



# NO TICKET

## Contents

Introduction.....	2
Background.....	3
Summary.....	3
Adventuring on the Lightning Rail.....	3
Prologue: With All Haste .....	4
Part One: Hopping the Rail .....	5
Part Two: Delving the Rail .....	7
Conclusion.....	25
Adventure Questions.....	25
Appendix 1.....	26

**Design:** Stephen Radney-MacFarland

**Illustrations:** David Esbri

**Cartography:** Stephen Radney-MacFarland

**Playtesters:** Stephen Baker, David Christ, Mike Donais, Skaff Elias, Curt Gould, Greg Marks, Dru Moore, Brian Nowak, Paul Peterson, Rachel Reynolds, Tel, Chris Tulach, and Rob Watkins

**Sources:** *Complete Arcane* [Rich Baker], *Complete Adventurer* [Jesse Decker], *Eberron Campaign Setting* [Keith Baker, Bill Slavicsek, James Wyatt], *Eberron Explorers' Handbook* [David Noonan, Rich Burlew, Frank Brunner], *Expanded Psionics Handbook* [Bruce R. Cordell], *Fiend Folio* [Eric Cagle, Jesse Decker, James Jacobs, Erik Mona, Matt Sernett, Chris Thomasson, James Wyatt], *Five Nations* [Bill Slavicsek, David Noonan, Chris Perkins], *Races of Eberron* [Jesse Decker, Matthew Sernett, Gwendlyn F.M. Kestrel, Keith Baker].

## DUNGEONS & DRAGONS CAMPAIGNS

U.S., Canada  
ASIA, PACIFIC, & LATIN AMERICA  
Wizards of the Coast, Inc.  
P.O. Box 707  
Renton, WA 9805-0707  
Questions? 1-800-324-6496



European Headquarters  
Wizards of the Coast, Belgium  
T. Hosveld 6d  
1702 Groot-Bijgaarden  
Belgium

+322 467 3360

Based on the original DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® rules created by E. Gary Gygax and Dave Arneson and the new DUNGEONS & DRAGONS game designed by Jonathan Tweet, Monte Cook, Skip Williams, Rich Baker, and Peter Adkison.

This WIZARD OF THE COAST® game product contains no Open Game Content. This work may be reproduced for personal use or in its entirety for use at RPGA-sanctioned events. To learn more about the Open Gaming License and the d20 SYSTEM® License, please visit [www.wizards.com/d20](http://www.wizards.com/d20). This product uses material from the v.3.5 revision.

This is an official RPGA® play document. To find out more about the RPGA and to learn more on how you can sanction and run DUNGEONS & DRAGONS game events of all sizes, visit our website at [www.wizards.com/rpga](http://www.wizards.com/rpga).

DUNGEONS & DRAGONS, D&D, D&D REWARDS, DUNGEON MASTER, EBERRON, ABERRATIONS, DEATHKNELL, WINTER FANTASY, RPGA, d20, d20 SYSTEM, WIZARDS OF THE COAST, *Player's Handbook*, *Dungeon Master's Guide*, and *Monster Manual* and their respective logos are trademarks owned by Wizards of the Coast, Inc., in the US and other countries. This material is protected under the copyright laws of the United States of America. Any reproduction or unauthorized use of the material or artwork contained herein is prohibited without the express written permission of Wizards of the Coast, Inc. This product is a work of fiction. Any similarity to actual people, organizations, places, or events is purely coincidental. © 2005 Wizards of the Coast, Inc. Visit the DUNGEONS & DRAGONS CAMPAIGNS website at [www.rpga.com](http://www.rpga.com)

**For rules questions specific to this document and DUNGEONS & DRAGONS CAMPAIGNS email** [dispelconfusion@wizards.com](mailto:dispelconfusion@wizards.com)

## INTRODUCTION

This adventure is optimized for 2nd-level characters. This means that it's designed and balanced for a group of four to five 2nd-level characters. If your group deviates from this size and strength, each encounter features a section titled "Scaling the Encounter" so that you, the Dungeon Master (DM), can create a more balanced encounter. If there are only four of five PCs of the same level it is easy to use this section: just use the level entry that corresponds with the PCs' level (the optimized entry is given in the main adventure text). For groups of mixed levels and groups with six PCs, determine the average level of the PCs, and add increase that average by one for groups of six PCs. Treat that level as the groups level. That said, as DM you have discretion when it comes to fitting the challenges of the adventure. If the PCs are having too hard or too easy of a time, feel free to increase or decrease the level of challenge. The goal is to challenge the PCs, and entertain the players, not to overwhelm or even underwhelm them. The most enjoyable D&D games are ones where failure and character death are possible, but success and reward are attainable through daring and smart play.

This adventure has been designed to be part of the RPGA DUNGEON & DRAGONS: CAMPAIGNS—MARK OF HEROES program. Like all DUNGEONS & DRAGONS CAMPAIGNS adventures, it's recommended that parties undertaking its challenges have at least one arcane spellcaster, a divine spellcaster (preferably a cleric), a strong warrior, and a rogue. Parties missing these valuable adventuring components may find *No Ticket* very challenging, and the percentages of character death higher. Please warn the players of this before play starts. DUNGEONS & DRAGONS CAMPAIGNS allow players to "take one for the team;" that is to play a fastplay wizard, fighter, rogue, or cleric in place of one of their characters, and gain experience point for their character. If the group lacks one of these vital four classes, suggest to your players to take advantage of this option.

### RPGA-Sanctioned Play

Most likely you ordered this adventure as part of an RPGA even from the RPGA website, or as part of the DUNGEONS & DRAGONS CAMPAIGNS retail program. To play *No Ticket* as part of the MARK OF HEROES campaign—a worldwide, ongoing D&D campaign set in EBERRON—you must sanction it as part of an RPGA event. This event could be as elaborate as a big convention, or as simple as a group of friends meeting at the DM's house.

To sanction an RPGA event, you must be at least a HERALD-LEVEL gamemaster. The person who sanctions the event is called the senior gamemaster, and is in charge of making sure the event is sanctioned before play, runs smoothly on the date sanctioned, and then reported back to the RPGA in a timely manner. The person who runs the game is called the table DM (or usually just DM). Sometimes (and almost all the time in the cases of home events) the senior gamemaster is also the table DM. You don't have to be a HERALD-LEVEL GM to run this adventure if you are not the senior GM.

By sanctioning and reporting this adventure you accomplish

a few things. First, it allows the PCs participating in play to accumulate experience points (XP) and gold pieces (gp) to advance their MARK OF HEROES characters. Second, it allows the RPGA to track and record what character did during the adventure, and future adventures a written with what the majority of player did in mind—in this way characters' action shape the future of the campaign. Lastly, player and DMs gain rewards for sanctioned RPGA play if they are members of the DUNGEONS & DRAGONS REWARDS program. Playing this adventure is worth four (4) points.

This adventure retires from RPGA sanctioned play on October 1, 2005.

To learn more about the DUNGEONS & DRAGONS CAMPAIGNS: MARK OF HEROES character creation and development, RPGA event sanctioning, and DUNGEONS & DRAGONS REWARDS, visit the RPGA website at [www.rpga.com](http://www.rpga.com).

### Players Read No Farther

If you are planning on playing this adventure, stop reading now. The rest of the information in this adventure is for the DM only. If you read farther than this section, you'll know too much about its challenges, which kills the fun. Also, if you're playing this adventure as part of an RPGA-sanctioned event, reading beyond this point makes you ineligible to do so.

## DUNGEONS & DRAGONS MINIATURES

To run this adventure it's recommend you have the following miniatures:

### From the Harbinger™ set:

2 Human Commoners (8/80) to represent red caps

### From the Dragoneye™ set:

Dire Ape (26/50) to represent warforged charger

### From the Giants of Legend™ set:

Zombie (40/72) to represent Beltrulelgald the dusk hag  
Astral Construct (20/72) to represent Nur-Tungor

### From the Aberrations™ set:

5 Man-At-Arms (08/60) to represent Murzos d'Orien and the House Orien novice guards  
5 Emerald Claw Soldiers (30/60) to represent ir'Vessin soldiers.



## PREPARING FOR PLAY

To get the most out of this adventure, you need copies of the following D&D books: *Player's Handbook*, *Dungeon Master's Guide*, *Monster Manual*, and the *Eberron Campaign Setting*. It is also a good idea to have a copy of the *RPGA Extend Psionics Handbook Primer*, a PDF document that you can find on the RPGA website ([www.rpga.com](http://www.rpga.com)) as it is possible that some character playing in this adventure will be kalashtar utilizing the psionics rules.

Throughout this adventure, shaded boxes provide player information for you to paraphrase or read aloud when appropriate. Sidebars contain important information for you, including special instruction on running the adventure. Information on nonplayer characters (NPCs) and monsters appear in abbreviated form in the adventure text. Full information on NPCs and monsters are given in a section directly after each encounter, or can be found in the *Monster Manual*.

Attached to this adventure, you'll find a special RPGA Table Tracking sheet tailored for this adventure. If you're playing this adventure as part of an RPGA-sanctioned event, complete and turn in this sheet to your senior GM directly after play.

## BACKGROUND

In the adventure *EMH-1 Reflections of the Multiverse*, a conspiracy was uncovered. What started as the investigation into the death of a fellow member of the Diggers' Union grew into a strange plot perpetrated by a dusk hag named Beltrudalgald to bring strange otherworldly creatures called the nerra to Eberron. While the PCs were successful in stopping at least the bulk of nerra wishing to pass through to Eberron through the cosmic machine in the Crook Observatory, the dusk hag escaped, and her true purposes were never quite ascertained.

By the end of that adventure the PCs were asked by Matron Martra to keep this knowledge secret. She explained that she would call upon them with the aid of a special magical necklace, if more came of the discovery.

That time has come.

Less than a week ago, Professor Murgos Lurn, the new chair of the department of antiquities at the Wroat campus of Morgrave University (taking over from the recently deceased Professor Kelmini) reported that the newly discovered original copy of the *Deviant Celestia*, complete with insightful annotations from the hand of its author, the Mad Gnome Belental Heirm, was stolen. Before the theft book was recently rediscovered in Professor Kelmini's personal collection, and was quickly placed back into Wroat's Morgrave library. Days later some one or some thing broke into the library and stole the tome.

Professor Lurn hired the Diggers' Union to find and reacquire the book. The new chair has no idea that the Union has its own interest in the book, and Matron Martra had no idea that the original copy had been found until that point.

Matron Martra immediately moved on the information, hiring House Tharashk finders to track the book. The day before the events in the prologue (and five days prior to the beginning of Part One of this adventure) they found the book,

in the possession of a woman in the company of a minor Karrnathi lord. The lord, the lady—along with the book—were getting ready to board a lightning rail coach heading toward Thrane, presumably to find water passage to Karrnath. Martra rightly deduces that the lady was none other than Beltrudalgald in disguise. With all haste she's banded a trustworthy and knowledgeable group of adventurers together to chase after the dusk hag and the book.

## SUMMARY

The adventure starts with the PCs heeding the call of Matron Martra at Grea Tower. In the Hall of Messengers, Martra gets the PCs up to speed, and speeds them off with the aid of magebred horses. The PCs must find a way to catch up to the lightning rail and reacquire the book.

After a grueling trip, the PCs finally catch up with the coach in Hatheril, and must jump the coach to chase their quarry. Most of the adventure involves the PCs navigating the coach to find the book and the dusk hag. The going will not be easy. Not only is the coach guarded by House Orien and the soldiers of a Karrnathi lord, the Emerald Claw has their own reason for being on the coach, and the PCs aren't the only one on the coach without a ticket. Getting to the dusk hag and the book will take stealth, guile, or utter ruthlessness.

## ADVENTURING ON THE LIGHTNING RAIL

As detailed in the summary, most of the adventure has the PCs navigating a 10-cart lightning rail coach in order to reach their ultimate goal. Circumstances at the beginning of the adventure ensure that the PCs are not able to procure a ticket for the trip, so one of the chief challenges is staying on the lightning rail coach.

Lightning rail coaches are dynamic places. More than one rules question will likely come up during the adventure. Use the following guidelines along with the rules for various skills (Balance, Jump, and Climb to name a few) to adjudicate issues. For rules questions that come up that don't seem to have rules answers, use the following rule of thumb as your guide: what would be the most fun that keeps the action going? Do that!

### Lightning Rail Movement

The easiest way to handle a moving lightning rail coach at the gaming table is to treat the coach as stationary, moving terrain as necessary. Usually, however, the specifics of the landscape won't matter directly, though the slope of the terrain does affect how the lightning rail moves.

Everyone has seen movie action sequences involving trains, and players will likely be eager to employ some similar tricks.

**Climbing Onto the Roof:** Unless noted otherwise hatches and ladders are located at the forward end of each cart. Opening a roof hatch is a move action. With a DC 0 Climb check, it takes 40 feet of movement to get up a ladder; a DC 5 Climb check gets you up the ladder with only 20 feet of movement.



Unless a character is unusually burdened, failure simply means no progress on the climb, not an actual fall. Keep track of which hatches are open, as they won't need to be opened again before other characters can ascend or descend.

**Walking Along the Roof:** Treat walking along the roof with normal movement, except in the squares that require balance checks to proceed. Those who fail those checks don't proceed. Those who fail them by 10 slide one square toward the closest side edge of the roof. See the "Fall or Jump Off" section if that would move the PCs off the edge.

Whenever the PCs traverse the roof, there is a good chance those in the cart below hear their movement. The basic (as in not moving silently) DC is 0. Because of the sound of the train, creatures in the cart below get a -5 to their Listen check to hear a creature move across the roof.

Single creatures moving across may not attract suspicion, as passengers and crew alike assume it is some member of the crew, but numerous footfalls do.

**Detach Carts:** Pulling the pin that connects one cart to the next takes three full-round actions. The first 2 rounds are spent disconnecting heavy chains between the two carts (an automatic success, but time-consuming). On the third round, a DC 20 Strength check is needed to pull the pin between the two carts. The part of the lightning rail coach no longer connected to the crew cart decelerates by 10 feet per round until it comes to a stop.

**Fall or Jump Off:** Treat this as a normal fall, except that it deals 2d6 points of damage due to the coach's horizontal velocity. As with any other fall, you can reduce the damage by 1d6 points if you jump down intentionally and succeed on a DC 15 Jump check. You can also reduce the damage by 1d6 points if you succeed on a DC 15 Tumble check. A person who jumps intentionally from a lightning rail cart and succeeds on both checks takes no damage at all.

**Push Someone Off:** A normal bull rush attack is generally sufficient to push someone off the roof of a cart. Attempting to do so from the outer walkways along the carts is somewhat harder, with the rail giving the defender a +2 bonus on the opposed Strength check. With difficulty, you can even push someone off the train from the inside, but the window gives the defender a +5 bonus on the opposed Strength check and the railing beyond it provides an additional +2. Lightning rail cart windows are either glass (for passenger carts with wooden walls and roofs) or just empty spaces (for cargo carts with canvas roofs or steerage-class passenger carts). A character pushed through a glass window takes 1d4 points of damage in addition to any damage for falling from the cart.

**Grab at a Railing:** If you're falling off the lightning rail for whatever reason, a DC 20 Climb check lets you grab onto a guardrail or similar protrusion. A move action and a DC 10 Climb check is sufficient to pull yourself back onto the lightning rail coach, but you're hanging by your fingertips until you do.

**Get Back Onto the Moving Lightning Rail:** As long as the entire coach is of sufficient length, it is possible to fall off the front cart of the lightning rail, get back to your feet, and then grab onto a rear cart. You must take a move action and move at least 20 feet in the same direction as the lightning rail before

trying to climb back on. A DC 15 Climb check and another move action gets you back on one of the cart's outer walkways. At the back of the coach, the rear crew cart has a low platform that requires only a DC 5 Climb check to climb aboard.

## Moving the Lightning Rail

Even treating the lightning rail coach as stationary, the terrain level it moves across has a wide variety of effects on combat in and around the coach.

The lightning rail moves twice in each round, once at initiative point 10 and once at initiative point 0. Because you're moving the terrain, not the coach, move anyone not on the coach straight toward the back of the train at those initiative points. These "moves" happen simultaneously and don't provoke attacks of opportunity—they're just an abstraction to simulate the vehicle's movement.

How far the lightning rail coach moves at each initiative point depends on the surrounding terrain and how straight its path of *conductor stones* is.

Terrain Conditions	Lightning Rail Movement
Flat straightaway	125 ft.
Uphill straightaway	100 ft.
Downhill straightaway	150 ft.
Flat curve 125 ft.	
Uphill or downhill curve	100 ft.
Tunnel 125 ft.	
Bridge 125 ft.	

**Tunnel:** At initiative point 0, any nonprone character on a cart's roof takes 15d6 points of damage and is knocked off when he slams into the rock wall above the tunnel.

**Bridge:** The *conductor stones* are set on a rail narrower than the carts themselves, so only flying characters can be next to a moving lightning rail cart when it is on a bridge.

## Controlling the Lightning Rail

Characters at the helm of the lightning rail coach can telepathically command the bound air elemental, Ssareneex, to move the coach forward or backward, speed it up, slow it down or stop it. To make Ssareneex obey any of these commands, a character must win an opposed Charisma check against the Ssareneex (Charisma modifier of +0). Ssareneex is a contrary windbag. If the elemental wins the opposed check, it will do the exact opposite of what the character commanded. If it can't do the opposite—like speeding up when it is already at full speed—it comes to a grinding halt. If the character wins the opposed check, the lightning rail coach moves as the characters intends.

