

SF 9

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— Adventure 9: Duel of Magic —

By Gary Schotter & Jeff Harkness

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This book is dedicated to the memory of Dustin “Lanky” Ray Cook, 1985-2009.

Special Thanks

Jeff would like to dedicate this book to Tammy, Kaitlyn and Alyssa. Gary would like to dedicate this work to Christina, Brooklyn, Kaden and Amberlyn. We also want to thank Greg Wilson for his wisdom and advice in solving many dilemmas and game mechanics issues.

And a special dedication to the 32 PCs who lost their lives during playtesting.



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**TOUGH
ADVENTURES
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PLAYERS**

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Splinters of Faith

— Adventure 9: Duel of Magic —

By Gary Schotter & Jeff Harkness

PCs must infiltrate a coven of evil witches to free an astral deva who can help them complete their quest to restore the *Scepter of Faiths*. The adventure is designed for characters of levels 8 through 10.

The ship rises and falls in the Reaping Sea's embrace, the harsh waves slapping the hull with every rough breaker of water that washes over the railing. The crew stands fast against the elements, their eyes looking to the horizon. One sailor shouts, pointing into the gloomy distance. The other sailors cheer, their voices rising against the howling winds, as the faint glow reveals itself.

The yellow light spreads across the storm clouds, even as darker shadows reveal themselves as the island you seek. Long docks flow gracefully across the water like spreading fingers, the sturdy planks standing strong against the violent sea.

The Island City of Jah Sezar takes the breath away. A massive peak – rising 2,500 feet into the dark ring of stormclouds – is dotted with buildings and lush gardens. People move on paths up and down the cobblestoned hillside.

Sitting at the peak, visible now through the gloom, is the Theurgist Seminary of Thasizier; its massive dome aglow with the blessed light

that welcomed the ship into safe havens.

The Island City of Jah Sezar

The city of Jah Sezar covers the majority of a 5-mile island located in the Reaping Sea. Long docks extend off the island to allow a multitude of ships to dock during the sometimes violent storms that sweep the waters. Visitors are welcomed into the city by Harbormaster Gull Ashenchisel.

The center of the island rises in a peak that reaches more than 2,500 feet above sea level. Buildings perch on the slopes of the massive peak amid a lush, tropical setting. Cobblestone streets provide ample walkways up and down the hill. The people are very welcoming and kind-hearted.

Sitting atop the central peak is the city's most famous landmark:



How to Use This Adventure

This adventure is part of the Splinters of Faith campaign, which leads PCs to restore a broken scepter and destroy a reawakened death-priest named Akruel Rathamon. The first nine adventures require PCs to obtain a ritual to restore the relic. The final adventure finds the PCs and the reformed scepter facing off against the death-priest on his home turf. (For more information on the overall campaign, see *Splinters of Faith 1: It Started with a Chicken ...*)

At this point in the campaign, the relic – called the *Scepter of Faiths* – is equivalent to a +3 adamantine heavy mace, +5 vs. undead with the ability to cast *bless* and *cure serious wounds* (3/day) and *protection from evil* 10 ft. radius (at will). The scepter can also cast *resurrection* once per month, *detect undead* (30-ft. radius) and is able to locate the death-priest Akruel with no range limits as long as the wielder and Akruel are on the same plane.

If you don't want to run the full campaign, don't worry. This adventure is complete on its own. Each adventure in the campaign follows a similar setup where the PCs visit a good temple, then are recruited/hired/asked to take part in an adventure before receiving the blessing they seek. The PCs must then travel to an "evil" temple to complete their mission.

If you plan to run the adventure without the others that precede it, you'll need to devise a way to get the PCs started. Since each adventure starts with a "good" temple, this could be as simple as having the temple elders request aid against the "evil" temple. Of course, the promise of gold, magic and the thrill of adventure also might not hurt.

The Theurgist Seminary of Thasizier. The temple's dome lights each night, casting a warm glow over the city below. The temple's light can be seen for many miles out to sea, and acts as a beacon to passing ships.

Authority figures: Governor Ghajden Shyd (Lawful human male Magic-user 10); Constable Ehrlich Smotecat (Lawful human male Paladin 10); Harbormaster Gull Ashenchisel (Neutral dwarf male dwarven warrior 8).

Important character: Ayire Jaysa, Master Scholar of the Mystic Erudite (Lawful human female Magic-user 11).

Theurgist Seminary of Thasizier

Location: Island City of Jah Sezar

Nickname: The Eight Disciplines of the Magi, Heaven's Dome

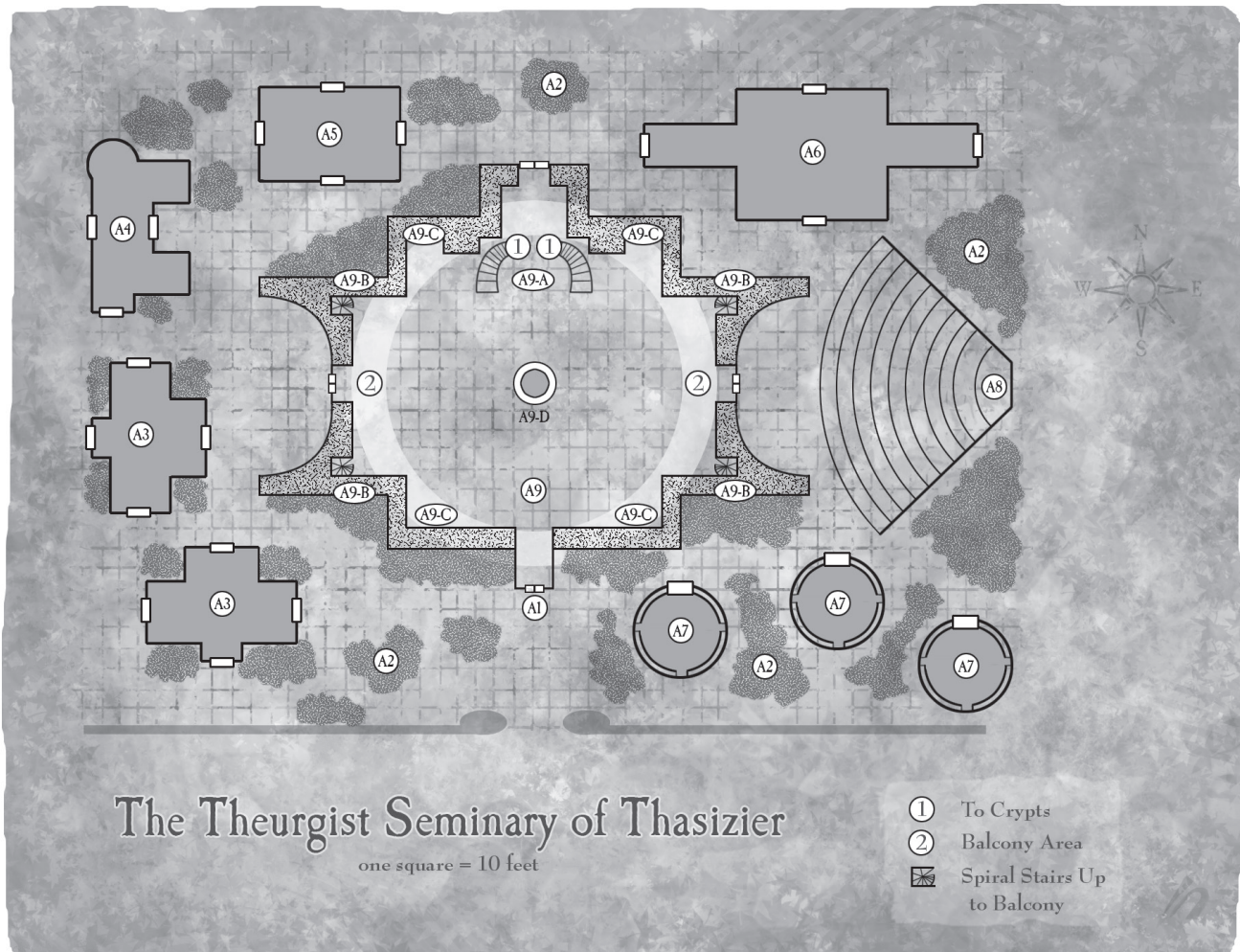
Deity: Thasizier, the Divine Mage (good magic).

Leader: Ayire Jaysa, Master Scholar of the Mystic Erudite

Servants: 250 students (Magic-user 1, Cleric 1, Bard1), 20 Scholar (Magic-user 5-8, Cleric 5-8, Bard 5-8)

Dress: Thasizier's priests favor multiple layers of silk robes. A glyphic sash worn over the shoulder tells the priest's rank within the order.

Uniqueness: A massive stained-glass dome tops a massive cathedral. At night, multihued lights bathe the grounds and buildings in brilliant light as the dome shines brightly from within.



Theurgist Seminary of Thasizier

The Seminary perches above the city, the light of its radiant dome bringing peace and reason to those who bask in its glow. A place of solemn worship and study of magic, the temple's congregation consists of students and scholars. Spellcasters of all races and classes travel from hundreds of miles away to pay homage to the Mage of Divinity and to peruse the massive underground library housed in catacombs that honeycomb throughout the island's peak.

