Intimidate +7, Spellcraft 10, Swim +12.

Feats: Combat Casting, Empower Spell, Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes.

Poison (Ex): Bite, injury, Fortitude DC 20, initial and secondary damage 1d4 Str. The save DC is Charisma-based.

Telepathy (Su): A bone naga can communicate telepathically with any creature within 250 feet that has a language.

Sorcerer Spells Known (6/8/7/7/6/4; caster level 10th; +10 ranged touch) 0—*acid splash, arcane mark, detect magic, ghost sound* (DC 15), *light, mage hand, message, open/close, read magic*; 1st—*charm person* (DC 16), *expeditious retreat, magic missile, ray of enfeeblement, shield*; 2nd—*knock, mirror image, see invisibility, scorching ray*; 3rd—*displacement, icefane corpse, stinking cloud* (DC 18),; 4th—*Evard's black tentacles, shout* (DC 19); 5th—*wall of force.*

Xarthyx, male quasit sorcerer 11: CR 12; Tiny outsider (chaotic, extraplanar, evil); HD 3d8+3 plus 11d4+11; hp 57; Init +5; Spd 20 ft., fly 50 ft. (perfect); AC 20, touch 17, flat-footed 15; Base Atk +8; Grp –1; Atk +15 melee (1d3–1 plus poison, claw); Full Atk +15 melee (1d3–1 plus poison, 2 claws) and +10 melee (1d4–1, bite); Space/Reach 2-1/2 ft./0 ft.; SA poison (DC 14, 1d4 Dex/2d4 Dex), spells, spell-like abilities; SQ alternate form, bat familiar, damage reduction 5/cold iron or good, darkvision 60 ft., empathic link, fast healing 2, immunity to poison, resistance to fire 10, share spells; AL CE; SV Fort +9, Ref +11, Will +10; Str 8, Dex 20, Con 12, Int 14, Wis 10, Cha 19.

Skills: Bluff +21, Concentration +12, Diplomacy +12, Disguise +4 (+6 to act in character), Hide +19, Intimidate +12, Knowledge (arcana) +8, Knowledge (the planes) +7, Listen +9, Move Silently +11, Spellcraft +19 (+21 to decipher spells on scrolls), Spot +6, Use Magic Device +14 (+16 involving scrolls).

Feats: Great Fortitude, Improved Initiative, Skill Focus (Use Magic Device), Spell Focus (evocation), Weapon Finesse.

Spell-Like Abilities (caster level 6th): At will—*detect good, detect magic, invisibility* (self only); 1/day—*cause fear* (DC 15, 30-foot radius).

Sorcerer Spells Known (6/7/7/7/7/4; caster level 11th, +15 ranged touch): 0—*acid splash, daze* (DC 14), *detect magic, flare* (DC 15), *open/close, prestidigitation, ray of frost, read magic, touch of fatigue* (DC 14); 1st—*burning hands* (DC 16), *detect secret doors, expeditious retreat, magic missile, shield*; 2nd—*bear's endurance, scorching ray, Melf's acid arrow, touch of idiocy, web* (DC 16); 3rd—*displacement, fireball* (DC 18), *ray of exhaustion, stinking cloud* (DC 17); 4th—*confusion* (DC 18), *enervation, ice storm*; 5th—*cone of cold* (DC 20), *teleport.*

Possessions: *Cloak of Charisma +2, ring of chameleon power*, 2 scrolls of *arcane lock*, 2 divine scrolls of *cure moderate wounds*, scroll of *phase door, wand of searing light* (10 charges, 6th level), *wand of unholy blight* (10 charges, 8th level), carved ruby amulet (symbol of Adimarchus), 23 pp, 13 gp.

Xoden Nightshield, male dwarf expert 4: CR 3; Medium humanoid; HD 4d6+8; hp 22; Init –1; Spd 20 ft.; AC 16, touch 9, flat-footed 16; Base Atk +3; Grp +4; Atk or Full Atk +5 melee (1d10+1/×3, masterwork dwarven waraxe); SA —; SQ darkvision 60 ft., dwarf traits; AL LE; SV Fort +3 (+5 against poison), Ref +0, Will +4; Str 12, Dex 8, Con 14, Int 13, Wis 10, Cha 7.

Skills: Appraise +8 (+10 for metal or stone items), Craft (blacksmithing) +8, Craft (stonemasonry) +8, Gather Information +0, Knowledge (architecture and engineering) +8, Knowledge (local) +8, Listen +7, Search +1 (+3 to find secret doors and compartments), Spot +7.

Feats: Armor Proficiency (medium), Shield Proficiency.

Languages: Common, Dwarven Goblin.

Possessions: +1 scale mail, masterwork heavy steel shield, masterwork dwarven waraxe, *potion of cure light wounds.*

Xokek, male shadar-kai wizard 13/rogue 2: CR 16; Medium fey (extraplanar); HD 5d6+5 plus 13d4+13 plus 3; hp 71; Init +7; Spd 30 ft.; AC 18, touch 15, flat-footed 15; Base Atk +8; Grp +8; Atk +12 melee (1d6+1/19–20, *+1 short sword*) or +12 ranged (1d6/×3, masterwork shortbow); Full Atk +12/+7 melee (1d6+1/19–20, *+1 short sword*) or +12/+7 ranged (1d6/×3, masterwork shortbow); SA sneak attack +1d6, spells; SQ displacement (50% miss chance), evasion, hide in plain sight, shadow curse, superior low-light vision, toad familiar, trapfinding; AL CE; SV Fort +6, Ref +13, Will +10; Str 10, Dex 16, Con 12, Int 17, Wis 9, Cha 13; *Fiend Folio* 150.

Skills: Balance +5, Bluff +10, Concentration +7, Diplomacy +3, Disguise +1 (+3 acting), Escape Artist +12, Hide +15 (+25 in shadows), Intimidate +3, Jump +2, Knowledge (arcana) +15, Knowledge (dungeoneering) +15, Knowledge (the planes) +15, Listen +18, Move Silently +18, Search +9, Spellcraft +17, Spot +18, Survival +5 (+7 underground or on other planes), Tumble +13, Use Rope +3 (+5 bindings).

Feats: Alertness, Craft Wondrous Item, Greater Spell Penetration, Improved Initiative, Scribe Scroll, Silent Spell, Spell Focus (illusion), Spell Penetration, Weapon Finesse.

Languages: Abyssal, Common, Draconic, Elven, Slaad, Sylvan.

Hide in Plain Sight (Su): Xokek can use the Hide skill even while being observed, as long as he is not illuminated by natural daylight, the *daylight* spell, or a similar magic light. He can hide himself from view in the open without having anything to actually hide behind.

Shadow Curse (Su): Any time Xokek is stunned, dazed, staggered, or unconscious (other than from natural sleep), he must make a successful DC 15 Will save or gain a negative level. The negative level cannot be removed until he returns to the Plane of Shadow and affixes his soul to his body again with a *greater restoration* spell. On the Material Plane, he must use a *wish* or *miracle* spell to restore his soul. When afflicted with the shadow curse, Xokek cannot be raised from the dead or resurrected, and cannot gain experience. On the Plane of Shadow, Xokek ameliorates the effects of the shadow curse and suffers no ill effects; however, if he leaves the plane without restoring his soul, the shadow curse returns. Xokek does not wear a gal-ralan (a magic armband many shadar-kai wear to protect themselves from the shadow curse, but at the cost of a point of Constitution).

Superior Low-Light Vision (Ex): Xokek can see four times as far as a human in low-light conditions.

Wizard Spells Prepared (caster level 13th; prohibited schools +11 ranged touch): 0—*dancing lights, detect magic, ghost sound* (DC 14), *read magic*; 1st—*disguise self* (DC 15), *expeditious retreat, mage armor, magic missile, shield*; 2nd—*cat's grace, darkness, invisibility, mirror image, see invisibility*; 3rd—*dispel magic, fireball* (DC 16), *major image* (DC 17), *shadow dagger* (2, DC 17); 4th—*dimension door*, silent *haste, phantasmal killer* (DC 18), *shadow puppeteer* (DC 18); 5th—*cloudkill* (DC 18), silent *shadow puppeteer* (DC 18), *teleport*; 6th—*chain lightning* (DC 19), *mislead*; 7th—*Mordenkainen's magnificent mansion* (already cast).

Spellbook: 0—*dancing lights, daze, detect magic, ghost sound, mage hand, message, open/close, read magic*; 1st—*color spray, disguise self, expeditious retreat, mage armor, magic missile, shield, true strike, ventriloquism*; 2nd—*blur, cat's grace, darkness, fox's cunning, invisibility, minor image, mirror image, misdirection, see invisibility, sepia snake sigil*; 3rd—*dispel magic, displacement, fireball, haste, illusory wall, invisibility sphere, major image, shadow dagger**; 4th—*dimension door, greater invisibility, phantasmal killer, rainbow pattern, shadow puppeteer**, *wall of fire*; 5th—*cloudkill, mirage arcana, teleport*; 6th—*chain lightning, greater dispel magic, mislead, programmed image*; 7th—*Mordenkainen's magnificent mansion, plane shift*.

*These new spells are detailed in the Appendix.

Possessions: *Bracers of armor +3, +1 short sword, major cloak of displacement, blackstone rune* (1 charge remaining; see Appendix), *Ring of Thirteen*, scroll of *cloudkill*, scroll of *greater dispel magic*, scroll of *teleport*, masterwork dagger, masterwork shortbow, 20 arrows, spellbook protected by *sepia snake sigil* (Reflex DC 15 negates), spell component pouch, silver cage pendant (15 gp).

Xukasus, male ogre (polymorphed otyugh): CR 3; Large giant; HD 6d8+12 plus 3; hp 42; Init –1; Spd 30 ft.; AC 16, touch 8, flat-footed 16; Base Atk +4; Grp +9; Atk or Full Atk +4 melee (2d6+7/18–20, falchion); SA —; SQ darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; AL N; SV Fort +4, Ref +1, Will +6; Str 21, Dex 8, Con 15, Int 7, Wis 12, Cha 6.

Skills: Hide –1, Listen +6, Spot +6.

Feats: Alertness, Toughness, Weapon Focus (tentacle).

Languages: Common.

Possessions: Hide armor, falchion, iron key to locked iron chest in area **M4**, iron key to all of the giant fire beetle cages in the Malachite Fortress.

Yuathyb, dark stalker: CR 4; Medium humanoid (dark one); HD 3d8+3; hp 16; Init +7; Spd 30 ft.; AC 17, touch 13, flat-footed 14; Base Atk +2; Grp +4; Atk or Full Atk +4 melee (1d6+2/19–20, short sword) or +5 ranged (1d6+2, javelin); SA *fog cloud*, poison use, sneak attack +3d6; SQ blindsight 60 ft., light vulnerability, evasion, shadow cloak; AL CN; SV Fort +2, Ref +8, Will +3; Str 14, Dex 17, Con 13, Int 13, Wis 14, Cha 16.

Skills: Hide +13, Listen +3, Move Silently +8, Sleight of Hand +4, Spot +3, Tumble +4.

Feats: Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes.

Languages: Common, Dark One, Gnome, Undercommon.

Fog Cloud (Sp): Twice per day, a dark stalker can use *fog cloud* at caster level 5.

Poison Use (Ex): Dark stalkers never risk accidentally poisoning themselves when applying poison to a weapon.

Light Vulnerability (Ex): When exposed to sunlight or its magical equivalent, dark stalkers suffer a –2 morale penalty on attack rolls, damage rolls, saving throws, ability checks, and skill checks.

Shadow Cloak (Su): Three times per day, a dark stalker can wrap itself in a cloak of shadows that grants it concealment from its foes. In shadows or darkness, the dark stalker gains total concealment (a 50% miss chance from attackers). In bright light, it gains partial concealment (20% miss chance). Darkvision does not reduce the amount of concealment. Creatures that can see in magical darkness suffer no miss chance.

Possessions: Black cloak, short sword, 4 javelins, *potion of cure light wounds, potion of remove paralysis*, key to all "D" gear doors (hanging around neck), vial of monstrous spider venom (5 applications; Fortitude save DC 14; initial and secondary 1d4 Str), pouch containing 60 sp.

Zaenna Quespin, female human rogue 3/cleric 7 (Vecna): CR 10; Medium humanoid (human); HD 3d6+7d8+30; hp 84; Init +8; Spd 30 ft.; AC 24, touch 15, flat-footed 20; Base Atk +7, Grp +11; Atk +16 melee (1d6+5/18–20, *+1 rapier*); Full Atk +16/+11 melee (1d6+5/18–20, *+1 rapier*); SA sneak attack +2d6; SQ evasion, spells, immune to fear, immune to poison, SR 25, trapfinding, trap sense +1; AL LE; SV Fort +9, Ref +9, Will +9; Str 18, Dex 18, Con 16, Int 10, Wis 14, Cha 8.

Skills: Balance +6, Bluff +5, Concentration +10, Disable Device +6, Diplomacy +1, Disguise –1 (+1 acting), Hide +10, Intimidate +1, Jump +6, Knowledge (religion) +7, Listen +8, Move Silently +10, Open Lock +10, Search +6, Spellcraft +7, Spot +8, Survival +2 (+4 following tracks), Tumble +10.

Feats: Blind-Fight, Combat Casting, Improved Initiative, Weapon Finesse, Weapon Focus (rapier).

Languages: Common.

Cleric Spells Prepared (caster level 7th; +11 ranged touch): 0—*cure minor wounds* (2), *detect magic* (2), *read magic, guidance*; 1st—*protection from good*[D], *cure light wounds* (2), *divine favor, obscuring mist, shield of faith*; 2nd—*bear's endurance, cure moderate wounds, death knell* (DC 14), *desecrate*[D], *silence* (DC 14); 3rd—*dispel magic*[D], *cure serious wounds, searing light*; 4th—*cure critical wounds, unholy blight*[D] (DC 16).

D: Domain spell. Domains: Evil (cast Evil spells at +1 caster level), Magic (use magic items as 3rd-level wizard).

Possessions: *+1 studded leather* (*+3 studded leather* with *magic vestment*), *+1 light shield, +1 rapier, gloves of Dexterity +2, ring of protection +1, amulet of natural armor +1, lesser rod of silent spell, potion of cure serious wounds*, 250 gp.

Spells From Ike Iverson: The benefits of these spells are included in the statistics above: *air walk, heroes' feast, magic vestment, mass bear's endurance, mass bull's strength, protection from energy (fire)* (ignore first 120 points of fire damage), *spell resistance, status*.

Zarik Dhor, male half-black dragon minotaur fighter 4/barbarian 4: CR 14; Large Dragon; HD 10d12+4d10+70; hp 162; Init +3; Spd 40 ft.; AC 30, touch 14, flat-footed 30; Base Atk +14, Grp +29; Atk +28 melee (2d6+20, *+2 spiked chain*); Full Atk +28/+23/+18 melee (2d6+20, *+2 spiked chain*) and +23 melee (1d8+5, bite) and +23 gore (1d8+5 gore); Space/Reach 10ft./10ft. (15 ft. with spiked chain), SA breath weapon, powerful charge 4d6+11, rage 2/day; SQ darkvision 60 ft., immune to acid, sleep, and paralysis, low-light vision, natural cunning, scent, trap sense +1, uncanny dodge; AL CN; SV Fort +18, Ref +13, Will +12; Str 32, Dex 16, Con 20, Int 12, Wis 10, Cha 8.

Skills: Intimidate +16, Listen +17, Search +14, Sense Motive +4, Spot +15, Survival +10, Swim +21.

Feats: Combat Reflexes, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (spiked chain), Improved Bull Rush, Iron Will, Multiattack, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (spiked chain), Weapon Specialization (spiked chain).

Languages: Common, Draconic, Giant.

Breath Weapon (Su): 1/day, 60-foot line of acid, 6d8; Reflex DC 18 half (DC 20 if raging). The save DC is Constitution-based.

Rage (Ex): While raging, Zarik's statistics change as follows: AC 28, touch 12, flat-footed 25; Grp +31; Atk +30 melee (2d6+23, *+2 spiked chain*); Full Atk +30/+25/+20 melee (2d6+23, *+2 spiked chain*) and +25 melee (1d8+6, bite) and +25 gore (1d8+6 gore); SA powerful charge 4d6+13; SV Fort +20, Will +14; Str 36, Con 24.

Possessions: *+3 chain shirt, +2 spiked chain, cloak of resistance +3, gloves of Dexterity +2, ring of protection +2, potion of bull's strength* (2), *potion of bear's endurance* (2), *potion of see invisibility* (2), *potion of cure serious wounds* (2), 1,900 gp.

Zarkad, male hobgoblin warrior 2: CR 1; Medium humanoid (hobgoblin); HD 2d8+2; hp 15; Init +1; Spd 30 ft.; AC 17, touch 11, flat-footed 16; Base Atk +2; Grp +4; Atk or Full Atk +4 melee (1d8+2/19–20, longsword) or +3 ranged (1d6+2, javelin); SA —; SQ darkvision 60 ft.; AL LE; SV Fort +4, Ref +1, Will +0; Str 14, Dex 13, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 12.

Skills: Hide –3, Intimidate +3, Listen +4, Move Silently +1, Spot +4.

Feats: Alertness.

Languages: Goblin.

Possessions: Banded mail, longsword, 2 javelins, two *potions of cure light wounds*, pouch containing 15 gp and 88 sp.

Zarn Kyass, male ogre mage fighter 4: CR 12; Large giant; HD 5d8+4d10+36; hp 85; Init +4; Spd 40 ft., fly 40 ft. (good); AC 22, touch 9, flat-footed 22; Base Atk +7; Grp +16; Atk +13 melee (3d6+10/19–20, *+1 greatsword*) or +6 ranged (2d6+5/×3, composite longbow); Full Atk +13/+6 melee (3d6+10/19–20, *+1 greatsword*) or +6/+1 ranged (2d6+5/×3, composite longbow); Space/Reach 10 ft./10 ft.; SA spell-like abilities; SQ darkvision 90 ft., flight, low-light vision, regeneration 5, SR 19; AL LE; SV Fort +12, Ref +2, Will +4; Str 21, Dex 10, Con 18, Int 14, Wis 14, Cha 17.

Skills: Concentration +16, Listen +12, Spellcraft +10, Spot +12.

Feats: Cleave, Combat Expertise, Improved Initiative, Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Weapon Focus (greatsword), Weapon Specialization (greatsword).

Languages: Common, Dwarven, Giant, Orc.

Spell-Like Abilities (caster level 9th): At will—*darkness, invisibility*; 1/day—*charm person* (DC 14), *cone of cold* (DC 18), *gaseous form, polymorph, sleep* (DC 14).

Possessions: *+2 chain shirt, +1 greatsword, amulet of natural armor +2*, composite longbow (+5 Str) with 20 arrows.

Zenith Splintershield, male dwarf fighter 7/dwarven defender 3: CR 10; Medium humanoid; HD 7d10+24 plus 3d12+9; hp 88; Init +1; Spd 20 ft.; AC 24, touch 12, flat-footed 23; Base Atk +10; Grp +14; Atk +16 melee (1d10+7/19–20/×3, *+1 dwarven waraxe*); Full Atk +16/+11 melee (1d10+7/19–20/×3, *+1 dwarven waraxe*); SA —; SQ dwarf traits, defensive stance 2/day, uncanny dodge; AL LE; SV Fort +11, Ref +4, Will +4; Str 19, Dex 13, Con 16, Int 10, Wis 8, Cha 12.

Skills: Intimidate +11, Jump +8, Sense Motive +2, Spot +2.

Feats: Dodge, Endurance, Improved Critical (dwarven waraxe), Power Attack, Quick Draw, Toughness, Weapon Focus (dwarven waraxe), Weapon Specialization (dwarven waraxe).

Languages: Common, Dwarven.

Defensive Stance: Zenith's defensive stance lasts for 8 rounds. It gives him +2 to Str, +4 to Con, +2 on saves, and +4 to AC. His stats change to hp 108; AC 28; Full Atk +17/+12 melee (1d10+8/19–20/×3, *+1 dwarven waraxe*); Fort +15, Ref +6, Will +6 (not factoring in Zenith's dwarven bonuses); Str 21, Con 20.

Possessions: *+1 full plate, +1 heavy steel shield, +1 dwarven waraxe, gauntlets of ogre power +2, amulet of health +2, sphere of the unseen.*

Recurring NPCs

Some of the more important NPCs in this campaign gain experience behind the scenes as the game progresses. These NPCs (Fario, Fellian, Jenya, Shensen, and the Stormblades) are encountered often as the campaign progresses, and can serve as allies, recurring enemies, or even cohorts for the PCs. Since they level up throughout the campaign, these eight NPCs are detailed in their own section at the end of this appendix.

Each of these NPCs has a stat block that represents them at the time they are first encountered by the PCs. Following the stat block is a table that details how that character progresses with each level. Note that when one of these characters gains an upgrade to an item, she does not keep the less powerful version of the item. As the game progresses, each of these NPCs should level up to keep their character level equal to the average party level –1. Note that in some cases, this means that the NPC won't level up for a few adventures, since they're waiting for the PCs to "catch up."

ANNAH TASKERHILL'S LEVEL PROGRESSION

Level	HP	AC	Melee/Ranged	F/R/W	Spells/Day	Special
Ari 1/Brd 4	27	16	+5	+2/+5/+6	3/2/0	—
Ari 1/Brd 5	31	17	+5	+2/+5/+6	3/3/1	—
Ari 1/Brd 6	36	17	+6	+3/+6/+7	3/3/2	*Suggestion*
Ari 1/Brd 7	40	17	+7	+3/+6/+7	3/3/2/0	—
Ari 1/Brd 8	45	17	+8	+3/+7/+8	3/3/3/1	Insprire courage +2
Ari 1/Brd 9	49	17	+8	+4/+7/+8	3/3/3/2	Inspire greatness
Ari 1/Brd 10	54	17	+9	+4/+8/+9	3/3/3/2/0	—
Ari 1/Brd 11	58	17	+10	+4/+8/+9	3/3/3/3/1	—
Ari 1/Brd 12	63	19	+11	+5/+9/+10	3/3/3/3/2	*Song of freedom*
Ari 1/Brd 13	67	20	+11	+5/+9/+10	3/3/3/3/2/0	—
Ari 1/Brd 14	72	21	+12	+5/+10/+11	4/3/3/3/3/1	Inspire courage +3
Ari 1/Brd 15	76	21	+13	+6/+10/+11	4/4/3/3/3/2	Inspire heroics
Ari 1/Brd 16	81	21	+14	+6/+11/+12	4/4/4/3/3/2/0	—
Ari 1/Brd 17	85	21	+14	+6/+11/+12	4/4/4/4/3/3/1	—
Ari 1/Brd 18	90	21	+15	+7/+12/+13	4/4/4/4/4/3/2	*Mass suggestion*

Every time Annah gains a level, she gains a number of scrolls. For character levels 5–8, she gains 700 gp in scrolls per level. For character levels 10–14, she gains 1,125 gp in scrolls per level. And for character levels 15–19, she gains 2,275 gp in scrolls per level. She can cast spells from these scrolls with Use Magic Device, so she usually picks spells that aren't on the bard spell list.

Each time she gains a bard level, Annah adds one rank to Bluff, Diplomacy, Forgery, Gather Information, Knowledge (local), Knowledge (nobility and royalty), Perform (stringed instrument), Tumble, and Use Magic Device.

Annah Taskerhill, female human aristocrat 1/bard 3: CR 3; Medium humanoid; HD 1d8+1 plus 3d6+3; hp 22; Init +1; Spd 30 ft.; AC 16, touch 11, flat-footed 15; Base Atk +2; Grp +1; Atk or Full Atk +4 melee (1d6–1, masterwork rapier) or +4 ranged (1d8/19–20, masterwork light crossbow); SA fascinate, spells; SQ bardic music, bardic knowledge +5, countersong, inspire competence, inspire courage +1; AL CN; SV Fort +2, Ref +4, Will +5; Str 8, Dex 13, Con 12, Int 14, Wis 10, Cha 16.