## PROLOGUE: PROCEED WITH ALL HASTE

The following assumes that at least some of the PCs have the "Knowledge of the Nerra" story object. If you are running with a group without this story object is sending a new group to find a copy of stolen book only. She doesn't give out the information about the nerra or the dusk hag—they PCs will have to find those dangers on their own.



*"Days ago you were called by Matron Martra via the special necklace she gave you after the incident at the Crook Observatory. She called you to the Hall of Messengers in Grea Tower, but you did not stay there for long. In the privacy of her patron's booth she told you the following in frantic hush tones.*

*"I believe the dusk hag who replaces old lady Fellon and who constructed the Cosmic Machine from Crook Observatory is on the move—rather I know she is. A few days ago the new chair of antiquities at Morgrave University came to Grea Tower. It seems that after the death of the old chair, the original copy of the Deviant Celestia was uncovered in his private collection. Professor Lurn, the new chair, told me the original copy has annotations further illuminating the Mad Gnome's theory on the multiverse.*

*"I wish I knew this when the discovery was made, but we've been keeping the affair so secret, Lurn saw no reason to tell the Union about the find. Without fanfare, he placed the tome in the university's library, where it was promptly stolen. It is only then that came to us, hoping we could retrieve the book.*

*I immediately called upon the aid of House Tharashk to track the object, and soon found out that a woman in the company of a visiting Karrn lord—one Heri ir'Vessin—was in possession of the tome. I also learned that the duo, along with the book, were boarding a House Orien Lightning Rail traveling to Thrane, and no doubt to Karrnath from some port there. I believe the woman is the dusk hag in disguise, and that she moves to further aid the nerra. But I need you to find the truth in my supposition.*

*"Dismissing the house Tharashk finders, I called upon you. I still don't think it would be wise for us to share our information about the nerra with others, but we must retrieve that book. Not only for our Morgrave patron, but to gain a deeper understanding of the forces at work in the cosmos. Now follow me."*

With that, Matron Martra takes the PCs out to the Diggers' Union stables. Gives them each a magebred horse, a map of Breland and Thrane, along with the schedule of the lightning rail and sends them on their way.

*"Ride quickly and you can catch the lightning rail, hopefully at the thorp of Nowhere on the confluence of the Hatheril and Starilaskar railstones. Don't spare the horse."*

From there, the PCs are in for an exhausting and wild ride, until they reach the Hatheril station, a little off their expected path, where they finally catch up with the lightning rail coach.

## PART ONE: HOPPING THE RAIL

The PCs were supposed to catch up with the lightning rail coach in the small thorp of Nowhere on the junction of the Starilaskar and Hatheril routes, but they quickly find out the coach they are pursuing suffered some sort of damage, and was diverted to the better stocked and near by Hatheril station for repairs.

By the time the PCs reach Hatheril, their magebred horses

are lathered and near death. And after traveling for 4 days straight, all but warforged PCs are entirely exhausted (they are 15 minutes away from suffering the affects of forced march—see *Player's Handbook* page 164).

*Finally, luck has begun to favor you. After days of travel on your now near-dead magebred horses, you've finally caught up with the lightning rail. Luck is not fully on your side though, as you reach the station's platform you see that the coach is leaving the station—in fact it's almost gone. It is going to take quick wits—and feet—to steal away on the lightning rail.*

*To your right, a goblin House Orien carter blows a whistle, a last warning that the coach is about to leave the station. Looking around frantically, you notice two things of extreme interest.*

*First, from one of the far windows of the large ir'Vessin private car a figure peers out. It is the face of the dusk hag, Beltrudalgald. Matron Martra was right; she is definitely on this coach, and traveling with the Karrnathi lord. Luckily it doesn't seem like she sees you.*

*The second thing of interest is an unlocked and partially opened cargo cart door on the second to the last cart. It is close enough to try to reach before the coach is gone into the thick fog rolling in.*

Show the players "Illustration 1" to help describe this scene. At this point, the fog is rolling in, obscuring vision beyond 50 feet. A few minutes into the trip the fog engulfs the coach, reducing visibility to 20 feet maximum. It stays this way for the first four hours of the trip.

With the lightning rail coach almost gone from the Hatheril station, the PCs are going to have to find some way to get on the coach. On the battle grid, they start in the section marked "PC start." From there, the most common ways to get on the coach is to jump on to a cart balcony, jump to the opened cargo cart door, or try and jump on the Aft Crew Cart. Make sure to review the rules on Jump checks (*Player's Handbook* page 77) before running this encounter.

The lightning rail goes on initiative order 10, moving to the second position marked on your map. Feel free to fudge this if you are sure that its movement makes it impossible for a PC to hop the lightning rail. If this is the case, just have the coach move at the end of the initiative order.

In the end, this is a challenging encounter that should be succeeded by all who put in an effort. It is here to give the PCs an interesting problem to solve, not as some sort of "you need to be this tall to ride" encounter involving Jump checks. Come up with interesting ways where failures are near misses (you are dangling by the tip of your fingers from the speeding lightning rail) without making it obvious. Make sure to always ask about action points. This adventure has the potential to drain a large number of action points.

Due to the fog rolling in, the only person on the lightning rail that has a chance to notice the PCs hopping the coach is the kalashtar Sezfedharath (see Part Two, Cart 10). The few people and House Orien staff on the station's platform look upon the PCs' actions with shock and some fascination. No one interferes with the PCs' boarding of the lightning rail.

Once the PCs are on the coach, proceed to Part Two, where the PCs first challenge is finding a place where their non-warforged members can rest.







## PART TWO: DELVING THE RAIL

Once the PCs are on the coach, they must find a place to rest, and then explore the coach to find their objective. Luckily, the weather is on their side for the first.

During the first four hours of the trip, until the coach reaches the tiny settlement of Nowhere, the lightning rail is moving through some rather thick fog. Visibility, even darkvision, is limited to 20 feet during this period of the trip.

With this limited visibility, the only crewmembers who has a chance of seeing the PCs is the kalashtar Sezfedharath, and he has own agenda that precludes warning the rest of the crew. If the PCs rest for 8 hours after jumping the coach, they awaken in the middle of the night (roughly 3 a.m.), giving them opportunity to move through the coach during night.

The following is the schedule of the lightning rail throughout the trip.

### From Hatheril to:

Nowhere	4 hours
Starilaskur	16 hours
Vathirond	30 hours
Aruldusk	39 hours (includes a 1-hour delay for ticket and customs inspection)

## Cart 10 (Aft Crew Cart): A Traitorous Mind (EL 3)

One of two carts that the PCs likely encounter first, the Aft Crew Cart is the current inactive “engine” of the coach. The elemental in the Aft Crew Cart’s far chamber is currently suppressed, and the place is locked and warded (PCs of this level can’t gain access).

**Cart Features:** This cart has two chambers. The inner locked and warded helm chamber and the outer crew compartment. The crew compartment features a ladder that leads to an iron-and-glass enchased cupola that the crew uses as a lookout.

From outside the cart, the crew compartment is accessible by a locked (good lock, DC 30) and barred iron door (break DC 28; hardness 10; hp 60) or by breaking the thick glass of the upper level of the cupola windows (break DC 15).

The door has a small 1-foot-by-1-foot hatch that can be opened from inside the crew compartment to peer onto the cart’s balcony and the aft balcony of cart 9. Beyond the door, the crew compartment contains four foldout bunks and a small storage space, and the latter that leads up to the upper level of the cupola. Only one crewmember currently dwells in the cart, with the remainder of the steering crew living and working in the Forward Crew Cart (see cart 1).

**The Situation:** The most junior member of the coach crew—a kalashtar named Sezfedharath—currently oversees and guards the Aft Crew Cart. Unbeknownst to the rest of the crew, and most of House Orien, Sezfedharath is a unique agent of the Order of the Emerald Claw, who’s infiltrated the coach

for a specific purpose: the assassination of Lord Heri ir’Vessin. This task is to be accomplished with the help of a specially modified warforged charger stored in cart 8.

There’s a chance Sezfedharath spied the PCs as they snuck upon the lighting rail coach. Make a Spot (DC 0 or the PCs Hide checks) check for the kalashtar (Spot –5; adjustments for distances, fog and distraction are taken into account); success spots the boarding. The PCs have an equal chance of spotting Sezfedharath, and he only hides if his check was successful. If the PCs spot the kalashtar, show them “Illustration 2.”

**Sezfedharath:** Male kalashtar psion (telepath) 2/artificer 2; hp 12; see “Combat Statistics,” below.

**Sezfedharath Reacts:** The kalashtar’s reaction depends on how he becomes aware of them. If he sees them board the coach but they do not approach the Aft Crew Cart, he observes discreetly for as long as he can, trying to gage the PCs’ intentions. His machinations might benefit from the added chaos a rail robbery could bring. He’s also not opposed to someone else killing Lord ir’Vessin. Dead is dead, after all. What worries him is the possibility that the PCs could be working for ir’Vessin, and that the Karrnathi noble has discovered the Order’s plot. Either way, Sezfedharath eventually ventures out to put his plot in motion (see “PCs Ignore Sezfedharath,” below).

If the PCs approach the Aft Crew Cart, the kalashtar’s first reaction is to hunker down and defend the cabin. He’ll stay behind the locked and barred door, and even throw out a *mind thrust* or two (and he is not afraid to augment them to 2-power-point, 2d10-points-of-damage *mind thrusts* if necessary) from the small door hatch to defend the cart. If the cart’s defense becomes hopeless, he takes a different tact, attempting to reason with the PCs, even going so far to offer his services to the PCs’ cause. Of course he maneuvers to twist such services to the benefit of his secret goal.

**Development:** This is a very open-ended encounter with a number of possible conclusions and repercussions. How you develop it is entirely based on the PCs’ actions. The following are some guidelines, but not an inclusive list of possible outcomes.

**PCs Kill Sezfedharath:** Since this “engine” is not the one currently driving the coach, and it is warded beyond their abilities, the PCs can’t really affect the coach’s progress.

A quick search of the crew cart (DC 10) finds Sezfedharath’s personal items in a small cubby, under one of the fold-out bunks; just a few pairs of cloths, a wash basin, a comb, some soap, a pouch with 15 gp, a warforged repair kit with some strange (read psionic) tools and supplies, and a locked ledger. Missing is any overt identification that would link the kalashtar with the Order of the Emerald Claw.

The ledger is rather large—13 inches tall, 10 inches wide, and 4 inches thick. Opening the lock (very simple lock, DC 20, or using the key that Sezfedharath carries) or simply breaking the iron lock mechanism (hp 10; hardness 10; Break DC 12) finds that the book is hollow; hiding a strange iron band or crown with four crystal screws situated in regular



intervals around band, so that it looks like an iron and crystal compass rose. The item, which radiates strong telepathy psionics, is a *device of forgelink*, a psionic item created so its wearer can control the mindless warforged charger stowed in cart 8.

### Powers and Displays

Displays are secondary effects of a manifested power. They are like components in that they can clue other intelligent creatures to what the manifester might be doing. *Psionic charm* and *conceal thoughts* both have mental displays, which means that when they are manifested a subtle chime rings once in the minds of creatures within 15 feet of the manifester or the subject (manifester's option). Other powers have other types of displays, like auditory (a base-pitched hum coming from the manifester of the subject) and material (the subject or area is slicked with a translucent, shimmering substance that evaporates after 1 round).

When manifesting these powers among the PCs, Sezfedharath attempts to do so while dispensing with the display. To accomplish this he must succeed a Concentration check DC 15 + the level of the power. If he fails, the power is still manifested; it's just accompanied by the display.

Manifesting a power without its displays still provokes attacks of opportunity (though Sezfedharath can succeed another DC 15 + the level of the power Concentration check to manifest defensively), but it makes it harder for others to detect the power, as reduces the physical signs of manifesting to nothing more than a far away look, and negates the possibility of Psicraft checks to determine the power being manifested.

Only Sezfenharath can use the device, as it is powered by psionic infused crystals that must be screwed into the kalashtar's skull. Examining his skull (use of the Investigate feat [DC 10] or Search DC 15—grant a +2 synergy bonus for either check to characters with 5 or more ranks of Heal), finds macabre holes under his main of hair: one at the top; two one each side of the skull, just over the ear; and one just under the occipital bun. Plugs made of the original skull and scalp fragments protect each hole. The plugs are easily removed with a sharp tug that produces a moist and sickening suction sound. Successful use of the Investigate feat to analyze the clue (DC 15—grant a +2 synergy bonus if the investigating character has 5 or more ranks of Psicraft) gains insight to the crown's use—it taps into a kalashtar's psionic power to control some creature wearing a similar device.

*PCs Ignore Sezfedharath:* If the PCs ignore the kalashtar, he stays inside the Aft Crew Cart watching the PCs intently for as long as possible. Regardless of whether or not Sezfedharath

knows of the PCs' infiltration, that night, around six hours after the PCs' boarding, he travels over cart 9, to cart 8, down the hatch to the cargo compartment, and opens the warforged charger's crate, attempting to move silently as he goes. If the PCs discover his skulking, they could investigate or even confront him. If truly cornered, the kalashtar tries to enlist the PCs' help. If that doesn't work, he's still a member of the crew, and tries to warn Muzos d'Orien (cart 7) of the PCs' presence.

*PCs Befriend Sezfedharath:* If the PCs are able to secure the kalashtar's trust, either by diplomacy (changing his attitude from indifferent to helpful) or cornering him, there's a good chance the House Orien traitor lets the PCs in on his plot. An obvious member of House Orien among the PCs or Sezfedharath detecting that the PCs are bluffing him obviously dissuades him from such a disclosure.

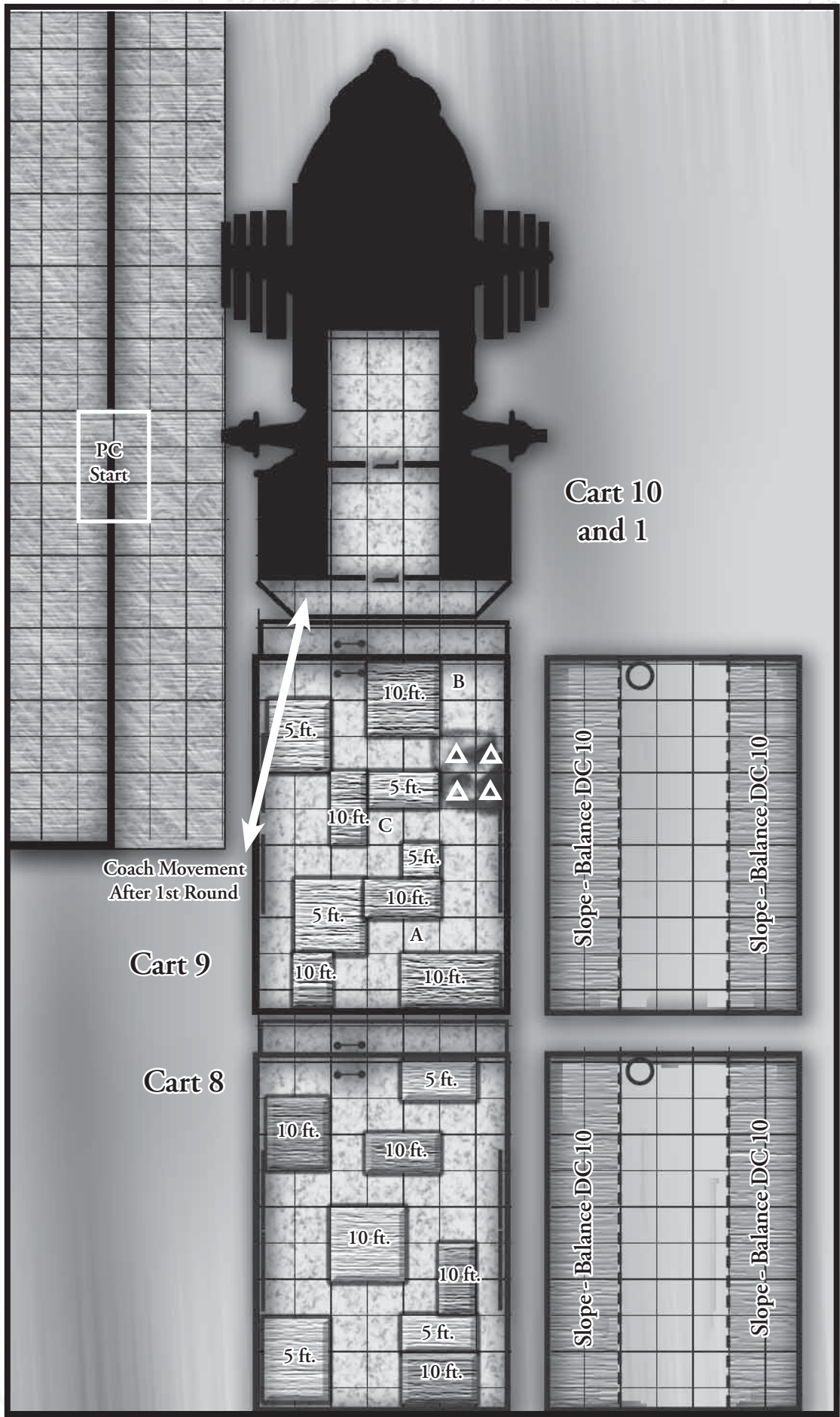
### Scaling the Encounter

**1<sup>st</sup>-level Characters:** Use the psion (telepath) 2/artificer 1 version of Sezfedharath (hp 10).

**3<sup>rd</sup>-level and 4<sup>th</sup>-level Characters:** Male kalashtar psion (telepath) 3/artificer 2 version of Sezfedharath (hp 14).