Crime in Jah Sezar is almost nonexistent, thanks largely in part to the presence of the temple's priests working with the city's populace. During the day, apprentices and volunteers fan out through the city to assist the poor and to clean the neighborhoods that spread down the massive peak like sprawling ivy. Apprentices clean the Seminary's walls, and offer their magical talent to keep other buildings sparkling as well. The apprentices' helpful nature is greatly appreciated throughout the city, and has helped foster extreme loyalty by the city's residents toward the clergy.

The Seminary emphasizes humility and compassion, meaning that no one is exempt from the most mundane of chores. To that end, students and clergy are expected to perform menial and humbling tasks to assist the city's population.

Thasizier's priests teach that the greatest powers of magic require reverence and a desire to protect life. However, this doesn't mean Thasizier's clergy are soft or passive. Quite the contrary: The majority of the Seminary's occupants are skilled spellcasters with years of adventuring under their belts. Most have little tolerance for evil deeds or discord.

The very embodiment of the followers' beliefs can be found within the central dome, where an angelic figure encased in crystal dominates the chamber. Visitors come from all over to stare in awe at the beautiful figure that has come to represent their godhood.

Area A: The Seminary Grounds.

From street level, the Seminary's white marble walls convey a sense of prestige and purity. Crowds flock to the temple to marvel and be entertained by the students and clergy as they perform simple spells for the masses. The temple draws commoners as if to a sideshow or museum of oddities.

Beautiful garden topiary rises among the marble statues that depict famous mages and departed heroes who worshipped Thasizier. Onyx benches sit in quiet niches in the garden, perfect spots for the priests and mages to meditate.

Area A1: The Front Doors

The Seminary's massive bronze double doors stand open, day and night. Guards are usually human paladins (5th level), but other classes serve as long as they are of Lawful alignment. The **paladin guards** are a special detachment from the Shield Basilica of Muir, and consider it an honor to stand watch. Guards serve for one year, and receive rooms within the temple and further training in their art. The guards do not speak or react, and remain stoic unless the temple is in danger. They always wear highly polished full plate armor and wield polearms. Long swords and shields stand at the ready in case they are needed.

Area A2: The Gardens

Magnificent, flourishing gardens surround the cathedral and its campus buildings. Tending the gardens are **2d4 Lawful druids** (Druid 3-6) and/or priests of Iseleine (Cleric 2-4). These priests, like the guards, consider it an honor to work in the gardens caring for the exotic plants and herbs. The plants are used as teaching tools and spell components.

Familiars of all kinds call the gardens home when they are not attending to their masters. The familiars serve as stealthy "guards" who watch the grounds and report suspicious activity. Virtually everything is noticed. No animal in the garden is allowed to be harmed.

Area A3: The Rectory

These two-story white marble buildings house scribes, scholars, professors and philosophers. The average members of the clergy (Cleric 5-7 or Magic-user 6-8) are elderly and beyond their adventuring days. Each building houses eight people.

Area A4: Erudite Manse

This beautiful mansion is home to **Ayire Jaysa**, Master Scholar of the Mystic Erudite (Lawful human female Magic-user 5/Cleric 5). Although Ayire is rarely present in the compound, she welcomes visitors as long as they adhere to proper courtesy. Two **guards** (human Paladin 6) stand at attention outside the doors.

Ayire's elderly husband, **Guscar** (Lawful human male Magic-user 11) is somewhat senile and frail, but remains very active within the Seminary, particularly in maintaining the gardens. He enjoys regaling visitors with stories of his adventures, although he rambles for hours, often forgetting or mixing up his tales. When he forgets a detail, he "spices up" the stories with extravagant fabrications to fill in the gaps. Ayire and Guscar's children are grown and prominent adventurers in their own right, each more than ready to avenge any wrongs done to their parents.

Ayire is currently being tormented by disturbing dreams and images. These nightmares disrupt her rest, and she often wakes with visions of a being of supreme purity under extreme duress. Images of Hecate and Abhor Brazier accompany these disquieting nightmares. Ayire believes these dreams are a call for help from someone trapped within Abhor Brazier, but she is hesitant to attack the evil temple for fear of igniting a deadly war.

Area A5: Congregation Hall

This room serves as a meeting place and mess hall for students and clergy. A backroom contains a fully furnished kitchen. **Najart** (Neutral human male, cook) and his staff serve superb meals, most made with produce grown on the island.

A fair amount of expensive cheese recently went missing, and Najart suspects a sneaky familiar. He has yet to discover any clues as to the culprit's identity. He appreciates any help tracking down the thieving rodent.

Area A6: Seminary of the Divine Theurgist

This imposing white marble building towers four stories above the gardens. A fluted colonnade encircles the main structure. Paving stones lining the colonnade are inscribed with the names of every Seminary graduate. Tens of thousands of names and dates decorate the stones. The stones radiate mild magic, and each one glows a brilliant gold until the named student breathes his last breath. The stone then turns white as the mage's passes. The stones have no other properties.

A search reveals the name **Rayne D'Anzeray** among the paving stones. His stone is a muted gray. If asked about D'Anzeray, the faculty states that he was a gifted student who excelled in the necromantic arts and ancient lore, but that his interests in illicit magic brought about his expulsion. He left the Seminary after recurring conflicts with students and faculty. The Seminary's mages are also

concerned by the color of D'Anzeray's stone; he isn't the first over the years to become a lich. They don't volunteer this information unless asked. They fear the information might reflect badly on the Seminary's teachings. (See *Splinters of Faith 10: Remorse of Life* for more on D'Anzeray's current condition.)

Standing at the Seminary's entrances are **8 guards** (Paladin 4), two at each door.

The Seminary itself is a testament to magecraft. Its walls display paintings and tapestries spanning thousands of years. Crystal display cases hold artifacts and antiques from a variety of cultures. Visitors are not allowed into the school without authorization and a **guard escort** (Paladin 5).

Gethsemane the Eminent (Lawful human male Magic-user 15) is the Seminary's headmaster. He retired from adventuring decades ago, but remains agile and vigorous. Gethsemane was never a handsome man, and age and time have not improved his visage. Despite his homely looks, Gethsemane is honest and benevolent. He never married but still seeks a good woman with whom to share his remaining life.

Gethsemane's **aides** (Magic-users 6-8) are specialists in the various schools of magic. A number of **clerics** (levels 4-8) assist him in teaching Thasizier's religion and philosophy.

Area A7: The Dormitories

A round building houses students and apprentices of all races, ages and classes. At any given time, **8d4 students** (Lawful Magic-user 1 or Cleric 1) are present.

Area A8: Colloquium Amphitheater

This semicircular amphitheater is partially sunken into the ground. Stone benches line the dirt slope leading to the stage. Students and faculty perform plays, give lectures and put on magic exhibitions here.

New Deity: Thasizier

Master of Magic, God of Good Magic

Alignment: Lawful

Typical Worshippers: Good-aligned arcane spell casters,

Favored Weapons: Staff

Thasizier is the enigmatic sage, the wizened soothsayer and the embodiment of righteous magic. He depicts himself as a majestic young gentleman with a commanding presence. His emblem is a platinum circlet symbolizing the infinite power of magic and purity of the soul. The god takes great interest in humanity and elves. He willingly sends messengers and minions to assist his faithful in times of dire need if they are fighting evil arcanists. He opposes all that is evil and especially those who debase magic. Thasizier and his minions regard Hecate and her covens with open hostility. Thasizier and Hecate wage an eternal war that often spills out to include their mortal followers.

Thasizier and his priesthood actively seek out guttersnipes and vagabonds to train in arcane arts under strict supervision and education. Those lacking arcane talents are guided to Muir's schools. Thasizier's priests adorn themselves with blue robes of multiple hues.

Area A9: Temple Thasizier

This structure dwarfs the buildings around it. Massive white marble block walls rise 150 feet into the air. Flying buttresses support the block walls, and a domed ceiling towering overhead. Narrow golden glass windows ring the walls, which arc to a slender peak.

Two guards (Paladin 8) stand at each of the four bronze double doors. Each door is embossed with a depiction of Thasizier. The doors, which are rarely shut, open directly into the central worship chamber. The sun shining through the hemispherical ceiling of stained glass lights the expansive circular room with a colorful array of lights.

In the middle of the chamber is a wondrous sight: an angelic figure frozen in a block of transparent crystal. The temple appears to have been built around the mysterious figure.

As impressive as the ceiling is during the day, only at night is its true beauty revealed. The entire glass ceiling glows each night from more than 100 *continual light* spells cast upon the panes of glass. The glow from the dome bathes the surrounding gardens and buildings in multicolored hues of astonishing beauty.

The room beneath the dome is ringed with many smaller chapels containing statues of heroic and famous mages throughout history. Some of these chapels also contain the tombs of honored mages and divine leaders. A golden, stained-glass window on the outer wall illuminates each shrine.

Bridavat the Sworn Protector (Lawful human male Paladin 15) keeps a watchful eye on the temple. He serves as the captain of the guard and resides in the rectory (Area A3) with his wife and young sons. He can be found near the angelic figure most of the time.

The temple's high priest, **Saebyl Neyron the Sighted** (Lawful elf male Cleric 11) can also be found here during the daylight hours and during ceremonies to Thasizier. While Saebyl is the temple's acting high priest, Ayire Jaysa is the Seminary's true spiritual guide and chancellor.