Skills: Bluff +10, Diplomacy +12, Forgery +9, Gather Information +10, Knowledge (local) +9, Knowledge (nobility and royalty) +9, Perform (stringed instrument) +10, Tumble +4, Use Magic Device +6.

CORA LATHENMIRE'S LEVEL PROGRESSION

Level	HP	AC	Melee	Ranged	F/R/W
Ari 1/Swa 4	34	14	+7	+7	+5/+6/+2
Ari 1/Swa 5	41	15	+8	+8	+5/+6/+2
Ari 1/Swa 6	47	15	+9	+9	+6/+7/+3
Ari 1/Swa 7	54	16	+11	+11	+6/+8/+3
Ari 1/Swa 8	60	17	+13	+12	+7/+8/+3
Ari 1/Swa 8/Dul 1	67	19	+15	+14	+7/+11/+3
Ari 1/Swa 8/Dul 2	73	20	+16	+15	+7/+12/+3
Ari 1/Swa 8/Dul 3	80	21	+19	+16	+8/+12/+3
Ari 1/Swa 8/Dul 4	86	21	+20	+17	+8/+14/+3
Ari 1/Swa 8/Dul 5	93	23	+21	+18	+8/+14/+3
Ari 1/Swa 8/Dul 6	99	24	+22	+19	+9/+15/+4
Ari 1/Swa 8/Dul 7	106	26	+23	+20	+9/+15/+4
Ari 1/Swa 8/Dul 8	112	26	+24	+21	+9/+16/+4
Ari 1/Swa 8/Dul 9	119	26	+25	+22	+10/+16/+5
Ari 1/Swa 8/Dul 10	126	28	+26	+23	+10/+17/+5

**Cora no longer wears leather armor at this level.*

Each time she gains a swashbuckler level, Cora adds one rank to Balance, Bluff, Escape Artist, Jump, Sense Motive, Swim, and Tumble.

Each time she gains a duelist level, Cora adds one rank to Balance, Bluff, Escape Artist, Jump, Perform (dance), Sense Motive,

Feats Gained	Ability Increase	Spells Learned	Gear Aquired
—	—	*enthrall, suggestion*	—
Improved Disarm	—	*silent image, mirror image*	*Ring of protection +1*
—	—	—	*Heward's Handy Haversack*
—	+1 Cha	*detect thoughts, charm monster, glibness*	*Cloak of Charisma +2*
Improved Trip	—	*lesser geas*	*+1 rapier*
—	—	—	*Circlet of persuasion*
—	—	*scrying, dimension door, dominate person*	*+1 glamered chain shirt*
Greater Spell Focus (enchantment)	+1 Cha	*modify memory*	*Wand of magic missile* (9th)
—	—	—	*Amulet of natural armor +2*
—	—	*freedom of movement, mislead, song of discord*	*Ring of protection +2*
Extend Spell	—	*greater dispel magic*	*Cloak of Charisma +4, +2 glamered chain shirt*
—	+1 Cha	—	*Cloak of Charisma +6*
—	—	*unseen servant, seeming, geas/quest, project image*	*Boots of speed*
Enlarge Spell	—	*tongues, programmed image*	*Tome of leadership and influence +1*
—	—	*displacement*	*Ring of shooting stars*

Feats: Combat Expertise, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (whip)[B], Spell Focus (enchantment), Weapon Finesse.

Languages: Common, Elven, Gnome.

Bard Spells Known (3/2; caster level 3rd): 0—*dancing lights, detect magic, mage hand, mending, prestidigitation, read magic*; 1st—*charm person* (DC 15), *cure light wounds, expeditious retreat.*

Possessions: *+1 chain shirt*, masterwork rapier, masterwork light crossbow with 20 bolts, *wand of cat's grace* (15 charges), two *potions of cure light wounds*, noble's outfit, masterwork lute, gold ring (80 gp) leather pouch containing 40 gp.

Cora Lathenmire, female human aristocrat 1/ swashbuckler 3: CR 3; Medium humanoid; HD 1d8+1 plus 3d10+3; hp 28; Init +2; Spd 30 ft.; AC 14, touch 12, flat-footed 12; Base Atk +3; Grp +4; Atk or Full Atk +6 melee (1d6+2/18–20, *+1 rapier*) or +6 ranged (1d8+1/×3, masterwork composite longbow); SA insightful strike; SQ grace +1; AL CN; SV Fort +4, Ref +6, Will +2; Str 13, Dex 15, Con 12, Int 14, Wis 8, Cha 10.

Skills: Balance +5, Bluff +7, Diplomacy +2, Escape Artist +5, Intimidate +6, Jump +4, Knowledge (nobility and royalty) +6, Listen +3, Perform (dance) +4, Ride +6, Sense Motive +2, Spot +3, Swim +4, Tumble +5.

Special	Feats Gained	Ability Increase	Gear Aquired
—	—	—	—
Dodge +1	Mobility	—	*Ring of protection +1*
—	—	—	—
Acrobatic charge	—	+1 Dex	*Bracers of armor +2**
Improved flanking	Weapon Focus (rapier)	—	*Amulet of natural armor +1*
Canny defense	—	—	*Gloves of Dexterity +2*
Improved reaction +2	—	—	*Headband of intellect +2*
Enhanced mobility	Improved Critical (rapier)	+1 Str	*+2 rapier*
Grace	—	—	*Boots of striding and springing*
Precise strike +1d6	—	—	*Bracers of armor +4*
Acrobatic charge	Combat Expertise	—	*Headband of intellect +4*
Elaborate parry	—	+1 Int	*Ring of protection +3*
Improved reaction +4	—	—	*Cape of the mountebank*
Deflect Arrows	Spring Attack	—	*+2 speed rapier*
Precise strike +2d6	—	—	*Bracers of armor +6, ring of evasion*

FARIO ELLEGEATH'S LEVEL PROGRESSION

Level	HP	AC	Melee*	Ranged	F/R/W	Special
Rog 2/Ftr 1	17	14	+6/+5	+4	+3/+5/–1	Evasion
Rog 2/Ftr 2	24	16	+7/+7	+6	+4/+6/–1	—
Rog 3/Ftr 2	28	16	+8/+8	+6	+5/+6/+0	Sneak attack +2d6, trap sense +1
Rog 3/Ftr 3	35	16	+9/+9	+7	+5/+7/+1	—
Rog 4/Ftr 3	39	16	+10/+10	+8	+5/+8/+1	Uncanny Dodge
Rog 4/Ftr 4	46	17	+11/+11	+9	+6/+8/+1	—
Rog 5/Ftr 4	50	17	+11/+11	+9	+6/+8/+1	Sneak attack +3d6
Rog 5/Ftr 5	57	17	+13/+13	+10	+6/+8/+1	—
Rog 6/Ftr 5	61	17	+14/+14	+11	+7/+9/+2	Trap sense +2
Rog 6/Ftr 6	68	18	+15/+15	+13	+8/+11/+3	—
Rog 7/Ftr 6	72	19	+16/+16	+13	+8/+11/+3	Sneak attack +4d6
Rog 7/Ftr 7	79	25	+17/+17	+14	+8/+11/+3	—
Rog 8/Ftr 7	83	25	+19/+19	+15	+8/+12/+3	Improved uncanny dodge
Rog 8/Ftr 8	90	26	+21/+20	+17	+11/+15/+5	—
Rog 9/Ftr8	94	26	+21/+20	+18	+12/+15/+6	Sneak attack +5d6, trap sense +3
Rog 9/Ftr 9	101	26	+22/+21	+19	+12/+16/+7	—
Rog 10/Ftr 9	162	27	+23/+22	+20	+15/+17/+7	Defensive roll

**The first number indicates Fario's best attack with his longsword, and the second number indicates his best attack with his short sword. If he fights with both at once, remember to add the appropriate penalties.*

Each time he gains a rogue level, Fario adds one rank to Disguise, Escape Artist, Gather Information, Hide, Listen, Move Silently, Open Lock, Sense Motive, and Spot.

Each time he gains a fighter level, Fario adds one rank to Climb, Jump, and Swim.

Feats: Dodge, Lightning Reflexes, Power Attack, Weapon Finesse[B].

Languages: Common, Elven, Gnome.

Grace (Ex): A swashbuckler gains a +1 competence bonus on Reflex saves at 2nd level. This bonus increases to +2 at 11th level and +3 at 20th level. A swashbuckler loses this bonus when wearing medium or heavy armor or when carrying a medium or heavy load.

Insightful Strike (Ex): At 3rd level becomes able to place her finesse attacks where they deal greater damage. She applies her Intelligence bonus as a bonus on damage rolls (in addition to any Strength bonus she may have) with any light weapon, as well as any other weapon that can be used with Weapon Finesse. Targets immune to sneak attacks or critical hits are immune to the swashbuckler's insightful strike. A swashbuckler cannot use

FELLIAN SHARD'S LEVEL PROGRESSION

Level	HP	AC	Melee	Ranged	F/R/W	Spells/Day	Special
Rog 2/Clr 1	16	15	+0	+4	+3/+7/+4	3/3	Evasion
Rog 2/Clr 2	21	15	+1	+5	+4/+7/+5	4/4	—
Rog 3/Clr 2	25	16	+2	+6	+5/+7/+6	4/4	Sneak attack +2d6, trap sense +1
Rog 3/Clr 3	30	16	+3	+7	+6/+9/+7	4/4/3	—
Rog 4/Clr 3	34	16	+4	+8	+6/+10/+7	4/4/3	Uncanny dodge
Rog 4/Clr 4	39	18	+5	+11	+7/+12/+8	5/5/4	—
Rog 5/Clr 4	43	21	+5	+11	+7/+12/+8	5/5/4	Sneak Attack +3d6
Rog 5/Clr 4/Pwd 1	48	21	+5	+11	+9/+14/+8	5/5/4	Fast movement +5, sure stride
Rog 5/Clr 4/Pwd 2	53	22	+6	+12	+10/+15/+8	5/5/4	Bonus Feat
Rog 5/Clr 4/Pwd 3	58	23	+7	+13	+10/+15/+9	5/5/4	Fast movement +10, nature's grace
Rog 5/Clr 4/Pwd 4	63	23	+8	+16	+11/+16/+9	5/5/4	Bonus Feat
Rog 5/Clr 4/Pwd 5	68	23	+8	+16	+11/+16/+9	5/5/4	Fast Movement +15, introspection (Lake)
Rog 6/Clr 4/Pwd 5	72	23	+9	+19	+12/+17/+10	5/5/4	Trap sense +2
Rog 7/Clr 4/Pwd 5	77	24	+10	+22	+12/+19/+10	5/5/4	Sneak attack +4d6
Rog 8/Clr 4/Pwd 5	81	28	+11	+23	+12/+20/+10	5/5/4	Improved uncanny dodge
Rog 9/Clr 4/Pwd 5	86	28	+11	+23	+15/+22/+13	5/5/4	Sneak attack +5d6, trap sense +3
Rog 10/Clr 4/Pwd 5	90	31	+12	+25	+15/+24/+13	5/5/4	Improved evasion

Each time he gains a rogue level, Fellian adds one rank to Bluff, Disable Device, Gather Information, Listen, Search, Sense Motive, Spot, and Tumble. He adds a half rank to Knowledge (geography).

Each time he gains a cleric level, Fellian adds one rank to Concentration, Knowledge (religion), and Survival.

Each time he gains a pathwarden level, Fellian adds one rank to Knowledge (geography), Knowledge (nature), Listen, Spot, and Survival.

Feats Gained	Ability Increase	Gear Aquired
Two-Weapon Defense	—	Masterwork short sword
Weapon Focus (short sword)	+1 Dex	*+1 leather armor*
—	—	—
Quickdraw	—	*+1 longsword*
—	—	*+1 shortsword*
Weapon Specialization (longsword)	+1 Dex	*Ring of protection +1*
Improved Two-Weapon Fighting	—	—
—	—	*Gauntlets of ogre power +2*
—	—	*+1 keen longsword*
Dodge, Weapon Specialization (short sword)	+1 Dex	*+1 keen shortsword*
—	—	*Ring of protection +2*
—	—	*+4 mithril breastplate*
Mobility	—	*Belt of giant Strength +4*
Greater Weapon Focus (longsword)	+1 Dex	*Gloves of Dexterity +4, cloak of resistance +2*
—	—	*+1 flaming burst composite longbow (+4 Str)*
Greater Two-Weapon Fighting	—	*+1 flaming keen longsword, +1 flaming keen shortsword*
—	—	*Amulet of health +6, ring of protection +3*

this ability when wearing medium or heavy armor or when carrying a medium or heavy load.

Possessions: Leather armor, *+1 rapier*, masterwork composite longbow (+1 Str), noble's outfit, *potion of bull's strength*, two *potions of cure light wounds*, leather pouch containing 12 gp and 10 sp.

The swashbuckler core class appears in *Complete Warrior*. Cora starts taking levels in the duelist prestige class at 10th level.

Dodge +1 (Ex): A swashbuckler is trained at focusing her defense on a single opponent in melee once she reaches 5th level. During her action, she may designate an opponent and receive a +1 dodge bonus to Armor Class against melee attacks from that opponent. She can select a new opponent on any action. A swashbuckler loses this bonus when wearing medium or heavy armor or when carrying a medium or heavy load.

Acrobatic Charge (Ex): A swashbuckler of 7th level can charge in situations where others cannot. She may charge over difficult terrain.

Improved Flanking (Ex): At 8th level, a swashbuckler who is flanking an opponent gains a +4 bonus instead of a +2 bonus on attacks.

Fario Ellegoth, male half-elf rogue 1/fighter 1: CR 2; Medium humanoid; HD 1d6+1+1d10+1; hp 13; Init +2; Spd 30 ft.; AC 14, touch 12, flat-footed 12; Base Atk +1; Grp +3; Atk +5 melee (1d8+2/19–20, masterwork longsword) or +3 ranged (1d8+2/×3, composite

Feats Gained	Ability Increase	Gear Aquired
Run	—	—
—	+1 Dex	—
—	—	*Ring of protection +1*
Track	—	*Cloak of protection +1*
—	—	*+1 shortbow*
—	+1 Dex	*Gloves of Dexterity +2*
Point Blank Shot	—	*+2 chain shirt*
—	—	*Lens of detection*
Rapid Shot	—	*Dusty rose ioun stone* (+1 AC)
Precise Shot	+1 Dex	*Ring of protection +2*
Weapon Focus (longbow)	—	*+2 longbow*
—	—	—
Improved Critical (longbow)	—	*Greater bracers of archery*
—	+1 Dex	*Gloves of Dexterity +4*
—	—	*+4 mithral breastplate*
Manyshot	—	*+2 speed longbow, cloak of resistance +3*
—	—	*Gloves of Dexterity +6, amulet of natural armor +3*

JENYA URIKAS' LEVEL PROGRESSION

LEVEL	HP	AC	MELEE	F/R/W	SPELLS/DAY*
Clr 6	36	18	+5	+6/+1/+8	5/5/5/4
Clr 7	42	18	+6	+6/+1/+8	6/6/5/4/2
Clr 8	47	18	+7	+7/+1/+10	6/6/5/5/4
Clr 9	53	19	+8	+7/+2/+10	6/6/6/5/4/2
Clr 10	58	23	+9	+8/+2/+11	6/6/6/5/5/3
Clr 11	64	23	+10	+10/+4/+13	6/7/6/6/5/3/2
Clr 12	69	23	+11	+11/+5/+15	6/8/6/6/5/5/3
Clr 13	75	23	+11	+11/+5/+15	6/8/7/6/6/5/3/2
Clr 14	80	25	+12	+12/+5/+16	6/8/7/6/6/5/4/3
Clr 15	86	25	+13	+12/+6/+17	6/8/8/7/6/6/5/3/2
Clr 16	91	27	+14	+13/+6/+18	6/8/8/7/6/6/5/4/3
Clr 17	97	27	+14	+13/+6/+18	6/8/8/7/7/6/6/4/3/2
Clr 18	102	27	+15	+17/+10/+22	6/8/8/7/7/6/6/4/4/3
Clr 19	108	27	+16	+17/+10/+22	6/8/8/7/7/7/6/5/4/4

*Includes domain spells.

**Additionally, Jenya creates 1d4 potions and 1d4 scrolls each time she gains a level.

longbow); Full Atk +3 melee (1d8+2/19–20, masterwork longsword) and +1 melee (1d6+1/19–20, short sword) or +3 ranged (1d8+2/×3, composite longbow); SA sneak attack +1d6; SQ trapfinding, half-elf traits, permanent *Rary's telepathic bond* with Meerthan; AL N; SV Fort +3, Ref +4, Will –1; Str 14, Dex 15, Con 13, Int 12, Wis 8, Cha 10.

Skills: Climb +3, Diplomacy +2, Disguise +4, Escape Artist +6, Gather Information +6, Hide +6, Jump +3, Listen +3, Move Silently +6, Open Lock +6, Sense Motive +3, Spot +3, Swim +3.

Feats: Two-Weapon Fighting, Weapon Focus (longsword).

Languages: Common, Draconic, Elven.

Possessions: Leather armor, masterwork longsword, short sword, composite longbow (Str +2) with 20 arrows, 2 *potions of invisibility*, gray cloak, spyglass, leather pouch containing 8 gp and 25 sp.

Fellian Shard, male half-elf rogue 1/cleric 1 (Fharlanghn): CR 2; Medium humanoid; HD 1d6+1 plus 1d8+1; hp 12; Init +2; Spd 30 ft.; AC 15, touch 12, flat-footed 13; Base Atk +0; Grp –1; Atk or Full Atk –1 melee (1d8–1/19–20, longsword) or +3 ranged (1d8/×3, masterwork shortbow); SA sneak attack +1d6, spells, turn undead; SQ trapfinding; AL N; SV Fort +3, Ref +6, Will +4; Str 8, Dex 14, Con 12, Int 13, Wis 15, Cha 10.

SHENSEN HESSERIL'S LEVEL PROGRESSION

LEVEL	HP	AC	MELEE	F/R/W	DRUID SPELLS/DAY
Mnk 2/Brd 1/Drd 4	33	15	+5	+7/+7/+11	5/4/3
Mnk 2/Brd 1/Drd 5	38	16	+6	+7/+8/+11	5/4/3/2
Mnk 2/Brd 1/Drd 6	42	17	+7	+8/+9/+13	5/4/4/3
Mnk 2/Brd 1/Drd 7	47	17	+8	+8/+9/+13	6/5/4/3/2
Mnk 2/Brd 1/Drd 7/Pwd 1	50	18	+9	+10/+12/+13	6/5/4/3/2
Mnk 2/Brd 1/Drd 7/Pwd 2	54	21	+10	+11/+13/+13	6/5/4/4/3
Mnk 2/Brd 1/Drd 7/Pwd 3	57	23	+11	+11/+13/+14	6/5/4/4/3
Mnk 2/Brd 1/Drd 7/Pwd 4	61	26	+12	+12/+14/+14	6/5/5/4/3/1
Mnk 2/Brd 1/Drd 7/Pwd 5	64	28	+13	+12/+15/+15	6/6/5/4/3/2
Mnk 2/Brd 1/Drd 8/Pwd 5	69	29	+15	+13/+16/+17	6/6/6/5/5/3
Mnk 2/Brd 1/Drd 9/Pwd 5	73	29	+15	+13/+17/+17	6/7/6/5/4/3/2
Mnk 2/Brd 1/Drd 10/Pwd 5	77	29	+18	+14/+17/+18	6/7/6/5/4/4/3
Mnk 2/Brd 1/Drd 11/Pwd 5	81	30	+19	+14/+17/+19	6/7/7/6/5/4/3/2

Once Shensen reaches 12th level, she begins making wands. Each time she gains a level from 13th–14th she gains a wand containing a 1st-level druid spell. Each time she gains a level from 15th–16th she gains a wand containing a 2nd-level druid spell. Each time she gains a level from 17th–18th she gains a wand containing a 3rd-level druid spell. When she reaches 19th level, she gains a wand containing a 4th-level druid spell. Spells contained in these wands operate at minimum caster level and cannot have expensive material components.

Each time she gains a druid level, Shensen adds one rank to Knowledge (nature), Listen, Spot, and Survival. She adds a half rank to Gather Information and Knowledge (geography).

Each time she gains a pathwarden level, Shensen adds one rank to Concentration, Knowledge (religion), Listen, Search, Spot, and Survival.

Feats Gained	Ability Increase	Gear Aquired**
Extra Turning	—	*+1 heavy steel shield*
—	—	—
—	+1 Wis	*periapt of Wisdom +2*
Weapon Focus (heavy mace)	—	*ring of protection +1*
—	—	*+2 full plate*
—	—	*cloak of resistance +2*
Quicken Spell	+1 Wis	—
—	—	*+1 holy heavy mace*
—	—	*+3 full plate, +2 heavy steel shield*
Extend Spell	—	*periapt of Wisdom +4*
—	+1 Wis	*ring of protection +3*
—	—	—
Maximize Spell	—	*+1 holy disrupting heavy mace, cloak of resistance +5*
—	—	*+3 heavy fortification full plate*

Skills: Bluff +4, Concentration +2, Diplomacy +2, Disable Device +5, Gather Information +6, Knowledge (geography) +3, Knowledge (religion) +2, Listen +6, Search +5, Sense Motive +6, Spot +6, Survival +3, Tumble +6.

Feats: Lightning Reflexes.

Languages: Common, Draconic, Elven.

Cleric Spells (3/3; caster level 1st): Fellian prefers to prepare spells that enhance or aid his mobility, or spells that augment his armor class or Dexterity. He dislikes melee, and thus eschews touch attacks, preferring combat spells with ranges.

Domains: Luck (reroll one die roll 1/day), Strength (*freedom of movement* up to 1 round/cleric level per day; Survival is a class skill).

Special	Feats Gained	Ability Increase	Gear Aquired
Resist nature's lure	—	—	*Heward's Handy Haversack*
Wild shape (1/day)	—	+1 Dex	—
Wild shape (2/day)	Natural Spell	—	*Circlet of Wisdom +2*
Wild shape (3/day)	—	—	*Boots of striding and springing*
Fast movement +5, sure stride	—	—	*Gloves of Dexterity +2*
Increased Spellcasting	Craft Wand	+1 Wis	*Ring of force shield*
Fast movement =10, nature's grace	—	—	*Ring of protection +2*
Increased Spellcasting	—	—	*Bracers of armor +3*
Fast movement +15, introspection (Animal)	Extend Spell	—	*Circlet of Wisdom +4*
Wild shape (Large)	—	+1 Wis	*Gloves of Dexterity +4*
Venom immunity	—	—	*Rod of thunder and lightning*
Wild shape (4/day)	Maximize Spell	—	*Amulet of mighty fists +2*
Wild shape (Tiny)	—	—	*Circlet of Wisdom +6, minor cloak of displacement*

Possessions: *+1 leather armor*, longsword, masterwork shortbow with 20 arrows, 2 potions of invisibility, 2 scrolls of cure light wounds, gray cloak, holy symbol of Fharlanghn, leather pouch containing 13 gp and 15 sp.

Jenya Urikas, female human cleric 5 (St. Cuthbert): CR 5; Medium Humanoid; HD 5d8+5; hp 31; Init –1; Spd 20 ft.; AC 17, touch 9, flat-footed 17; Base Atk +3; Grp +3; Atk or Full Atk +4 melee (1d8+1, *+1 heavy mace*); SA spells, turn undead; SQ —; AL LN; SV Fort +5, Ref +0, Will +7; Str 10, Dex 8, Con 12, Int 13, Wis 16, Cha 14.

Skills: Concentration +5, Diplomacy +7, Heal +14, Knowledge (history) +6, Knowledge (religion) +6, Spellcraft +6.