## Combat Statistics

The psionic powers and feats that Sezfedharath uses can be found in the Expanded Psionics Handbook or in Appendix 1. Kalashtar racial substitution levels are from *Races of Eberron*, but everything needed to run these levels is presented in the statistic block text.

### SEZFEDHARATH

CR 3

Male kalashtar psion (telepath) 2/artificer 1

NE Medium humanoid (psionic)

**Init** +1; **Senses** Listen +1, Spot +1

**Languages** Common, Quor; Draconic, Riedran

**AC** 16, touch 11, flat-footed 15; **Dodge**

**hp** 10 (3 HD)

**Immune** *dream* and *nightmare* spells, and any other effect that relies on dreams.

**Fort** -1, **Ref** +1, **Will** +5; +2 racial bonus on saves against mind-affecting spells and ability and possession

**Spd** 30 ft. (6 squares)

**Atk** melee +2 masterwork spear (1d8-1/x3)

Ranged + 2 light crossbow (1d8/19-20)

**Base Atk** +1; **Grp** +1

**Artificer Infusions Prepared** (CL 1; 1d20+1 to overcome SR or PR):

1<sup>st</sup>—*inflict light damage* (+1 melee touch), *repair light damage*, *shield of faith*

**Psion Powers Discovered** (ML 2; 1d20+2 to overcome PR):

Power Points (11) ○○○○○○ ○○○○○○ ○

1<sup>st</sup>—*catfall*, *conceal thoughts*, *deceleration* (Reflex DC 13), *psionic charm* (Will DC 13; Duration 3 hours), *mind thrust* (Will DC 13)

**Racial Substitution Level** kalashtar telepath 1st

**Abilities** Str 10, Dex 12, Con 8, Int 15, Wis 13, Cha 14

**Feats** Dodge, Psionic Endowment, Scribe Scroll, Toughness

**Skills** Bluff +10, Concentration +5, Diplomacy +4, Disable Device +6, Intimidate +4, Move Silently -4, Open Locks +5, Spellcraft +6, Use Magic Device +6

**Possessions** chainmail, masterwork spear, crossbow, 2 *psionic shards of Bluff* (+4), key ring with keys to all the locks in the aft and forward crew carts and his journal.

**Psi-Like Ability:** *Mindlink* 2/day—This ability is like the power manifested by a 3<sup>rd</sup>-level wilder. This basic kalashtar power has been modified by Sezfedharath's racial substitution level.

**Telepathic Talent (Ex):** When Sezfedharath manifests *psionic charm*, he can treat his manifester level as 3<sup>rd</sup>.

### SEZFEDHARATH

CR 4

Male kalashtar psion (telepath) 2/artificer 2

NE Medium humanoid (kalashtar, psionic)

**Init** +1; **Senses** Listen +1, Spot +1

**Languages** Common, Quor; Draconic, Riedran

**AC** 16, touch 11, flat-footed 15; **Dodge**

**hp** 12 (4 HD)

**Immune** *dream* and *nightmare* spells, and any other effect that relies on dreams.

**Fort** -1, **Ref** +1, **Will** +6; +2 racial bonus on saves against mind-affecting spells and ability and possession

**Spd** 30 ft. (6 squares)

**Atk** melee +3 masterwork spear (1d8-1/x3)

Ranged + 3 light crossbow (1d8/19-20)

**Base Atk** +2; **Grp** +2

**Artificer Infusions Prepared** (CL 2; 1d20+2 to overcome SR or PR):

1<sup>st</sup>—2 *inflict light damage* (+1 melee touch), *repair light damage*, *shield of faith*

**Psion Powers Discovered** (ML 2; 1d20+2 to overcome PR):

Power Points (12) ○○○○○○ ○○○○○○ ○○

1<sup>st</sup>—*catfall*, *conceal thoughts*, *deceleration* (Reflex DC 14), *psionic charm* (Will DC 14; Duration 3 hours), *mind thrust* (Will DC 14)

**Racial Substitution Level** kalashtar telepath 1st

**Abilities** Str 10, Dex 12, Con 8, Int 16, Wis 13, Cha 14

**Feats** Brew Potion, Dodge, Psionic Endowment, Scribe Scroll, Toughness

**Skills** Appraise +4, Bluff +10, Concentration +6, Diplomacy +4, Disable Device +7, Intimidate +4, Move Silently -4, Open Locks +6, Spellcraft +8, Use Magic Device +7

**Possessions** chainmail, masterwork spear, crossbow, 2 *psionic shards of Bluff* (+4), *potion of cure light wounds*, key ring with keys to all the locks in the aft and forward crew carts and his journal.

**Psi-Like Ability:** *Mindlink* 2/day—This ability is like the power manifested by a 4<sup>th</sup>-level wilder. This basic kalashtar power has been modified by Sezfedharath's racial substitution level.

**Telepathic Talent (Ex):** When Sezfedharath manifests *psionic charm*, he can treat his manifester level as 3<sup>rd</sup>.

### SEZFEDHARATH

CR 5

Male kalashtar psion (telepath) 3/artificer 2

NE Medium humanoid (kalashtar, psionic)

**Init** +1; **Senses** Listen +1, Spot +1

**Languages** Common, Quor; Draconic, Riedran

**AC** 17, touch 11, flat-footed 16; **Dodge**

**hp** 14 (5 HD)

**Immune** *dream* and *nightmare* spells, and any other effect that relies on dreams.

**Fort** +0, **Ref** +2, **Will** +6; +2 racial bonus on saves against mind-affecting spells and ability and possession

**Spd** 30 ft. (6 squares)

**Atk** melee +3 masterwork spear (1d8-1/x3)

Ranged + 3 light crossbow (1d8/19-20)

**Base Atk** +2; **Grp** +2

**Artificer Infusions Prepared** (CL 2; 1d20+2 to overcome SR or PR):

1<sup>st</sup>—2 *inflict light damage* (+1 melee touch), *repair light damage*, *shield of faith*

**Psion Powers Discovered** (ML 3; 1d20+3 to overcome PR):

Power Points (15) ○○○○○○ ○○○○○○ ○○○○○○

1<sup>st</sup>—*catfall*, *conceal thoughts*, *deceleration* (Reflex DC 14), *psionic charm* (Will DC 14; Duration 3 hours), *mind thrust* (Will DC 14)

2<sup>nd</sup>—*psionic suggestion* (Will DC 15; Duration 4 hours or until completed), *read thoughts* (Will DC 15; Duration concentration up to 4 minutes).

**Racial Substitution Level** kalashtar telepath 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup>.

**Abilities** Str 10, Dex 12, Con 8, Int 16, Wis 13, Cha 14

**Feats** Brew Potion, Dodge, Psionic Endowment, Scribe Scroll, Toughness

**Skills** Appraise +4, Bluff +10, Concentration +7, Diplomacy +4, Disable Device +7, Intimidate +4, Move Silently -3, Open Locks +6, Psicraft +7, Spellcraft +8, Use Magic Device +7

**Possessions** +1 *chainmail*, masterwork spear, crossbow, 2 *psionic shards of Bluff* (+4), *potion of cure light wounds*, key ring with keys to all the locks in the aft and forward crew carts and his journal.

**Psi-Like Ability:** *Mindlink* 3/day—This ability is like the power manifested by a 5<sup>th</sup>-level wilder. This basic kalashtar power has been modified by Sezfedharath's racial substitution level.

**Telepathic Talent (Ex):** When Sezfedharath manifests *psionic charm*, *psionic suggestion*, or *read thoughts*, he can treat his manifester level as 3<sup>rd</sup>.

**Roleplaying Notes** An orphan of kalashtar society, Sezfedharath was born to a human mother who's a long-time Emerald Claw operative. A champion of the philosophy of Karnathi patriotism, his mother groomed her psionically-talented son for missions promoting the Order's surface mission. Sezfedharath is not aware of the Emerald Claw's true mission and master. He also doesn't know of Furt, the other Emerald Claw operative aboard the train (See Cart 5), nor does he know the true nature of his target or his 'lady friend.'





### Cart 9 (Cargo): Dangerous and Fey Hobos (EL 4)

Cargo carts have three entrances. One is circular hatch on the roof leading connecting to the hold's floor by way of a 15-foot-tall iron ladder. The other two are large, sliding double doors located on each side of cargo hold: it's through these doors that workers load the cargo into the hold. As noted in "Part One" the chain and lock is missing from this cart's portside door, and the PCs may have gained entrance by that opportunity. If this is the case, read aloud the following:

*Light and air rush into the cargo hold. The air kicks up dust and straw, while the light illuminates the numerous carts, barrels, other contains, and bundles of grain are stacked on and anchored to the floor of this place. To the right an iron ladder climbs from the floor to a hatch above.*

A pair of redcap hobos hiding here stealthily travels (Move Silently +8) from "A" to "C," hoping to spy on the new additions to the cart and pounce upon them later.

If instead the PCs hopped upon one of the cart's balconies and travel up the outside ladder to the cart's top, the redcaps likely (Listen +8) hear the approach. One of the fey moves from "A" to "B" while the other moves to "C," in the hopes of surprising newcomers and wedging them with a flanking maneuver later. Even if the PCs quietly traverse the ladder onto the cart top, they find the hatch stuck, requiring force (Strength DC 28 or hardness 10, hp 60), or finesse (Disable Device DC 20) to open. Finesse can help the PCs get the jump on the redcaps, but force alerts them to the PCs' approach. If the PCs find themselves split up inside this cart and the balconies between it and cart 9, the hatch isn't stuck. The red caps are a serious enough menace for an entire group, those

who are in trouble because they inadvertently tangled with them alone, need help (or escape) sooner than later.

When the PCs encounter the redcaps, show them "Illustration 3".

**Creatures:** This pair of gnarled miscreants secreted their way onto the coach when it stopped for impromptu repairs just southwest of Dragon's Crown. They used to be part of a larger band that robbed and tortured travelers and settlements outside of the ruins, but a successful offensive by Breland soldiery and angry militia motivated them to explore new haunts. They don't take kindly to other tagalongs squatting in the cart, but have enough patience to spy and assess the threat before attacking. Their presence is unknown to the unsuspecting lightning rail coach's staff and passengers.

**Young Redcaps (2):** 22, 20; see "Combat Statistics", below.

**Tactics:** The redcaps attack when the PCs are unawares, separated, or even asleep if possible. Firing eldritch stones first, they slash with scythes only when forced or after they're confident their magic stones have significantly softened targets.

They assault the PCs with a maniacal and terrifying glee, cracking off-color jokes and singing disgusting limericks about the joys of murder and mutilation as they slash and sling away at the PCs.

If the large cargo doors are open, and the opportunity presents itself, the redcaps don't hesitate to bull rush pesky arcane spellcasters from the lightning rail coach. See the "Adventuring on the Lightning Rail" for adjudicating the results of this tactic. If a redcap successful with this tactic, it's so amused with result it spends a round laughing at the plight of the poor PC—the redcap is effectively dazed during the round it laughs.



**Battle Grid Features:** The spill between “A” and “B” is difficult terrain, and the affected squares are denoted by the semitransparent triangle symbol. Climbing up or down a 5-foot cargo pile doesn’t require a Climb check, but does cost 10 feet (2 squares) of movement. Climbing up a 10-foot pile requires a DC 10 Climb check, and takes a move action in most cases. The ceilings are 15 feet high in this cart, meaning that Large creatures atop a 10-foot pile are squeezed.

### Character Knowledge about Redcaps

Bards may use bardic knowledge for these checks, but the DC for such checks is increased by 5 over the Knowledge skill checks for the same information.

#### Knowledge (Nature)

##### DC Result

- |    |  |
|----|--|
| 14 | These deceptively strong creatures are redcaps, sometimes called dwarfsplitters. They are wicked and vicious fey who find joy in inflicting pain and death.  |
| 19 | The hats on their head are died with the blood of victims, which they bleed to death with their oversize, but expertly wielded, scythes.   |
| 24 | Like many fey, redcaps are resilient to weapons not made of cold iron. They also enhance their sling stone with a greenish-blue magical energy and can inflict dreadful wounds with the eldritch weapon. |
| 28 | When a redcap dies, it vanishes from the world, leaving a single tooth behind. Those who keep the tooth as a trophy gain respect and status among other redcaps and even other fey.                      |

#### Knowledge (Local)

A DC 15 check recalls a recent story about Breland soldiers and local militia out of Mistmarch finding a warren of creatures matching this description outside the stones of Dragon’s Crown. In the vicious fight that ensued, these creatures were able to kill five times their number in men-at-arms before the overwhelming numbers of the Breland force won the day.

**Development:** When a redcap dies, it disappears, leaving in its place a single tooth. Give out copies of “Story Object: Redcap Tooth,” for each of the creatures the PCs defeat.

Some PCs may want to rummage through the various crates and containers. Remind them that the objects here probably belong to various passengers on the lightning rail coach. Almost all of the crates and containers are filled with trade goods (see *Player’s Handbook* page 112 for a list of common trade goods—there are no animals, gold, or platinum kept in this cargo cart), with one bundle of hay hiding the redcap’s gold (see “Treasure” below). One of the crates

contains five suits of +1 *scale mail*, and five +1 *heavy steel shields*, packed in clean straw. All ten pieces of armor are emblazoned and engraved with symbols and icons of the Silver Flame. A Knowledge (religion) check DC 17 (clerics or paladins of the Silver Flame automatically succeed this check) recognizes the particular iconography of the design as denoting the Pure Flame, a particularly fanatical sect of the Church of the Silver Flame who follow a literal interpretation of the Voice of the Flame’s every utterance. This crate belongs to a passenger named Chantalyn Hettrion who is staying in cart 5. If she spots the PCs with her property, there may be serious consequences (see that cart’s description).

Cautious and cunning PCs can make good use of this place as a quiet base of operations, especially after they deal with Sezfedharath (see cart 10). Unless the PCs do something to gum up the works, the rest of the crew is scheduled to stay in the forward engine until the coach arrives in Aruldusk.

**Treasure:** Hidden (Search DC 10) within a bundle of hay, in a sack made of the same blood-dyed linen as the redcap’s hats, is 150 gp.

### Scaling the Encounter

**1<sup>st</sup>-level Characters (EL 2):** There is only one redcap hobo in this cart (hp 22).

**3<sup>rd</sup>-level Characters (EL 5):** Add another redcap to the encounter (hp 22, 21, 20).

**4<sup>th</sup>-level Characters (EL 6):** Add two more redcaps to the encounter (hp 25, 22, 21, 20).

### Cart 8 (Cargo): Killing Machine (EL 0 to EL 5)

Cargo carts have three entrances. One is circular hatch on the roof leading connecting to the hold’s floor by way of a 15-foot-tall iron ladder. The other two are large, sliding double doors located on each side of cargo hold: it’s through these doors that workers load the cargo hold. Both of the cargo doors are currently locked, making it very difficult to enter this cart by that manner, requiring a DC 15 Climb check to reach the door (DC 5 if the PCs lower a rope from the cart’s roof), and a DC 25 Open Locks. The PCs can’t unlock the cargo doors from inside the cart. The hatch up top is neither stuck nor locked.

*This cart is filled with crates, barrels, sacks and bails of grain. One particularly large cart dominates the center of the cart.*

Once the cart gets moving, and even if he saw the PCs jump on the train, Sezfedharath uses the heavy fog to his advantage and moves to this cart six hours into the trip (see Cart 1 description). Once inside, he opens the large crate in preparation for the assassination. He then returns to his station until the coach arrives at Aurldusk. If the PCs miss him, and later enter or return to the cart, continue with the following:

*One side of the large cart has been pried open and straw spills out from the opened side.*



## Combat Statistics

This statistic block takes into account the *Monster Manual III* errata.

YOUNG REDCAP

CR 2

CE Small Fey

**Init** +5; **Senses** low-light vision; Listen +8, Spot +8

**Languages** Common, Sylvan

**AC** 13, touch 12, flat-footed 12; **DR** 5/cold iron

**hp** variable, see adventure text (4 HD)

**Fort** +3, **Ref** +5, **Will** +5

**Spd** 30 ft. (6 squares)

**Atk** melee Medium scythe +3 (2d4+7/x4)\* or ranged Medium sling +5 (1d6+3)

**Base Atk** +2; **Grp** +4

**Atk Options** Power Attack (\*includes adjustment for Power Attack).

**Special Atk** Eldritch stones (bullets fired from sling treated as magic, +1 enhancement bonus attack and damage, enhanced damage output).

**Abilities** Str 14, Dex 13, Con 14, Int 11, Wis 12, Cha 13

**Feats** Improved Initiative, Power Attack

**Skills** Hide +12, Intimidate +8, Listen +8, Move Silently +8, Spot +8, Survival +8

**Possessions** Medium scythe, Medium sling, 10 bullets.

**Eldritch Stone (Su):** Bullets fired from a redcap's sling glow with a greenish-blue magical energy, giving them a +1 enhancement bonus on attack rolls and damage rolls as well as dealing 1d6 points of damage.

**Powerful Build (Ex):** The physical stature of a readcap lets it function in many ways as if it were one size category larger. This is reflected in the statistic block.

**Description** *A seemingly short and tough-looking old man with leathery skin, iron boots, and a bright red hat. He is wilding a scythe that looks too large for him. His wicked grin is lined with sharp teeth.*

If the cart has been pried open, or the PCs open the cart (Strength DC 15; +2 circumstance bonus if the PCs' use a crowbar), they find it stores a dangerous-looking, but seemly inert, warforged creature. Use "Illustration 4" to help describe the scene.