During the day, a steady stream of spellcasters and clerics pays homage to the mysterious being encased in his crystal tomb. From dawn to sunset, arcane casters and clerics shuffle through the building, offering tributes and prayers. The numbers dwindle at night, but a few spellcasters can always be found within the chamber.

Common pilgrims are allowed in during the day. At any time, **4d10 sightseers** (a mix of elves, humans and an occasional dwarf) can be found visiting the temple.

Area A9-A: The Crypt Entrance

These stairs wind down into the crypts. Iron gates seal the entrances, preventing visitors from accessing the catacombs. Only Bridavat, Saebyl and Ayire hold the keys to the crypt entrances. No undead live within the chambers, but tomb guardians include golems, summoning spells and other traps.

Area A9-B: The Choir

Four spiral staircases access a balcony surrounding the base of the glass dome. The choir area is 50 feet above the floor and is used only during ceremonies and special events.

Area A9-C: The Shrines and Chapels

Smaller chapels and reliquaries dedicated to important church figures decorate the temple's outer wall. Sarcophagi and holy relics of legendary heroes and spiritual leaders sit in these small shrines. Engraved plaques detail the deeds of these religious icons.

A9-D: The Angel

The most impressive aspect of the Seminary is the angelic figure encased in crystal that dominates the chamber beneath the dome. The enigmatic male figure is nude, with a pair of white, feathered wings spreading upward from his back. His face is serene, but a single tear lies frozen below his right eye. A single wound mars the flawless skin of his breast, piercing his heart.

The entire cathedral was built around this mysterious figure. Scholars believe the winged man is a messenger or avatar of Thasizier. All that is known of the entombed being is that a holy symbol of Thasazier hangs on a golden chain around his neck.

The clear stone casing resists all attempts at penetrating its hard shell. Divination magic sheds little light on this relic. Protecting the figure at all times are **4 guards** (Paladin 8).

The being in the crystal is **Marros Stron**, an **astral deva** and one of Thasizier's most-beloved minions. Stron freely offered his soul to power the original *Scepter of Faiths* when it was created. Stron's body was encased in a shard of elemental force as a tribute to his devotion. If somehow freed, no amount of magic can return the astral deva to life. When Akruel escaped and broke the scepter, Stron's soul was finally released to spend eternity at Thasizier's side.

The crystal encasing Stron is immune to all magical, supernatural, spell-like and extraordinary effects. The crystal has 500 hit points, but heals all damage done to it at the end of every round. The magic of the stone also returns a like amount of damage upon any weapon or item used against it. The crystal is 15 feet tall and weighs 5 tons.

If the new *Scepter of Faiths* is brought within 30 feet of the angelic figure, flashing images appear upon the crystal's surface. The guards immediately fall to their knees in amazement, while others scurry to alert Ayire. She arrives in two rounds to witness the "miracle."

Over the next hour, the images show the *Enchantment of Power* ceremony required to complete the *Scepter of Faiths*. PCs watch the original *Scepter's* creation as Stron willingly gave up his life and plunged the scepter into his chest to empower the relic. The scenes then switch to show the final battle with Akruel Rathamon, and Shah Rasalt plunging the scepter into the death-priest's chest.

The images end with a picture of Poverty's Bethel in Lessef and a robed necromancer pulling the scepter from a desiccated corpse. Ayire immediately recognizes Rayne as the robed figure, and the corpse as the rumored Akruel Rathamon.

Finally, all in the temple hear a soft voice whisper in their minds: "I failed to strike true the heart of hellish might, the beating of a thousand souls. Succeed where I did not." An image of a black temple pyramid with massive carved skulls ringing its step tiers flashes across the crystal.

As the whispering voice fades, another image of a tortured astral deva flickers across the crystal and a scream echoes in the PCs' minds.

Game Referees should use the images to fill in any details the PCs might have missed. PCs should understand after watching the images that a Lawful being must give up its life voluntarily to power the *Scepter of Faiths*.



The Adventure

The Brood of Hecate, devout followers of the goddess of evil magic, have long been rivals of Thasizier and the Seminary, despite the more than 700 miles between the two temples. Past clashes often erupted into minor wars that devastated the battlefields upon which the magic-wielding combatants faced off. The conflicts were devastating and legendary, deadly for the combatants as well as those caught in the mayhem. The terrors unleashed from the Brood's mountain stronghold of Abhor Brazier were truly stuff of nightmares.

For the last hundred years, however, the Brood of Hecate has been silent, the doors of their great black temple closed to outsiders, the temple itself cut off by bitter winters and impassable mountain roads. But inside Abhor Brazier, the brood has been actively preparing for the return of Akrue Rathamon. With the death-cult leader's return, evil is once again stirring within the unholy sanctum as the Brood witches turn their eyes toward stomping out their old enemy. Recently, a great gout of flame visible from miles away erupted from the temple's remote mountainside location, a dire signal of the Brood's reawakening. Ayire Jaysa knows something is amiss, and feels that the witches are again active and awaiting their chance to strike. She has already alerted the Shieldfane of Muir to be ready in case the winnowers of Hecate march forth from the mountains.

But despite her suspicions, Ayire has not organized her city's defenses. In fact, her attention is wandering, as many within the compound will attest. Some say Ayire is under an evil spell caused by Abhor Brazier's awakening. This isn't far from the truth: Ayire is the recipient of a *dream* spell cast nightly by **Lianhi**, a prisoner inside Abhor Brazier. The dreams are desperate pleas for help, but Ayire feels powerless to intervene for fear of throwing Thasizier's minions into a battle with the Brood on their home turf.

Ayire recently used her divination magic to discover the *Scepter's* whereabouts and sent a messenger to retrieve the party carrying the blessed relic. Ayire wants to discover the nature of the mournful pleas tormenting her sleep, but feels it is somehow connected to the party and the restored scepter. If asked about the images shown on the deva's crystal, Ayire now understands that the *Enchantment of Power* blessing requires a Lawful being to willingly sacrifice itself to power the *Scepter*. She can't explain it, but she is sure that her recent dreams pertain to this final blessing. Unfortunately, she is also sure that the answer to the mystery lies within Abhor Brazier.

The Final Blessing

This final blessing on the *Scepter of Faiths* is perhaps the most difficult for PCs to attain: A being must willingly sacrifice itself to power the *Scepter of Faiths*.

At least 12 life levels must be freely given to the *Scepter* to complete the final blessing. The levels must come from a single Lawful being. Even if the being has more life levels than required, the person falls dead, a look of serenity on his face and a single tear falling down his cheek. No amount of magic short of divine intervention can revive the being.

From her past dreams, Ayire believes that someone willing to offer its life exists within Abhor Brazier's walls — and she is convinced that Thasizier selected this being. She beseeches the PCs to travel to the horrid temple in the Hollow Spire Mountains more than 700 miles to the northwest of the island city to investigate.

Ayire isn't too far off in her beliefs, despite the fact that the dreams are actually coming from a spell cast by Lianhi as she languishes each night inside Abhor Brazier's dark walls. What Ayire doesn't know — although she somehow senses it — is that the witches of Hecate are currently holding a captured astral deva named **Ceallachan** within their unholy temple. If found, the astral deva — tainted by the corruptions the Brood forces on him daily — willingly sacrifices his soul to end his misery.

Going to New Heights

The height at which Abhor Brazier is built (14,000 feet above sea level) may pose a challenge to PCs attempting to quickly invade the Brood's lair.

Adjusting to the high altitude takes time, requiring PCs to rest regularly. PCs traveling up the mountain peak can easily climb (or use magic) to reach the 8,000-foot mark. Above 8,000 feet, the lower oxygen forces PCs to rest two days and acclimate for every 1,000 feet of elevation (about a half-day's climb).

PCs pushing themselves (using a *fly* spell or *teleport*, for instance) to go farther must make a saving throw or become fatigued for a number of days equal to the number of 1,000-foot intervals attempted. The saving throw penalty increases by -1 for each 1,000 foot above the 8,000-foot mark. For example, a PC using a *fly* spell to go from the 8,000-foot mark to the 13,000-foot point would have to make a saving throw with a -5 penalty or become fatigued for 5 days.

Creatures acclimated to the heights, such as those living within Abhor Brazier, are used to the thin air and do not have to attempt the saving throw. It takes a month of living in the thin air to adjust to the altitude.

PCs making the climb more slowly by taking a two-day rest after each day of climbing 1,000 feet can reach the temple doors and be ready to fight without any problems.

Area B: Abhor Brazier

Location: The temple sits 14,000 up the peaks of the Hollow Spire Mountains

Nickname: The Brood Home, Hecate's Hellgate, the Coventry

Deities: Hecate, the Wild Witch (evil magic).

Leader: Dealyn Rhó, Chaotic Cleric 12

Servants: The Brood of Hecate is composed of members who serve Hecate and all facets of magic.