Feats: Brew Potion, Scribe Scroll, Skill Focus (Heal).

Languages: Common, Dwarven.

Cleric Spells (5/5/4/3; caster level 5th): Jenya prefers to prepare spells that protect her in combat and allow her to overcome her enemies via nonviolent means. She always prepares at least one of the various restorative spells, such as *lesser restoration, remove paralysis, restoration, remove disease, neutralize poison*, and so on.

Domains: Protection (protective ward grants +5 resistance bonus on next save, 1/day), Strength (1/day gain bonus to Str equal to cleric level for 1 round)

Possessions: *+1 chainmail*, heavy steel shield, *+1 heavy mace*, 2 scrolls of *cure serious wounds*, brown robe, 2 vials of holy water, keys to temple, holy symbol of St. Cuthbert.

TODD VANDERBOREN'S LEVEL PROGRESSION

LEVEL	HP	AC	MELEE	RANGED	F/R/W	SPELLS/DAY	SPECIAL
Ari 1/Rog 4	26	17	+7	+7	+2/+7/+3	—	Uncanny dodge
Ari 1/Rog 5	31	17	+8	+7	+2/+7/+3	—	Sneak attack +3d6
Ari 1/Rog 5/Asn 1	35	17	+8	+7	+2/+9/+3	1	Sneak attack +4d6, death attack, poison use
Ari 1/Rog 5/Asn 2	41	17	+9	+8	+2/+10/+3	2	+1 save against poison, improved uncanny dod
Ari 1/Rog 5/Asn 3	45	17	+10	+9	+3/+10/+4	3/1	Sneak attack +5d6
Ari 1/Rog 5/Asn 4	51	18	+12	+11	+3/+12/+4	4/2	+2 save against poison
Ari 1/Rog 5/Asn 5	55	18	+12	+11	+3/+12/+4	4/3	sneak attack +6d6
Ari 1/Rog 5/Asn 6	61	19	+14	+13	+4/+14/+5	4/4/1	+3 save against poison
Ari 1/Rog 5/Asn 7	65	20	+16	+15	+4/+15/+5	4/4/2	Sneak attack +7d6
Ari 1/Rog 5/Asn 8	71	22	+17	+16	+4/+16/+5	4/4/3/1	+4 save against poison, hide in plain sight
Ari 1/Rog 5/Asn 9	75	22	+17	+16	+5/+16/+6	4/4/3/2	Sneak attack +8d6
Ari 1/Rog 5/Asn 10	81	22	+18	+17	+5/+17/+6	4/4/3/3	+5 save against poison
Ari 1/Rog 6/Asn 10	85	23	+20	+19	+6/+19/+7	4/4/3/3	Trap sense +2
Ari 1/Rog 7/Asn 10	91	23	+22	+20	+6/+19/+7	4/4/3/3	Sneak attack +9d6
Ari 1/Rog 8/Asn 10	95	29	+23	+21	+6/+20/+7	4/4/3/3	—

Each time he gains a rogue level, Todd adds one rank to Appraise, Bluff, Disable Device, Disguise, Hide, Knowledge (local), Listen, Move Silently, Sense Motive, Search, and Tumble.

Each time he gains an assassin level, Todd adds one rank to Bluff, Disguise, Hide, Knowledge (local), Listen, Move Silently, and Tumble.

Shensen Tesseril, female half-drow monk 2/bard 1/druid 3: CR 6; Medium humanoid; HD 5d8+1d6; hp 29; Init +1; Spd 30 ft.; AC 15, touch 15, flat-footed 14; Base Atk +3; Grp +2; Atk +4 melee (1d6, unarmed strike); Full Atk +2/+2 (1d6, unarmed strike); SA *fascinate*, flurry of blows, spells; SQ bardic music, bardic knowledge +2, countersong, evasion, inspire courage +1; AL NG; SV Fort +6, Ref +7, Will +11; Str 8, Dex 13, Con 10, Int 14, Wis 16, Cha 12.

Skills: Concentration +5, Diplomacy +3, Jump +4, Gather Information +7, Knowledge (geography) +6, Knowledge (nature) +6, Knowledge (religion) +6, Listen +9, Perform (stringed instrument) +7, Search +3, Spot +9, Survival +7, Tumble +6.

Feats: Combat Reflexes[B], Improved Unarmed Strike[B], Run, Stunning Fist[B], Track, Weapon Finesse.

Languages: Common, Druidic, Elven, Halfling.

Bard Spells Known (2; caster level 1st):

ZACHARY ASLAXIN II'S LEVEL PROGRESSION

LEVEL	HP	AC	MELEE*	F/R/W	CLR SPELLS/DAY	RGR SPELLS/DAY
Ari 1/Rgr 2/Clr 2	37	16	+5/+4	+9/+4/+7	4/4	—
Ari 1/Rgr 3/Clr 2	45	16	+6/+5	+10/+5/+9	4/4	—
Ari 1/Rgr 3/Clr 3	52	16	+7/+6	+10/+6/+9	4/4/3	—
Ari 1/Rgr 4/Clr 3	60	16	+8/+7	+11/+7/+10	4/4/3	1
Ari 1/Rgr 4/Clr 4	67	16	+10/+8	+12/+7/+11	5/5/4	1
Ari 1/Rgr 5/Clr 4	75	17	+11/+10	+12/+7/+11	5/5/4	1
Ari 1/Rgr 5/Clr 5	82	17	+12/+11	+12/+7/+11	5/5/4/3	1
Ari 1/Rgr 6/Clr 5	90	17	+13/+12	+13/+8/+13	5/6/4/3	2
Ari 1/Rgr 6/Clr 6	97	17	+14/+13	+14/+9/+15	5/6/5/4	3
Ari 1/Rgr 7/Clr 6	105	17	+16/+15	+14/+9/+15	5/6/5/4	3
Ari 1/Rgr 7/Clr 7	112	20	+17/+16	+14/+9/+15	6/7/5/4/3	3
Ari 1/Rgr 8/Clr 7	120	20	+18/+17	+15/+10/+15	6/7/5/4/3	3/1
Ari 1/Rgr 8/Clr 8	127	20	+19/+18	+20/+14/+20	6/7/5/5/4	3/1
Ari 1/Rgr 9/Clr 8	135	20	+20/+19	+20/+14/+22	6/7/6/5/4	3/2
Ari 1/Rgr 9/Clr 9	142	25	+20/+19	+20/+15/+22	6/7/6/5/4/3	3/2

**The first number indicates Zachary's best attack with his rapier, and the second number indicates his best attack with his kukri. If he fights with both at once, remember to add the appropriate penalties.*

***Includes domain spells.*

Each time he gains a ranger level, Zachary adds one rank to Concentration, Heal, Knowledge (nature), Listen, Spot, and Survival.

Each time he gains a cleric level, Zachary adds one rank to Concentration and Knowledge (religion).

Feats Gained	Ability Increase	Spells Learned	Gear Aquired
—	—	—	—
Weapon Focus (rapier)	—	—	*+1 rapier*
—	—	*disguise self, feather fall*	—
—	+1 Dex	*obscuring mist*	*Boots of elvenkind*
Dodge	—	*invisibility, spider climb*	*Cloak of elvenkind*
—	—	*true strike, darkness*	*Gloves of Dexterity +2*
—	—	—	*3 human slaying arrows*
Mobility	+1 Dex	*alter self, false life, nondetection, misdirection*	*+1 composite shortbow* (+1 Str)
—	—	—	*Gloves of Dexterity +4*
—	—	*deep slumber, dimension door, freedom of movement, poison*	*+3 studded leather armor*
Spring Attack	—	—	*+1 wounding rapier*
—	+1 Dex	*modify memory*	*Portable hole*
—	—	—	*Gloves of Dexterity +6*
Improved Critical (rapier)	—	—	*Rapier of puncturing*
—	—	—	*Ring of proteciton +4, ring of force shield*

Druid Spells (4/3/2, caster level 3rd): Shensen's primary ranged capability in combat comes from her spells, so at least half of her spells are ranged attack spells of some sort. Of the rest, she typically splits evenly between healing spells and spells to aid and assist her movement.

Animal Companion: When the PCs encounter Shensen, her most recent animal companion (an eagle) is dead, slain by Tongueater. She doesn't call a new companion until she becomes a 4th-level druid, at which point she calls on a leopard.

Possessions: *Ring of protection +1, ring of jumping, wand of magic fang* (13 charges), *wand of entangle* (7 charges), *wand of barkskin +2* (8 charges), masterwork lute, leather pouch with 41 gp.

Todd Vanderboren, male human aristocrat 1/rogue 3: CR 3; Medium humanoid; HD 1d8+1 plus 3d6+3; hp 22; Init +7; Spd 30 ft.; AC 17, touch 13, flat-footed 14; Base Atk +2; Grp +3; Atk or Full Atk +6 melee (1d6+1/18–20, masterwork rapier) or +6 ranged (1d6+1/×3, masterwork composite shortbow); SA sneak attack +2d6; SQ evasion, trap sense +1, trapfinding; AL CE; SV Fort +2, Ref +6, Will +3; Str 12, Dex 16, Con 13, Int 14, Wis 10, Cha 8.

Skills: Appraise +9, Bluff +6, Diplomacy +3, Disable Device +5, Disguise +6 (+8 acting), Hide +8, Knowledge (architecture and engineering) +6, Knowledge (local) +5,

Special	Feats Gained	Ability Increase	Gear Aquired
—	—	—	*+1 chain shirt*
Endurance	Spring Attack	—	*Cloak of resistance +1*
—	—	—	—
Animal companion	—	+1 Wis	*Periapt of Wisdom +2*
—	Two-Weapon Defense	—	*+1 rapier*
Favored enemy (dragon) +4,	—	—	*+1 kukri, ring of protection +1*
—	—	—	*Gauntlets of ogre power*
Improved Two-Weapon Fighting	Power Attack	+1 Wis	—
—	—	—	*Periapt of Wisdom +4*
Woodland stride	—	—	*Belt of giant strength +4*
—	Improved Critical (rapier)	—	*+4 chain shirt*
Swift tracker	—	+1Wis	*Winged boots*
—	—	—	*Cloak of resistance +5*
Evasion	Improved Critical (kukri)	—	*Periapt of Wisdom +6*
—		—	*Ring of protection +5*

Stormblades

Cora Lathenmire

Zachery Aslaxin II

Annah Taskerhill

Todd Vanderboren

Striders of Fharlanghn

Fellian Shard

Fario Ellegoth

Shensen Tesseril

Knowledge (nobility and royalty) +6, Listen +7, Move Silently +8, Sense Motive +6, Search +5, Tumble +6.

Feats: Improved Initiative, Stealthy, Weapon Finesse.

Languages: Common, Dwarven, Gnome.

Possessions: *+1 studded leather armor*, masterwork rapier, masterwork composite shortbow (+2 Str) with 20 arrows, 3 *sleep arrows*, *elixir of hiding*, *potion of glibness*, noble's outfit, masterwork thieves' tools, leather pouch containing 34 gp and 4pp.

Zachary Aslaxin II, male human aristocrat 1/ranger 2/cleric 1: CR 3; Size type; HD 4d8+12; hp 30; Init +1; Spd 30 ft.; AC 15, touch 11, flat-footed 14; Base Atk +2; Grp +3; Atk +4 melee (1d6+1/18–20, masterwork rapier); Full Atk +2 melee (1d6+1/18–20, masterwork rapier) and +1 melee (1d4/18–20, masterwork kukri); SA favored enemy humanoid (reptilian) +2, spells, turn undead; SQ wild empathy +2; AL CN; SV Fort +8, Ref +4, Will +6; Str 12, Dex 13, Con 16, Int 8, Wis 14, Cha 10.

Skills: Concentration +6, Diplomacy +4, Heal +4, Intimidate +4, Knowledge (nature) +1, Knowledge (nobility and royalty) +3, Knowledge (religion) +1, Listen +4, Spot +4, Survival +8.

Feats: Dodge, Mobility, Track[B], Two-Weapon Fighting[B], Weapon Focus (rapier).

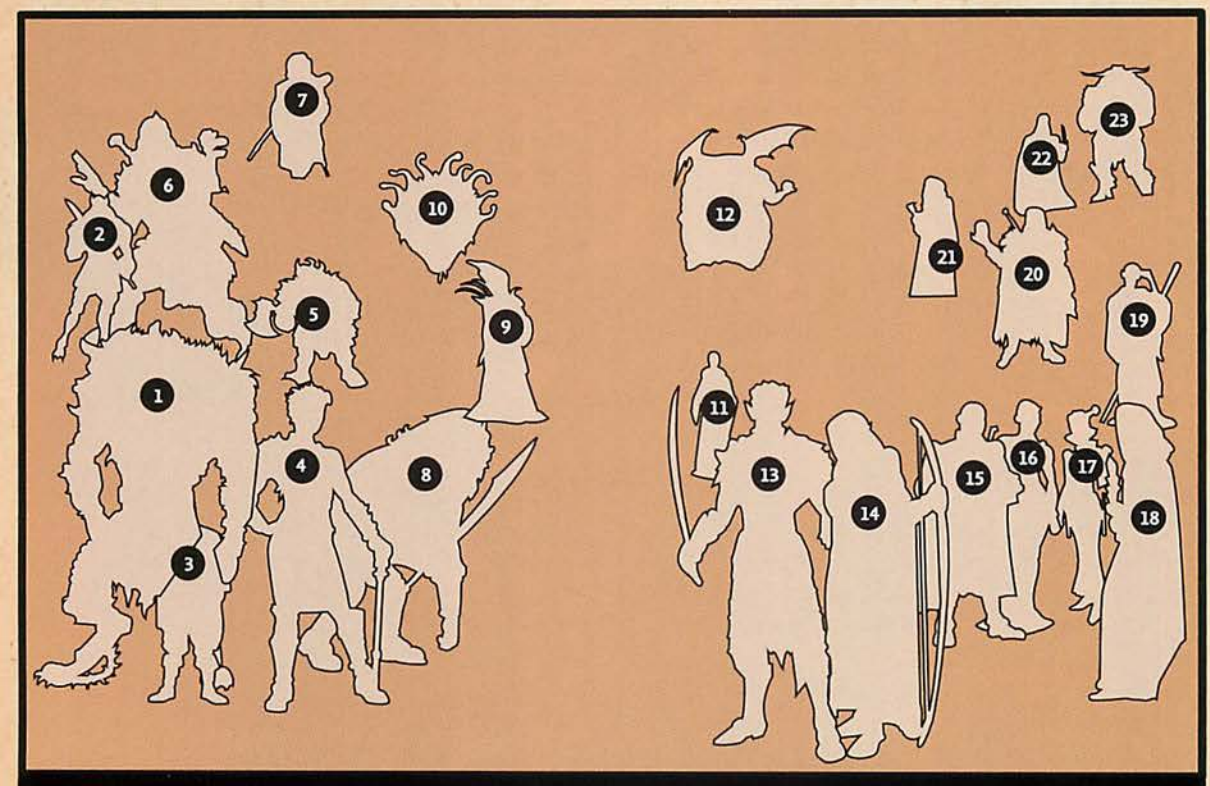
Cleric Spells (3/3, caster level 1st): Zachary can take the most physical abuse of the Stormblades, and thus often finds himself in the front line in melee. He prefers to prepare spells that aid his Armor Class or combat spells that are delivered by touch attacks. He's also the primary healer of the group, so often keeps spells like *lesser restoration* and *remove paralysis* prepared.

Domains: Luck (reroll 1 die roll 1/day), Strength (1/day gain bonus to Str equal to cleric level for 1 round)

Languages: Common.

Possessions: Masterwork chain shirt, masterwork rapier, masterwork kukri, *wand of cure light wounds* (40 charges), *wand of light* (35 charges), *pearl of power* (1st level), noble's outfit, silver holy symbol, leather pouch containing 7 gp.

Animal Companion: Once he can call an animal companion, Zachary calls upon a large mastiff (use stats for riding dog).



1. Tarkilar
2. Aszithef
3. Skaven Umbermead
4. Triel Eldurast
5. Kazmojen
6. Ti'irok
7. Kaurophon
8. Tongueater
9. Thifirane
10. Vhalantru
11. Shebeleth Regidin
12. Dyr'ryd
13. Viirdran Daraqor
14. Kyan Winterstrike
15. Nulin Wiejeron
16. Ardeth Webb
17. Freija Doorgan
18. Embril Aloustinai
19. Thearynn Louvel
20. Alurad Sorizan
21. Ssythar Nahazir
22. Xokek
23. Gau Kleeoch

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APPENDIX V

CHARACTER CREATION

THE SHACKLED CITY

The Shackled City Adventure Path is a tough campaign. Vhalantru understands that adventurers are his greatest enemy, and for the past few decades has developed an excellent eye for appraising the potential of beginning adventurers. Under the ironic mantle of patron, he offers his aid and support to new adventurers, guiding them toward quests of great danger. He keeps the threat of high-level adventurers at bay by encouraging lower-level adventurers to take on quests that they cannot possibly handle. By the time the PCs finish Chapter One, they have caught his attention in this manner and he hopes that by encouraging them to take on the more dangerous adventures in Chapters Two, Three, and Four that they'll perish.

As a result, this campaign has a number of encounters and events that are designed to significantly challenge your players. Particularly dangerous encounters are indicated in the text; you'll want to take care with these encounters and perhaps drop subtle hints to your players that they might want to rest and recover from existing wounds before continuing. Or perhaps not.

In any event, when you gather your players for this campaign, you should inform them at the start that this is a difficult campaign. The rewards are great, but getting to them will be tough. The Shackled City Adventure Path is designed to challenge a group of six player characters—if your group has fewer numbers than this, you should consider reducing some of the dangers the PCs will face, or perhaps simply allow them more opportunities to rest.

To give the PCs a little bit of an "edge" in this campaign, you should use the following guidelines during character generation. Of course, if your players enjoy tougher adventures, you should ignore these suggestions and generate characters normally; just don't be surprised when Tongueater, Aushanna, or Nabthataron kill off a few more PCs than you expected them to!

Ability Scores: If you use the standard method for generating ability scores (roll 4d6 and drop the lowest result), allow the player to generate three sets of ability scores and then let him choose which set he wishes to use for his character. If you use the point-buy method to generate ability scores (*Dungeon Master's Guide*, page 169), allow the player to spend 28 points to purchase his ability scores.

Class Choices: Although *Shackled City* should provide characters of any class ample opportunities to shine, some classes may have particular troubles at certain points during the campaign. When you find out what kinds of classes your players are choosing, you should use the information given below to advise them on what choices might make the most sense for the campaign.

Barbarian: Much of this campaign takes place in dungeon or urban environs. As such, a barbarian designed to excel in the wilderness won't have as much to do as one who focuses his skill points on things like Climb, Intimidate, Jump, and Listen. If you have a barbarian in your group, you might want to spend additional time focusing on the plight of the half-orc mercenaries who are brought into town in Chapter Four, in order to give the barbarian character a group to identify with.

Bard: Bards are an excellent choice for this campaign. There are ample opportunities to influence important NPCs during the campaign, and skill in Bluff, Diplomacy, and Intimidate, plus access to enchantment and illusion spells, can be a great help in dealing with large crowds of people (as occurs in Chapters Four, Five, and Nine). If you have a bard in your group, you should make sure that the PCs have plenty of opportunities to interact with the Striders of Fharlanghn, the Chisel, and the town's nobility.

Cleric: There are only four established temples in Cauldron; temples to St. Cuthbert, Pelor, Kord, and Wee Jas. The Last Laugh thieves' guild has a small shrine of Olidammara within its hidden guildhouse. A shrine to Fharlanghn exists at the Lucky Monkey, and a loosely organized group of his faithful (the Striders) have a strong presence in the region. Additional shrines to Pelor, Wee Jas, Moradin, Yondalla, and Garl Glittergold can be found in the outlying towns and villages in the area. Clerics who worship one of these deities have an advantage in that they'll have a support structure of some sort to rely upon, although clerics of Wee Jas will eventually be forced to choose sides once the corruption within the Cathedral at Cauldron becomes apparent. Clerics of Heironeous, Ehlonna, Corellon Larethian, Boccob, and Obad-Hai are on their own in the Cauldron region, although they could find support in an allied church. Note also that while undead can be found in this campaign, they are not the campaign's focus.

Clerics who focus on feats to enhance their ability to turn undead might consider instead other divine feats that allow them to use their energy channeling ability for other uses. Finally, if you have a cleric in your group, make sure the corresponding church plays a more prominent role in the campaign. If the character's deity doesn't have an established church in the region, perhaps he is eventually tasked with founding one!

Druid: As with barbarians, you should bear in mind that much of this campaign takes place in urban and dungeon environs. Nonetheless, there are ample opportunities for a druid's specialized skills to shine, particularly in Chapters Three, Four, and Nine. The citizens of Cauldron know about animal companions, and probably won't react too violently to a druid's companion unless she takes a particularly large or exotic one. If you have a druid in your group, make sure that the Striders of Fharlanghn play a strong role in your game, since this organization adheres closely to classic druidic values.

Fighter: Fighters should have plenty to keep them busy in this campaign. If you have a fighter in your group, consider punching up the role that Cauldron's town guard plays in the campaign, as a fighter might consider joining such a group at a later date. The church of Kord is another good nomination for such a role.

Monk: There are no local monasteries or other establishments that cater to a monk's unique interests and skills. A monk is likely to be regarded by locals with a mixture of curiosity and quiet awe. If you have a monk in the party, consider changing Shensen Tesseril's advancement to focus more heavily on monk rather than druid, so she can serve as a mentor, ally, or even pupil for the PC monk.

Paladin: A paladin is an excellent choice for this campaign, although you should take care to keep meetings with Embril Aloustinai, Vhalantru, and other NPCs who are quietly evil behind the scenes to a minimum if you don't want to risk having them being found out by a *detect evil*. At the same time, don't punish the paladin by making her *detect evil* useless; you should be prepared to alter certain events in this campaign as necessary if, for example, the paladin realizes that one of the town's most important nobles is evil. If you have a paladin in your group, consider making the church of St. Cuthbert a focus of the adventure. If the paladin has some sort of relationship with Alek Tercival, Chapter Five should be quite memorable!

Ranger: The advice given above for barbarians and druids applies to rangers as well. One thing to note is that the ranger's favored enemy ability is unique amongst the class abilities; a poor choice of favored enemy can dramatically reduce the enjoyment of playing a ranger. In the Shackled City Adventure Path, the best choices for a ranger's favored enemies are animals, dragons, humanoid (human, goblinoid, or orc), or outsider (evil). Nevertheless, all choices should give a ranger at least a few chances through the campaign to use his favored enemy bonuses. If a ranger is in your group, make sure the Striders of Fharlanghn play an important role in your campaign.

Rogue: Rogue is an excellent choice for this campaign; there are a large number of traps for rogues to handle in the numerous dungeons, and a rogue focused in social skills could be an invaluable asset during the eruption of the volcano in Chapter Nine. If you have a rogue in your party, make sure that the Last Laugh has a more visible role. A PC rogue might wish to try to join this group, but more likely, the PC rogue will find her actions opposed by this guild, providing ample opportunities for amusing roleplay. Alternately, the PC may be tempted to join the Alleybashers—unlike the Last Laugh, this guild is quite disorganized and with a strong, charismatic leader in place (like a PC), this guild could be shaped into anything. The Chisel might make a good support option for a rogue who has no interest in joining the Last Laugh.

Sorcerer: Sorcerers pose an interesting possibility in this campaign. Since sorcerers gain their magical powers from some mystical inborn source, perhaps your group's sorcerer gains his powers due to the fact that he's one of the Shackleborn (see "Local Heroes," below). Alternately, the sorcerer could count one of Dhorlot the Dragon-Father's spawn as one of his ancestors. These links can be nothing more than flavor, or they can actually make a difference; if no one in the group gains the Sign of the Smoking Eye template in Chapter Five, maybe it's the sorcerer's bloodline that functions as a key to Adimarchus's cage in Chapter Twelve.