**Creature:** The crated creature is a mindless warforged charger. Modified for use as a weapon to kill Lord Heri ir'Vessin, it stands as motionless as a statue until Sezfedharath uses the *device of forgelink* to animate and control the thing or it is accidentally activated. An artificer examining the warforged can attempt an artificer knowledge check (DC 12) to discern that the warforged internal workings have been modified with a strange—almost alien—device. A *detect magic* or a *detect psionics* reveals it to be a psionic aura of moderate strength, but a DC 20 Psicraft check is required to tell its aura is telepathy. Disabling the device is a daunting task, especially for those with no real knowledge of psionics. A DC 30 check is required, and only those with ranks in Knowledge (psionics) may attempt to assist. If the character attempting to disable the device has ranks in that skill, he or she gets a +2 circumstance bonus to the check. Failing the check by 5 partially animates the charger, and it attacks any creature in the cart. PCs without ranks in Disable Device that decide to tamper with the charger's core must succeed a DC 30 Intelligence check. Success messily disables the thing, but failure by 5 or more activates the thing. If the PCs accidentally activate the charger, it gains the following trait:

**Unreliable (Ex):** The residual of the warforged charger's consciousness is only quasi-real. It is thus sometimes slow to react to the changing environment around it. At the beginning of each round in which the warforged charger attempts to act, roll 1d20. On a result of 11 or better, it acts normally; otherwise it takes no action.

If either check is successful, Sezfedharath is no longer

able to control it with his psionic contraption without repairing it, which he is capable of doing with the help of his warforged repair kit and his strange psionic tools and supplies (see Cart 10).

**Mindless Warforged Charger:** hp 38; see "Combat Statistic", below.

**Development:** This encounter has many possibilities. The PCs can encounter Sezfedharath when he is unpacking the crate. The kalashtar could spot the PCs entering or leaving the cart, and investigate, all too aware that his plan is hopeless without the 'forged. If he sees the PCs as a threat to his plan, Sezfedharath has no qualms about donning the *device of forgelink* and using the charger as an adventurer disposal.

It's just as likely that the PCs are careful in their exploration of the cart, and lack the curiosity to tear open the big crate. In this case, this cart becomes a good base of operations for their further exploration of the coach.

PCs curious enough to rummage through the other crates, barrels, sacks, and bails, find only trade items similar to those in Cart 9. There are no hidden treasures in this cart.





### Combat Statistics

MINDLESS WARFORGED CHARGER

CR 5

N Large construct

**Init** +0; **Senses** Listen -2, Spot -2

**Languages** None

**AC** 17, touch 9, flat-footed 17; **DR** 2/adamantite; moderate fortification (75% chance to ignore sneak attack and critical hit damage)

**hp** 38 (4 HD)

**Fort** +6, **Ref** +1, **Will** -1

**Spd** 30 ft. (6 squares)

**Atk** melee slam with adamantite fists +7 (1d8+5)

**Base Atk** +3; **Grp** +12

**Atk Options** Improved Bull Rush, Power Attack, Powerful Charge

**Special Atk** Powerful Charge (1d8+5 plus 2d6 damage)

**Abilities** Str 20, Dex 10, Con 20, Int —, Wis 7, Cha 3

**Feats** Adamantine Body<sup>b</sup>, Improved Bull Rush, Power Attack, Powerful Charge<sup>b</sup>

**Skills** Jump +12

**Mindless (Ex):** This warforged charger is mindless, and can only be controlled by Sezfedharath using the device of *forgelink*.

**Description** This construct looks like an ogre-size gorilla, and looks like it walks on both its short legs and its hammerlike hands. Its body is heavily plated.

### Cart 7 (Lounge): Unexpected Guests (EL 3)

The lounge cart has two entrances, both at floor level and on each end of the cart. Both doors are normally unlocked. There are nine tables each with four chairs and a bar in the lounge. During the day the lounge is a favorite hangout of the House Orien guards, lead by Murzos d'Orien. At night the place is usually cleared out of all creatures but the barkeep, but there is a 5 in 20 chance that Murzos is here also, as the heir of Orien suffers from bouts of insomnia, and spends those nights playing cards with the barkeep.

The barkeep serves drinks and simple foods, stored, preserved, and even heated by special House Orien magic (standard prices for drinks and foodstuff, see *Player's Handbook*).

**The Situation:** The bar is tended all day and night by a pacifist warforged named Zurk (male-personality warforged expert 3; *Skills and Feats*: Ironwood Body, Skill Focus [bluff]; Bluff +9, Listen +2; Sense Motive +8, Spot +2). From the bar he notices the entry of all but the most hidden of creatures entering the cart, and those entering will surely notice him.

*Behind the bar stands a tall, thin warforged. Unlike many of its ilk, it's primarily constructed of ironwood—it's finish extremely polished—complete with a wood replica of a handlebar mustache sitting comically over the forged's mouth.*

Zurk is sociable but always rather incomprehensible, employing a friendly banter that uses mumbling half-sentences and seemingly inside jokes that make the Zurk—and usually only Zurk—laugh. He immediately recognizes that the PCs aren't ticketed passengers, but keeps quiet at first, trying to learn as much as possible from the coach crashers.

If the PCs enter during daylight hours, Murzos d'Orien and a group of novice guards are here. Since a large section of the coach houses Lord ir'Vessin and his personal guard, his group is no more than a small training force. While the novice guards play a game



of Three-Dragon Ante in the corner, Murzos sits at a separate table reading a week-old copy of the *Sharn Inquisitive*, looking up only when someone enters the cart or at a commotion. Like Zurk, he notices any new additions to the coach ride, but waits to act. The novice guards only cease their game if Murzos springs into action.

During the day, other passages use the lounge cart. Feel free to place some passengers from carts 5 and 6 in this place if you want, but the best passenger may be Riki Thorne (female human rogue 1; Sense Motive +5), a young and spunky reporter on her first mission for the *Brelant Ledger*. She could be berating Murzos for his choice of chronicles, only relenting when the PCs enter the cart.

**Murzos d'Orien:** male human fighter 2/rogue1; hp 18; see "Combat Statistics", below.

**House Orien Novice Guards (3):** human male fighter 1; hp 9, 7, 5; see "Combat Statistics", below.

**Tactics:** The PCs' entrance causes some degree of calamity. Zurk's content to learn about their motivations, and in conversation shies away from talk of tickets, but eventually moves to inform Murzos of the intrusion. For extra nighttime drama, you can have Murzos enter the cart just as the PCs end their conversation with Zurk. In this case Murzos retreats momentarily to rouse the novice guards, one of which moves up the coach attempting to seek aid from the ir'Vessin soldiers.

### Lightning Rail Fare

The following fares are based on the trip from Hatheril to Starilaskur. If the PCs attempt to purchase the fair after leaving Starilaskur, the fares increase by the price shown, unless they can bluff Murzos into thinking they hopped on the coach at a later stop. The costs are the cheap seats, and per person, not for the entire group.

Starilaskur	225 gp
Vathirond	+210 gp
Aruldusk	+115 gp

During the day, Murzos watches long enough to size up the opposition (no more than a minute), takes out his hip flask, and casually slips his *potion of cat's grace* (Bluff -1, with a +4 circumstance bonus for the innocuous nature of the action) once "buffed" he approaches the PCs, calling his guards to action. Those PCs who didn't sense his motive don't act in the surprise round, but neither do the novice guards.

House Orien is not normally accepting of armed strangers crashing their lightning rail coaches, and Murzos and his men have been warned of threats on Lord ir'Vessin's life, which makes them more ruthless than usual. Unless the PCs skilled diplomats (their attitude usually starts as hostile, use the reactions in "Development" as a guide on how they react if diplomacy softens their mood) or have money or house Orien

on their side (see "Development" below), the guards attack with lethal force while informing the PCs the only way to escape is by jumping off the coach. During combat, Murzos uses his *dimensional leap* dragonmark ability to gain flanking position, or to take care of pesky casters and manifesters early in the combat.

**Development:** PCs who approach the situation willing to buy passage on the coach, may create a brief respite of hostility, but only long enough to learn the ticket cost (see sidebar), as almost no group will have the coin to pay the expensive lightning rail fares.

A member of House Orien—especially a dragonmarked member—among the PCs may help the situation. If at least one of the characters identifies him or herself as a member of House Orien (this can also be done with a Bluff check DC 20) then Murzos and the guard's attitude starts at unfriendly, as they are upset at the brashness of their fellow house members but don't dare attack unless provoked. Murzos grudgingly allows the PCs to stay on the lightning rail coach, but confines them to the lounge cart, even locking the doors at night to keep them in (good lock, DC 30; break DC 18) until he converses with higher ups in the house. This will not be done until the coach reaches the next destination, and at that point the House allows passage only to the next stop, and only if the PCs have cause no trouble up to that point.

A dragonmarked member garners fewer problems, as Murzos and the guards attitude becomes indifferent, meaning that they accept the PCs' right to be on the coach, but watch them with some suspicion. They definitely aid the ir'Vessin guards if the PCs try to gain access to the lord's cart.

An unmarked Favored of the House (as in the feat) is treated as a dragonmarked member of the house, while a dragonmarked favored adjusts the attitude to friendly. Murzos automatically recognizes a dragonmarked favored as soon as he or she enters the cart.

PCs can't bluff that they're dragonmarked members of House Orien unless they also succeed the necessary Disguise check to replicate the mark. No disguise or bluff replicates the benefit of a Favored of the House feat. Lastly, remember, in the MARK OF HEROES campaign, a character must have the "Heir of Gust and Path" card (promo card 4) in order to play a member of House Orien.

**Treasure:** The only real treasure possible here is the pot of the Three-Dragon Ante game, which is only 15 gp in mixed coins (mostly silver and copper). While some of the goods and magic could be looted from the bar, such treasure would only be contraband.



## Combat Statistics

MURZOS D'ORIENT

CR 3

Male human fighter 2/rogue 1

N Medium humanoid (human)

Init +2; Senses Listen +0, Spot +0

Languages Common

AC 17, touch 12, flat-footed 15; Combat Expertise

hp 22 (3 HD)

Fort +5, Ref +4, Will +0

Spd 30 ft. (6 squares)

Atk +7 melee masterwork rapier (1d6+1/18-20)

Base Atk +2; Grp +3

Atk Options Combat Expertise, 1/day—*dimensional leap* (teleport up to 30 feet), Improved Feint, Sneak Attack +1d6

Combat Gear *potion of cat's grace* (+4 Dex; AC 19, touch 14; +9 melee masterwork rapier; Balance, Escape Artist, Hide and Tumble +6, Jump +7)

Abilities Str 12, Dex 15, Con 14, Int 13, Wis 10, Cha 8

Feats Combat Expertise, Improved Feint, Least Dragonmark (Mark of Passage), Weapon Finesse, Weapon Focus (rapier)

Skills Climb +5, Balance +4, Bluff +3, Escape Artist +4, Hide +4, Intimidate +3, Jump +5, Ride +4, Sense Motive +4, Tumble +4.

Possessions masterwork rapier, masterwork buckler, masterwork chain shirt, *potion of cat's grace* in a hip flask, ring of keys for all the coach's lock, except for the ir'Vessin private cart (Cart 3) and to the helm chamber in each "engine" (carts 1 and 10).

## HOUSE ORIEN NOVICE GUARDS

CR 1

Male human fighter 1

N Medium humanoid (human)

Init +2; Senses Listen +1, Spot +3

Languages Common

AC 17, touch 12, flat-footed 15; Dodge

hp variable, see adventure text (1 HD)

Fort +4, Ref +2, Will +0

Spd 20 ft. (6 squares)

Atk +5 melee masterwork falchion (2d4+3/18-20)

Base Atk +1; Grp +3

Abilities Str 15, Dex 14, Con 13, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 8

Feats Dodge, Improved Initiative, Weapon Focus (falchion)

Skills Climb +1, Jump +1, Spot +3

Possessions masterwork breastplate, masterwork falchion, 5 gp each in mixed coin (mostly silver and copper).



## Cart 6 (Passenger): Strange Mix of Passengers (EL 0 or 2)

The passenger carts have four private rooms and eight banks of common seats. There are eight passengers scattered throughout the seats (typically settling in their own bank, for a bit of privacy), and additional passengers occupying three of the private rooms. Murzos is using the other private room as his personal quarters, but is only found there at night when he is not suffering from insomnia (see Cart 7, above). The doors of the private rooms are usually locked (average lock, DC 25; break DC 18). Passengers with private rooms have keys to their own rooms, and Murzos has keys to all the rooms, as does Ari Nagel in the forward engine cart (cart 1).

Most of the passengers in the common seats are tradesfolk and artisans traveling to the settlements of eastern Breland and beyond. Use your imagination in describing them, as none have any real importance to the adventure. Utilize "Table 4-24: One Hundred Traits" on page 128 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide* and the "100 Instant NPC Agendas" on page 99 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide II* (if you have access to that book) to help flesh them out if you'd like.

One of the passengers among the common seats is of particular interest, although there's a chance the PCs met her in the lounge. A young human girl of no more than 19 years, Riki Thorne (CG female human rogue 1; Hide +6, Move Silently +6, Sense Motive +5) is the newest reporter of the *Breland Ledger*. She's on a trip to western Breland to investigate sightings of a mysterious black airship that House Lyrandar refuses to acknowledge or even comment upon. While such a mission may seem exciting to the PCs, Riki thinks it's "tower spit" (a Brelish expression for nonsense). She would much rather follow the daring exploits of *bona fide* adventurers. If the PCs tell her they work for the Diggers' Union, there is no getting rid of her. Her older brother is a Digger currently searching for artifacts in the



Demon Wastes, and from his stories she has the distinct impression that Diggers are always on an adventure.

While Riki tries to be helpful, and she has a magic item that could be quite useful, she is a bit of a bumbler, and can be more trouble than she's worth. Use her as comic relief whenever possible; she accidentally triggers encounters, and could even be captured by the PCs' quarry later in the adventure, and used as a hostage. At other time you can use her as a tool to keep the adventure going, as she can chastise the PCs for becoming sidetracked, or push them to be more heroic—"you are Diggers, after all."

More helpful than her person is her sole magic possession, a *chime of opening* with three uses. And she is not afraid to use the item as leverage for keeping her around, as while she does not hesitate to use it, she does not let the PCs borrow it. "If you want the chime, you also get me," she tells them.

As for the private rooms, their inhabitants are described below.

**Room 1:** Chantaly Hettrion, a cleric of the Silver Flame, occupies this first room. Originally from Thrane, she served at the Shrine of Fathen the Martyr in Sharn for the past two years, and is happily returning home. The PCs should run afoul of her if they get into a pitch battle with the House Orien guard, as she happily offers her services to repel lightning rail raiders, or if the PCs parade around in armor pilfered from cart 9. In either case this Silver Flame cleric becomes a stalwart foe.

**Chantaly Hettrion:** female human cleric 2; hp 12; see "Combat Statistics", below.

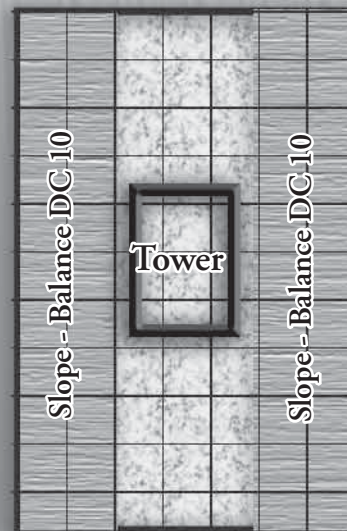
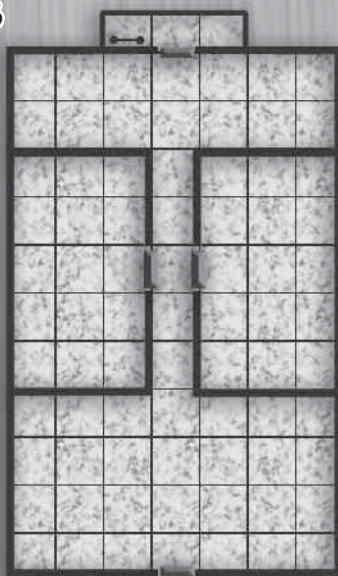
**Room 2:** Wultram Ochem a Karrn magewright (N half-elf male magewright 3) is returning to Karrnath after a long stay at Wroat. On the off chance the PCs' interact with him, he can tell them this about Lord ir'Vessin.

*Vessin, he is a northern lord, but not a member of the Rekkenmark, if I remember correctly. A dilettante warrior, and a bit of a dandy, there is little respect for him among the Karrn warlords. He is rich, though. His family has control of lucrative furring rights in the Karnwood.*

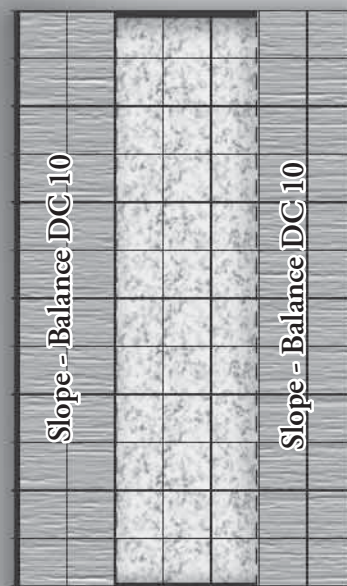
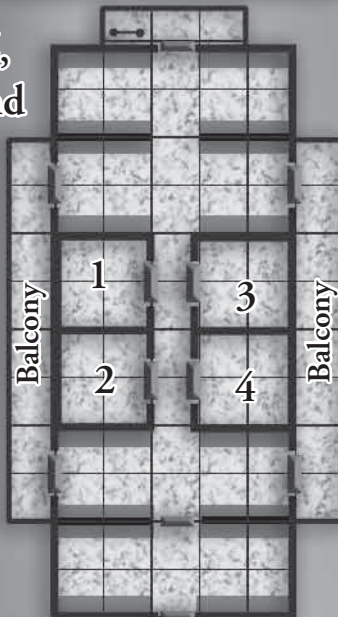
**Room 3:** Murzos uses this place as his quarters. It is neat and orderly, and contains nothing the PCs likely find interesting.