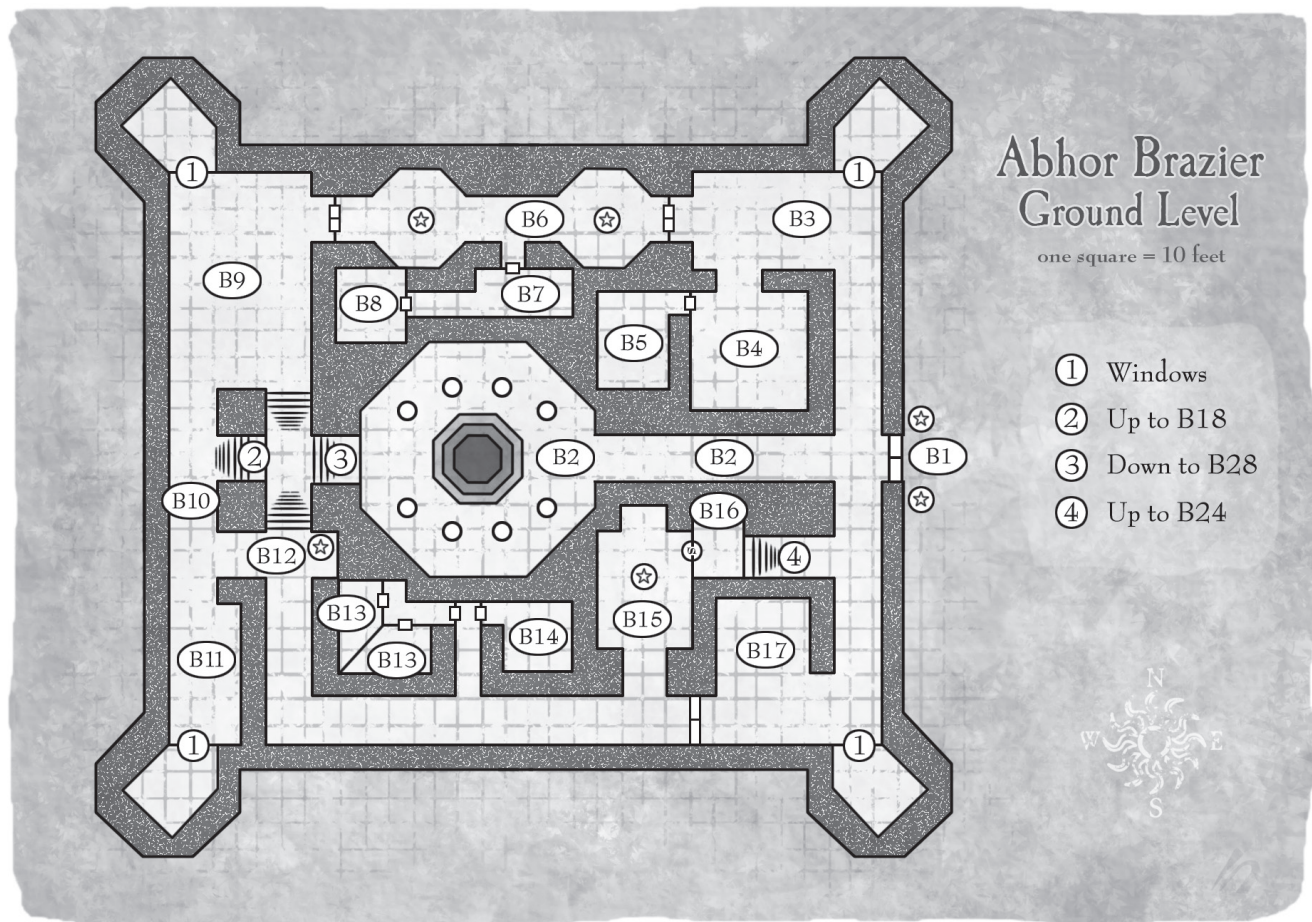
Dress: The Brood wear various outfits befitting their personalities. Hecate's followers tend toward loose robes.

Uniqueness: Abhor Brazier sits high in the mountains, flanked on its four corners by high chimneys that contain links to the fires of Hades.

Abhor Brazier sits on the side of a rumbling volcano, about 14,000 feet above sea level. The air is thin around the black temple, and altitude sickness may affect PCs. The temple appears more like a tomb than a place of worship, with black polished walls of obsidian that reflect the rocky, volcanic wasteland. The smooth walls slope upward 100 feet to a flat surface atop the structure. A set of massive brass doors is the only visible entrance. Intricate runes and alien glyphs flanked by hellish wolf sculptures decorate the doors. A brass standard of a setting moon is embedded in each lintel.

Four smokestacks at the corners of the temple reach 300 feet above the structure. Purplish flames bellow from the tops of each stack, the wicked fires reflecting on the temple's seamless obsidian walls. Each smokestack contains a gate to the fires of Hades.

Dealyn Rhó, the high priestess of Hecate, is quickly restoring the dark temple to life.



New Deity: Hecate

Goddess of Evil Magic

Alignment: Chaotic

Typical Worshippers: Wizards, Women

Favored Weapons: None.

Hecate is the goddess of evil magic and appears as a beautiful woman flanked by numerous hellhounds, her favored creature. The setting moon is her symbol. Her priests are normally accompanied by hellhounds sent to guard Hecate's temples. Her clerics have a special rapport with the beasts. Hecate is jealous, capricious and quick to anger. Hecate resides in a floating castle in the Nine Hells.

Area Br: Inhospitable Gates

These 20-foot-tall brass doors are surrounded by horrid glyphs and carvings.

Looking like nothing more than imposing decorations, **2 obsidian minotaurs** stand guard near the entry. Each is cleverly hidden as bas-relief sculptures on either side of the door.

Each massive construct carries a halberd made of volcanic glass. The minotaurs drop the halberds before combat, as each "weapon" is merely a decoration to add an air of menace. The minotaurs haven't moved in ages, and dust and ash coat their bodies. If PCs attempt to open the doors, the obsidian minotaurs step out of their wall niches

and attack. They defend themselves if threatened before the doors are opened.

The doors are locked and trapped. Any living being that touches the door triggers a *symbol of death*.

OBSIDIAN MINOTAUR (2): HD 10; hp 76; AC 6[13]; Atk 2 claws (2d6) plus fire (1d6); Move 9; Save 5; CL/XP 12/2,000; Special: Breath weapon, burning claws, resistance 75%

New Monster: Obsidian Minotaur

Hit Dice: 10

Armor Class: 6 [13]

Attacks: 2 claws (2d6) plus fire damage (1d6)

Saving Throw: 5

Special: Breath weapon, burning claws, fire heals, immune to most spells

Move: 9

Alignment: Neutrality

Challenge Level/XP: 12/2,000

An obsidian minotaur is a 12-foot-tall minotaur-like golem constructed of black obsidian. Its hands end in large claws that burn with a scorching fire. It can expel a cloud of poison gas from its mouth that deals 2d6 points of damage. Fire heals an obsidian minotaur, while a *cone of cold* slows it to half speed. The obsidian minotaur is immune to all other spells.

Sneak or Fight?

Abhor Brazier is a working temple — despite being sparsely populated because of the isolation imposed by the high altitude. If the PCs are quiet, however, they may be able to sneak into the temple without raising too much of an alarm. The witches inside have their own intrigues to attend to, and don't vigilantly watch the front gates due to the high altitude. Getting inside without getting noticed allows them to fight the temple's leaders on their own terms — at least until an alarm is sounded.

If PCs burst through the front doors looking for a fight, though, the many leaders of Abhor Brazier will happily oblige them. Unfortunately, the women know how to fight together, and will do so to the best of their abilities to protect the home of their goddess.

Referees shouldn't hesitate to have the leaders come running if there is a threat on their doorstep. PCs deserve whatever awaits them if they come out swinging.

Area B2: The Grand Temple

Crackling flames cast crimson flashes down this 50-foot-long hallway. Patterns move about the walls in chaotic red clouds that take horrid shape then vanish just as quickly. Amethyst streaks swirl throughout the black walls.

The hall opens into a large octagonal room containing eight intricately carved columns. Each column is made up of three massive statues of women standing back to back. The eyes of the statue are even with a veranda that sits 50 feet above the floor. Each woman wears flowing robes that gather at her feet. Their arms lift burning torches high over their heads so that flames lick the dome 75 feet overhead. The statues represent the many phases of Hecate the All-Seeing.

A billowing violet mist roils along the ceiling in a whirlpool-like cloud. A brass crest of a setting moon occasionally can be glimpsed through the mist directly over a flaming pit in the center of the room.

Flanking each pillar are tall brass candelabras. Silk tapestries representing the eight schools of arcane magic flutter in the warm breezes that circulate through the chamber. Brass chimes hanging from each end of the tapestry rods chime random melodies.

In the center of the chamber is a 20-foot-diameter pit surrounded by low stone stairs that rise about three feet in an octagon around the opening. Violet flames fill the pit, a sheet of intense fire that runs horizontally across the opening between the steps. The pit drops 20 feet to Area B40.

The violet flames are a horizontal permanent *wall of fire*. PCs passing through the *wall of fire* suffer 2d6 points of fire damage and drop into Area B40.

A modified **iron golem in the form of a five-headed hydra** lies within the pit, resting in Area B40. The creature uses ledges cut into the central pit to climb to the top of the pit so it can attack beings inside the temple room. The iron golem hydra remains in the pit, extending only its elongated necks and the forepart of its body through the flames to attack those in the worship room. It can reach beings within 15 feet of the pit. The *wall of fire* heals 10 points to the golem while it remains in contact with the flames each round.