Wizard: The primary concern to keep in mind if there's a wizard in your group is one of campaign timing. Wizards need more down time between adventures than other classes, both to scribe new spells into their spellbooks and to take advantage of their bonus Item Creation feats. Later in the campaign, the opportunity for down time fades away; you should consider re-organizing some of the later events to have some gaps between them so the wizard will have a chance to do her thing. Wizards might have a keen interest in joining the Chisel, since that organization has a fairly extensive collection of secret lore.

LOCAL HEROES

The Shackled City Adventure Path works best if the PCs are locals from the Cauldron region. If they count Cauldron or one of the surrounding villages or towns as their home, they'll be all the more concerned about the region's fate and more likely to take an active interest in its defense. In order to encourage players to make their characters locals, consider allowing players to randomly determine or choose one of the following traits during character creation. These traits are similar to those introduced in *Unearthed Arcana*, save that their drawbacks are slightly less potent; this is intentional, and is meant

to reward a player who chooses to make his character local. If you let the players choose their local traits, give them a list to use to decide which trait they want, but keep in mind that many of these traits incorporate secrets that can only be discovered during play.

No NPC should be given any of these traits unless otherwise specified in the text; these are meant to be the marks of heroes. The average NPC is simply not important enough to gain the benefits of one of these local traits.

d%	Local Trait
01–10	Child of Jzadirune
11–20	Demonscarred
21–30	Dream Haunted
31–40	Long Shadowed
41–50	Mark of the Beast
51–60	Nobility
61–70	Scarred Soul
71–80	Scion of Surabar
81–90	Touched in the Head
91–100	Wyrm Blooded

Child of Jzadirune

One of your ancestors lived in Jzadirune at the time the Vanishing struck. You are especially resistant to diseases, but find the prospect of becoming sick yourself horrifying.

Benefit: You gain a +2 bonus on all saving throws made to resist the effects of disease.

Drawback: You suffer a –2 morale penalty on saving throws against fear while in the ruins of Jzadirune, or when fighting creatures that are diseased or can inflict disease with a spell, supernatural ability, or extraordinary ability.

Roleplaying Ideas: Your parents told you harrowing stories about the Vanishing, and your dreams are haunted by visions in which you catch the disease and slowly fade away.

Demonscarred

One of your ancestors was a half-fiend. As a result, you carry some of that taint with you.

Benefit: Regardless of your actual alignment, spells and spell-like abilities with the evil descriptor treat you as if your alignment were evil. Magic items are similarly fooled. An *unholy blight* spell, for example, won't damage you, no matter what your actual alignment is.

Drawback: Regardless of your actual alignment, spells and spell-like abilities with the good descriptor treat you as if your alignment were evil. Magic items are similarly fooled. A *holy word* spell, for example, will harm you even if you are good aligned.

Roleplaying Ideas: You are moody, gloomy, and have a short temper.

Dream Haunted

Your dreams are haunted by strange visions of tortured landscapes and deformed monsters. In some of these dreams, *you* are the deformed monster!

Benefit: You are used to fatigue, and suffer no penalties when you become fatigued. When you become exhausted, you are instead treated as if you are fatigued.

Drawback: You suffer a –2 penalty on saving throws against effects that cause madness or insanity, and on saving throws against *sleep* effects. If you are normally immune to *sleep* effects, you lose that immunity.

Roleplaying Ideas: You are always tired, though not to the point of fatigue. You tend to nod off when bored, and sometimes find it difficult to remember minor, relatively unimportant bits of information.

Long Shadowed

You are descended from a tribe of indigenous peoples who died out as a separate tribe many centuries ago. Still, this tribe's penchant for necromantic magic runs in your blood.

Benefit: You automatically stabilize if reduced to negative hit points. When you take damage from negative energy, you reduce the actual damage you take by 5 points.

Drawback: Healing magic works poorly on you. Whenever you regain hit points from magical healing, you gain 1 less point of healing per character level you possess, to a minimum of one point per die rolled.

Roleplaying Ideas: You are somewhat morbid and intrigued by death and undeath, even if these interests are purely to learn more of your enemies.

Mark of the Beast

One of your ancestors was a lycanthrope. Select a predatory animal of your choice; that animal feels a mystic bond with you.

Benefit: Animals have a strange reticence when they attack you, and suffer a –2 penalty on all attack rolls made against you. If you have the wild empathy ability, you gain a +1 bonus on wild empathy checks.

Drawback: You suffer a –4 penalty to saving throws made to resist lycanthropy, and take +1 point of damage from attacks made by silver weapons.

Roleplaying Ideas: You have a curious animal magnetism that is at once intriguing and disturbing. Your manners might be a bit crude, but you're loyal to your friends.

Nobility

You were born into a noble family.

Benefit: You start play with an additional 200 gp, and gain a +1 bonus on all Diplomacy and Intimidate checks made against citizens of Cauldron or the nearby villages. Certain NPCs in this campaign may react more favorably to your presence.

Drawback: You are well-known and recognizable, and suffer a –4 penalty on Disguise rolls made against citizens of Cauldron or the nearby villages. Certain NPCs in this campaign may react more poorly to your presence.

Roleplaying Ideas: You might be haughty, impatient, or condescending to others. You might spend money frivolously, believing that there'll always be more income to be had.

Scarred Soul

You've led a particularly tough life. Perhaps you're an orphan, or maybe you suffered some sort of traumatic experience as a child. Whatever the cause, your childhood experiences have left you jumpy and haunted.

Benefit: You gain a +2 bonus on initiative checks.

Drawback: Your experiences have left your mind less able to deal with trauma, and as a result you suffer a –1 penalty on all Will saves.

Roleplaying Ideas: You are quick to anger, jumpy, and possibly even a bit hyperactive. You're prone to feelings of paranoia and unfounded fear.

Scion of Surabar

You are a descendant of the man who discovered Cauldron, helped settle the region, and aided in the defeat of an ancient demonic army.

Benefit: Pride for your lineage girds your mind and soul. You gain a +2 morale bonus on saving throws against fear, death effects, and insanity or confusion.

Drawback: Demons that encounter you in this region (not those that you might fight on other planes) can instinctively sense your lineage and connection to their old enemy, and gain a +1 morale bonus on attack rolls and weapon damage rolls when fighting you.

Roleplaying Ideas: You are proud of your heritage, and quick to anger if another mocks it. You find demons intolerable, and some might see you as haughty or imperious.

Touched in the Head

You're a little crazy.

Benefit: Your mind is disorganized and chaotic. You gain a +1 bonus on all saving throws against mind-affecting effects, save for those effects that cause confusion or insanity.

Drawback: Your inability to concentrate for long makes you suffer a –1 penalty on all Wisdom-based skill checks.

Roleplaying Ideas: You have a number of strange quirks (whistling off-key, eating raw meat, a nervous tic, a tendency to scream at odd moments, and so on) that can make you difficult to get along with.

Wyrm Blooded

One of your ancestors was a half-black dragon. You have some sort of distinctively draconic feature, be it reptilian eyes, scales on the backs of your hands, or tiny vestigial horns on your head.

Benefit: You gain a +4 bonus on all saving throws against acid effects, a +2 bonus on Swim checks, and a +1 bonus on Listen and Spot checks.

Drawback: Your body isn't quite as limber as it should be. You take a –1 penalty on Reflex saves.

Roleplaying Ideas: You have an intensity about everything you do, and your emotions are powerful and often difficult for you to control.

SECRET EFFECTS

The Dream Haunted and Touched in the Head traits indicate a character has been touched by the madness of Adimarchus. This may have additional effects during the campaign, as you see fit.

The Wyrm Blooded trait indicates that one of the character's ancestors was in fact one of Dhorlot's sons or daughters.

The Scarred Soul trait indicates that the character is also one of the Shackleborn! The Carcerian Sign is plainly visible on this character's face if he is in the radius of an *invisibility purge*, anti-magic zone, or other region that suppresses invisibility. Likewise, characters that can see invisible things can see the Sign. Being one of the Shackleborn means that if the Cagewrights capture the PC, they may try to use her in the ritual of planar junction. Likewise, if their agents realize that the PC is one of the Shackleborn, they might try to capture her for the same reason. This could translate into ambushes by Last Laugh agents, attacks by cultists, or whatever you desire. The benefit and drawback for this trait are intentionally underwhelming, to discourage PCs from taking the trait and thus complicating the campaign. Still, having one of the PCs be one of the Shackleborn can make for truly memorable game play!

PLAYER HANDOUTS

THE SHACKLED CITY

The handouts reproduced in this appendix have been specifically designed to immerse your players in the world of Cauldron and the Shackled City Adventure Path.

For best results, clip the handouts directly from the page for a high-quality, vibrantly colored play experience. Since many readers would rather eat their lead miniatures than let a scissors touch their beloved gaming books, however, permission is granted to photocopy the handouts in this chapter for personal use only.

Alternately, readers may download a full-color PDF of these handouts at the Paizo Publishing website (paizo.com).

PLAYER'S MAP OF CAULDRON

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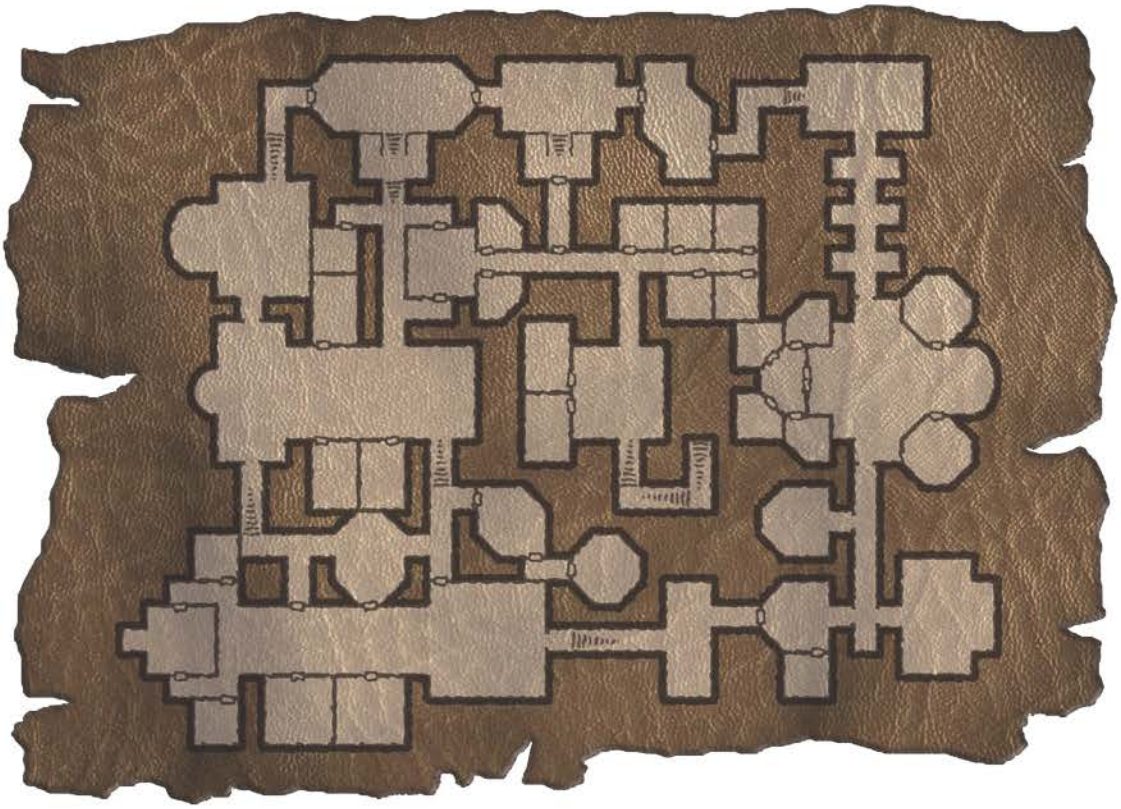

At Lucky Monkey. Have eight wands. Tavern's been attacked. Bandits led by barbaric apeman. Mortally wounded. Retreated to basement. They know we're here. Send assistance!

@Sarcem: Is that you? Rang on! Conserve your resources. I'll send out aid immediately. Send me another message when you carry but until then, have—

I know you're looking for the wands. I can help, for a price. If you're interested, come alone to the Lakeside Pavilion tonight at midnight. Bring 500 gold coins and you'll walk away with the location of the wands. Bring backup, and you'll never find them.

The locks are key to finding them. Look beyond the curtain, below the cauldron. Beware the doors with teeth. Descend into the malachite 'hold, where precious life is bought with gold. Half a dwarf binds them, but not for long.

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Player's Map of Jzadirune

CHAPTER ONE

Life's Bazaar

Strange Invitation

CHAPTER THREE

Flood Season

Sarcem's Sending

CHAPTER THREE

Flood Season

The Star Of Justice's Riddle

CHAPTER ONE

Life's Bazaar

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High Priestess,

As many have heard me say, the cages alone will not afford the completion of the ritual. The Sagewrights have built a matrix on which to support them, but due to the shortsightedness of the others, I have been left out of these discussions. You are my only ally amongst the Thirteen now. You must warn them that there is more hidden in the Soul Pillars that could prove of great import to their plans. What more is needed I cannot say, and so I continue to explore the mysteries of the Soul Pillars at great peril. Witthiss Wake grows ever more restless, and the insanity that lies frozen in Kattan-Kutal begins to stir. Yet I shall remain here until the end, in hope of unveiling the last of the Weavers' hidden lore. Still, the risk is great. My price has doubled.

F. Rhadius

I would like to meet with you at the Town Hall to discuss a very important matter. Please come at your earliest convenience or send notice that you are unable to attend.

Terreon Skellerans,
Captain of the Town Guard

1-SEE TO DECRIHNI. THE CONSTANT ORGAN PLAYING HAS GOT TO STOP.

2-SPEAK TO THE WYRM ABOUT THE COLLAR. ENSURE IT IS STILL CARED FOR.

3-SPEAK TO DYRYD ONCE THE PORTAL IS OPEN TO INQUIRE ABOUT THE DISPENSATION OF LAND.

4-ESTABLISH PLAN WITH NULIN AND THEARYNN TO ROUND UP REMAINING TOWNSFOLK AS WORKERS FOR THE LORDS FROM BEYOND.

~~5-KILLIN DIRCKNIKE.~~

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Letter From "F. Abradius"

CHAPTER SEVEN

Secrets of The Soul Pillars

T'irok Coalfire's Agenda

CHAPTER TEN

Thirteen Cages

The Birthmark Of The Shackleborn

CHAPTER SEVEN

Secrets of The Soul Pillars

The Captain's Summons

CHAPTER TWO

Drakthar's Way

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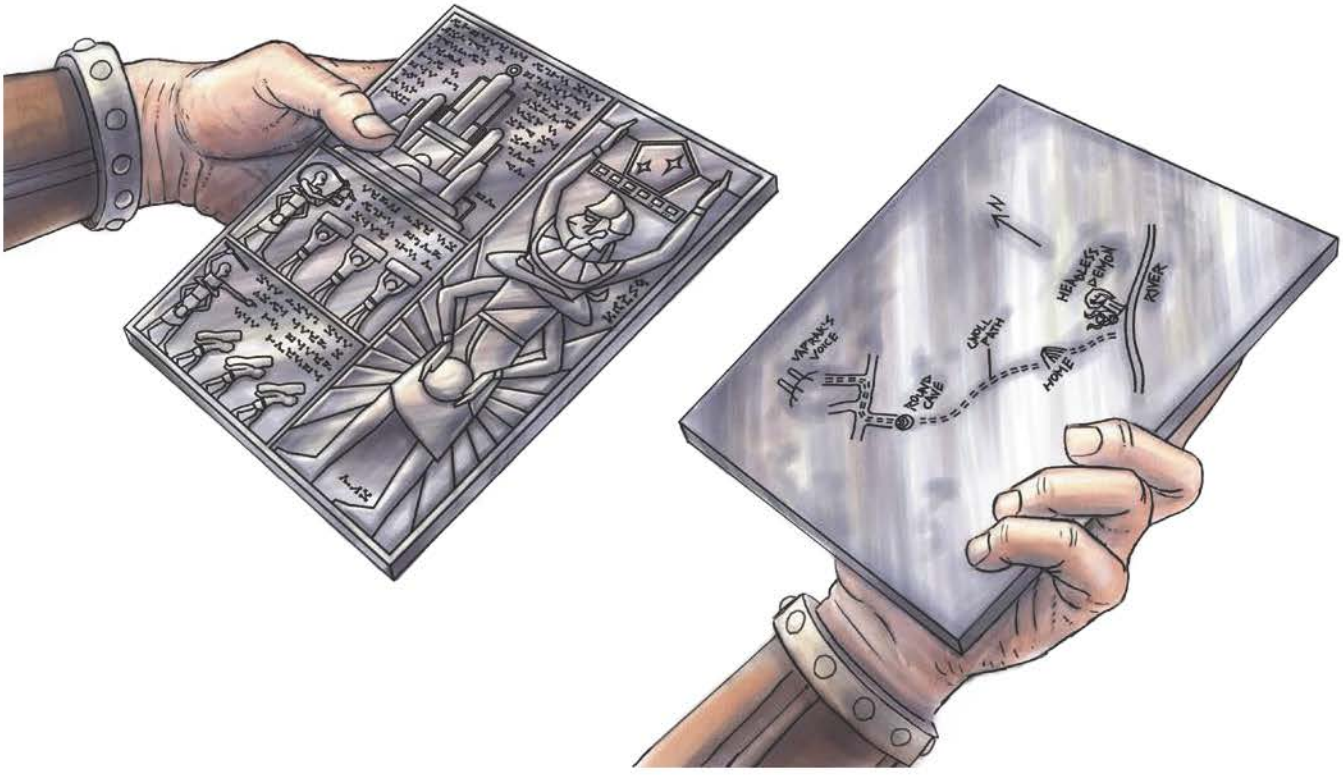

NOTICE

CITIZENS OF CAULDRON! LET YOUR VOICE BE HEARD!

Come one, come all to City Hall this evening! Those in power must learn that we do not welcome their indulgences! Their vices shall be borne by our pockets no more! The tax collectors are the lapdogs of their greed——let not their shadows besmirch our stoops! Speak your will! Voice your pains!

HELP US RETURN CAULDRON TO HER CHILDREN!

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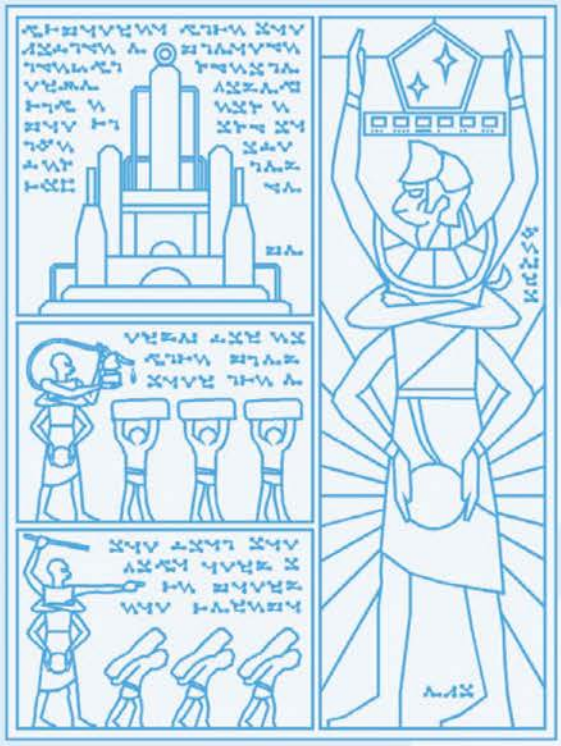

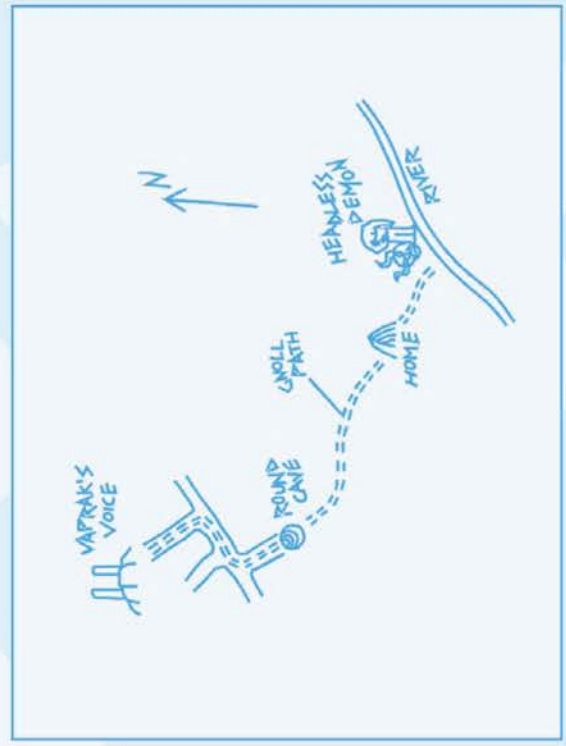

The Hegemonic Plate

CHAPTER FIVE

The Demonskar Legacy

Tax Demonstration Handbill

CHAPTER FIVE

The Demonskar Legacy

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CAULDRON

KEY

1 North Gate
2 East Gate
3 South Gate
4 West Gate
5 Town Hall
6 Town Guard Barracks
7 Church of St. Cuthbert
8 Maavu Warehouses
9 Slippery Eel Tavern
10 Cusp of Sunrise
11 Maavu's Main Warehouse
12 Tygot's Old Things
13 Maavu Imports
14 Drunken Morkoth Inn
15 Tipped Tankard Tavern
16 Garthûn Imports
17 Skie's Treasury
18 Lantern Street Orphanage
19 Coy Nixie
20 Lakeside Pavillion
21 Vanderboren Manor
22 Minuta's Board
23 Sure Foot Livery
24 Gurnezarn's Smithy
25 Temple of Lordly Might (Kord)
26 Lord Mayor's Residence
27 Weer's Elixirs
28 The Brass Trumpet
29 Church of Wee Jas
30 Ghelve's Locks
31 Orak's Bathhouse
32 Bluewater Academy
33 Church of Pelor
34 House Vhalantru
35 Westkey's Map Emporium
36 House Rhiavadi
37 Taskerhill Manor
38 Zanathor's Provisions
39 Lathenmire Manor
40 Entrance to Lava Tubes
41 Half-Orc Mercenary Camp