**Room 4:** As an optional encounter, and only if none of the players have played in *EMH-6 Blind Man's Hunt*, this room is

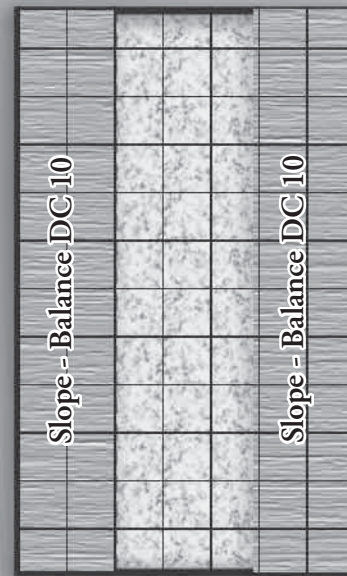
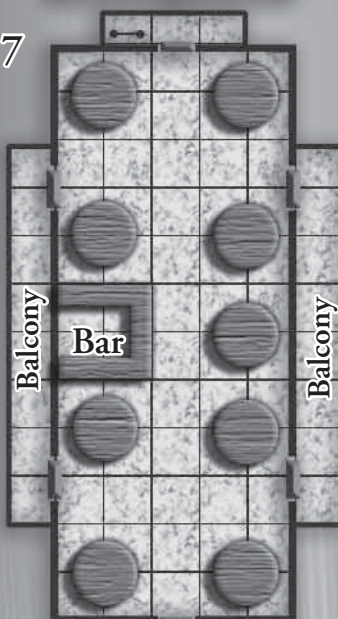
Cart 3



Cart 6,  
5, 4, and  
2



Cart 7





the quarters for a somewhat famous medusa artist named Anthropario (NG female medusa expert 2). Characters who succeed a Knowledge (local) or bardic knowledge check (DC 20) have heard of the medusa painter from Droaam. Talented and exotic, her work (and company) is favored by the powerful of Sharn, Wroat, Fairhaven, Zoanberg, and even Karrlakton.

A Droaam expatriate, she knows her visage scares many common people, and stays sequestered in her private room. That said, she is a kind, classy, and good lady, who can be helpful to the PCs. If the PCs question her, they might get a break. If they ask if she's seen a dusk hag, she tells the PCs the following.

*Yes and know. I saw a woman board in Wroat. The Karrnathi lord greeted her there, and I believe she travels with him. I had the feeling something about her was not as it seems, and now with you mentioning dusk hags, it was her mannerisms. She moved like a hag.*

Some PCs may only see a monster and attack Anthropario. While she starts any encounter with her gaze "turned off," she has no problem activating to save her life (Fort DC 17, see *Monster Manual* page 180).

If the PCs ask where the Anthropario is heading, she tells them Thrane.

#### CHANTALYN HETRIION

CR 2

Female human cleric 2

LN Medium humanoid (human)

Init +1; Senses Listen +2, Spot +2

Languages Common

AC 18, touch 11, flat-footed 17

hp 12

Fort +4, Ref +1, Will +5

Spd 20 ft. (6 squares)

Atk +3 melee light mace (1d6+2) or  
+2 ranged longbow (1d8/19-20)

Atk Options 3/day—turn undead (1d20+2; 2d6+2 turning damage), spontaneous cast cure spells

Base Atk +1; Grp +3

Cleric Spells Prepared (CL 2; 1d20 +2 to overcome SR or PR)

1<sup>st</sup>—divine favor (+1), protection from chaos<sup>D</sup>, shield of faith (+2)

0—detect magic, guidance, resistance

D: Domain spells; Domains: good and protection

Abilities Str 14, Dex 12, Con 13, Int 8, Wis 15, Cha 10

Feats Extra Turning, Martial Weapon Proficiency (longbow)

Skills Concentration +6, Knowledge (religion) +4

Possessions masterwork breastplate, heavy steel shield, light mace, longbow, 20 arrows

*I have been commissioned to do work for a Thrane noble named Lenorf ir'Lumm. He is an important, albeit somewhat controversial, patron of the arts in that nation. I'm traveling to his villa north of the Harrowcrowns so that he can observe me work. Though I find this odd, because I hear he's blind.*

If any of the PCs have already played *EMH-6 Blind Man's Hunt*, the medusa artist is not here, and this room is used by some of the House Orien guards as a place to rest away from the common stalls.

#### Cart 5 (Passenger): Near Empty Passenger Car

Similar to cart 6, this passenger cart has four private rooms and a number of common seats. Due to Lord ir'Vessin's special arrangement with House Orien, the seats in this place are unoccupied, with only Murzos's men using them to get a bit of rest from time to time. At any given time there are two novice guards resting here. When novice guards rest here they take off their armor (AC 12, touch 12, flat-footed 10). At any given time there are at least two novice guards resting here (hp 10, 6; see Cart 7 for statistics).

The four private rooms are occupied (Lord ir'Vessin chose not to reimburse House Orien for the loss of revenue to keep these empty). Their occupants are detailed below.

**Room 1:** Silversmiths Mendil (human male commoner 1/expert 2; 35 years old) and Julinna Felmdur (half-elf female expert 5; age 70) are devout followers of the Silver Flame from Sharn. They have saved for the last 8 years so that four children (see Room 2) could make a pilgrimage to the Cathedral of the Silver Flame in comfort and style. An insipid but well-meaning couple, they're prone to leading their children in the most saccharine of Silver Flame hymns imaginable within a moment's notice. When not in their private car, they are busy harassing Chantalyn Hetriion about theology when they can catch her in the lounge.

**Room 2:** Zoel (half-elf male commoner 1; age 12), Marci (half-elf female commoner 1; age 11), Landar (half-elf male commoner 1; age 8), and Corina (half-elf female commoner; age 5), the Felmdur children, are housed in this private chamber. The preverbal little angels when their parents are around, their behavior shifts to the other side of the celestial spectrum when the folks are out of sight and earshot. They take great delight in tormenting Honrald Furt (see Room 4), who they call "Mr. Fart," usually followed by a cacophony of high-pitched giggles.

**Room 3:** An eccentric gnome wine connoisseur a minor noble named Vergal ir'Teln (CN male gnome aristocrat 1) is staying in this private room. As the PCs pass the door they'll smell spicy and musky aroma drifting from the room, and see small wafts of smoke drifting from the cracks and the keyhole. Vergal is practicing a Talenta purification ritual in preparation for his trip to the berry-wine makers around Vathirond. He spends most of the trip sitting cross-legged in front of a brazier burning halfling-made incense, in an effort to cleanse his palate for the wine tasting.

**Room 4:** The Order of the Emerald Claw really wants Lord Heri ir'Vessin dead. Unbeknownst to their kalashtar agent, Sezfedharath, they've placed another assassin on the coach, just in case the kalashtar's strange plan fails.

The changeling Furt has infiltrated the coach in the guise of Honrald Furt, a seemingly crotchety old bookseller from Wroat. Stooping, with a constant snarl on his face, the old man appears to be nothing more than the punch line of Felmdur brood fart



jokes, but he is actually an assassin, with a knack of getting his prey to attack him first, before sticking them with a poisoned dagger.

He'll take notice of the PCs only if he sees them as a tool for getting at ir'Vessin.

**Furt (Honrald Furt):** male changeling rogue 3; hp 12; see "combat statistic below.

#### **Cart 4 (Passenger): Ir'Vessin's Rear Garrison (EL 4)**

This is a passenger cart similar to carts 5 and 6, but it is currently being used as a garrison for Lord ir'Vessin's guards.

At any given time there are five guards here. Three are on watch, while the other two are resting. While Karrn soldiers are well known for their discipline, the soldiers of ir'Vessin are far more lax than most of their ilk. They spend their time playing cards and dice, knowing that their lord rarely leaves his cart.

Still, while their discipline may not be up to Rikkenmark standards, they respond with professionalism and promptness to any perceived threat to their master. Those on guard, quickly awaken those at rest, who heed the call dressed in nightshirt, helmet, and shield, weapons at the ready (use Illustration 5 to help describe this stirring).

**Lord ir'Vessin's Guards (5):** hp 11, 9, 6, 6, 5; see "Combat Statistics", below.

**Tactics:** The guards' chief goal is to protect their lord, and they find the easiest most effective way to do that. They have no problem bull rushing PCs off the train, or crowding the far balcony to keep PCs from the ir'Vessin's front door. Given time, they'll try to rouse their sister guard garrison on the other side of the ir'Vessin cart.

#### **Combat Statistics**

**FURT (HONRALD FURT)**

**CR 3**

Male changeling rogue 3

LE Medium humanoid (shapechanger)

**Init** +2; **Senses** Listen +3, Spot +4

**Languages** Common; Gnome

**AC** 13, touch 12, flat-footed 13; trap sense +1

**hp** 12

**Fort** +1, **Ref** +5, **Will** +2; Evasion, trap sense +1, +2 racial bonus against sleep and charm effects

**Spd** 30 ft. (6 squares)

**Atk** +2 melee masterwork dagger (1d4-1/19-20 plus poison)

**Atk Options** sneak attack +2d6, Goad (move action goads an intelligent (3 or higher) opponent that threatens Furt, has line of sight to him, and can hear him. On next turn, if opponent threatens and has line of sight Furt, it must succeed DC 13 Will save. Failure means it can only make melee attacks against Furt that round, but can choose not to make melee attacks, and can even cast spells or make ranged attacks, instead), black adder venom (Injure DC 11; 1d6 Con initial and secondary)

**Base Atk** +2; **Grp** +1

**Abilities** Str 8, Dex 15, Con 10, Int 12, Wis 13, Cha 14

**Feats** Persona Immersion<sup>†</sup>, Goad<sup>†</sup>

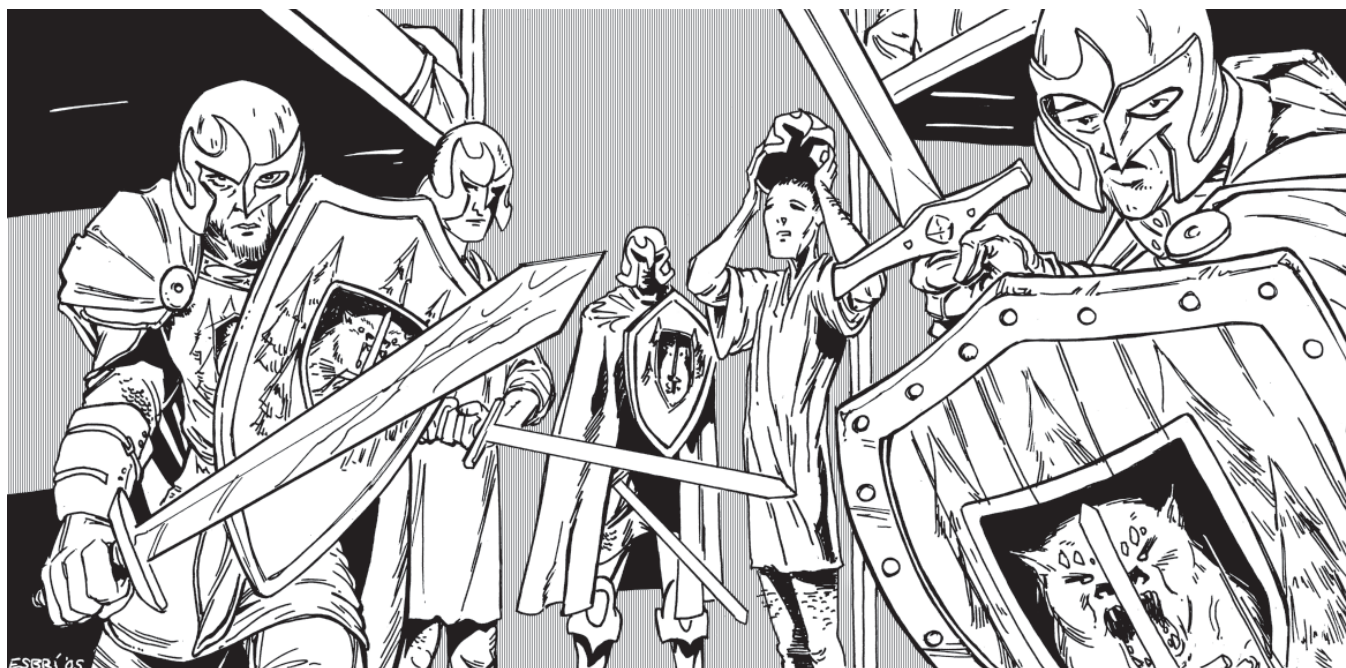
**Skills** Appraise +6, Bluff +7, Climb +4, Disable Device +7, Disguise +17 (+19 acting), Intimidate +4, Listen +3, Open Locks +7, Move Silently +7, Search +6, Spot +4

**Possessions** masterwork dagger, *amulet of natural armor*

+1, 3 doses of black adder poison, artisans outfit

<sup>†</sup>This feat is found on page 110 of *Races of Eberron*. If Furt makes a successful save against a divination spell or telepathic psionic power of 3<sup>rd</sup> level or lower, he can generate a misleading result.

<sup>†</sup>This feat is found on page 109 of *Complete Adventurer*. Its basic rules are in the "Combat Option" above.





While they are dedicated to protecting their lord, the men are loath to call upon the aid of Gustavus, the Karrnathi zombie, as they find the undead soldier creepy. Still, the creature is a soldier of Karrnath, and their call upon its aid to help protect their lord, or to help save their own skins.

### Scaling the Encounter

**1<sup>st</sup>-level Characters (EL 3):** There are only four guards, two of which are without armor (hp 9,6,6,5).

**3<sup>rd</sup>-level Characters (EL 6):** Add two more guards, one in armor and one without (hp 11, 10, 9, 9, 6, 6, 5).

**4<sup>th</sup>-level Characters (EL 7):** Add three more guards, all in armor (hp 11, 10, 10, 9, 9, 6, 6, 5).

### Combat Statistic

#### LORD IR'VESSIN'S GUARDS

CR 1

Male human fighter 1

N Medium humanoid (human)

Init +2; Senses Listen +1, Spot +3

Languages Common

AC 18, touch 12, flat-footed 16; Dodge (or AC 13, touch 12, and flatfooted 13 for those guards in nightshirts)

hp variable, see adventure text (1 HD)

Fort +4, Ref +2, Will +0

Spd 20 ft. (6 squares)

Atk +4 melee longsword (1d8+2/19-20) or +3 ranged light crossbow (1d8/19-20)

Atk Options Point Blank Shot

Base Atk +1; Grp +3

Abilities Str 15, Dex 14, Con 13, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 8

Feats Improved Initiative, Point Blank Shot, Weapon Focus (longsword),

Skills Climb +0, Jump +0, Spot +3

Possessions chainmail, light steel shield, longsword, light crossbow, 10 bolts.

### Cart 3 (Custom Private Cart): Ir'Vessin's Fortress Cart (EL 5)

This iron-plated, fortified cart is wider than most. It's protected by locked (good lock, DC 30) iron doors (2-inch thick; hardness 10; hp 60; break DC 28) and an actual turret atop its roof, guarded by Gustavus, a vigilant—some would say overzealous—Karrnathi zombie.

The custom lightning rail cart protected for one reason, Lord Heri ir'Vessin's a paranoid man...and was so even before he was replaced by a nerra infiltrator.

The real Lord Heri ir'Vessin was a sheep among the wolf pack that is the Karrn warlords. Though his father was a man of strength, ruthlessness, and cunning who carved out a fortune in the unforgiving northern Karrnathi wilderness, his son grew up to be a vain and spoiled spendthrift, whose only virtue was a keen sense that other nobles would have no qualms about creating a power vacuum on the coasts of Karrn Bay. But he

was so busy guarding against foes among his countrymen, he was entirely vulnerable to an attack from an unlikely place: from among the very planes.

Months before the nerra incident in Wroat (detailed in *EMH-1 Reflections of the Multiverse*), another localized portal between Eberron and Speculum opened in the northeastern Karrnwood—a conjunction not predicted by Belental Heirm's *Deviant Celestia*. In the months following the cosmic rift, a sizable group of the otherworldly creatures created a power base of the ir'Vessin lands after replacing the hereditary lord with the nerra warlock, Nur-Tungor.

When the nerra in Karrnath learned of the incident at the Crook Observatory, they sent Nur-Tungor to learn more about it. In Wroat the nerra met up with Beltrudelgald, almost right after the dusk hag lifted the original copy of the *Deviant Celestia* from Morgrave University. Now the pair is on the first leg of a long trip back to the Karrnwood, *Deviant Celestia* in tow, disguised as the Lord ir'Vessin and his new lady, Soranda ir'Temorlane, a jewel of fallen Cyre.