IRON GOLEM (FIVE-HEADED HYDRA FORM): HD 20; hp 80; AC 3[16]; Atk 5 bites (1d10); Move 6; Save 3; CL/XP 18/3800; Special: Poison gas, immune to all weapons +2 or less, slowed by lightning, healed by fire, immune to most magic.



Area B3: The Pack

Purplish light shines through a large, round window, the glow the ugly color of a bruise. Beyond the window roar torrents of crimson and violet flame. The window — a partially opened gate to the fiery pits of Hades — blocks the flames from entering the room. Powerful Abjuration magic on the window — glass delved from the Mines of Honn — prevents extraplanar beings from entering, but allows flames to belch forth in violent eruptions. Similar windows open into the interior of the fiery smokestacks at the temple's four corners.

The glass window is incredibly strong and immune to fire-based effects. Breaking the glass unleashes a hellish storm of searing flame. The blaze deals 20d6 points of damage to beings in the room. Half is fire damage, while the other half is unholy energy.

Making their lair in the room are **12 hell hounds**. Hecate's beloved creatures have free rein of the temple, but often wait here to be unleashed to spread destruction in the mountains.

HELL HOUNDS (12): HD 7; hp 55; AC 4[15]; Atk bite (1d6); Move 12; Save 9; CL/XP 8/800; Special: Breathe fire

Area B4: Shrine to Arcane Flame

Eight large cauldrons of burning oil hang from the 30-foot-high ceiling, suspended 20 feet above the floor on chains secured to the walls. Dense black smoke swirls in a caustic whirlpool through a vent in the ceiling. Pitch suet and sticky tar cover the floor. An ornate bronze bowl sitting on an altar of dark stone holds smoldering coals that emit white smoke. A small black statue depicting Hecate stands in the center of the glowing coals. The door of blackened wood is locked.

Maintaining the temple and the multiple fires are **2 aerial servants**. They launch burning cauldrons down upon intruders, dealing 1d8 points of bludgeoning damage plus 2d6 points of fire damage. PCs must make a saving throw or catch fire as they are covered in burning pitch.

AERIAL SERVANT (2): HD 16; hp AC 3[16]; Atk 1 slam (4d4); Move (Fly 36); Save 3; CL/XP 16/3,200; Special: none.

Area B5: Akhilesh's Chambers

The fearsome **Akhilesh** is the temple's master of Evocation. Akhilesh specializes in arcane fire and is prone to violent fits of anger. Few furnishings survive in her chambers, and those that remain show signs of recent fire damage. A charred bed lies disheveled and unkempt and a stone table holds hundreds of thin sheets of metal embossed with spells. The sheets weigh a total of 100 pounds. A stone wardrobe holds Akhilesh's clothing and personal effects.

Akhilesh rarely travels without an **elder fire elemental** at her side. Her favorite tactic is to envelop herself within the elder elemental and blast opponents with her spells.

AKHILESH (CHAOTIC FEMALE HUMAN MAGIC-USER 12): HD 9+3; hp 48; AC 5[14]; Atk staff (1d6); Move 9; Save 5; CL/XP 13/2,300; Special: Spells (1—*charm person, magic missile, shield, sleep*; 2—*darkness 15 ft. radius, invisibility, pyrotechnics, web*; 3—*fireball (x3), fly*; 4—*confusion, dimension door, wall of fire (x2)*; 5—*conjure elemental, feebleshield, passwall, wall of iron*; 6—*anti-magic shell*)

Combat Gear staff, *wand of fireballs (9 charges)*, *ring of fire resistance*, *ring of protection +2*, *cloak of protection +2* **Non-combat Gear** unholy symbol of Hecate, ruby encrusted bracers (3,000 gp)

Description Akhilesh is one of the most powerful and terrifying of the Brood. Her impetuous and unpredictable nature prevents her from moving up in status, however, a fact that fills her with constant

rage. Her passion for flame and Hecate are fanatical to the extreme. Akhilesh wears scant mithral chainmail, which is so negligible that it offers no protection or hindrance. The armor glows a brilliant red with heat when Akhilesh immerses herself in flames.

FIRE ELEMENTAL: HD 12; hp 90; AC 2[17]; Atk strike (2d6); Move 12; Save 3; CL/XP 13/2,300; Special: Ignite materials

Area B6: The Reception Hall

Thick wooden doors sit at either end of this hall. Facing the door are statues of robed women resembling Hecate. Each statue holds aloft two torches. The statues are actually low-ranking female priestesses of Hecate who were turned to stone centuries ago for displeasing the temple mistress at that time. They know little about the current temple and offer no resistance if freed.

Area B7: Visitors' Antechambers

This lounge is comfortably furnished with plush chairs, soft rugs and a well-stocked beverage table. A gold censer (1,500 gp) hanging from a gold chain in the center of the chamber emits a warm radiance that dispels the chill in the air emanating from the cold stone walls. The censer is enchanted to allow anyone within 15 feet of it to feel warm and cozy.

A table holds several books on topics such as forbidden romances, embellished illustrations of the male anatomy, and empowering females in male-dominated societies.

Area B8: Visitors' Chambers

Beds covered with down pillows sit against opposite walls. Two empty drawers are adjacent to each bed. The room is comfortable and inviting, but otherwise empty.

Area B9: The Exalted Conclave

A large window in the corner of the room bathes the chamber in a purplish light. Torrents of crimson and violent flames roar just on the other side of the window. The window is another partially opened gate to Hades (See Area A3). A wide set of stairs descends in the corner opposite the window, heading down to Area B28.

A huge U-shaped table with 10 chairs sits in the room. The finest dinner and silverware adorn the black, wooden table. Rich and colorful tapestries representing the schools of magic hang from the walls. The tapestry for the school of Abjuration hangs separately from the others in a place of honor behind the center chair.

The silverware and table settings are worth a total of 1,000 gp.

Area B10: The Hall of Deception

The hall is carved with a bas-relief of a hellish scene. Black flames envelop sculpted humanoids writhing in agony. The carving starts at the base of the black stone wall and continues overhead to the peaked ceiling. The carving slowly moves, with the entire scene changing about once every hour in a slow-motion crawl. While the changing sculptures pose no danger, **2 obsidian minotaurs** are cleverly concealed within the image. The carvings actually flow around and over the minotaurs' bodies, obscuring their obvious shapes. The obsidian minotaur guards attack any non-Hecate worshipper entering the staircase leading to Area B18. The guards wait until the PCs start up the stairs, then burst out of the wall carvings on either side of the last PC. The entire hall radiates strong Transmutation magic.

OBSIDIAN MINOTAUR (2): HD 10; hp 76; AC 6[13]; Atk 2

claws (2d6) plus fire (1d6); Move 9; Save 5; CL/XP 12/2,000; Special: Breath weapon, burning claws, fire heals, immune to most spells

Area B11: Alchemy Laboratory

The room is filled with an eerie lavender glow that shines through a small window. A small iron door below the window allows access to the flames, although opening the door leads to a miniature gate into Hell (See Area B3).

Tables and workbenches fill the room. Shelves with an abundance of alchemy supplies hang on the walls. All labels in the lab are written in an infernal language. The lab contains 10,000 gp worth of rare and exotic components and elements.

Many of the spellcasters residing in the temple frequently use this lab to mix potions and to find spell components for their horrid experiments.

Area B12: Vestibule

An alcove holds a 12-foot-tall statue of Hecate, her arms aloft and a flaming torch in each hand. The torches blaze with ever-burning flames. A small altar of obsidian sits before her, and a small bronze bowl sits in a depression on the altar's surface. The bowl holds a pool of clear liquid.

Once per day, the bowl fills with a *potion of invulnerability*. The potion lasts for an hour, but only affects followers of Hecate. Any non-follower of Hecate who drinks this sweet-tasting fluid suffers 3d4 points of Intelligence damage (save for half). Creatures dropping to 0 Int or below remain in a vegetative state until healed by normal or magical means.

The bowl's power is canceled if it is removed from the altar.

Stairs nearby lead down to a dark landing (Area B28).

Area B13: Sub-Priestess' Chamber

Each of these rooms houses 3 sub-priestesses and their hell hound companions. These women normally assist the higher-ranking clerics in their daily duties. Unless they are accompanying one of the priestesses, the women are here (30% chance). The room contains decorative furniture, fine clothing and personal belongings. Three chests sit at the foot of each bed. Each contains 2d8 pieces of miscellaneous jewelry (1d6x10gp each).

SUB-PRIESTESS OF HECATE (CHAOTIC FEMALE HUMAN CLERIC 5) (3): HD 5; hp 26; AC 1[18]; Atk staff (1d6); Move 9; Save 11; CL/XP 6/400; Special: Spells (1—*cure light wounds, light*; 2—*hold person, silence 15 ft. radius*; 3—*cure disease*).

Combat gear: plate mail, steel-banded staff; **Non-combat gear:** *ring of protection +1, cloak of protection +1* and 25 gp.

HELL HOUNDS (3): HD 5; AC 4[15]; Atk 1 bite (1d6); Move 12; Save 12; CL/XP 6/400; Special: Breathe fire (10hp).

Area B14: Andulasia's Chamber

A silver symbol of enchantment emblazons this black wooden door. White silks and translucent veils swath the ceiling. Curtains droop in billowy plumes against the walls. White pelt rugs cover the cold, black floor. A round fur-laden bed sits in the center of the room, and a small globe of dim light floats above the bed.