0 400 800 1200 1600 2000
Feet

WEST

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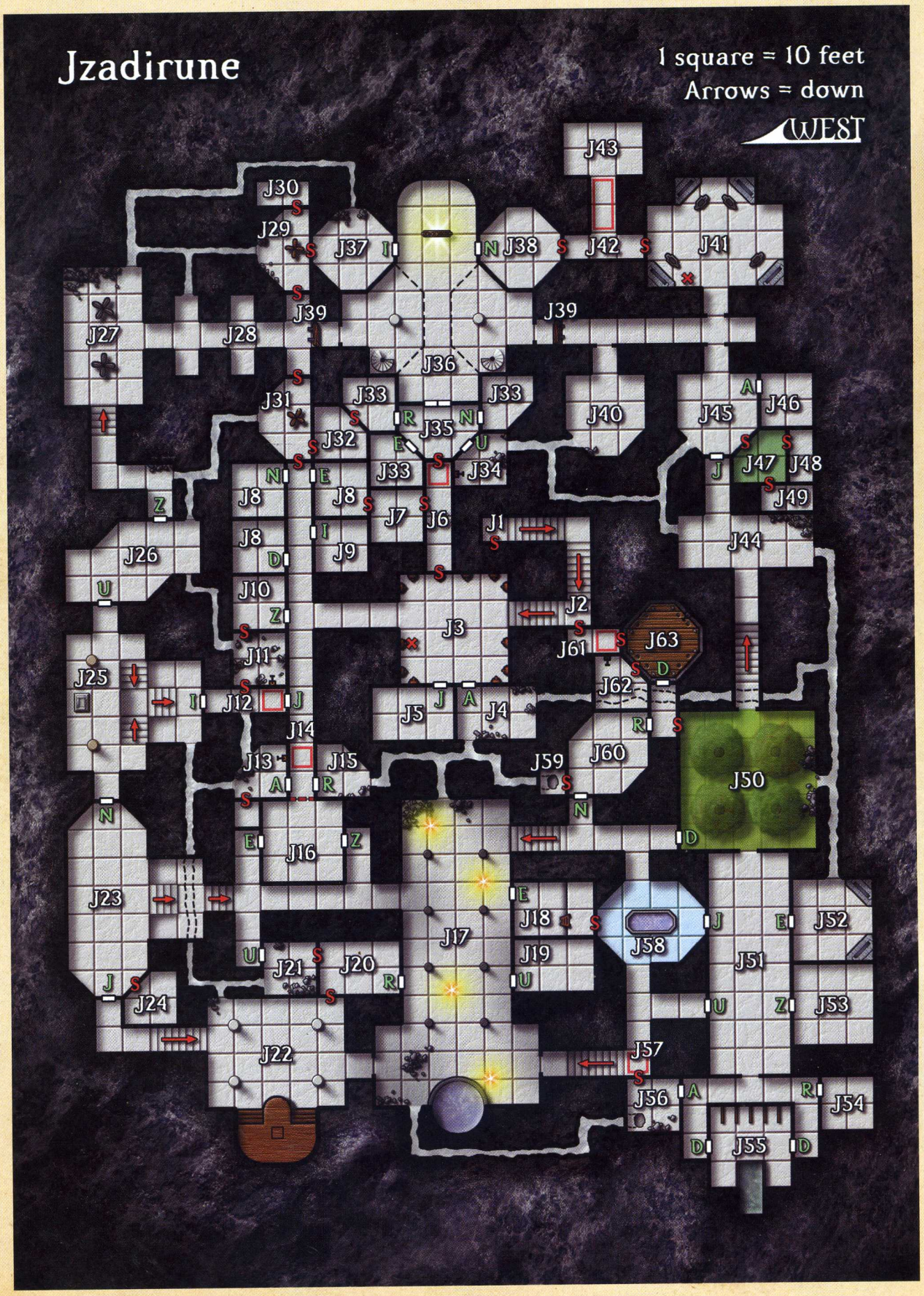
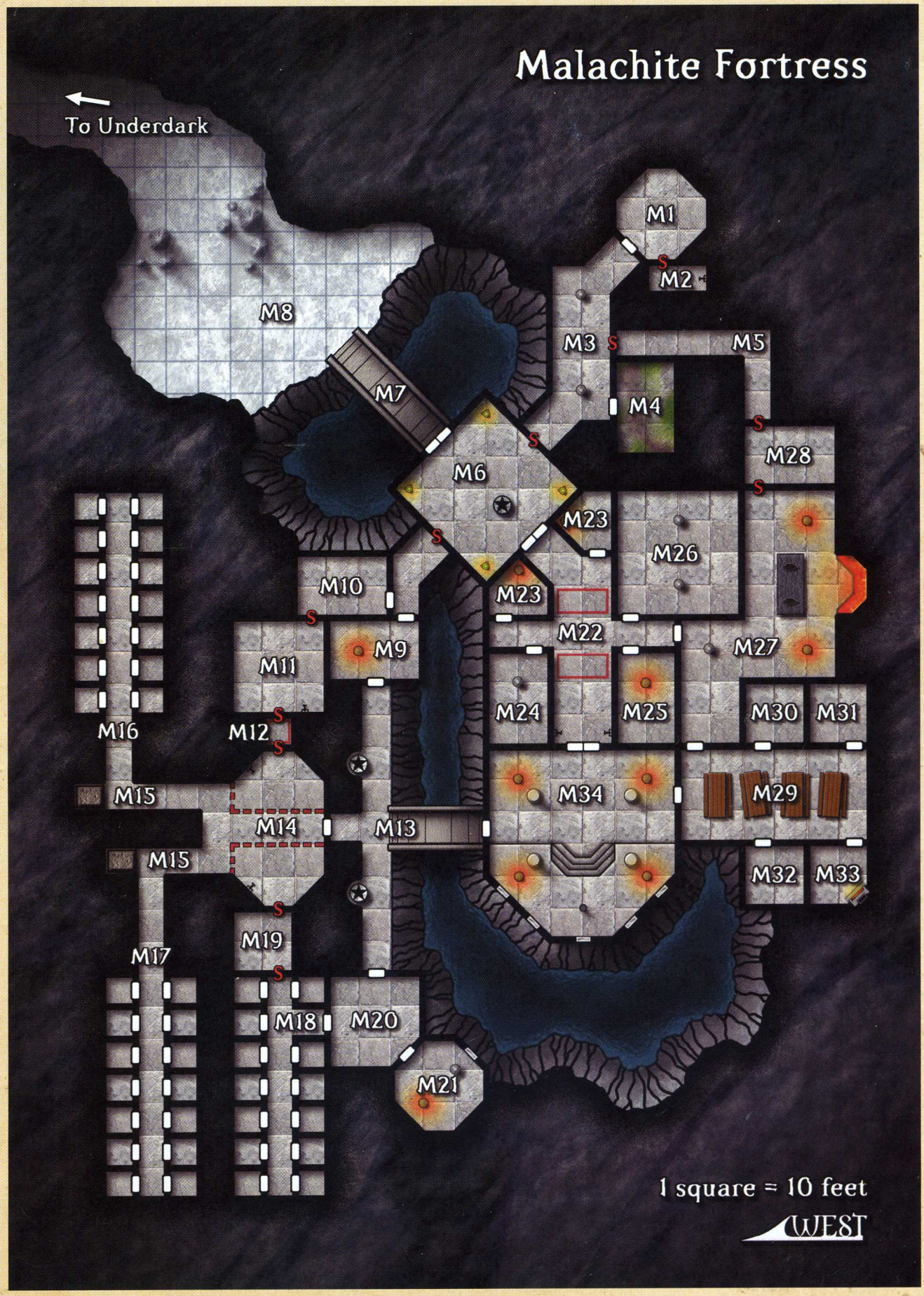
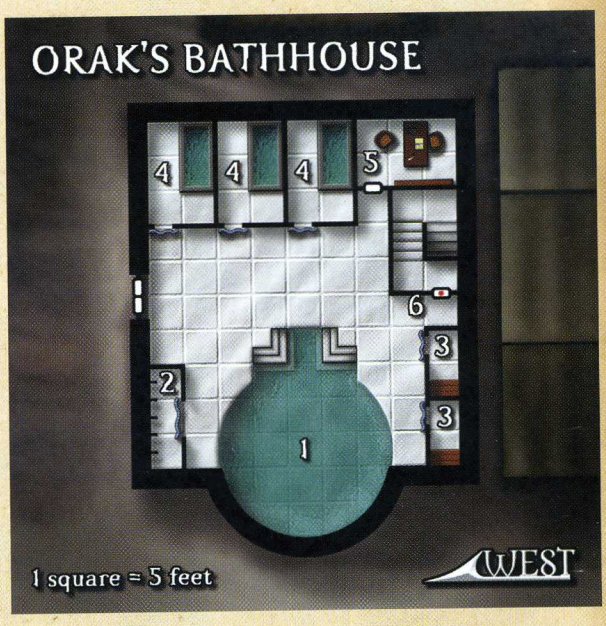
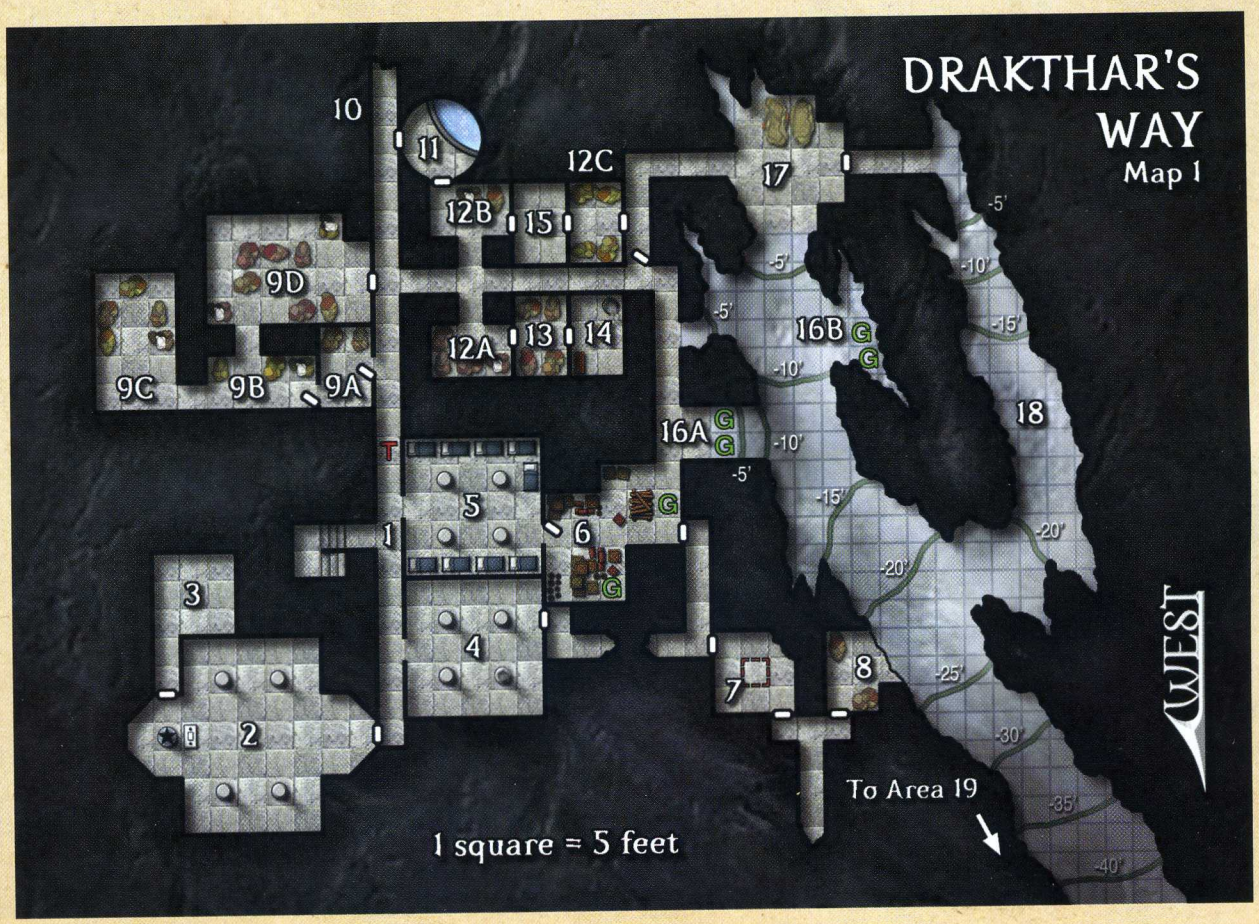
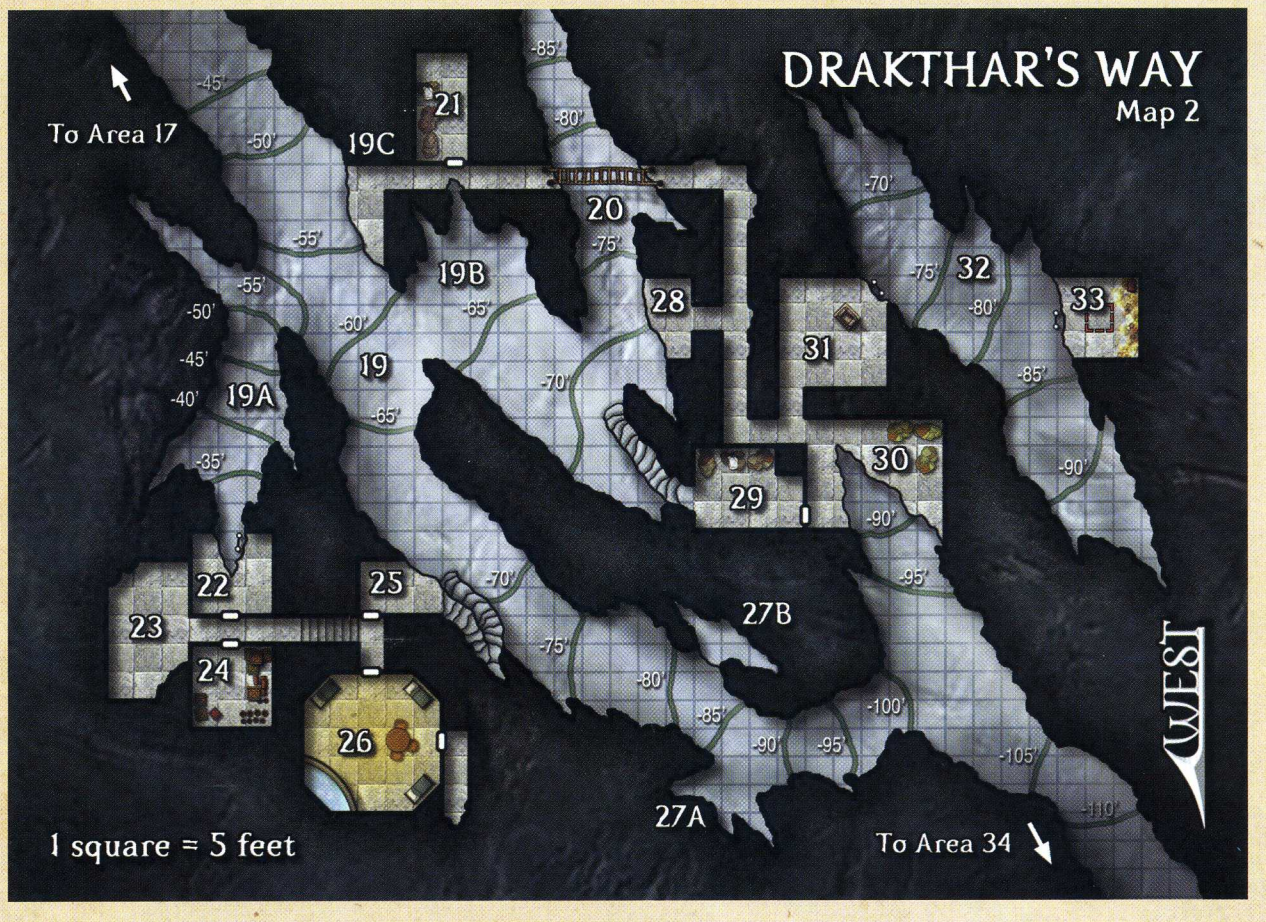

Jzadirune
1 square = 10 feet
Arrows = down
WEST
J43
J30
J29
J37
J38
J42
J41
J39
J39
J27
J28
J36
J31
J33
J33
J40
J45
J46
J32
J35
J47
J48
J34
J49
J8
J8
J7
J6
J1
J8
J9
J44
J26
J10
J2
J3
J61
J63
J11
J62
J25
J12
J5
J4
J14
J13
J15
J59
J60
J50
J16
J23
J18
J58
J52
J17
J19
J51
J21
J20
J24
J53
J22
J57
J56
J54
J55


Malachite Fortress
To Underdark
M1
M2
M3
M4
M5
M6
M7
M8
M9
M10
M11
M12
M13
M14
M15
M15
M16
M17
M18
M19
M20
M21
M22
M23
M23
M24
M25
M26
M27
M28
M29
M30
M31
M32
M33
M34
1 square = 10 feet
WEST

Ghelve's Locks
G5
Second Floor
G4
G2
S
Ground Floor
G1
G3
WEST


ORAK'S BATHHOUSE
4
4
4
5
6
3
2
3
1
1 square = 5 feet
WEST


DRAKTHAR'S WAY
Map 1
10
11
12C
12B
15
17
9D
12A
13
14
16B
G
9C
9B
9A
16A
18
T
5
6
1
3
4
2
7
8
To Area 19
1 square = 5 feet
WEST
-5'
-10'
-15'
-20'
-25'
-30'
-35'
-40'


DRAKTHAR'S WAY
Map 2
To Area 17
19C
21
20
19B
19
19A
28
31
32
33
30
29
22
23
24
25
26
27B
27A
WEST
To Area 34
1 square = 5 feet

DRAKTHAR'S WAY
Map 3
To Area 30
34
35
36
WEST
1 square = 5 feet

The Lucky Monkey
Upper Level
Ground Level
Basement
WEST
1 square = 5 feet
The Lucky Monkey
1 square = 10 feet
WEST

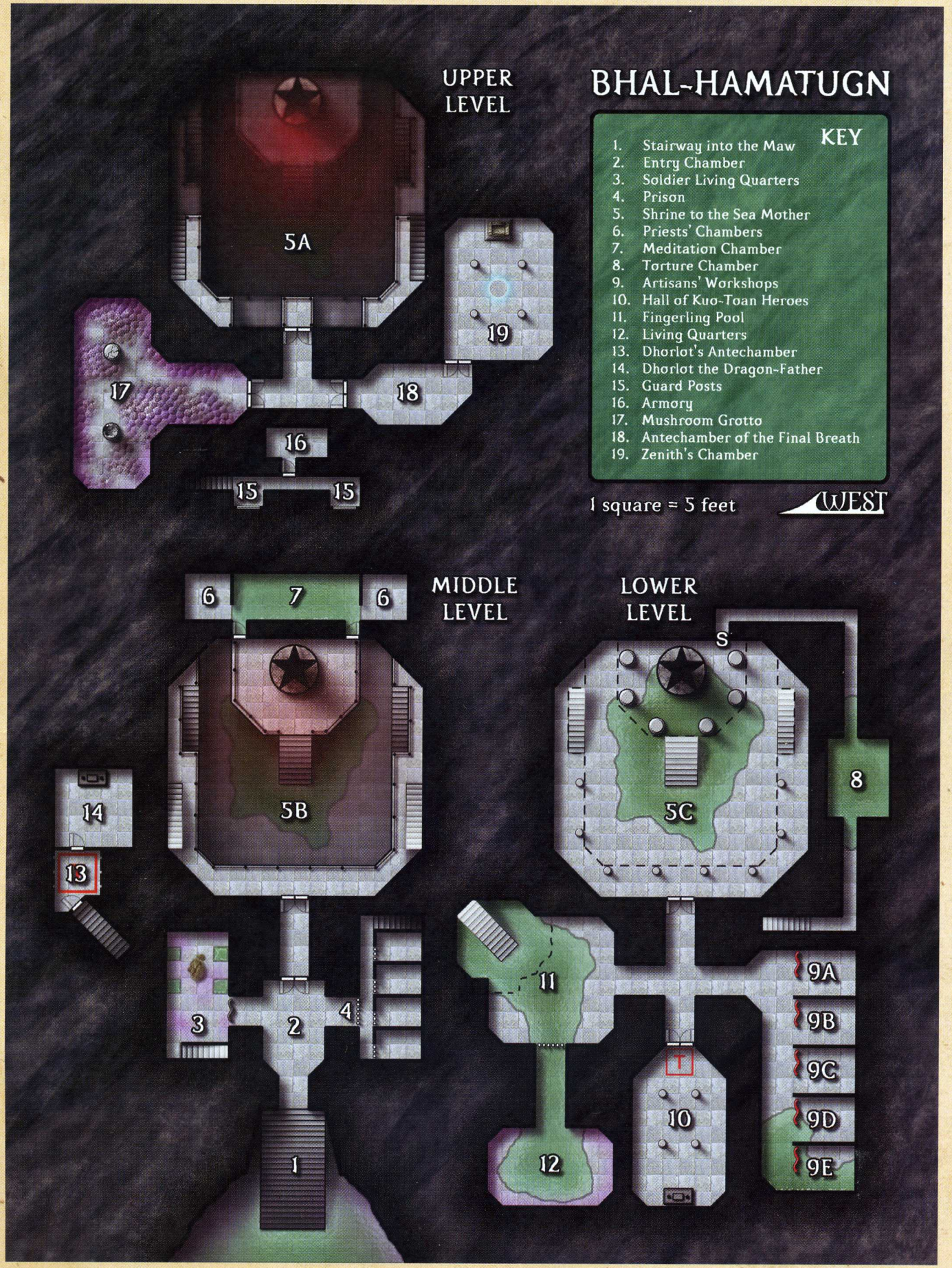
Kopru Ruins

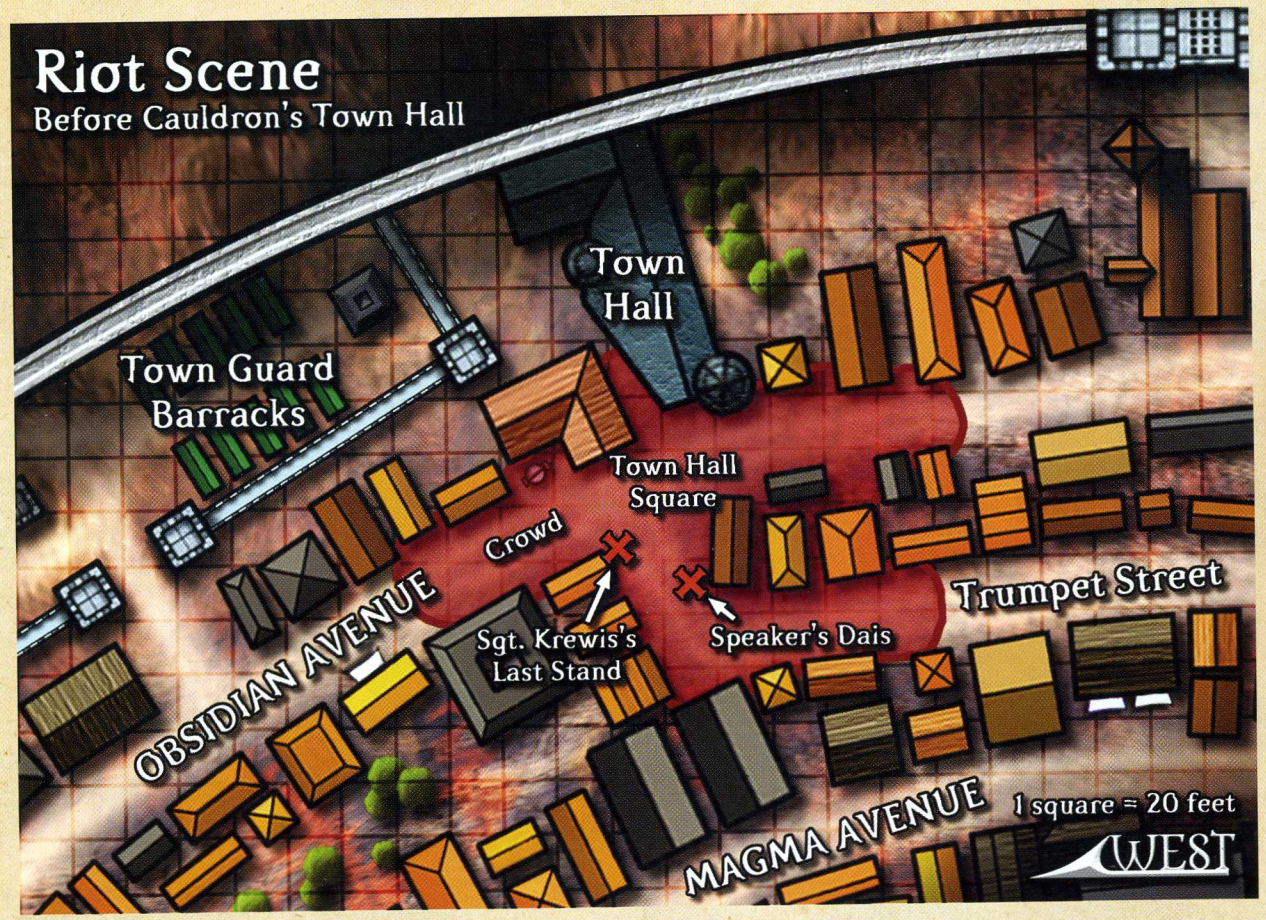
1 Overlook
2 Transport Cage
3 Upper Winch
4 Winch Operator's Barracks
5 Storage
6 The Phantom Lake
7 Nightmare Beach
8 Kopru Lair
9 Beach of Ruin
10 Trapped Foyer
11 Lower Watch
12 Main Entrance
13 The Gauntlet
14 Northern Guardroom
15 Southern Guardroom
16 Workroom
17 Welcome Trap
18 Guardroom
19 Storeroom
20 Southern Armory
21 Mess Hall
22 Barracks
23 Southern Entrance
24 Skaven's Parlor
25 Skaven's Bedchambers
26 Workroom Storage
27 Spider Nest
28 Abandoned Webs
29 Secret Passage
30 Webbed Cavern
31 Ettercap Lair
32 Harpoon Spider Lair
33 Trapped Chamber
34 Storeroom
35 Northern Armory
36 Triel's Chambers
37 Mess Hall
38 Meeting Room
39 Thug Barracks
40 Alleybasher Barracks
41 Bloodbath
42 Northern Entrance
43 Prison
44 Interrogation Chamber
45 Unfinished Trap
46 Guardroom
47 Entrance to Tarkilar's Caverns
48 Bone Guardian
49 Safe Cavern
50 Undead Spiders
51 Glyphs of Warding
52 Cult Treasury
53 Rubble-filled Room
54 Glyph Trap
55 Undead Minions
56 Tarkilar's Cavern