**The Situation Inside the Cart:** It is going to be hard for the PCs to approach cart without creating a commotion. Between the guards stationed in the carts aft and forward, and Gustavus's unblinking watch atop, Nur-Tungor and Beltrudelgald are sure to know trouble is coming. Even if they don't, the couple keeps their disguises up throughout the trip, so the PCs aren't likely to catch them in their true forms...not at first anyhow.

Because of the pair's high profile disguises, though, it is not always prudent for them to wait in the cart for trouble to blow over. It is quite possible for the PCs play diplomat with the ir'Vessin guards (they likely start as hostile if the PCs are attempting a frontal assault), talking the soldiers into taking an unarmed or seemingly innocuous group to visit with their lord to explain the nature of the intrusion. In those cases, Lord ir'Vessin and Lady ir'Temorlane invite the group into their plush abode, only to turn on the group when the doors are closed. Use illustration 7 and 8 for before and after shots of the pair.

When the PCs who have the "Knowledge of the Nerra" story object meet Lord ir'Vessin, have them make a Spot check DC 10. Success notices the strange reflective sword at his belt to be of the same type carried by the nerra who took the identity of Professor Mers Vevel in Wroat—Nur-Zelmor. As soon as either Nur-Tungor or Beltrudelgald realize their true forms have been sussed, they take on their true form and try to escape with the *Deviant Celestia*, flinging themselves off the Lightning rail if need be. Such a transformation shocks the ir'Vessin guards (even the stoic Gustavus) into inactivity, they all stand with a slack jawed horror as they realize their lord and his newfound lady are not who they seem.

**Lord Heri ir'Vessin (Nur-Tungor):** Male varrot nerra warlock 1: hp 16; see "Combat Statistics", below.

**Lady Soranda ir'Temorlane (Beltrudelgald the Dusk Hag):** hp 36; see "Combat Statistics", below.

**The Situation Atop the Cart:** On the turret, Gustavus the Karrnathi zombie waits for any sign of trouble. He has darkvision 60 ft., but that doesn't help him much during the



foggy first four hours of the trip.

Unlike his living compatriots, Gustavus brooks no diplomacy. Like most of the undead soldier of Karrnath, he believes diplomacy is the futile whimpering of the living, foolishly afraid of death's rewards.

**Gustavus the Karrnathi Zombie:** hp 25; see "Combat Statistics", below.

**Tactics:** Atop, Gustavus begins any combat with some crossbow shots, before climbing down the turret to grant his lord's enemies death's embrace. He begins any melee with the tradition Karrnath war cry of "Khoot! Khoot! Karrnath!" drawing out the "oo" sound into a raspy and horrifying howl. He'll follow his prey to the ends of the earth if need be, but only if he is certain that in doing so his lord will be serviced with ample protection from his warm brothers in arms.

Nur-Tungor and the dusk hag are more cunning in their tactics against enemies. If possible they would like to get rid of pesky adventures (literally or other) without blowing their current personas, but if that seems impossible, they have no problem dropping the pretenses in an attempt to shock and awe their opponents.

If they could lure the PCs into the cart alone, they have no problem with dropping their disguises to fight the PCs, as the arrogant pair believes they can take on any band of Diggers' Union adventurers—in fact Beltrudalgald's dreams have told her such, proving the strange auguries of dusk hags can be fickle things.

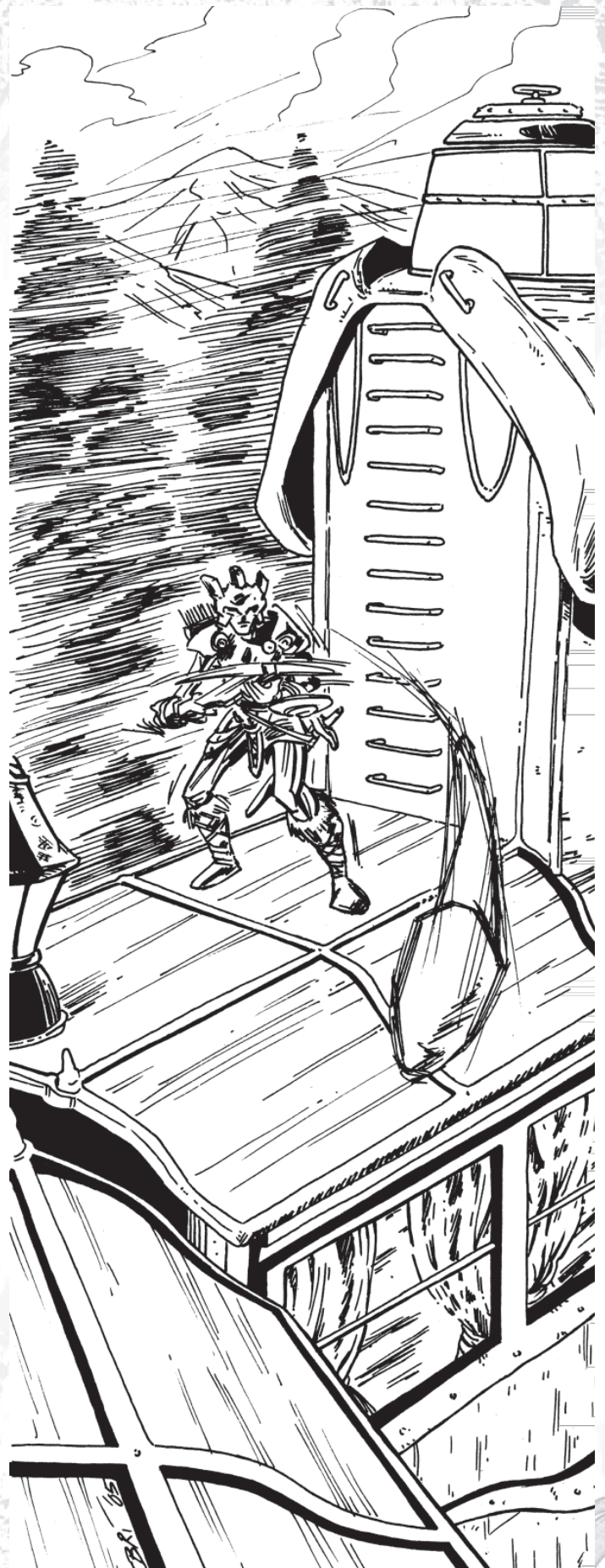
When in the form of Lord ir'Vessin, and among the house guard, Nur-Tungor avoids using his warlock powers and his mirror image spell-like ability, as use of magic by him might raise suspicion among his men. He joins combat using his nerra shard sword.

Beltrudalgald has no qualms about using her *fog cloud* while in the form of Lady ir'Temorlane. New to the company of ir'Vessin, his household guards have not yet gauged her abilities, and while they'll likely note her seemingly arcane display—they thought she was just a trophy companion—it doesn't shock them. She stays out of combat though, only attacking with claws when out of sight.

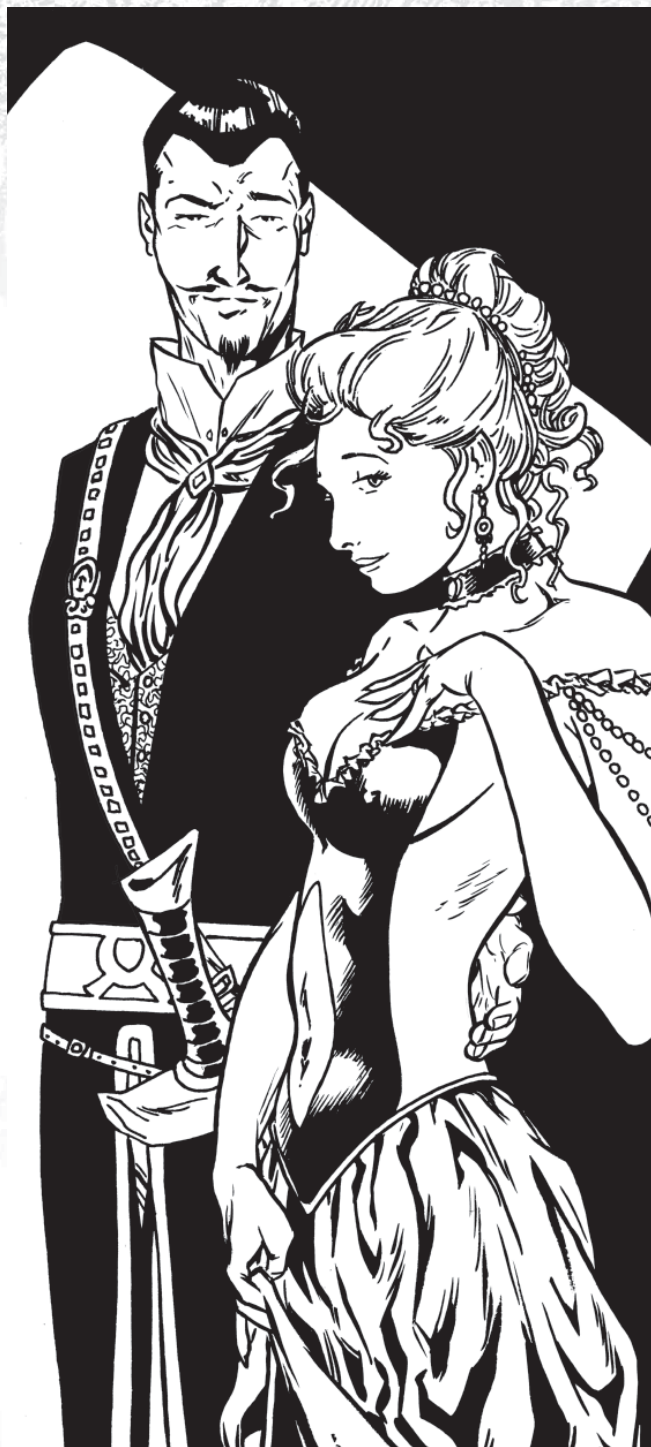
If the PCs are caught alone with the duo, the gloves come off. Nur-Tungor immediately activate his *mirror image*, and begins hurling *eldritch blasts* modified with *frightful blast* invocation, keeping his nerra shard sword out for pesky warriors. Beltrudalgald fights fiercely with a flurry of claw attacks. If she has the opportunity she tells the PCs the following a gloating, angry tone.

*"You should have left well enough alone, little diggers. You cannot stop me or my sisters from bring the nerra to their rightful place on Eberron, for we serve a powerful mistress who looks down onto the world from a great craggy height."*

A successful Knowledge (local) or bardic knowledge check (DC 15) figures the mistress could be one of the Daughters of Sora Kell—a trio of powerful hags who rule Droaam. If the PCs try to get more information from Beltrudalgald, she laughs at







them, adding “persist and you will know more in time, and to your own cost lesser creature.”

**Development:** While the shape-stealing duo is more than willing to die rather than escape, and even try to take their own lives to that end, it’s possible that crafty PCs might capture them. They reveal nothing of the overall plot, and even if their spell resistance and saves fail them, the PCs are unable to gain any information from magically interrogating them. Taking them back to Grea Tower in Wroat seems the only option, a task that Stalkerbane Fellows are well suited to.

If the servants of House ir’Vessin discover that their lord is not the man they thought, they are shocked, shaken, but a few with quick heads put their minds to the task of finding the next of kin to the ir’Vessin estate before rival’s decide to take the lands by force and intrigue. These level-heads ask the PCs and House Orien to kept the matter quiet for their sake at the very least.

Puzzled by the entire incident, House Orien thanks the PCs for uncovering a strange plot on one of their coaches and are even more grateful if the PCs were able to uncover the Order of the Emerald Claw plot on the coach. They agree to look past the fact that the PCs traveled on the coach without a ticket, as long as they get off at the next stop. They even allow the PCs to take the *Deviant Celestia*, but insist that they return any other items that belong to House ir’Vessin or other passengers.

### Scaling the Encounter

**1st-level Characters (EL 4):** When the PCs approach the pair, the dusk hag is in the middle of a mutative trance. So enraptured, she does not join the combat until she is attacked.

**3rd-level Characters (EL 6):** Use the 2nd-level warlock version of Nur-Tungor (hp 21).

**4th-level Characters (EL 7):** Use the 3rd-level warlock version of Nur-Tungor (hp 26).

### Cart 2 (Passenger): Ir’Vessin’s Front Garrison (EL 4)

This cart is identical to cart 4.

### Cart 1 (Front Crew Cart): The Driving Engine

This cart’s layout is identical to cart 10. Unlike that cart, the elemental is actively pulling the cart, the master of the coach, and three crew persons (human sorcerer 4; all dragonmarked members of House Orien) work to make sure that its controlled on course. One member of this crew is always in the locked and warded control station. That crewperson always has the only key to that chamber and the key to the sister chamber in Cart 10.

The other two of the other three crewpersons are other controllers, as the House Orien controllers oversee the elemental is a series of three shifts. The last person, Ari Nagel (NG male human sorcerer 5; AC hp 19; Skills and Feats: Concentration +10 [+14 cast defensively]; Combat Casting, Dodge Lesser Dragonmark; if you need full combat statistics, use spell list, magic items, and basic information from the 5<sup>th</sup>-level sample sorcerer on pages 124 to 125 of the *Dungeon Masters’ Guide*) is the master of the coach. He carries keys to almost all the locks, and is the ultimate authority on the coach, though he rarely leaves the active crew cart.

It is likely the PCs will not encounter the main crew until after they’ve confronted Nur-Turgor and the dusk hag, and confronting them before quickly becomes a recipe for disaster, as the three sorcerers do everything within their power to get the PCs off the train unless they have found some way to procure legitimate passage.



## Combat Statistics

**Note:** This statistic block takes into account the *Eberron Campaign Setting* errata.

### GUSTAVUS THE KARRNATHI ZOMBIE

CR 3

LE Medium undead

**Init** +0; **Senses** Darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +6, Spot +6

**Languages** Common (in a deep, scratchy and guttural voice)

**AC** 22, touch 10, flat-footed 22; DR 5/slashing

**hp** 25

**Fort** +1, **Ref** +1, **Will** +3

**Spd** 20 ft. (4 squares; can't run)

**Atk** +5 melee masterwork longsword (1d8+2/19-20)

**Base Atk** +1; **Grp** +3

**Abilities** Str 15, Dex 11, Con —, Int 11, Wis 10, Cha 1

**Feats** Toughness, Weapon Focus (longsword)

**Skills** Climb –2, Jump –2, Listen +6, Search +4, Spot +6

**Possessions** half-plate armor, light shield, masterwork longsword

**Description** A zombie clad in half-plate lumbers toward you, brandishing a longsword. The soldier's rotting flesh peels back in places to reveal sinew and bone, and its dead-black eye sockets glare menacingly.

### Lord Heri ir'Vessin (NUR-TUNGOR)

CR 2

Varrot nerra warlock<sup>†</sup> 1

N Medium outsider (extraplanar)

**Init** +2; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +6, Spot +6

**Languages** Common

**AC** 15, touch 13, flat-footed 12

**hp** 16 (2 HD)

**Resist** Cold 5, Electric 5, Fire 5; **SR** *reflective spell resistance* 14

**Fort** +3, **Ref** +4, **Will** +6

**Weakness** sonic vulnerability

**Spd** 30 ft. (6 squares)

**Atk** melee shard longsword +3 (1d8+2/19-20 plus wounding)  
ranged touch *eldritch blast* +3 (1d6)

**Base Atk** +1; **Grp** +1

**Invocations<sup>‡</sup> Known** 1 (CL 1st; 1d20+1 to overcome SR or PR)

Least—*frightful blast* (Will DC 15)

**Spell-Like Abilities** (CL 2nd; 1d20+3 to overcome SR or PR)  
3/day—*disguise self*; 1/day—*mirror image*

**Abilities** Str 10, Dex 15, Con 12, Int 11, Wis 14, Cha 17

**Feats** Toughness, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (shard longsword)<sup>§</sup>, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (shard dagger)<sup>§</sup>

**Skills** Bluff +7, Concentration +5, Diplomacy +7, Disguise +7 (+9 acting or +17 [+19 acting] while using *disguise self*), Gather Information +7, Intimidate +5, Knowledge (nobility and royalty) +4, Listen +6, Sense Motive +6, Slight of Hand +8, Spot +6

**Possessions** shard longsword.

**Eldritch Blast (Sp):** A warlock can attack using baleful energy to deal damage and sometimes deal other debilitating effects. An eldritch blast has a range of 60 ft. There is no save against its damage, but it is subject to spell resistance. It is the equivalent of a 1<sup>st</sup>-level spell.

**Mirror Jump (Su):** Nerras can move through mirrored and reflective surfaces at will. The effect is similar to shadow walk, but the nerra travels through their home plane. Unfortunately because of the current tenuous connection the nerra have with their home plane, they cannot take advantage of this ability.

**Reflective Spell Resistance (Sp):** a spell resisted bounces off and is reflected back to the caster. The caster becomes either the spell's target or the point of origin for the spell's effect, as appropriate.

**Sonic Vulnerability (Ex):** All nerras take half again as

much (+50%) damage as normal from an attack involving sonic energy, regardless of whether a saving throw is allowed, of the save is a success or failure.

**Shard Weapon:** Nerras swords and daggers are made out of the substance of their plane. Resembling the shards of a broken mirror that have been set into a shiny hilt, they look deceptively fragile. In the hands of someone with and Exotic Weapon Proficiency in the weapon they are a +2 *wounding* weapon. Those without the feat wield it awkwardly (-4 penalty to attack rolls) and don't benefit from the *wounding* effect.