Andulasia and her companion, **Devarsi**, live in this room. Andulasia is the resident mistress of Enchantment. The pair can be found here unless alerted to intruders. They are loners by nature, but nevertheless aid other Brood members in times of need.

ANDULASIA (CHAOTIC HUMAN FEMALE MAGIC-USER 9): HD 9; hp 47; AC 4[15]; Atk dagger +2, +4 vs. *Lawful* (1d4+2, or 1d4+4); Move 9; Save 7; CL/XP 10/1,400; Special: Spells (1—*charm person, magic missile, shield, sleep*; 2—*detect invisibility, invisibility, mirror image*; 3—*hold person (x2), suggestion*; 4—*charm monster, confusion*; 5—*feeblemind*).

Combat gear: dagger +2, +4 vs. *Lawful*; *wand of charm person (8 charges)*; *bracers of defense AC 5[14]*; *ring of protection +2*.

Personality: Andulasia hails from the slums of Bargarsport. An urchin, she worked the streets to earn a living, enduring unspeakable evils of men to survive. In her darkest hour, she turned to Hecate to plead vengeance upon man for her cruel and dark existence. Andulasia is a dark beauty, but scars (physical and emotional) of her past life are present upon closer inspection. She is a devout follower of Hecate, going so far as to wear the goddess's holy symbol.

DEVARSI (CHAOTIC HUMAN FEMALE FALLEN PALADIN 8): HD 8; hp 43; AC 3[15]; Atk +2 *bastard sword* (1d8+2); Move 6; Save 9; CL/XP 9/1,400; Special: None.

Combat gear: +1 *fiery plate mail, +2 bastard sword*; **Non-combat gear:** 3 vials of medusa poison.

Personality: Devarsi graduated from the esteemed Shield Basilica of Muir, where she excelled in combat and warfare. Ten years ago, Devarsi discovered her platoon of recruits in the midst of murdering and ravaging an entire village. She unleashed a brutal rage upon them, slaughtering the men and women, even as they begged for her mercy. Her rage blinded her. For stopping the slaughter, she was awarded Muir's blessing; however, for her uncontrolled rage, she was exiled from the Shield Basilica. Devarsi roamed the countryside in search of acceptance, her bitterness eating at her soul. It was not until she encountered Andulasia that she found comfort. She adores Andulasia and practically worships her like a deity. She lost the majority of her paladin abilities when she was exiled from Muir's Shield Maidens.

Devarsi is a tall, robust woman of obvious barbaric lineage. Her pale skin and thick blonde hair stand in stark contrast to her black raiment and armor. Devarsi has a companion named **Marcrinus**, a massive **war hound** that commonly harasses and thrashes Abhor Brazier's hell hounds. Marcrinus is large enough for a human to ride.

MARCRINUS (ST. BERNARD WAR HOUND): HD 7; hp 51; AC 3[16]; Atk 1 bite (1d8); Move 12; Save 9; CL/XP 8/800; Special: None.

Area B15: The Great Black Statue

A looming image of Hecate stands solemnly in the lightless room. The statue is 12 feet tall and flanked by four large stone hounds. The hounds gaze reverently upward at Hecate's face, as if awaiting her commands. Hecate's eyes are slivers of metallic crimson that reflect all corners of the room. Harmless flames coil out of the stone hound's nostrils. The seamless obsidian floors and walls are polished to a mirror-like perfection.

An alcove carved into the back wall holds a black *mirror of opposition* that appears to be part of the wall. The mirror cannot be removed without destroying it. The mirror duplicates the first four creatures that enter the room. During the next round, 3 **erinyes** (Area B16) *teleport* into the room and enter the fray, all the while staying between the party and the mirror.

The secret door is hard to detect (1 in 10 chance for all characters, including dwarves).

Area B16: Secret Vault

Eight podiums arranged in a circle hold open books. Three black iron chests line the back wall. Each chest is elaborately decorated with delicate bronze lace. Gathered in the room are 3 **erinyes**. The Brood summoned these devils to perform various tasks and to guard this treasure room. The erinyes are bored and desperate to inflict pain

upon mortals.

The books are a book being crafted into another enchanted protector (see Area B23), a *Manual of Wisdom*, a *Manual of Intelligence*, four spellbooks containing many 1st- through 4th-level spells (Game Referee's choice), and a book containing blank pages.

Chest #1: 5,687 pp, 6,982 sp.

Chest #2: 13,973 gp.

Chest #3: 17,900 gp of miscellaneous gems.

ERINYES DEMON (3): HD 6; hp 45; AC 2[17]; Atk 1 bronze sword (1d6 + paralysis); Move 12 (Fly 24); Save 11; CL/XP 9/1100; Special: Magic resistance (25%), fear, immune to fire and cold, entangle.

Area B17: The Hall Guards

Purple light shines around two small, obsidian shades that cover a window looking into a hellish chimney (see Area A3). The hall opens into a room with two obsidian double doors. A silver symbol of a moon setting over the horizon is engraved in the doors.

The room is guarded by **Gawadu** and **Gawabla**, 2 mutated rust monsters used to deter armored intruders. They investigate nearby disturbances. How these two horrors came to be is a closely guarded secret held by the Brood of Hecate. Despite their low intelligence, the rust monsters work in tandem against opponents, especially those with large amounts of metal.

GAWADU AND GAWABLA (MUTATED RUST MONSTERS) (2): HD 7; hp 54; AC 2[17]; Atk 2 antennae (0); Move 12; Save XX; CL/XP 8/800; Special: Cause rust, immune to fire, 3/day—darkness 15 ft. radius,

Abhor Brazier, Level 2

Hecate's minions live on this upper level. The halls are drab but clean, with rooms decorated to individual tastes.

Area B18: The Gallery

A 10-foot-wide balcony wraps around the upper portion of the grand temple (see Area B2). The veranda sits 50 feet above the floor. Even high above, the heat from the flaming pit (in Area B2) on the ground level is staggeringly intense. An upward-moving whirlpool of violet smoke swirls around a magnificent standard of a setting moon placed into the ceiling 75 feet above the pit. The moon is more visible from this vantage point, but just barely amid the roiling smoke.

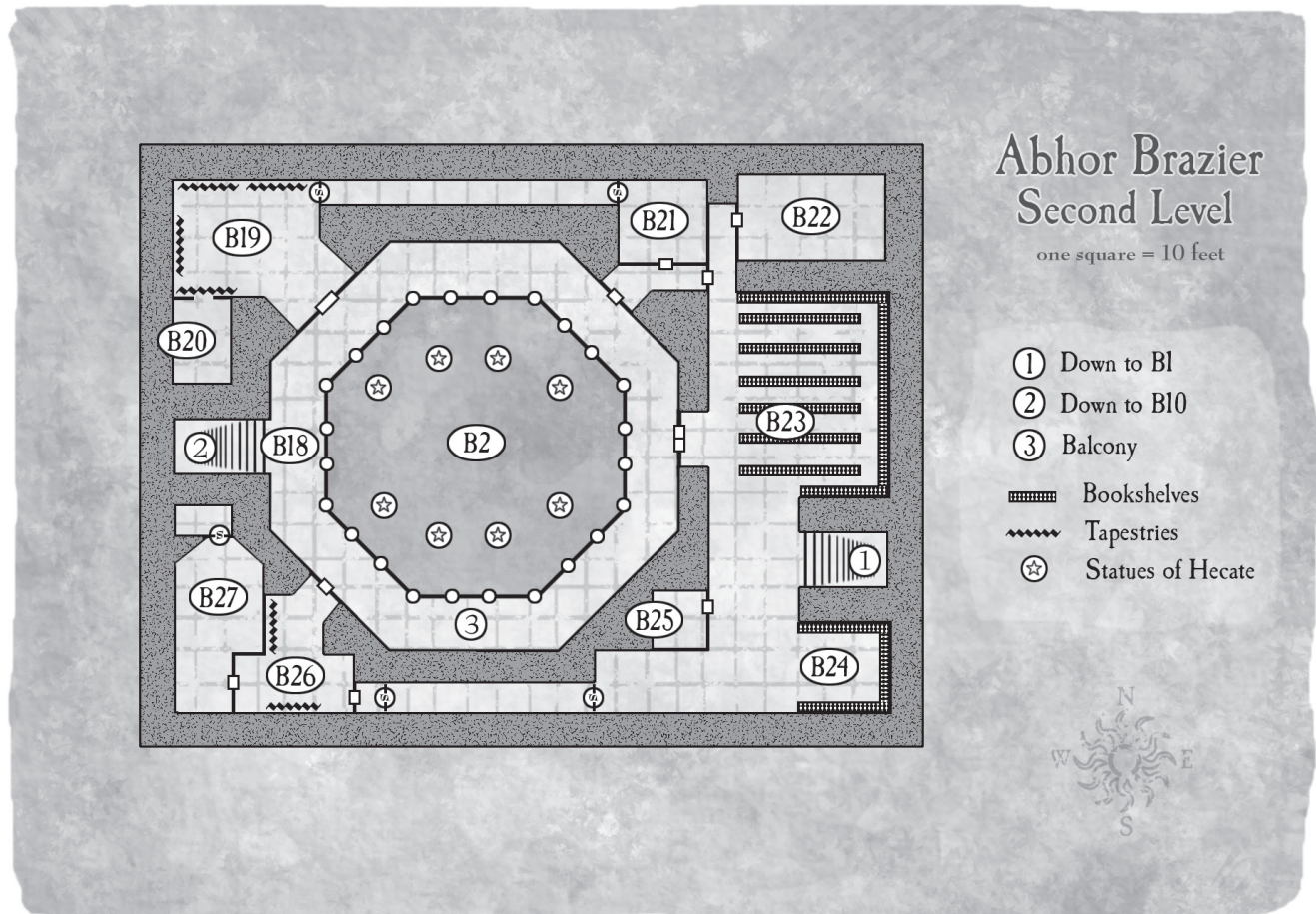
The balcony places PCs at eye level with the massive stone heads of 24 statues of Hecate (Area B2) standing back to back to back in groups of three to form eight massive columns. A two-foot-tall railing of black marble containing crimson veins circles the balcony's outer edge.