Umber Hulk Attack
1 square = 5 feet
WEST
Peleya's Cold Storage
Vacant Warehouse
Slippery Eel Tavern
K
Maavu's Dray Stables
Garlock's Auction
Garlock Warehouse
Maavu Warehouse
Maavu Warehouse
Meat On A Stick
Umber Hulk
Crowds
Magma Avenue
M
Vacant Shop
Babek & Sons, Butchers
Maavu Warehouse
Maavu's Money-Changing
Puppet Tent
B-Sharp Musical Treasures
Shan-Ra's Warehouse
B
Udoo the Silkmonger
Gorven's Boot & Shoe
Maavu's Imports
Lava Avenue

1 square = 5 feet
Crazy Jared's Hut
WEST

Pit of the Seven Jaws
Fissure
1 square = 5 feet
WEST

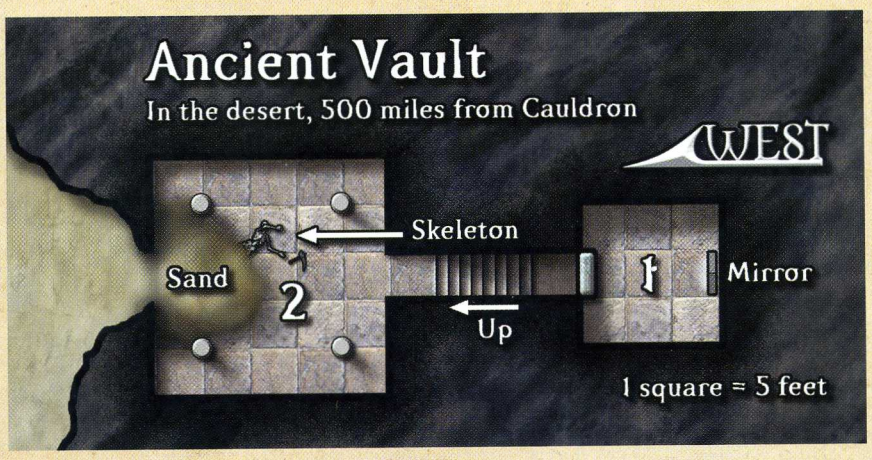

BHAL-HAMATUGN
UPPER LEVEL
MIDDLE LEVEL
LOWER LEVEL
KEY
1. Stairway into the Maw
2. Entry Chamber
3. Soldier Living Quarters
4. Prison
5. Shrine to the Sea Mother
6. Priests' Chambers
7. Meditation Chamber
8. Torture Chamber
9. Artisans' Workshops
10. Hall of Kuo-Toan Heroes
11. Fingerling Pool
12. Living Quarters
13. Dhorlot's Antechamber
14. Dhorlot the Dragon-Father
15. Guard Posts
16. Armory
17. Mushroom Grotto
18. Antechamber of the Final Breath
19. Zenith's Chamber
1 square = 5 feet
WEST
5A
5B
5C
S
T


Riot Scene
Before Cauldron's Town Hall
Town Hall
Town Guard Barracks
Town Hall Square
Crowd
OBSIDIAN AVENUE
Sgt. Krewis's Last Stand
Speaker's Dais
Trumpet Street
MAGMA AVENUE
1 square = 20 feet
WEST

The Village of
REDGORGE
WEST
Cauldron Gate
Old Breach
Stonemasons' District
Boat Docks
Waterfall
Redstone Quarry
Town Square
Miners' Bridge
Basalt Bastions
Caravans' Gate
KEY
1. Redhead Miner's Inn
2. Town Hall
3. Bailiff's Office
4. Shrine of Pelor
5. Hall of Carvings
= Occupied Building
= Abandoned Building
Feet
0 100 200 300 400 500

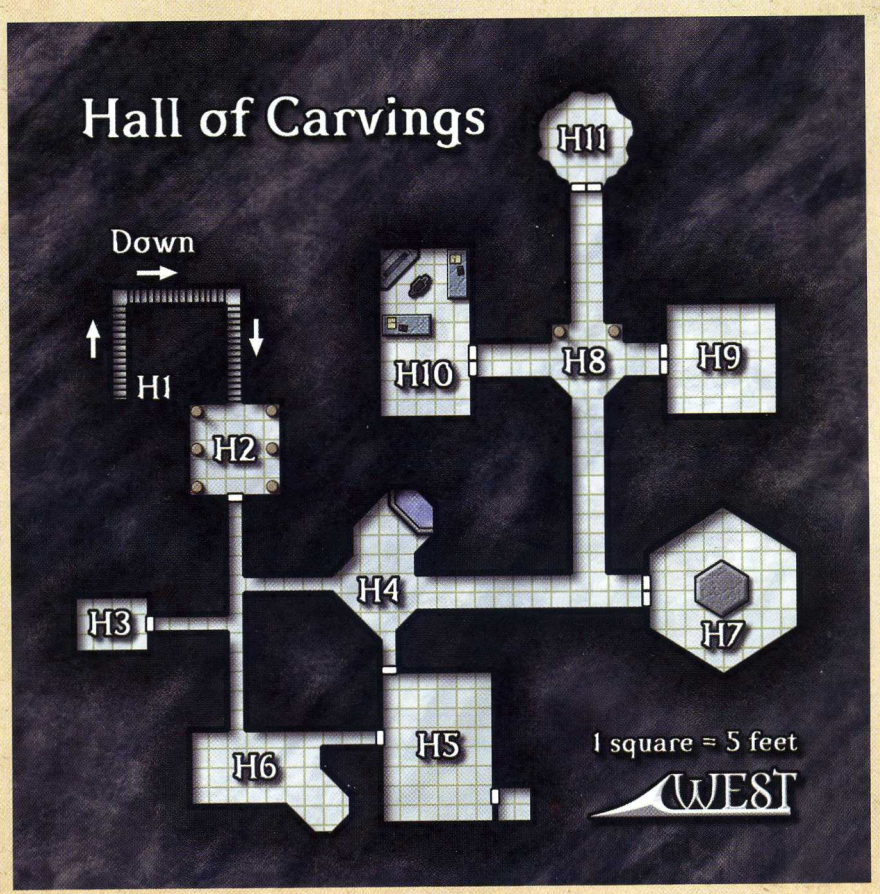
AREA MAP
Cauldron
Cauldron Mountains
The Demonskar
Giant Path From Vaprak's Voice
Redgorge
Haunted Village
Nabthatoron's Lair
Vaprak's Voice
Path Within Giant Pipe
Round Cavern
Trip by Rowboat
Road
Gnoll Hunting Trail
Old Ogre's Lair
Headless Demon
Jungles
Miles
0 5 10 15 20 25
WEST

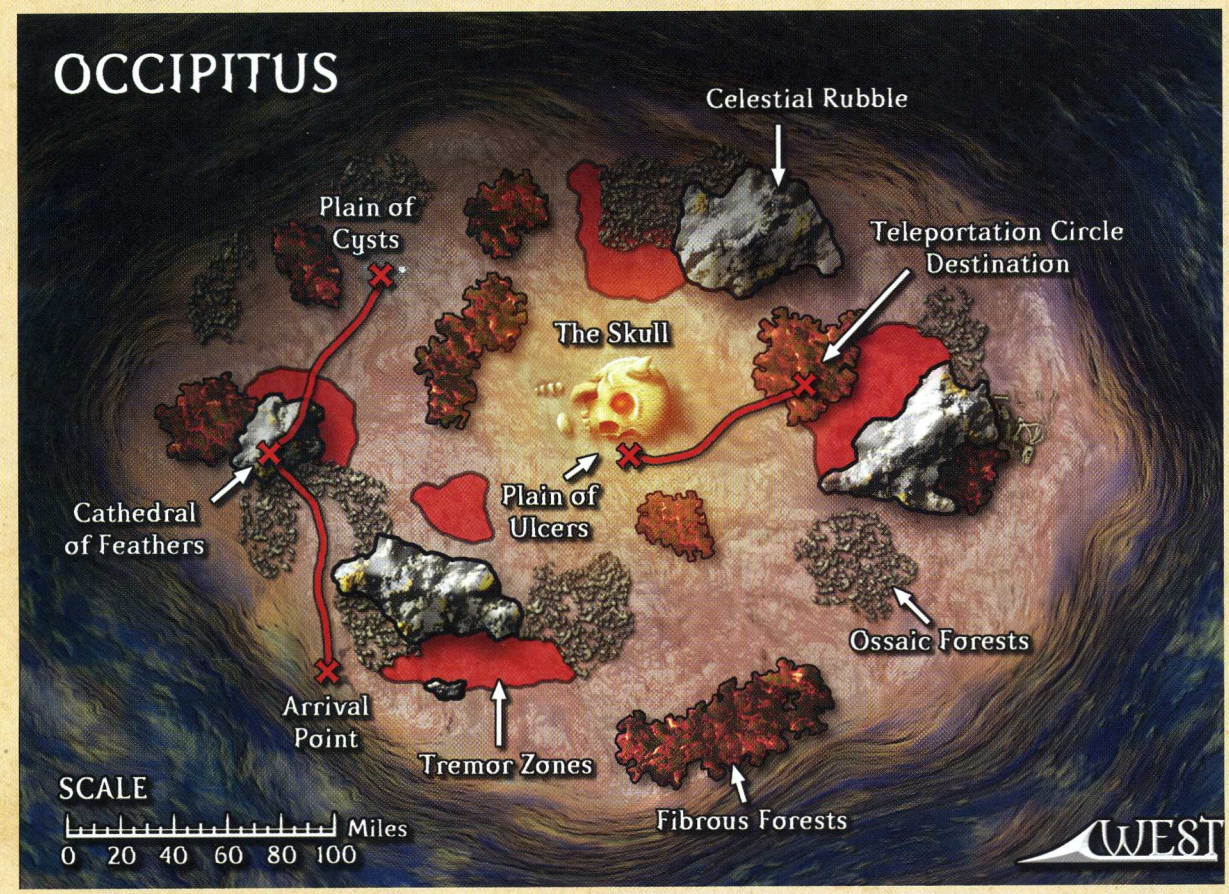
Vaprak's Voice
V15
V10
V5
V7
V8
V9
V14
V13
V3
V4
V2
V11
V6
V1
V12
1 square = 10 feet
WEST

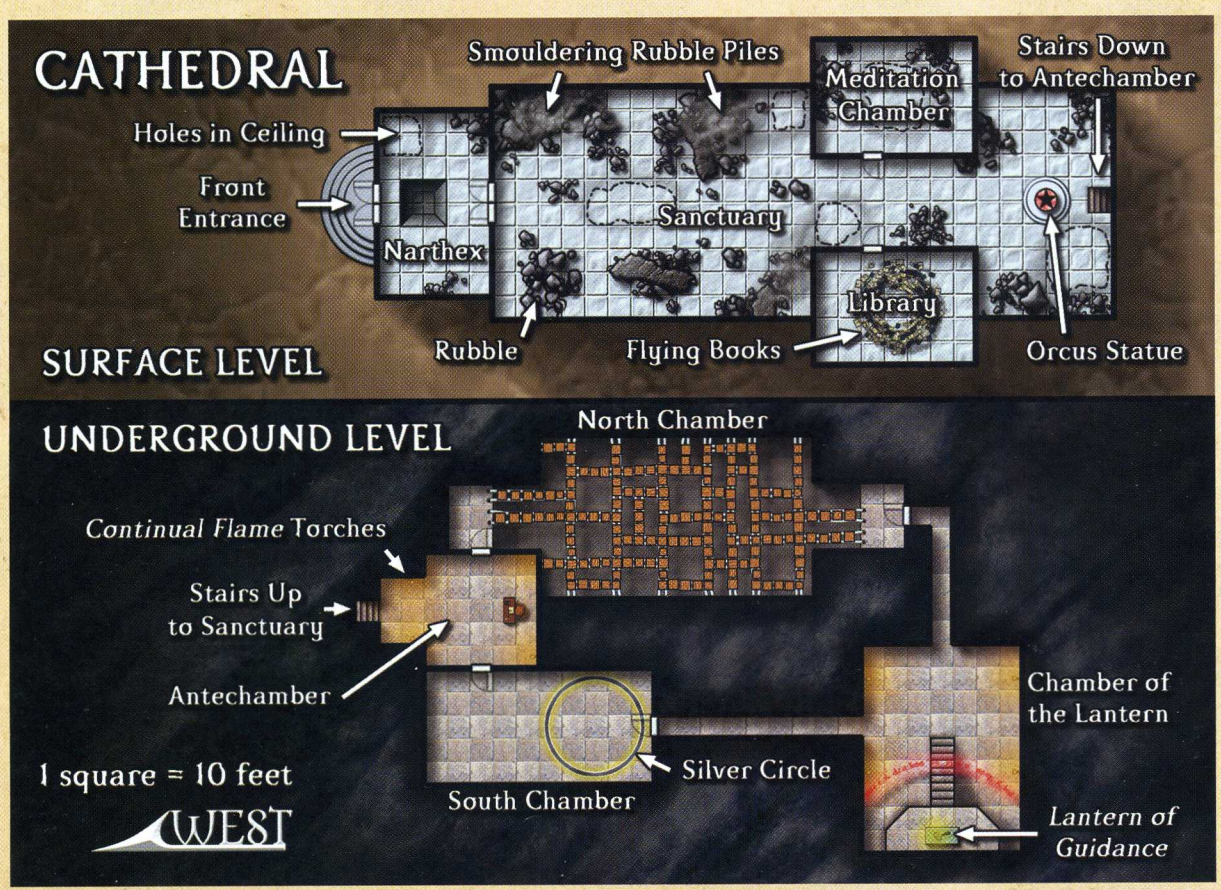

Ancient Vault
In the desert, 500 miles from Cauldron
WEST
Skeleton
Sand
2
1
Mirror
Up
1 square = 5 feet

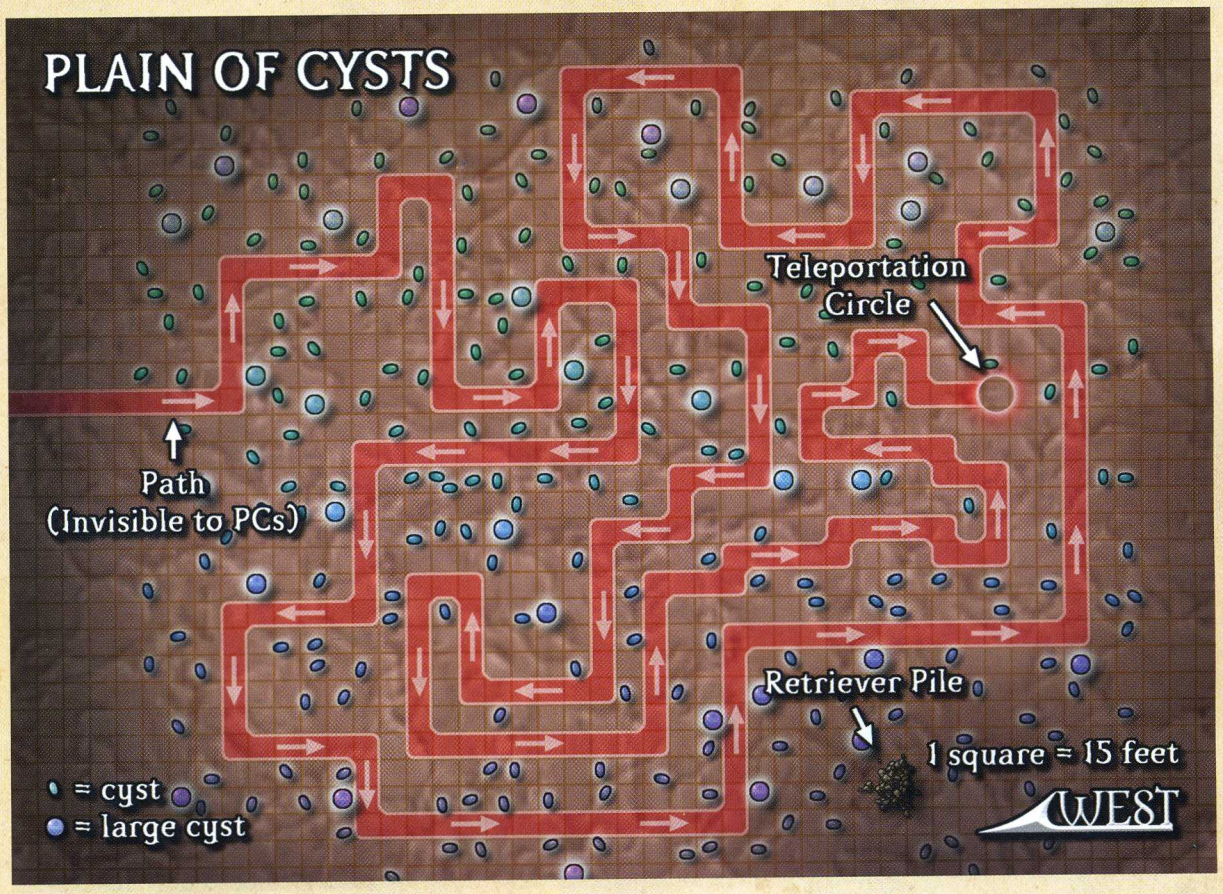
Starry Mirror
1
2
3
4
5
6

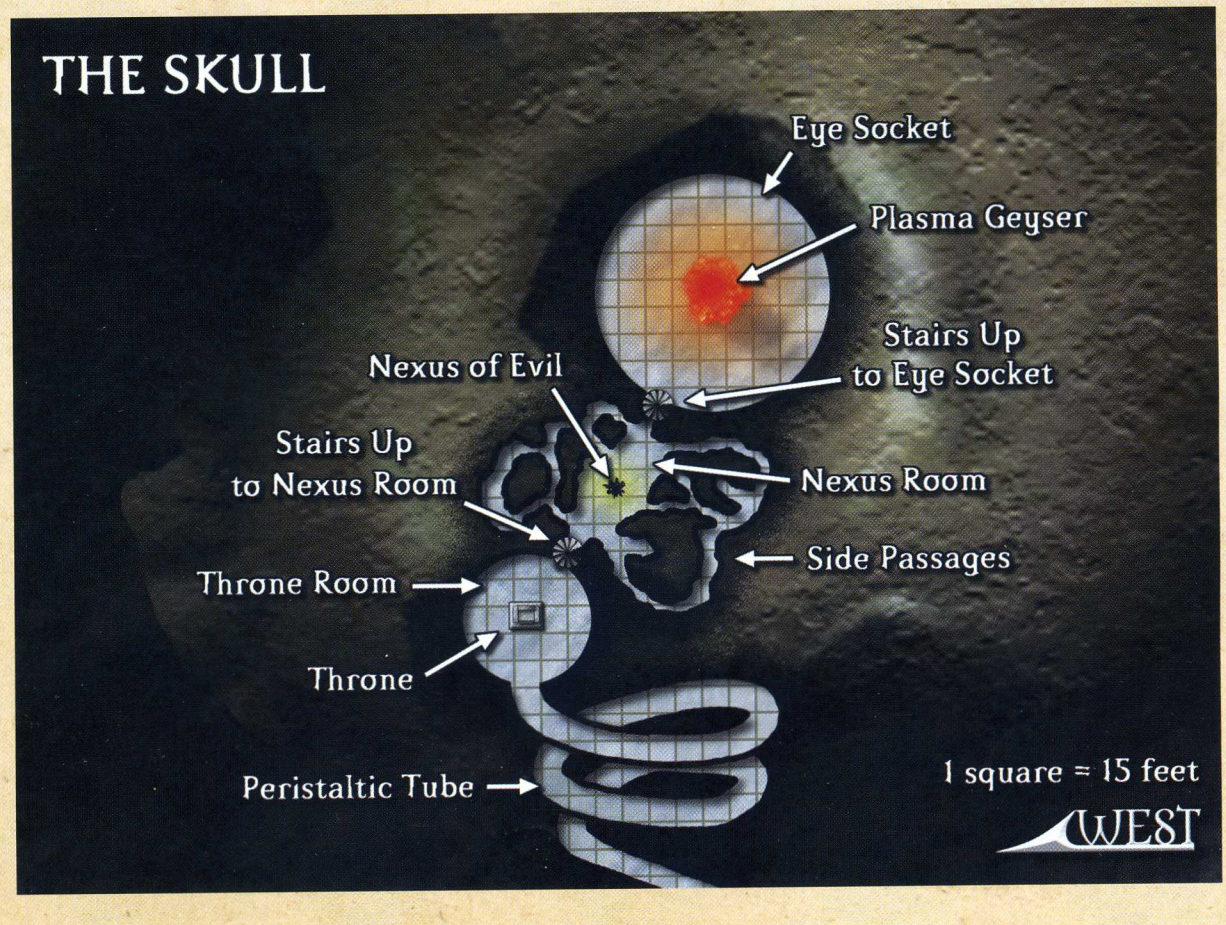
Area V15
1 square
= 5 feet
WEST


Hall of Carvings
H11
Down
H1
H10
H8
H9
H2
H4
H3
H7
H5
H6
1 square = 5 feet
WEST

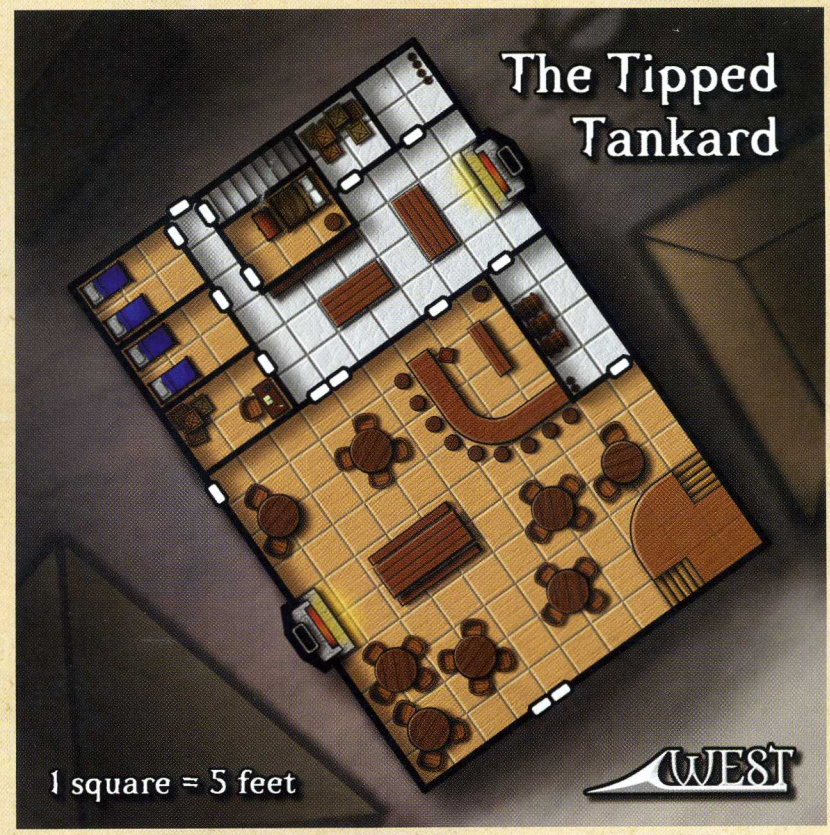

OCCIPITUS
Celestial Rubble
Plain of Cysts
Teleportation Circle Destination
The Skull
Plain of Ulcers
Cathedral of Feathers
Ossaic Forests
Arrival Point
Tremor Zones
Fibrous Forests
SCALE
Miles
0 20 40 60 80 100
WEST