<sup>†</sup>The warlock class is found on pages 5 – 10 of *Complete Arcane*. All information you need to run this NPC is in this statistic block. The warlock's *eldritch blast* and invocations have unlimited use.

<sup>‡</sup>The *frightful blast* invocation (found on page 134 of *Complete Arcane*) is applied to an *eldritch blast*. The blast does the damage, and forces the target of make a Will save. Those who fail the saving throw are shaken for 1 minute. A shaken creature is not affected by the shaken aspect of the blast but takes damage normally. Creatures immune to mind-affecting spells and abilities or fear effects cannot be shaken by *frightful blast*.

### Lord Heri ir'Vessin (NUR-TUNGOR)

CR 3

Varrot nerra warlock<sup>†</sup> 2

N Medium outsider (extraplanar)

**Init** +2; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +6, Spot +6

**Languages** Common

**AC** 15, touch 13, flat-footed 12

**hp** 21 (3 HD)

**Resist** Cold 5, Electric 5, Fire 5; **SR** *reflective spell resistance* 15

**Fort** +3, **Ref** +4, **Will** +7

**Weakness** sonic vulnerability

**Spd** 30 ft. (6 squares)

**Atk** melee shard longsword +4 (1d8+2/19-20 plus wounding)  
ranged touch *eldritch blast* +4 (1d6)

**Base Atk** +2; **Grp** +2

**Invocations<sup>‡</sup> Known** 2 (CL 2nd; 1d20+2 to overcome SR or PR)

Least—*frightful blast* (Will DC 15), *spiderwalk*

**Spell-Like Abilities** (CL 3rd; 1d20+3 to overcome SR or PR)  
3/day—*disguise self*; 1/day—*mirror image*

**Abilities** Str 10, Dex 15, Con 12, Int 11, Wis 14, Cha 17

**Feats** Toughness, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (shard longsword)<sup>§</sup>, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (shard dagger)<sup>§</sup>

**Skills** Bluff +8, Concentration +6, Diplomacy +7, Disguise +8 (+10 acting or +18 [+20 acting] while using *disguise self*), Gather Information +7, Intimidate +5, Knowledge (nobility and royalty) +4, Listen +6, Sense Motive +7, Slight of Hand +8, Spot +6

**Possessions** shard longsword.

**Eldritch Blast (Sp):** A warlock can attack using baleful energy to deal damage and sometimes deal other debilitating effects. An eldritch blast has a range of 60 ft. There is no save against its damage, but it is subject to spell resistance. It is the equivalent of a 1<sup>st</sup>-level spell.

**Detect Magic (Sp):** Nur-Tungor can use *detect magic* as the spell at will. CL 2

**Mirror Jump (Su):** Nerras can move through mirrored and reflective surfaces at will. The effect is similar to shadow walk, but the nerra travels through their home plane. Unfortunately because of the current tenuous connection the nerra have with their home plane, they cannot take advantage of this ability.

**Reflective Spell Resistance (Sp):** a spell resisted bounces off and is reflected back to the caster. The caster becomes either the spell's target or the point of origin for the spell's effect, as appropriate.

**Sonic Vulnerability (Ex):** All nerras take half again as



much (+50%) damage as normal from an attack involving sonic energy, regardless of whether a saving throw is allowed, of the save is a success or failure.

**Shard Weapon:** Nerras swords and daggers are made out of the substance of their plane. Resembling the shards of a broken mirror that have been set into a shiny hilt, they look deceptively fragile. In the hands of someone with and Exotic Weapon Proficiency in the weapon they are a +2 *wounding* weapon. Those without the feat wield it awkwardly (-4 penalty to attack rolls) and don't benefit from the *wounding* effect.

<sup>†</sup>The warlock class is found on pages 5 – 10 of *Complete Arcane*. All information you need to run this NPC is in this statistic block. The warlock's *eldritch blast* and invocations have unlimited use.

<sup>‡</sup>The *frightful blast* invocation (found on page 134 of *Complete Arcane*) is applied to an *eldritch blast*. The blast does the damage, and forces the target of make a Will save. Those who fail the saving throw are shaken for 1 minute. A shaken creature is not affected by the shaken aspect of the blast but takes damage normally. Creatures immune to mind-affecting spells and abilities or fear effects cannot be shaken by *frightful blast*.

The *spiderwalk* invocation (found on page 135 of *Complete Arcane*) grants Nur-Tungor *spider climb* (as the spell) with a duration of 24 hours and he is unaffected by webs (either mundane or magical) for the invocation's duration. Nur-Tungor triggers this invocation every morning, so it is always in effect.

### Lord Heri ir'Vessin (NUR-TUNGOR) CR 4

Varrot nerra warlock<sup>†</sup> 3

N Medium outsider (extraplanar)

**Init** +2; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +6, Spot +6

**Languages** Common

**AC** 15, touch 13, flat-footed 12; **DR** 1/cold iron

**hp** 26 (4 HD)

**Resist** Cold 5, Electric 5, Fire 5; **SR** *reflective spell resistance* 16

**Fort** +4, **Ref** +5, **Will** +7

**Weakness** sonic vulnerability

**Spd** 30 ft. (6 squares)

**Atk** melee shard longsword +5 (1d8+2/19-20 plus wounding)  
ranged touch *eldritch blast* +5 (2d6)

**Base Atk** +3; **Grp** +3

**Invocations**<sup>‡</sup> **Known** 2 (CL 3rd; 1d20+3 to overcome SR or PR)

Least—*frightful blast* (Will DC 16), *spiderwalk*

**Spell-Like Abilities** (CL 4th; 1d20+4 to overcome SR or PR)

3/day—*disguise self*; 1/day—*mirror image*

**Abilities** Str 10, Dex 15, Con 12, Int 11, Wis 14, Cha 18

**Feats** Toughness, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (shard longsword)<sup>B</sup>, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (shard dagger)<sup>B</sup>

**Skills** Bluff +10, Concentration +7, Diplomacy +8, Disguise +9 (+11 acting or +19 [+21 acting] while using *disguise self*), Gather Information +8, Intimidate +6, Knowledge (nobility and royalty) +4, Listen +6, Sense Motive +8, Slight of Hand +8, Spot +6

**Possessions** shard longsword.

**Eldritch Blast (Sp):** A warlock can attack using baleful energy to deal damage and sometimes deal other debilitating effects. An *eldritch blast* has a range of 60 ft. There is no save against its damage, but it is subject to spell resistance. It is the equivalent of a 1<sup>st</sup>-level spell.

**Detect Magic (Sp):** Nur-Tungor can use *detect magic* as the spell at will. CL 3

**Mirror Jump (Su):** Nerras can move through mirrored and reflective surfaces at will. The effect is similar to shadow walk, but the nerra travels through their home plane. Unfortunately because of the current tenuous connection the nerra have with their home plane, they cannot take advantage of this ability.

**Reflective Spell Resistance (Sp):** a spell resisted bounces off and is reflected back to the caster. The caster becomes either the spell's target or the point of origin for the spell's effect, as appropriate.

**Sonic Vulnerability (Ex):** All nerras take half again as much (+50%) damage as normal from an attack involving sonic energy, regardless of whether a saving throw is allowed, of the save is a success or failure.

**Shard Weapon:** Nerras swords and daggers are made out of the substance of their plane. Resembling the shards of a broken mirror that have been set into a shiny hilt, they look deceptively fragile. In the hands of someone with and Exotic Weapon Proficiency in the weapon they are a +2 *wounding* weapon. Those without the feat wield it awkwardly (-4 penalty to attack rolls) and don't benefit from the *wounding* effect.

<sup>†</sup>The warlock class is found on pages 5 – 10 of *Complete Arcane*. All information you need to run this NPC is in this statistic block. The warlock's *eldritch blast* and invocations have unlimited use.

<sup>‡</sup>The *frightful blast* invocation (found on page 134 of *Complete Arcane*) is applied to an *eldritch blast*. The blast does the damage, and forces the target of make a Will save. Those who fail the saving throw are shaken for 1 minute. A shaken creature is not affected by the shaken aspect of the blast but takes damage normally. Creatures immune to mind-affecting spells and abilities or fear effects cannot be shaken by *frightful blast*.

The *spiderwalk* invocation (found on page 135 of *Complete Arcane*) grants Nur-Tungor *spider climb* (as the spell) with a duration of 24 hours and he is unaffected by webs (either mundane or magical) for the invocation's duration. Nur-Tungor triggers this invocation every morning, so it is always in effect.

### SORANDA IR'TEMORLANE (BELTRUDELGALD THE DUSK HAG) CR 4

N Medium monstrous humanoid

**Int** +1; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +6, Spot +6

**Languages** Common; Giant, Infernal

**AC** 21, touch 11, flat-footed 20

**hp** 39 (6 HD); **DR** 5/cold iron and magic

**Immune** charm, sleep and fear effects

**SR** 20

**Fort** +4, **Ref** +6, **Will** +10

**Spd** 30 ft. (6 squares)

**Atk** melee 2 claws +9 (1d4+3)

**Base Atk** +6; **Grp** +9

**Special Atk** nightmare touch (DC 16)

**Spell-Like Abilities** (CL 6 1d20+6 to overcome SR): At will—*detect magic*; 3/day—*augury*, *disguise self*, *dream*, *fog cloud*, *tongues*, *zone of truth* (DC 13)

**Abilities** Str 17, Dex 12, Con 15, Int 14, Wis 16, Cha 13

**Feats** Ability Focus (nightmare touch), Alertness, Iron Will

**Skills** Concentration +7, Hide +5, Knowledge (arcana) +7, Knowledge (the planes) +10, Listen +6, Move Silently +5, Sense Motive +15, Spot +6

**Nightmare Touch (Su):** With a successful touch attack, can plague enemy with a night of troubled sleep. Save DC 16 Will or victim suffers effect of the nightmare spell when he or she attempts to sleep.

**Insight (Su):** When a dusk hag dreams, she occasionally and inexplicably gains flashes of insight about past, present, and future events. This ability cannot be controlled and serves as a plot device.

**Skills:** Dusk hags are perceptive and gain a +4 racial bonus on Sense Motive checks. This bonus has been added to her stats.



## CONCLUSION

By the end of the adventures, if successful, the PCs should have procured the original manuscript of the *Deviant Celestia*, complete with the annotations of Belental Heirm. They may have even captured Nur-Turgor and Beltrudalgald handing them over to Matron Martra and the Diggers' Union for interrogation. What these successes yield is a greater understanding of the strange circumstances that brought the nerra to Eberron.

In the days after the PCs return to Wroat, Matron Martra calls them to the Hall of Messengers, where she shares a startling revelation about the Mad Gnome's work. The following text assumes the PCs were successful in stopping the nerra in *Reflections of the Multiverse*; if they weren't, adjust the text accordingly.

*Heirm was wrong...or rather he lied. His calculations did not predict the connections of plane outside the known multiverse, but were rather elaborate calculations that predicted when Kytbri, the Churning Chaos, becomes conterminous. From what we've been able to decipher from his notes, large sections of the Deviant Celestia are coded to hide this fact, and the reasons why Heirm wanted to predict the comings and going of Kytbri. While we have yet to determine the reason, it seems obvious to me at least, that the Mad Gnome was talking to someone through his book on cosmology, and it wasn't wayward scholars wanting to believe that there are more than 17 planes.*

*The existence of the nerra on the lightning rail, and the fact that he was posing as a northern Karnn lord, points to more nerra intrusion onto Eberron, and ones that seemly weren't predicted by Heirm and his complex equations. Our agents in Karnnath have already been sent to scout the ir'Vessin lands. If I'm right, there is a cabal of nerra there, achieving there what you helped thwart in Wroat. Once we have a better grip of what's going on up there, I'll want to send you. More than anyone else, you've got the most experience dealing with these creatures.*

Give the players each a copy of the "True Nature of the Deviant Celestia" story object.

If the PCs were able capture Nur-Turgor and Beltudelgald, Martra has even more information to share. The text assumes that the PC captured both. Adjust if only one was captured.

*I must say the nerra is not what I expected, especially after the revelation that the nerra come from Kytbri. He is logical, reasonable, and very controlled. As of yet I've not been able to get any real information from him, but I will tell you something. He is quiet charming. He did tell me something I found interesting. When I asked him what Kytbri was like, he told me angrily "It is a hell, a prison, a maddening pit." While I could not get more information out of him, I get the impression that his people desperately want to escape the place.*

*The dusk hag is less charming, and more enigmatic. I believe she is ultimately the pawn of one of the hag rulers of Droaam, but I have no proof. I believe her dreams are moving her to aid the nerra, but don't know why...and I don't think she does either. She has said no more of her sister, but when she does, you will be the first to know.*

The plot continues in *EMH-9 Mote in the Eye of Chaos*.

## ADVENTURE QUESTIONS

DUNGEONS & DRAGONS CAMPAIGNS (of which MARK OF HEROES is part of) tracks character progress digitally. At the adventure's end, you report what the characters did, by answering a number of questions. The answers to those questions are tallied, and determine not only what happens in the campaign, but also the experience points (XP) and gold piece (gp) value increase each character gains.

At the end of this adventure, you'll find the RPGA Session Tracking form, tailored for this adventure. On the section titled "Adventure Questions" fill in the bubble that corresponds to the best answer for the questions below.

Many times the questions ask whether or not the PCs defeated an encounter. Defeating doesn't necessarily mean killing all enemies, but many times such an event suffices as defeating an encounter. Sometimes PCs merely bypass an encounter. Through luck or circumstance a group of PCs can avoid encounters unscathed. Does bypassing an encounter earn the XP that defeating it would? No. The reward for getting past an encounter without actually interacting with it is having extra resources to bear in the next encounter. Where is the line? You are going to have to make that decision, because you are the DM.

For traps, PCs get experience points just for encountering them, whether or not they have been disabled.

Sometimes the PCs' actions don't really fit the actions of a particular adventure question perfectly. This especially happens when you play the adventure using the "Scaling the Encounter" options. In these cases find the answer that best fits the spirit of their results.

### 1. Did the PCs defeat the Red Caps?

- a. No. They either didn't encounter the deranged little fey, or the creatures were too much for the PCs.
- b. Yes. With a poof they were gone, and only a single tooth remained.

### 2. How Did the PCs approach the ir'Vessin cart?

- a. By the roof on a direct assault.
- b. Through the cabins, confronting House Orien guards and ir'Vessin soldier alike.
- c. With their House Orien connections they were able to secure passage on the coach.
- d. By some other method.

### 3. Did the PCs kill any House Orien gaurds?

- a. Yes.
- b. No.

### 4. Did the PCs defeat the ir'Vessin guards?

- a. Yes, but only the Karnnathi zombie.
- b. Yes, both the zombie and some of the human soldiers.
- c. No.

### 5. Did the PCs defeat the nerra and the dusk hag?

- a. Yes, both of them fell to the PCs' assault.



- b. No, the duo escaped.
- c. They defeated one but not the other.
- d. Yes. They were able to capture both in the assault.
- e. No, the duo beat the PCs.

**6. Did the PCs uncover the Order of the Emerald Claw plot against ir'Vessin?**

- a. No
- b. Yes

**7. Rate the group's roleplaying.**

- a. Fantastic. Everyone had interesting and engaging characters the interacted with the adventure in very fun ways.
- b. Good. Most everyone had interesting and engaging character that interacted with the adventure in very fun ways.
- c. Okay. There was some roleplaying.
- d. None. They treated the adventure only as a set of objectives. There was no roleplaying.

## APPENDIX 1: PSIONIC RULES

### Skills

#### Concentration (Con)

An important psionic consideration for the Concentration skill, at least in terms of this adventure, is the concept of gaining and expending psionic focus. The following is a psionic amendment to the Concentration skill.

*Gain Psionic Focus:* Merely holding a reservoir of psionic power points in mind gives psionic characters a special energy. Psionic characters can put that energy to work without actually paying a power point cost—they can become psionically focused as a special use of the Concentration skill.

If you have 1 or more power points available, you can meditate to attempt to become psionically focused. The DC to become psionically focused is 20. Meditating is a full-round action that provokes attacks of opportunity.

When you are psionically focused, you can expend your focus on any single Concentration check you make thereafter. When you expend your focus in this manner, your Concentration check is treated as if you rolled a 15. It's like taking 10, except that the number you add to your Concentration modifier is 15. You can also expend your focus to gain the benefit of a psionic feat—many psionic feats are activated in this way.

Once you are psionically focused, you remain focused until you expend your focus, become unconscious, go to sleep, or until your power point reserve drops to 0.

### Feats

#### Psionic Endowment [Psionic]

You can endow your manifestation with more concentrated focus.

**Benefit:** To use this feat, you must expend your psionic focus (see the Concentration skill description, above). You add 1 to the save DC of a power you manifest.

### Powers

#### Catfall

Psychportation

**Level:** Psion/wilder 1, psychic warrior 1

**Display:** Auditory

**Manifesting Time:** 1 immediate action

**Range:** Personal

**Target:** You

**Duration:** Until landing or 1 round/level

**Power Points:** 1

You recover instantly from a fall and can absorb some damage from falling. You land on your feet no matter how far you fall, and you take damage as if the fall were 10 feet shorter than it actually is.

This power affects you and anything you carry or hold (up to your maximum load).

You can manifest this power with an instant thought; quickly enough to gain the benefit of the power while you fall. Manifesting the power is an immediate action (see below).

**Augment:** For every additional power point you spend, this power reduces your damage as if the fall were an additional 10 feet shorter.