Emblems of the eight schools of magic are arranged around the octagonal balcony. These five foot round symbols are made of inlaid bronze and ivory and signify where the priestess of the corresponding school stands during ceremonies.

Area B19: Kaluzhka's Lair

A human-sized statue of Hecate stands before a brazier of brilliant yellow flame. The obsidian walls appear green in the reflected fire. The overpowering odor of sweet incense blankets the air.

Four statues of women kneeling in worship surround the Hecate statue. Instead of faces, their features are replaced by smooth oval surfaces. The four statues were priestesses of Hecate deemed



“useless” to the goddess’s cause. The Brood turned them to stone and molded their faces into flat ovals to represent Hecate imprinting her beliefs on “blank slates.” The women quickly suffocate if restored to flesh.

Three tapestries displaying the symbol of Transmutation hang on the walls. One tapestry covers an arched opening leading into the home of the dread **Kaluzhka**, a **medusa** and the Brood’s eldest living member. She is head of the Transmutation discipline. Malicious and conniving, she has so far been unable to claim the position of high priestess, a title she desperately craves. Kaluzhka lacks desire and dedication to her Brood sisters, and they in turn treat her with disdain for her lack of spellcasting ability. She has no qualms about siding against the high priestess **Dealyn Rhó** in combat, but she quickly deals with PCs afterward. **Bartle**, an ancient and blind **hellhound**, is always in Kaluzhka’s company.

Tactics: Kaluzhka casts defensive spells upon herself and Bartle before entering combat. She relies heavily on arrows and gaze attacks to keep opponents at bay.

BARTLE, HELL HOUND: HD 7; hp 38; AC 4[15]; Atk 1 bite (1d6); Move 12; Save 9; CL/XP 8/800; Special: Breathe fire (14hp).

KALUZHKA (MEDUSA): HD 8; AC 2[17]; Atk 1 short sword (1d6); Move 9; Save 11; CL/XP 8/800; Special: Gaze turns to stone, poison, spells (as 9th-level Magic-User: 1—*light, magic missile, read languages, read magic*; 2—*levitate, knock, pyrotechnics*; 3—*fly, haste, rope trick*; 4—*massmorph, polymorph self*; 5—*passwall*)

Combat gear: +2 long bow, 24 silver arrows, 24 poisoned arrows, +2 chain mail, wand of slow (10 charges), potion of invisibility. **Non-combat gear:** cloak of resistance +1, Ruby-encrusted platinum necklace and earrings (5,250 gp), 8 platinum rings with different gemstones symbolizing a school of magic (500 gp each).

Description: Kaluzhka is a vicious and angry soul, who long ago gave herself to Hecate in exchange for power. She has sacrificed hundreds of beings over the years, usually by turning them to stone then chiseling their bodies into chunks of gravel. She takes a perverse pleasure in crafting “mortal clay” into hideous creatures with hindering and grotesque deformities. Some of her creations are truly inspired and eerily beautiful.

Area B2o: Kaluzhka’s Private Chamber

Four disturbing statues of human women with bizarre deformities stand along the wall’s perimeter.

The first statue has five arms extending around her waist. Each hand clutches a small stone animal. Her stone face is filled with a look of terror. The second woman resembles a medusa with long constrictor snakes replacing her hair. Her open mouth is full of long fangs. The third statue has the lower half of a large, many-legged insect. Her eyes are hollow pits sunk deep into her cranium. The fourth statue has no hands and her mouth is absent.

If PCs try to restore these statues to life, only the last statue survives reverting to flesh. The first three women fall to the floor and die within seconds, writhing in pain. Each of the first three statues is a low-level priestess of Hecate.

The fourth statue is **Jenhenhe** (Lawful human female Cleric 8), a priestess from the Theurgist Seminary of Thasizier. She was captured more than 100 years ago during a skirmish with the Brood of Hecate. Once restored, she immediately begins suffering from starvation. As her hands and mouth are missing, she can do little to aid PCs. She requires powerful healing spells and months of rest to regain her form. Grant each PC a 1,000 experience point bonus if they safely return her to the Seminary.

A bed of black wool and thick leather sits in the room’s center. A

desk sits in a niche beside a bookcase covering the wall opposite the entrance. The books cover topics such as sculpture and idols of evil temples, known venoms, and evil ceremonies and philosophies of Hecate. The desk has a false top that can be lifted to reveal a shallow compartment. The compartment holds an *arrow of direction* and a *gem of seeing*.

Area B21: Liseldona the Flagrant

The door is made of solid obsidian with gold lettering that reads “Shaenkue the Eternal.” The door is designed to deter people from entering this room. This chamber belongs to the weakest and newest member of the Brood of Hecate: **Liseldona**, a master of illusion. Rarely seen, she remains *invisible* whenever possible. She fears direct combat and avoids confrontation. She tries to negotiate a truce if cornered.

The room is barren and empty except for an elaborate stone throne in which sits a desiccated man with straggly wisps of hair hanging down around his undead features. Small balls of red light glow in his empty eye sockets, and his mouth is twisted into a permanent malevolent grin from his shrunken flesh. Power crackles around his bony fingers. His head rises as PCs come through the door, and he raises his arms toward his visitors. Beside his throne sits an ornate pillar of obsidian with gold-leaf decorations upon which a crystal ball glows with a dim light.

The being is an illusion to fool prowlers into believing a lich of horrific power occupies the chamber.

The room’s true contents are hidden under this *phantasmal force* display. The ornate pillar is real and contains a *symbol of sleep*. Anyone successfully disbelieving the illusion of the lich becomes subject to the *symbol of sleep* hidden beneath the illusion. Anyone still believing the room’s primary illusion sees the person crumple to the ground, then catch fire and vanish in a cloud of black ash.

The room actually contains a simple bed, desk, chair and a wardrobe. The wardrobe contains comfortable clothing and Liseldona’s personal effects. The desk holds Liseldona’s spellbook, which contains her memorized spells plus three others from each spell level. One desk drawer also contains a bottle of expensive wine (200 gp), a *potion of extra healing* and a *wand of invisibility* (8 charges).

LISELDONA (NEUTRAL HUMAN FEMALE MAGIC-USER 11): HD 9+2; hp 50; AC 6[13]; Atk +2 *dagger* (1d4+2); Move 9; Save 5; CL/XP 10/1,400; Special: Spells (1—*charm person, light, magic missile, read magic*; 2—*invisibility, mirror image, phantasmal force (x2)*; 3—*hold person, invisibility 10 ft. radius, rope trick, suggestion*; 4—*charm monster, confusion, hallucinatory terrain*; 5—*extension II, passwall, teleport*)

Combat gear: +2 *dagger* **Non-combat gear:** *ring of invisibility, ring of protection +1, cloak of protection +2, arcane scroll (mirror image, phantasmal force, suggestion), wand of polymorph other* (7 charges).

Personality: Timid and reclusive, Liseldona never draws attention to herself. She prefers to stalk and manipulate opponents while remaining at a distance. She derives satisfaction by indirectly causing others harm. She wears her long hair neatly tied with silk ribbons and dresses in a conservative gown to hide her body.

Area B22: Thanta the Medium

A heavy, iron-bound wooden door displays a mystic symbol of the school of divination. From the layers of dust and the rusted hinges, the door obviously hasn’t been opened in at least 5 years. A closed speak-easy panel opens at eye level in the door’s upper half. The room beyond contains thousands of dust-covered tomes that litter the floor in carefully balanced piles. Along the walls are bookshelves holding volumes detailing the planes of existence, pantheons and philosophy. A dusty cloth draped over a stone table covers several loose papers. The papers describe known more planes of existence

and the dangers of astral travel.

A female half-elf lies on a large silk-shrouded bier in the center of the room. A transparent veil covers her body, the sheer fabric draping to the floor. The woman appears to be sleeping. Actually, **Thanta** lies in a state of suspended animation caused by an *astral spell* she cast from a scroll nearly five years ago. She has not moved since that time, and the rest of the Brood of Hecate leave her alone in the hope that she might someday find her way back to them.

But Thanta didn't leave herself unprotected. Her body is under the protection of a **stone golem** that stays near her at all times. The golem is designed to fold into a cube when inactive. Currently, it serves as the cloth-covered table under the books. Thanta returns to her body in 1d4 hours after she is disturbed or the golem activates.