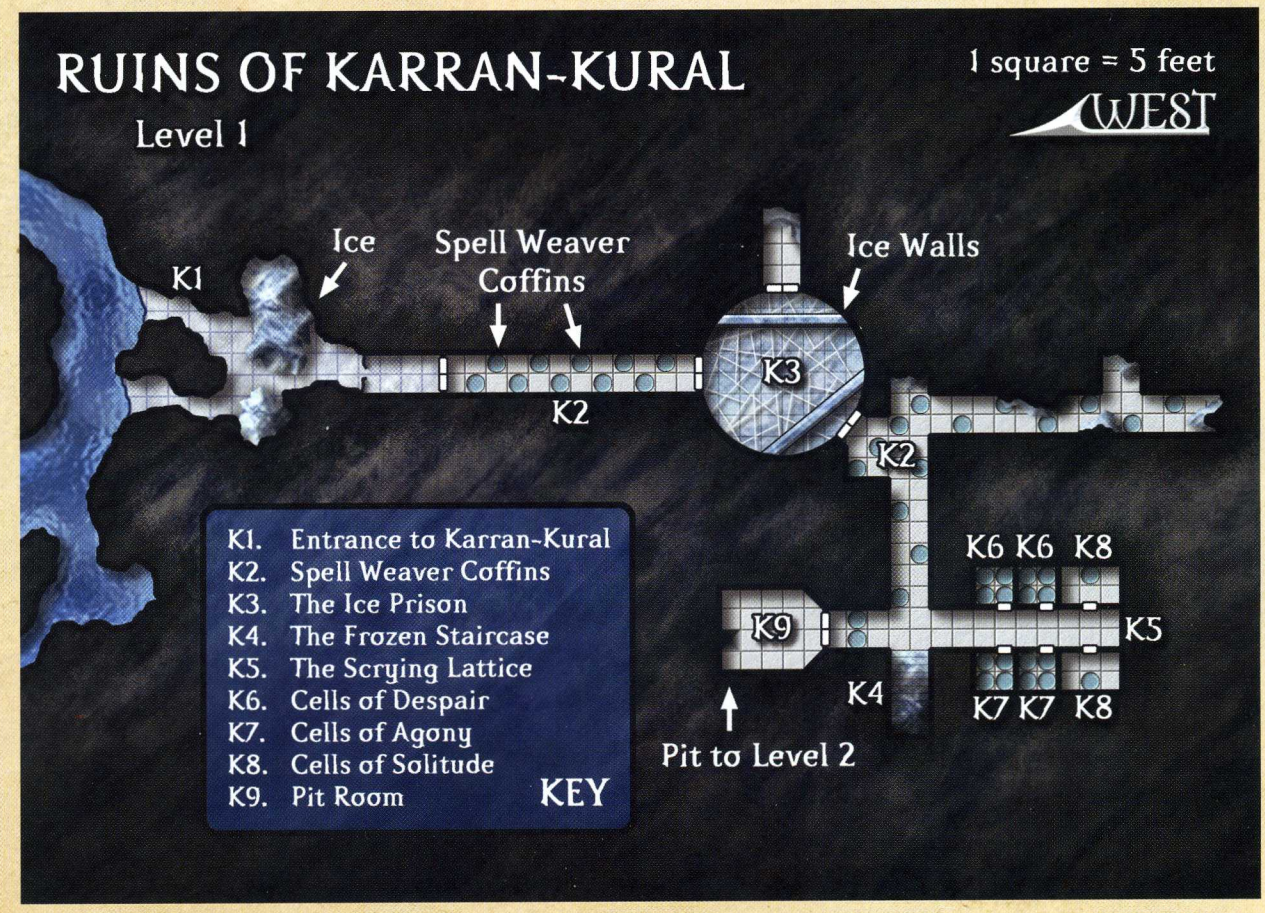

CATHEDRAL
Smouldering Rubble Piles
Meditation Chamber
Stairs Down to Antechamber
Holes in Ceiling
Front Entrance
Sanctuary
Narthex
Library
Rubble
Flying Books
Orcus Statue
SURFACE LEVEL
UNDERGROUND LEVEL
North Chamber
Continual Flame Torches
Stairs Up to Sanctuary
Antechamber
Chamber of the Lantern
Silver Circle
South Chamber
Lantern of Guidance
1 square = 10 feet
WEST

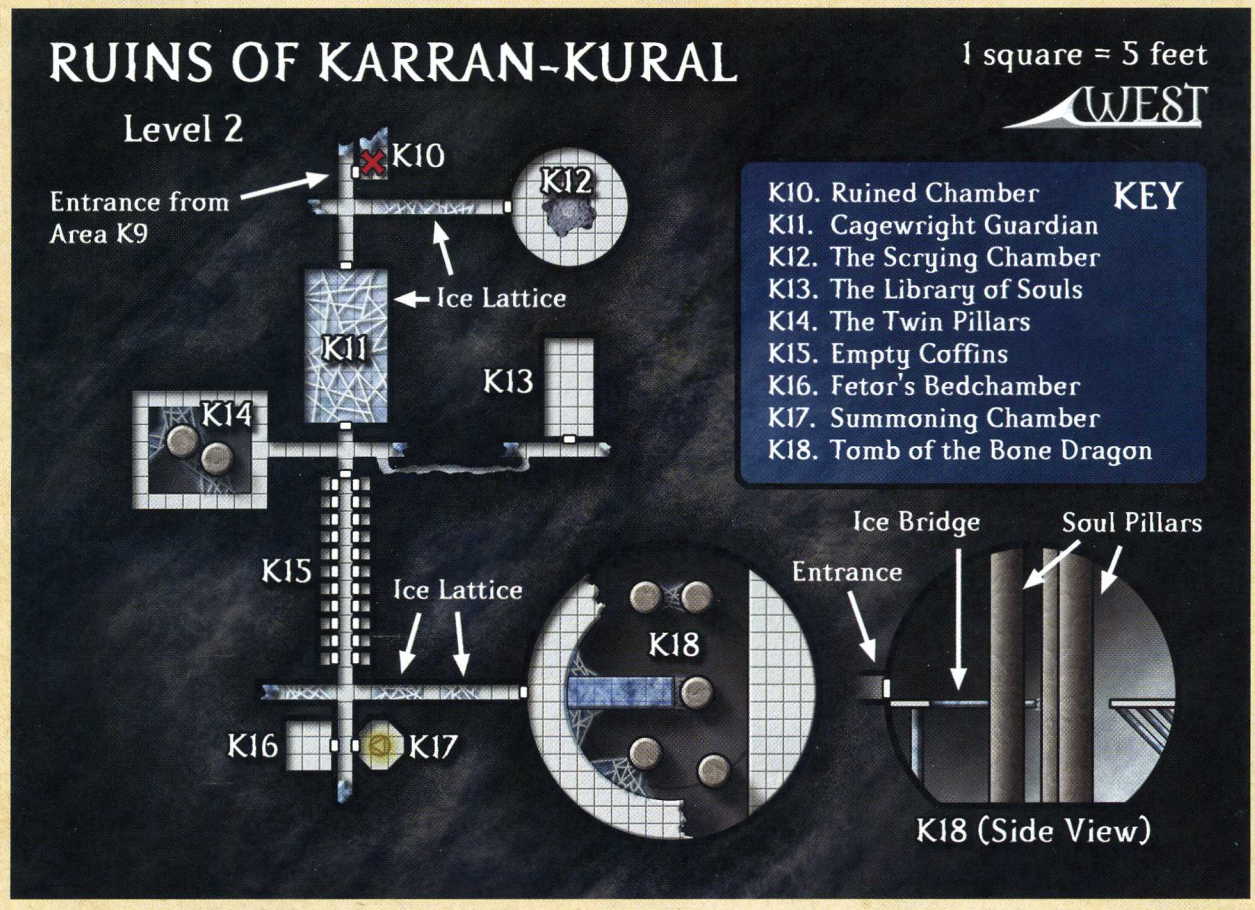

PLAIN OF CYSTS
Teleportation Circle
Path (Invisible to PCs)
Retriever Pile
1 square = 15 feet
= cyst
= large cyst
WEST

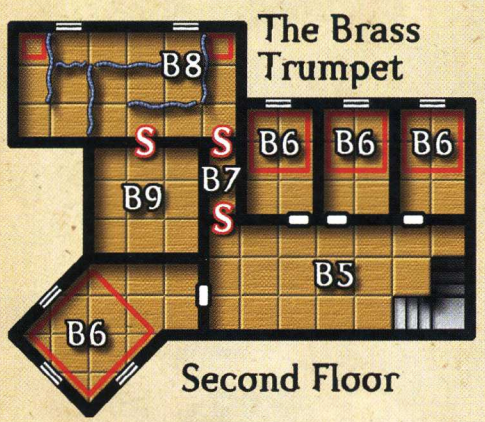

THE SKULL
Eye Socket
Plasma Geyser
Stairs Up to Eye Socket
Nexus of Evil
Stairs Up to Nexus Room
Nexus Room
Side Passages
Throne Room
Throne
Peristaltic Tube
1 square = 15 feet
WEST

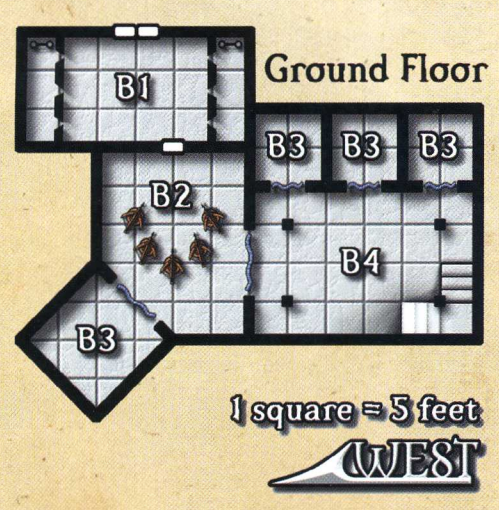
TEMPLE OF WEE JAS
Upper Level
W9
Dais
Down to Secondary Tower (W6-W8)
Soul Cage
W9
Stairs Ascend Inside Walls
City Wall
W1
W8
W7
Cross Section
Ground Level
Obsidian Avenue
W1
W2
W3
W4
W5
W5
W5
W5
W5
W5
Up to Area W9
W8
W6
W7
Upper Level
Ground Level
Secondary Tower
1 square = 5 feet
WEST


The Tipped Tankard
1 square = 5 feet
WEST

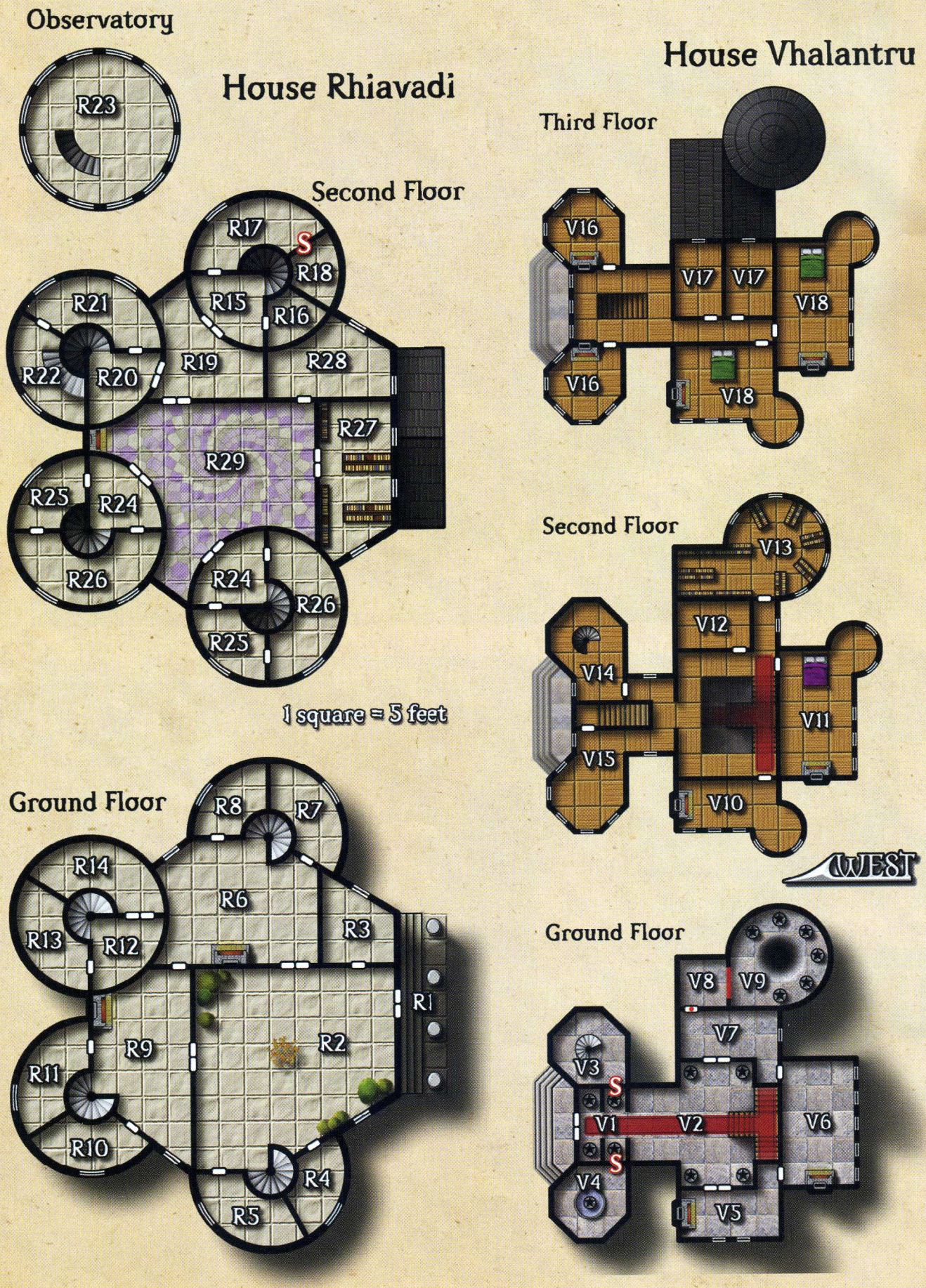

RUINS OF KARRAN-KURAL
Level 1
1 square = 5 feet
WEST
Ice
Spell Weaver Coffins
Ice Walls
K1
K2
K3
K2
K6 K6 K8
K9
K5
K4
K7 K7 K8
Pit to Level 2
K1. Entrance to Karran-Kural
K2. Spell Weaver Coffins
K3. The Ice Prison
K4. The Frozen Staircase
K5. The Scrying Lattice
K6. Cells of Despair
K7. Cells of Agony
K8. Cells of Solitude
K9. Pit Room
KEY


RUINS OF KARRAN-KURAL
1 square = 5 feet
WEST
Level 2
Entrance from Area K9
K10
K12
Ice Lattice
K11
K13
K14
K15
Ice Lattice
K16
K17
K18
KEY
K10. Ruined Chamber
K11. Cagewright Guardian
K12. The Scrying Chamber
K13. The Library of Souls
K14. The Twin Pillars
K15. Empty Coffins
K16. Fetor's Bedchamber
K17. Summoning Chamber
K18. Tomb of the Bone Dragon
Ice Bridge
Soul Pillars
Entrance
K18 (Side View)

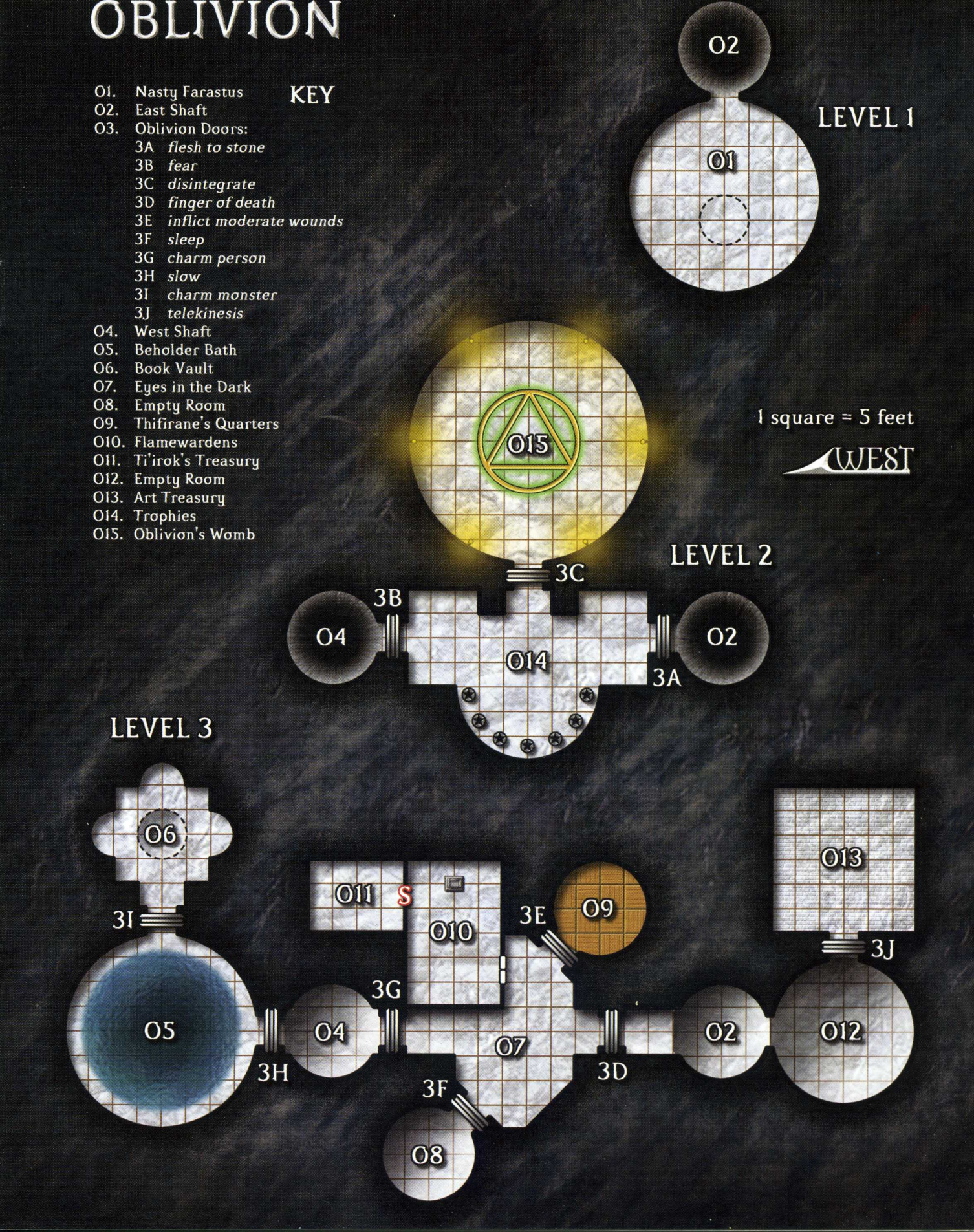

The Brass Trumpet
B8
S
S
B6
B6
B6
B7
B9
S
B5
B6
Second Floor

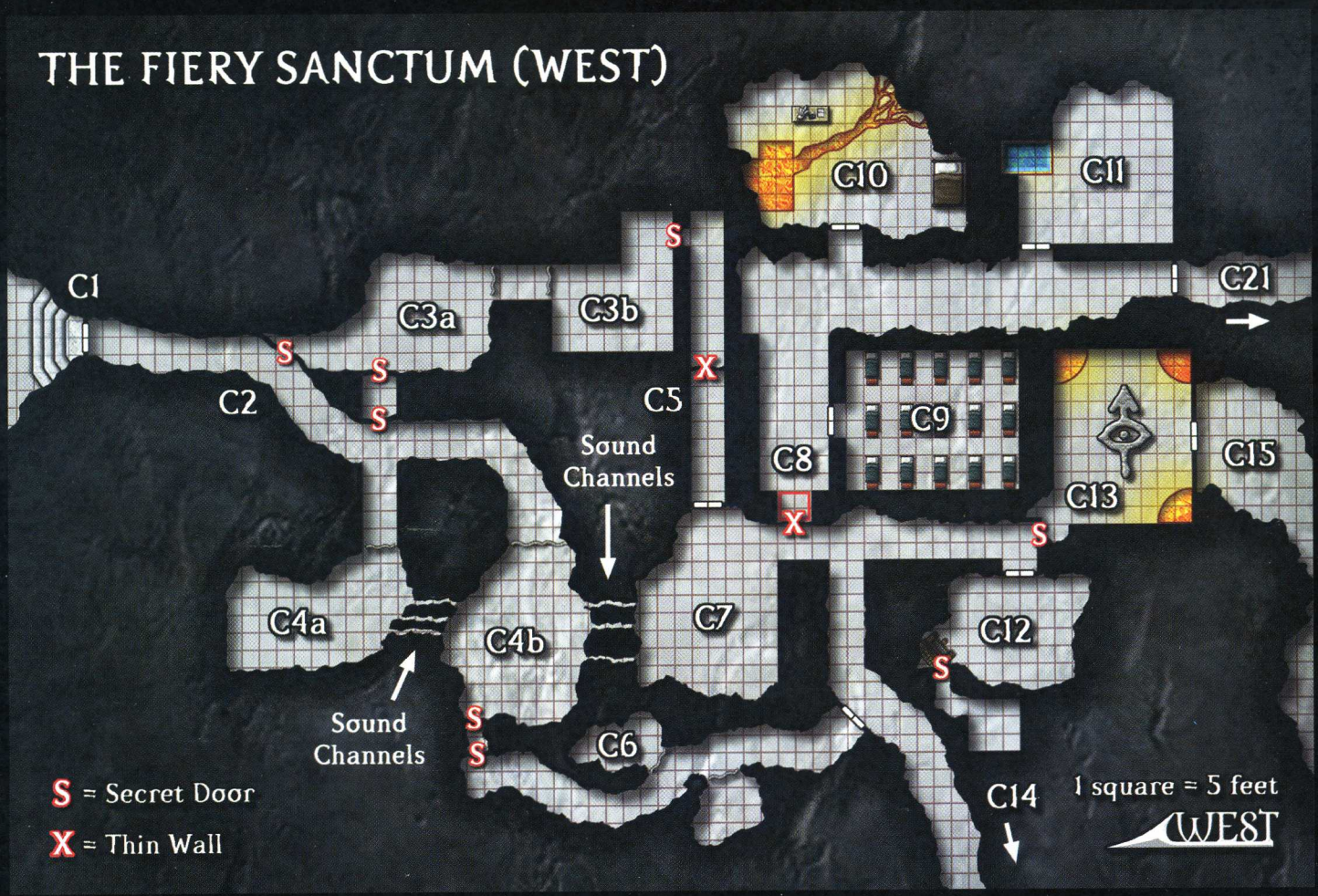

Ground Floor
B1
B3
B3
B3
B2
B4
B3
1 square = 5 feet
WEST

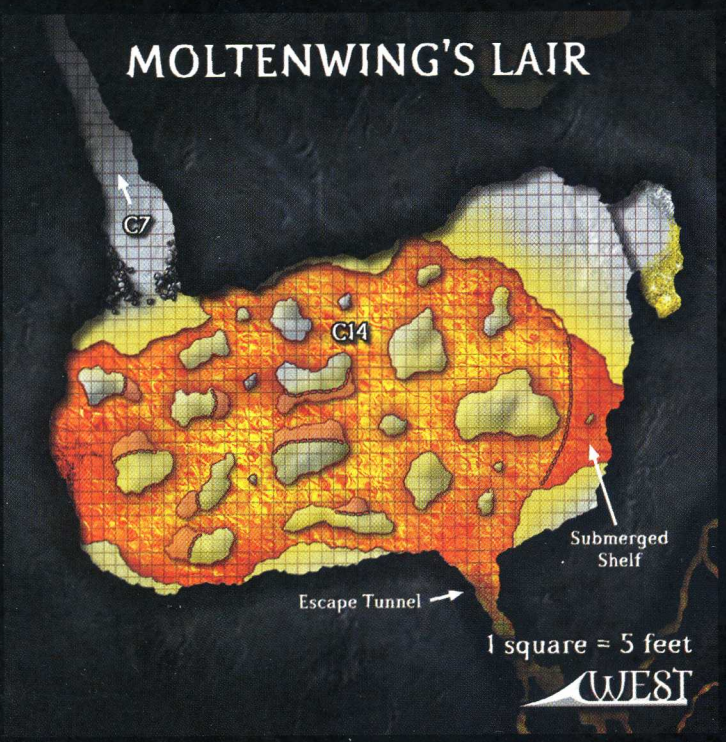
Town Hall
1 square = 5 feet
WEST


Observatory
R23
House Rhiavadi
Second Floor
R17
S
R18
R15
R16
R21
R22
R20
R19
R28
R27
R29
R25
R24
R26
R24
R26
R25
1 square = 5 feet
Ground Floor
R8
R7
R14
R6
R3
R13
R12
R1
R9
R2
R11
R10
R4
R5
House Vhalantru
Third Floor
V16
V17
V17
V18
V16
V18
Second Floor
V13
V12
V14
V11
V15
V10
WEST
Ground Floor
V8
V9
V7
V3
S
V1
V2
V6
S
V4
V5