#### Charm, Psionic

Telepathy (Charm) [Mind-Affecting]

**Level:** Telepath 1

**Display:** Mental

**Manifesting Time:** 1 standard action

**Range:** Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)

**Target:** One humanoid

**Duration:** 1 hour/level

**Saving Throw:** Will negates

**Power Resistance:** Yes

**Power Points:** 1

As *charm person* (page 209 of the *Player's Handbook*), except as noted here.

**Augment:** You can augment this power in one or more of the following ways.

1. If you spend 2 additional power points, this power can also affect an animal, fey, giant, magical beast, or monstrous humanoid.

2. If you spend 4 additional power points, this power can also affect an aberration, dragon, elemental, or outsider in addition to the creature types mentioned above.

3. If you spend 4 additional power points, this power's duration increases to one day per level.

In addition, for every 2 additional power points you spend to achieve any of these effects, this power's save DC increases by 1.

For example, if you spend 8 additional power points (4 to affect an aberration and 4 to increase the duration), this power's



save DC increases by 4.

### **Conceal Thoughts**

Telepathy [Mind-Affecting]

**Level:** Psion/wilder 1, psychic warrior 1

**Display:** Mental

**Manifesting Time:** 1 standard action

**Range:** Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)

**Target:** One willing creature

**Duration:** 1 hour/level

**Saving Throw:** Will negates (harmless)

**Power Resistance:** Yes (harmless)

**Power Points:** 1

You protect the subject's thoughts from analysis. While the duration lasts, the subject gains a +10 circumstance bonus on Bluff checks against those attempting to discern its true intentions with Sense Motive. It also gains a +4 on its saving throw against any power or spell used to read its mind (such a *read thoughts* or *mind probe*).

### **Deceleration**

Psychoportation

**Level:** Psion/wilder 1

**Display:** Auditory and material

**Manifesting Time:** 1 standard action

**Range:** Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)

**Target:** One Medium or smaller creature

**Duration:** 1 min./level

**Saving Throw:** Reflex negates

**Power Resistance:** Yes

**Power Points:** 1

You warp space around an individual, hindering the subject's ability to move. The subject's speed (in any movement mode it possesses) is halved. A subsequent manifestation of deceleration on the subject does not further decrease its speed.

**Augment:** For every 2 additional power points you spend, this power can affect a target one size category larger.

### **Mind Thrust**

Telepathy [Mind-Affecting]

**Level:** Psion/wilder 1

**Display:** Auditory

**Manifesting Time:** 1 standard action

**Range:** Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)

**Target:** One creature

**Duration:** Instantaneous

**Saving Throw:** Will negates

**Power Resistance:** Yes

**Power Points:** 1

You instantly deliver a massive assault on the thought pathways of any one creature, dealing 1d10 points of damage to it.

**Augment:** For every additional power point you spend, this power's damage increases by 1d10 points. For each extra 2d10

points of damage, this power's save DC increases by 1.

### **Mindlink**

Telepathy [Mind-Affecting]

**Level:** Telepath 1

**Display:** Mental

**Manifesting Time:** 1 standard action

**Range:** Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels); see text

**Target:** You and one other willing creature within range that has an Intelligence score of 3 or higher

**Duration:** 10 min./level

**Saving Throw:** None; see text

**Power Resistance:** Yes (harmless)

**Power Points:** 1

You forge a telepathic bond with your target. You can communicate telepathically through the bond even if you do not share a common language. No special power or influence is established as a result of the bond. Once the bond is formed, it works over any distance (although not from one plane to another).

**Augment:** You can augment this power one or both the following ways.

1. If you spend 4 additional power points, you can attempt to create a telepathic bond with a creature that is not willing (Will save negates).

2. For every additional power point you spend, this power can affect an additional target. Any additional target cannot be more than 15 feet from another target of the power.

### **Read Thoughts**

Telepathy [Mind-Affecting]

**Level:** Telepath 2

**Display:** Mental

**Manifesting Time:** 1 standard action

**Range:** 60 ft.

**Area:** Cone-shaped emanation centered on you

**Duration:** Concentration, up to 1 min./level (D)

**Saving Throw:** Will negates; see text

**Power Resistance:** No

**Power Points:** 3

You know the surface thoughts of the mind of any creature in the area that fails a Will save. A target that succeeds on its save is not affected by this manifestation of the power, even if it leaves the area and then reenters the area before the duration expires.

Creatures of animal intelligence have simple, instinctual thoughts that you can pick up. If you read the thoughts of a creature with an Intelligence of 26 or higher (and at least 10 points higher than your own Intelligence score), you are stunned for 1 round and the power ends. This power does not let you pinpoint the location of an affected mind if you don't have line of sight to the subject.

Each round, you can turn to use this power in a new area. The power can penetrate barriers, but 1 foot of stone, 1 inch of common metal, a thin sheet of lead, or 3 feet of wood or dirt blocks it.



**Suggestion, Psionic**

Telepathy (Compulsion) [Mind-Affecting, Language-Dependent]

**Level:** Telepath 2

**Display:** Auditory

**Manifesting Time:** 1 standard action

**Range:** Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)

**Target:** One creature

**Duration:** 1 hour/level or until completed

**Saving Throw:** Will negates

**Power Resistance:** Yes

**Power Points:** 3

As *suggestion* (page 285 of the *Player's Handbook*), except as noted here.

**Augment:** For every 2 additional power points you spend, this power can affect an additional target. Any additional target cannot be more than 15 feet from another target of the power.

**Immediate Actions**

An immediate action consumes a very small amount of time, but represents a larger expenditure of effort and energy than a free action. An immediate action can be performed at any time—even if it's not your turn in the initiative order. You may only perform a single immediate or swift action a round. You cannot use another immediate action or a swift action until after your next turn if you have used an immediate action when it is not currently your turn. You also cannot use an immediate action if you are currently flat-footed.

**Psionic Item**

**Psionic Shard:** These universal items are tiny fragments of cast-off crystal imprinted with minuscule bits of psionic power. Using a *psionic shard* requires grasping it and projecting a command thought as a standard action (most shards telepathically whisper their command word into the minds of living creatures who handle them). A shard grants a temporary competence bonus on one specific skill, ranging from +1 to +10. The granted bonus lasts until the skill is used or 10 rounds pass, whichever comes first. For instance, a *psionic shard of Jump* +8 grants a +8 competence bonus on the user's next Jump check if made within the next 10 rounds. Once its effect is activated, a *psionic shard* disintegrates immediately, whether or not the bonus granted by the shard is eventually used.

Moderate psychometabolism; ML 7<sup>th</sup>; Craft Universal Item, creator must have ranks in specified skill at least equal to the imprinted bonus; Price 10 gp (+1), 40 gp (+2), 90 gp (+3), 160 gp (+4), 250 gp (+5), 360 gp (+6), 490 gp (+7), 640 gp (+8), 810 gp (+9), 1,000 gp (+10).







Illustration 1





Illustration 2



Illustration 3



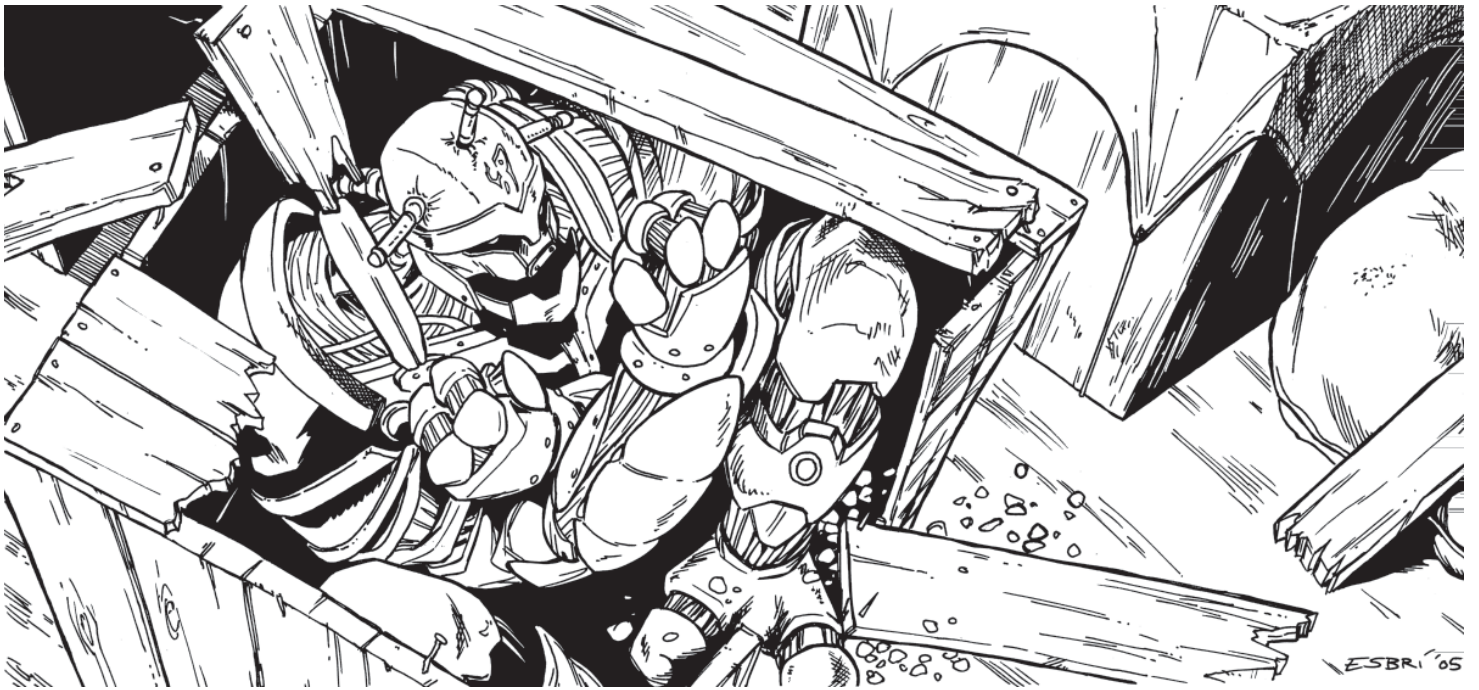


Illustration 4

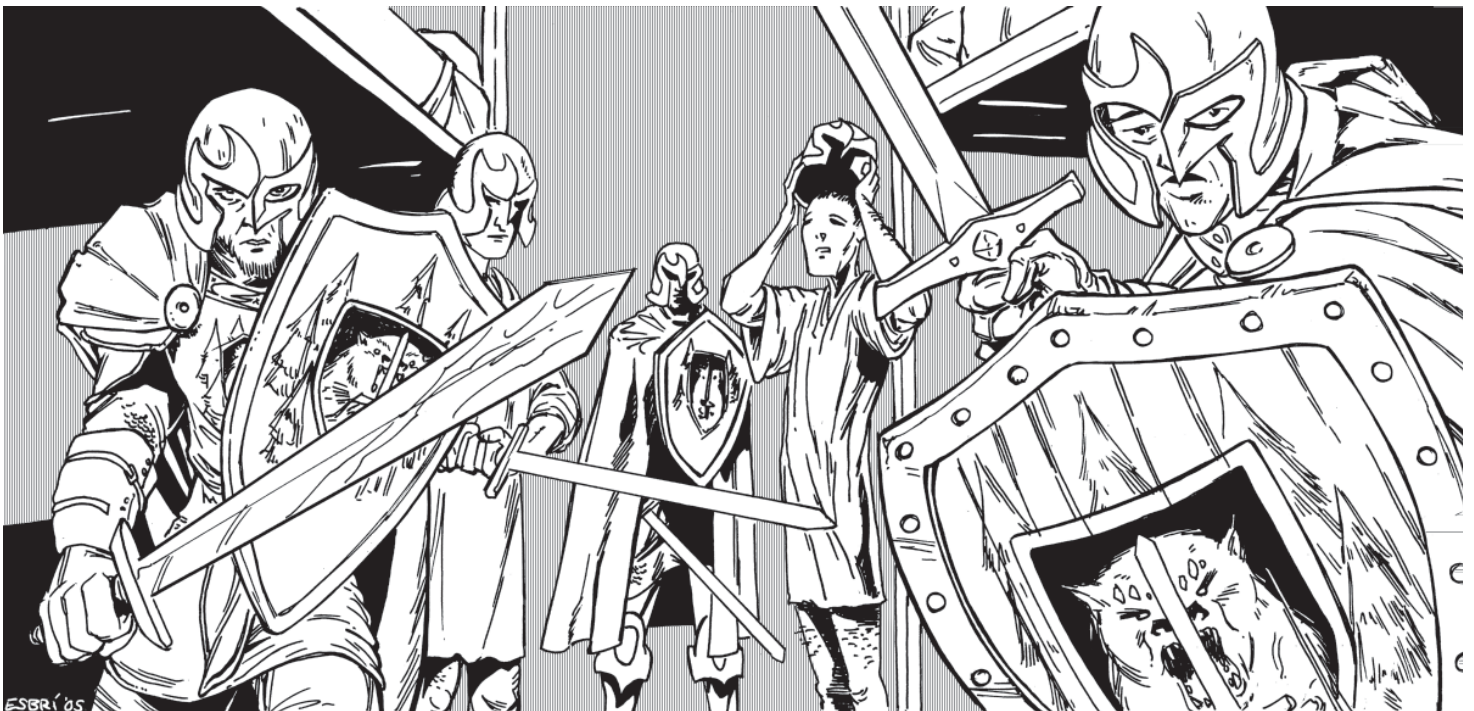


Illustration 5



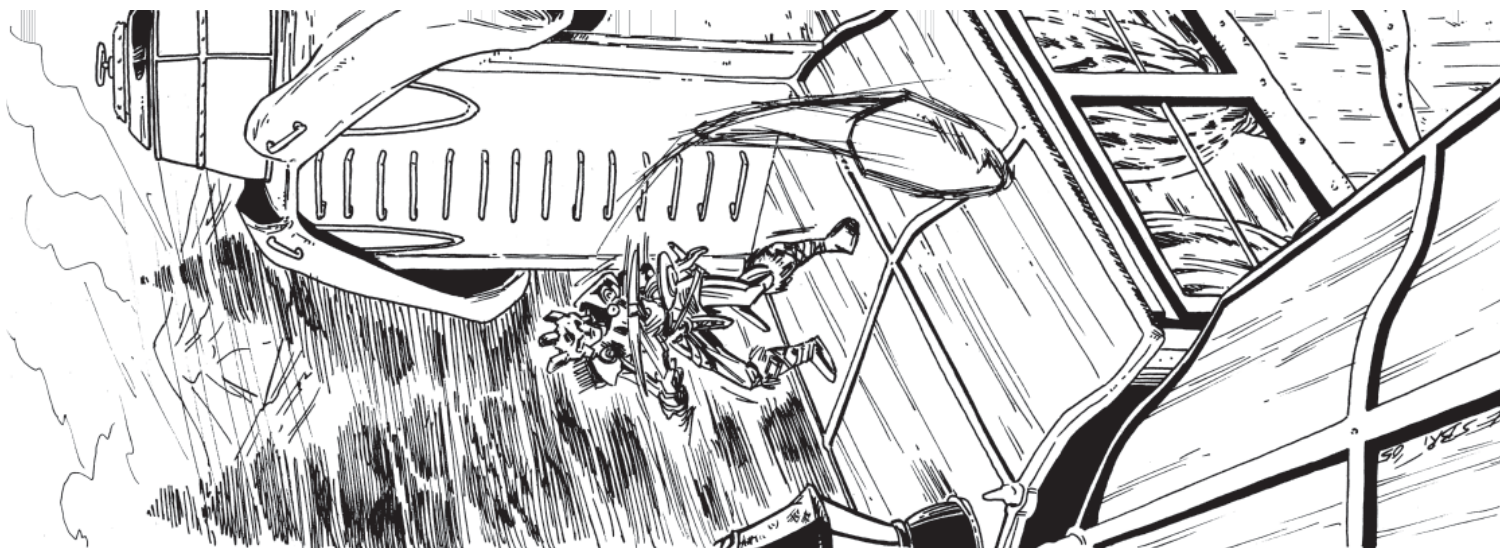


Illustration 6



Illustration 7



Illustration 8





## Story Object: True Nature of the *Deviant Celestia*

Through examination of Belental Heirm's original and annotated *Deviant Celestia*, you have learned that the nerra don't come from their own plane beyond the known multiverse, but rather are breaking through to Eberron from a section of Kythri, the Churning Chaos.

You have also learned that the nerra probably have created an enclave in northern Karrnath. Matron Martra has warned you that after she gains more information about the position and power of the nerra, she'll want to send you there to deal with strange being from beyond.



## Story Object: True Nature of the *Deviant Celestia*

Through examination of Belental Heirm's original and annotated *Deviant Celestia*, you have learned that the nerra don't come from their own plane beyond the known multiverse, but rather are breaking through to Eberron from a section of Kythri, the Churning Chaos.

You have also learned that the nerra probably have created an enclave in northern Karrnath. Matron Martra has warned you that after she gains more information about the position and power of the nerra, she'll want to send you there to deal with strange being from beyond.







## Story Object: Redcap Tooth

When a redcap dies, it leaves behind a single tooth. Anyone wearing this tooth gains a +2 circumstance bonus on Charisma checks when dealing with fey, and a +4 circumstance bonus when dealing with other redcaps.



## Story Object: Redcap Tooth

When a redcap dies, it leaves behind a single tooth. Anyone wearing this tooth gains a +2 circumstance bonus on Charisma checks when dealing with fey, and a +4 circumstance bonus when dealing with other redcaps.