OBLIVION


KEY
01. Nasty Farastus
02. East Shaft
03. Oblivion Doors:
3A flesh to stone
3B fear
3C disintegrate
3D finger of death
3E inflict moderate wounds
3F sleep
3G charm person
3H slow
3I charm monster
3J telekinesis
04. West Shaft
05. Beholder Bath
06. Book Vault
07. Eyes in the Dark
08. Empty Room
09. Thifirane's Quarters
010. Flamewardens
011. Ti'irok's Treasury
012. Empty Room
013. Art Treasury
014. Trophies
015. Oblivion's Womb
LEVEL 1
LEVEL 2
LEVEL 3
1 square = 5 feet
WEST


THE FIERY SANCTUM (WEST)
C1
C2
C3a
C3b
C4a
C4b
C5
C6
C7
C8
C9
C10
C11
C12
C13
C14
C15
C21
Sound Channels
Sound Channels
S = Secret Door
X = Thin Wall
1 square = 5 feet
WEST

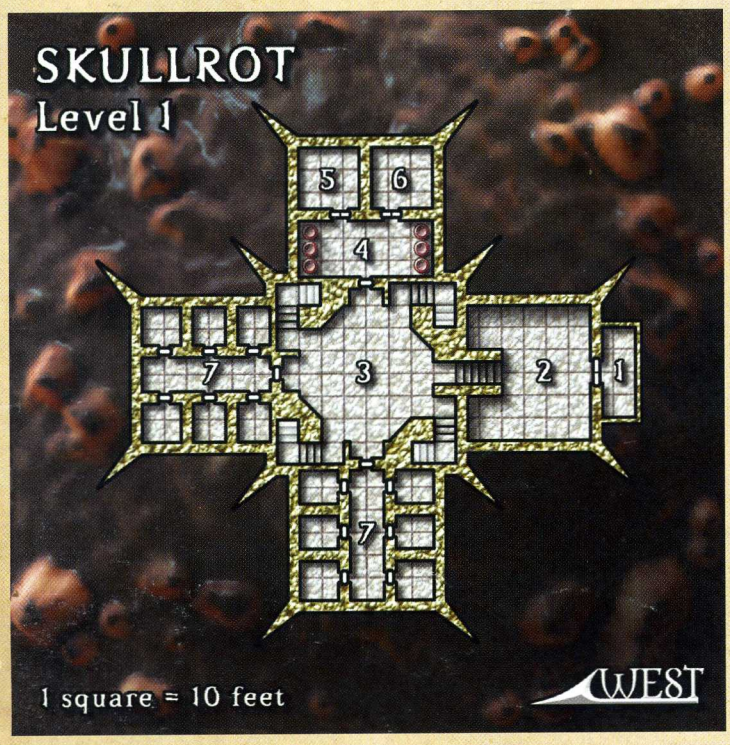

MOLTENWING'S LAIR
C7
C14
Submerged Shelf
Escape Tunnel
1 square = 5 feet
WEST

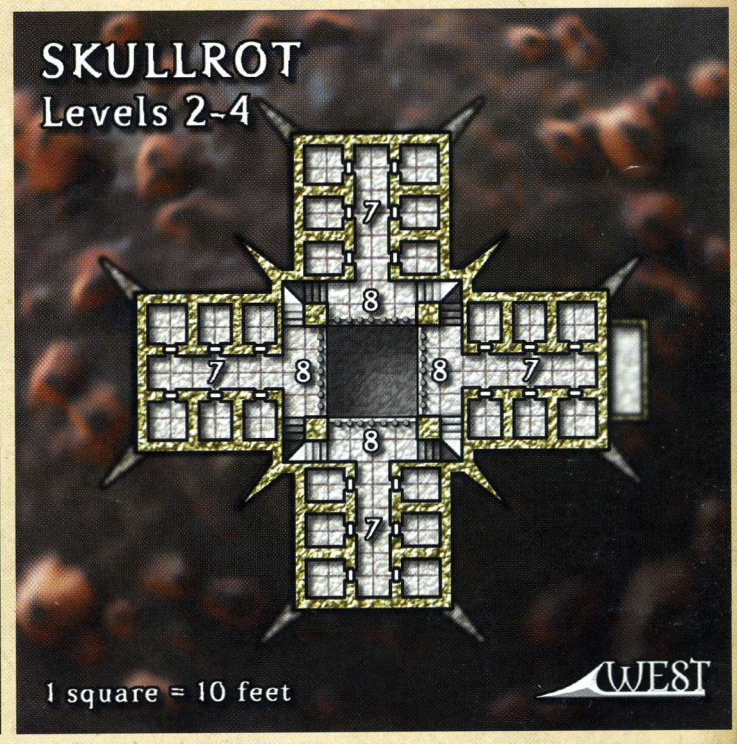
CHAMBER OF THE TREE
C24a
C27
C26a
1 square = 5 feet
WEST

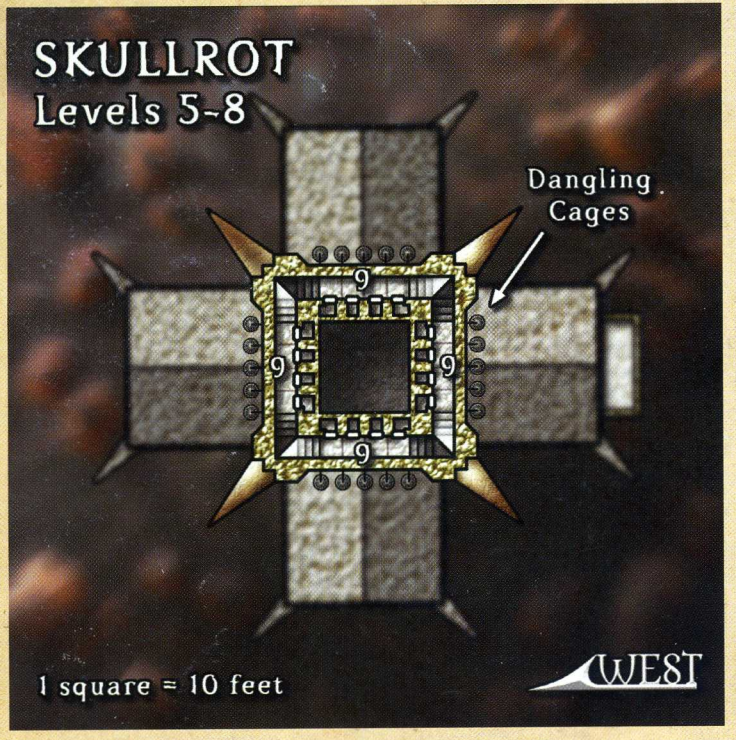
THE FIERY SANCTUM (EAST)
C11
C21
C22
C8
C25
S
C13
C20
C24a
S
C24b
S
C16
C19
C23
C15
C27
X
C26b
S
S
S
C17
C18
C26a
S = Secret Door
X = Thin Wall
1 square = 5 feet
WEST
C14

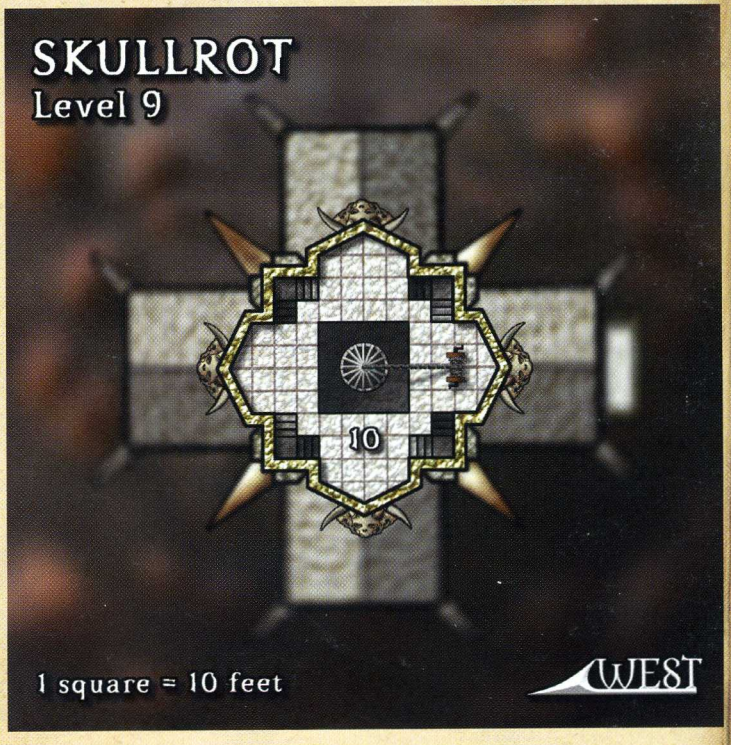
THE RUINS OF SHATTERHORN
WEST
1 square = 5 feet
illusory wall
Down to Area 1

UNDER SHATTERHORN
1 square = 5 feet
WEST
13
15
18
12
14
17
T
11
16
19
19
21
Area 21
Above
Area 20
20
S
9
S
10
Area 10
Below Area 9
8
2
T
4b
4c
S
S
1
T
T
4a
3
N
T
T
S
M
Up to Ruins of
Shatterhorn
7
5
6


SKULLROT
Level 1
5
6
4
7
3
2
1
7
1 square = 10 feet
WEST


SKULLROT
Levels 2-4
7
8
7
8
8
7
8
7
1 square = 10 feet
WEST


SKULLROT
Levels 5-8
Dangling Cages
9
9
9
9
1 square = 10 feet
WEST


SKULLROT
Level 9
10
1 square = 10 feet
WEST

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The Dark Tower of Cabilar (4th–8th)
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Grakhirt's Lair (1st–3rd)
The Elven Home (1st–3rd)
Into the Fire (6th–10th)
Guardians of the Tomb (3rd–5th)

The premiere issue of DUNGEON includes the first appearance of the red dragon Flame, who would go on to star in two sequels over the years.

Dungeon 29 — $15

Nymph's Reward (4th–6th)
Ex Libris (Forgotten Realms) (5th–8th)
Through the Night (1st–2nd)
'Til Death Do Us Part (8th–10th)
Mightier than the Sword (1st–4th)

In "Ex Libris" the PCs explore a library with shifting rooms, and you can use the enclosed cardboard map tiles to keep track of each room's position as the adventure progresses.

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Fetch (3rd–5th)
Fiends of Tethyr (6th–8th)
The Witch's Fiddle (2nd–5th)
Redcap's Rampage (1st–3rd)
Eyes of the Iceborn (4th–7th)
Dark Thane MacBeth (9th–10th)

Monastic murder mystery, dungeon-dwelling dinosaurs, and the drow version of Macbeth. the years.

Dungeon 55 — $12

Savage Beast (1st–3rd)
Umbra (Planescape) (6th–9th)
Tulips of the Silver Moon (5th–7th)
Sea Wolf (Ravenloft) (4th–6th)

PLANESCAPE fans won't want to miss "Umbra," a huge adventure by Chris Perkins set in the city of Sigil.

Dungeon 59 — $12

Seeking Bloodsilver (Birthright) (2nd–4th)
The Mother's Curse (3rd–5th)
Wedding Day (3rd–7th)
Voyage of the Crimpshrine (Mystara) (1st–4th)

It was just a matter of time before Chris Perkins turned his attention to BIRTHRIGHT; check out "Seeking Bloodsilver" for the results.

Dungeon 66 — $12

Enormously Inconvenient (2nd–3rd)
Avenging Murik (4th–6th)
The Sunken Shadow (1st–3rd)
Swing Shot! (4th–6th)
Operation Manta Ray (Forgotten Realms) (6th–9th)
The Petrifying Priestess (5th–7th)
Orange and Black (1st–3rd)

This issue's got it all: pirates, tigers, more pirates, werebadgers, and a giant raccoon!

Dungeon 69 — $12

Slave Vats of the Yuan-ti (Forgotten Realms, 3rd–5th)
Challenge of Champions II (Any level)
Stumping the Party (3rd–5th)
Sleep of Ages (Forgotten Realms, 5th–8th)

The second installment of the popular Challenge of Champions features several large illustrations of the puzzles your PCs will face. Also featured: Part 1 of the "Mere of Dead Men" series.

Dungeon 70 — $12

Homonculous Stew (2nd–4th)
The Maze of the Morkoth (4th–6th)
Boulder Dash (6th–8th)
Ssscaly Thingsss (3rd–6th)
Kingdom of the Ghouls (9th–15th)

The "Mere of Dead Men" continues with "Ssscaly Thingss." Also: Wolfgang Baur's "Kingdom of the Ghouls," a foray into the ghoul-haunted grottos of the Underdark and one of the most popular DUNGEON adventures ever.

Dungeon 87 — $15

The Raiders of Galath's Roost (Forgotten Realms) (1st)
The Cradle of Madness (6th)
Glacier Season (15th)
Valley of the Snails (1st)
The Shalm's Dark Song (5th)

Bonus in this issue: two additional 1st-level adventures on CD—"Tinderbox" and "Gorgoldand's Gauntlet."

Dungeon 88 — $10

The Door from Everywhere (Forgotten Realms) (6th)
Thirds of Purloined Vellum (Forgotten Realms) (1st)
Make it Big (9th)
The Seventh Arm (7th)

Roger Moore unveils some of the lost secrets of the Netherese empire in "The Door from Everywhere."

Dungeon 89 — $10

Honor and Eta (Oriental Adventures) (1st)
Rivers of Blood (4th)
Headless (12th)
Rage (7th)
Wedding Bells (4th)

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Dungeon 90/Polyhedron 150 — $10

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Totentanz (4th)
Prey for Tyrinth (5th)
Tears for Twilight Hollow (Forgotten Realms) (7th)

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The Rock and the Hard Place (16th)
Bogged Down (1st)
Sloth (6th)
The Legend of Garthulga (1st)
Kambranex's Machinations (9th)

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The Swarm (1st)
Return of Blessed Damozel (11th)
The Razing of Redshore (20th)

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The Statue Gallery (9th)
Swamp Stomp (4th)
The Storm Lord's Keep (21st)

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Dungeon 94/Polyhedron 153 — $10

Bloodlines (7th)
The Last Hunt (4th)
The Excavation (3rd)
Worms in the Exchequery (15th)
Spiral of Manzessine (Forgotten Realms) (11th)

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The Witch of Serpent's Bridge (3rd)
Lust (4th)
Porphyry House Horror (10th)

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Provincial Prior Cause (1st)
Pandemonium in the Veins (5th)
Beyond the Light of Reason (13th)

POLYHEDRON presents the *GeneTech* d20 Mini-Game of genetically altered superspies.

Dungeon 97/Polyhedron 156 — $10

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Heart of the Iron God (13th)
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Demonblade (16th)

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Wings, Spikes, and Teeth (8th)
Flood Season (Adventure Path 2) (4th)

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Critical Threats
Maps of Mystery

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Woe to Mistledale (Forgotten Realms) (8th)
Beast of Burden (6th)
Lich-Queen's Beloved (18th)

POLYHEDRON presents the *Knights of the Lich-Queen* d20 Mini-Game of githyanki invasion. 180-page super-spectacular! The red dragon Flame returns!

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Dungeon 101 $7

Prison of the Firebringer (Forgotten Realms, 13th)

Rich Baker's massive "Prison of the Firebringer" sends the PCs into the Silver Marches to fight against an ancient menace from the depths of Limbo. POLYHEDRON presents Iron Lords of Jupiter, a d20 MODERN Mini-Game in the "planetary romance" tradition of Edgar Rice Burroughs, Jack Vance, and Lin Carter.

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Cry Wolf (2nd)
Zenith Trajectory (Adventure Path 3) (6th)
Map of Mystery

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Forest of Blood (Forgotten Realms) (5th)
Map of Mystery

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The Demonskar Legacy (8th)
Map of Mystery

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Racing the Snake (6th)
The Stink (4th)
Critical Threat: Warduke

POLYHEDRON features *DEATHNET*, a d20 *MODERN* Mini-Game set in a virtual world of video game arcade menace, written by EBERRON's Keith Baker.

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Tammeraut's Fate (6th)
The Black Egg (12th)
Map of Mystery
Critical Threats

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Mellorn Hospitality (6th)
Test of the Smoking Eye (Adventure Path 3) (10th)
Map of Mystery
Critical Threat: Evard

POLYHEDRON has "Dead Man's Quest," a Freeport adventure, and monster hunting tips for *d20 MODERN*.

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Challenge of Champions V (any)
Map of Mystery

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Secrets of the Soul Pillars (Adventure Path 6) (12th)
The Devil Box (2nd)
Map of Mystery

POLYHEDRON features *d20 MODERN* super-terrorists and an in-depth GREYHAWK article on Hardby, City of Adventure.

Dungeon 110/Polyhedron 169 $7

The Buzz in the Bridge (3rd)
Last Stand on Outpost Three (4th)
DARK SUN DM's Guide

POLYHEDRON features the massive *DARK SUN DM's Guide*, with an overview of the devastated desert world of Athas and a monster supplement with 25 beasts!

Dungeon 111/Polyhedron 170 $7

Strike on the Rabid Dawn (15th)
Lords of Oblivion (Adventure Path 7) (13th)
Critical Threat: Lord of Blades

POLYHEDRON features an in-depth overview of the Droids cartoon series with stats for the Star Wars RPG as well as 17 new DARK SUN monsters.

Dungeon 113/Polyhedron 171 $7

Queen with Burning Eyes (1st)
Practical Magic (Forgotten Realms) (9th)
Foundation of Flame (Adventure Path 8) (15th)

POLYHEDRON previews *d20 FUTURE* and contains a feature on LIVING GREYHAWK's Knights of the Holy Shielding.

Dungeon 114 $7

Mad God's Key (1st)
Torrents of Dread (6th)
Thirteen Cages (Adventure Path 9) (16th)
Backdrop: The Isle of Dread

Check out our new format with this exciting debut issue! Columns from Monte Cook and Wil Wheaton, as well as the Campaign Workbook!

Dungeon 115 $7

Raiders of the Black Ice (3rd)
Steel Shadows (7th)
Strike on Shatterhorn (Adventure Path 10) (18th)

With adventures from Wolfgang Baur, Keith Baker, and Christopher Perkins, the new *DUNGEON* hits on all cylinders.

Dungeon 116 $7

Palace of the Twisted King (5th)
Death of Lashimire (12th)
Asylum (Adventure Path 11) (19th)
The 30 Greatest D&D Adventures

The final installment of the Adventure Path comes to an end! Find out which adventures made it to the top 30, as selected by our all-star panel.

Dungeon 117 $7

Fallen Angel (Eberron, 4th)
Touch of the Abyss (11th)
The Winding Way (14th)
Istivin: City of Shadows (Backdrop)

Visit the slums of Sharn, a haunted monastery, or start the *Istivin: City of Shadows* 3-part Campaign Arc.

Dungeon 118 $7

Box of Flumph (1st)
Shadows of the Abyss (11th)
Throne of Iuz (14th)
Greyhawk Map (Part 1)

If Part 2 of the *Istivin: City of Shadows* Campaign Arc, a gargantuan toad, or the first of a four-part massive poster map of the WORLD OF GREYHAWK aren't enough... there's always the flumph!

Dungeon 119 $7

Unfamiliar Ground (3rd)
Wrath of the Abyss (12th)
Tomb of Aknar Ratalla (14th)
Greyhawk Map (Part 2)

Save an imp from becoming a goblin's familiar, protect a dungeon from an invasion, or finish off the *Istivin: City of Shadows* Campaign Arc.

Dungeon 120 $7

The Obsidian Eye (4th)
Forsaken Arch (7th)
Lost Temple of Demogorgon (14th)
Greyhawk Map (Part 3)

Fight against a group of treasure-hunting monks a band of pearl-snatching kenku's, or a temple full of awakened apes and their scaly masters!

Dungeon 121 $7

Fiend's Embrace (4th)
The Styes (9th)
Secrets of the Arch Wood (Forgotten Realms, 13th)
Greyhawk Map (Part 4)

Solve the mystery of the Lantern Man murders and expose the sinister mastermind behind them in this atmospheric trip into "The Styes."

Dungeon 122 $7

Final Resting Place (3rd)
Fiendish Footprints (6th)
Root of Evil (18th)
Backdrop: Ring of Storms (Eberron)

Explore one of the most remote corners of the lost continent of Xen'drik. Plus: mutant troglodytes, vampires, and a giant evil tree!

Dungeon 123 $7

Salvage Operation (2nd)
Crypt of Crimson Stars (Shards of Eberron part 1, 7th)
The Amarantha Agenda (13th)
Quicksilver Hourglass (Epic, 30th)

Check out part 1 of the three-part *SHARDS OF EBERRON* Campaign Arc. And don't miss "Quicksilver Hourglass," DUNGEON's highest-level adventure yet!

Dungeon 124 $7

The Whispering Cairn (1st)
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