THANTA OF THE NETHER WORLDS (NEUTRAL HALF-ELF FEMALE MAGIC-USER 8): HD 8; hp 45; AC 8[11]; Atk staff (1d6); Move 9; Save 8; CL/XP 9/1,100; Special: Spells (4332 1—*light, hold portal, magic missile, shield*; 2—*invisibility, levitate, wizard lock*; 3—*fly, protection from evil 10 ft. radius, water breathing*; 4—*dimension door, confusion, wizard eye*)
Combat gear: staff **Non-combat gear:** carpet of flying (5 ft. x 5 ft.) under her body on the dais, ring of protection +1, medallion of ESP, amulet against scrying

Personality: Although not evil, Thanta worships the lesser evil facet of knowledge within Hecate's teachings. Thanta is a rational and diplomatic member of the Brood, which often puts her at odds with the others. She is delicate and frail. Her skin is pasty white from years spent indoors, and her hair is incredibly long and woven into an elaborate bun. Thanta seeks nonviolence and prefers subtle means to settle arguments among the Brood.

STONE GOLEM: HD 15; hp 80; AC 5[14]; Atk 1 fist (3d8); Move 6; Save 3; CL/XP 16/3200; Special: +1 or better magic weapon to hit, immune to most magic.

Cursed Magic Item: Vacuous Grimoire

A vacuous grimoire is a cursed magical item that appears to be normal volume on a mildly interesting topic. Anyone who opens and reads even a single word of the book must make two saving throws. The first save is to see if the reader loses 1 point of Intelligence and 1 point of Charisma permanently. The second save is to see if the reader loses 2 points of Wisdom permanently. A vacuous grimoire can only be destroyed by burning while simultaneously casting a *remove curse* on it. If placed with other books, the book instantly alters its appearance to resemble those around it.

Area B23: Librus Abmalorum

Shelves of identical black tomes fill this 25-foot-high room. Lanterns hanging at the end of each aisle cast a dim violet illumination. Attached to each shelf are wrought-iron ladders on rollers. None of the thousands of books has any discernable markings or titles; each book appears identical to those beside it.

All the books radiate identical magic. Each volume is also enchanted on the spine and cover so that speaking the phrase "Hecate Inamabilis" reveals the title, written as if with purple flames. Anyone not speaking the proper command phrase before picking up a book invokes the room's ward: an intelligent *vacuous grimoire* created specifically to protect the library.

The cursed book is enchanted to immediately and subtly switch

places with any book in the library. If PCs pick up a book, the cursed volume immediately switches places with the tome being held. A successful saving throw reveals that something is amiss with the chosen book. If multiple books are picked up at once, the *vacuous grimoire* switches places randomly with one of the volumes, but the PC doesn't get a save to notice the new addition.

The *vacuous grimoire* acts with an uncanny intelligence and can switch places with *any* book currently in the library — including those carried into the room by PCs, although it usually only does this as a defense measure. If threatened with destruction or a *remove curse*, the book immediately switches places — possibly with a PC's spellbook or other magical book — so that the grimoire remains safe. The book's powers do not extend beyond the library and its connected reading room (Area B24). It vanishes and returns to one of the shelves if taken through any door leading out of the library or down the stairs.

The normal books within the room cover topics on divine and arcane magic. If the books are removed safely, the total value of the library is 25,000 gp, assuming a buyer can be found. Given the library's predominantly evil nature and the often horrible subject matter, the books are extremely difficult to sell.

Scattered among the normal books are a *manual of beneficial exercise*; a book with three scrolls flattened between its pages (an arcane scroll containing *astral spell, power word blind, shape change*, an arcane scroll with *delayed blast fireball* and *limited wish*, and a divine scroll with *commune, finger of death* and *blade barrier*); a *manual of intelligence*; and a *manual of quickness*. Finding these books requires days of searching unless the titles can be read.

Two **aerial servants** watch over the room. They do not attack unless the books are harmed or removed, or if they must defend themselves. The servants remain in the darkness of the ceiling until called upon for assistance.

AERIAL SERVANT (2): HD 16; hp AC 3[16]; Atk 1 slam (4d4); Move (Fly 36); Save 3; CL/XP 16/3,200; Special: none.

Area B24: Reading Nook

This extension off the main library (Area B23) contains more shelves of books. Stacks of books sit on a low stone table before the shelves. The books are identical and have the same qualities as those in the main library chamber. The *vacuous grimoire* (Area B23) can also switch places with the books in this reading room.

The books on the table cover topics relating to suffering and the corruption of good outsiders. The details in these books appear to be written by denizens of the pits of hell for use by mortals.

A secret passage (1 in 6) leads to an escape tunnel (Area B24).

Area B25: Teleportation Circle

Behind this locked obsidian door is a barren room with a permanent teleportation circle marked in gold dust and bone ash. The circle is a conduit to many destinations deemed important to the Brood of Hecate.

Anyone not wearing an unholy symbol of Hecate who attempts to use the teleportation circle is immediately teleported above a lake of magma in a confined chamber 40 miles below the surface. The magma chamber lacks oxygen, and PCs not immediately falling into the magma suffer 6d6 points of fire damage each round from the intense heat. PCs falling into the molten rock suffer 20d6 points of fire damage per round while submerged.

The library contains information on a handful of locations linked by the teleportation circle. Unholy places sacred to the Brood could include **Akabeth's Tomb** (see *Rappan Athuk 3, The Lower Levels* by *Necromancer Games*), an abandoned shrine near the Nether Sepulcher in Al-Sifon (*Splinters of Faith 10: Remorse of Life*) and a small shrine in **Bargarsport** (see *Splinters of Faith 3: Culvert Operations*). Game Referees should add any locales from their game as appropriate.

Area B26: Chambers of Dealyn Rhó

Dealyn Rhó, the high priestess of Hecate, claims these rooms as her own. A bronze inlay of the symbol of abjuration decorates the chamber's obsidian door. The door is trapped with a *symbol of discord*.

Dealyn Rhó holds private audiences here with temple visitors. The room is fit for a queen, with expensive tapestries, rugs and furniture. Three gold, woven tapestries (350 gp each) depict images of Hecate and Abhor Brazier. An area rug made from the pelt of an androsphinx brings 2,500 gp if sold to a non-Lawful buyer. An ornate single-pedestal table holds a wine bottle and four goblets. Four padded chairs sit around the oval table. One door leads to Dealyn Rhó's bedchamber, while the other leads to a storage room containing a wine rack, dining utensils, candelabras, candles, priestess robes and other personal effects. A secret passage (1 in 8) leads to an escape tunnel to Area B24.

Lyncinius, Dealyn Rhó's **imp familiar**, normally can be found in this room keeping a watchful eye over his master. He often takes the form of a black cat with white feathered wings. Lyncinius never travels anywhere without the company and protection of **Kan Bor**, a monstrous **hell hound** assigned to the high priestess of Hecate.

LYNCINIUS (IMP): HD 2; hp 14; AC 2[17]; Atk 1 sting (1d4 + poison); Move 6 (Fly 16); Save 16; CL/XP 6/400; Special: Poison tail, polymorph, regenerate, immune to fire. A *word of recall* is cast when Lyncinius drops below 20 hp, teleporting him to Area B38.

KAN BOR (HELL HOUND): HD 9; AC 3[16]; Atk 1 bite (1d8); Move 12; Save 6; CL/XP 10/1,400; Special: Breathe fire (14hp).

Area B27: Bedchambers of Dealyn Rhó

The door to **Dealyn Rhó's** bedchamber is trapped to alert her when anyone enters the room. The luxurious chamber is decked out in lavish and ornate furniture, including a massive darkwood four-

poster bed against the far wall that is draped with black silks and furs. A bronze incense burner hangs above an oak table. A thin veil of fragrant smoke clouds the air.

Several open books lie on the desk, along with six vials, quill pens, a bronze candelabra, and a small stone devil-like statue. Dealyn Rhó is currently writing a book on horrific torture techniques that can be used to extract information. Two of the vials are *undead control* and *invulnerability*, while the others are various rare and exotic inks (150 gp each). Despite the statue's evil appearance, it is nothing more than a trinket picked up during Dealyn Rhó's travels.

A black wooden wardrobe sits beside the door and contains robes, evening gowns and other mundane garments. All of the clothing is of the highest quality. The garments have embroidered motifs of Hecate and other dark arcane symbols. Dozens of shoes and boots line the floor of the wardrobe.

A secret room lies behind the bed. The bed is attached to the obsidian door so that the entire bed moves to the side when the door is opened. The door's exterior is smooth, making it difficult to open from the outside. Dealyn Rhó's spellbooks are located on a shelf along the far wall. The books are each trapped with a *symbol of insanity* inscribed within the pages. The books contain all Dealyn Rhó's spells plus an additional 1d4 spells per level. A **clay golem** protects Dealyn Rhó's spellbooks, and responds immediately if summoned.

CLAY GOLEM: HD 12; hp 50; AC 7[12]; Atk 1 fist (3d10); Move 8; Save 5; CL/XP; 14/2700; Special: Immune to slashing and piercing weapons, Immune to most spells.

DEALYN RHÓ (CHAOTIC FEMALE HUMAN CLERIC 12): HD 9+6; hp 57; AC 1[18]; Atk +3 heavy mace (1d6+12) or staff of striking (2d6+8); Move 9; Save 5; CL/XP; 14/2,600; Special: Spells (1—*cure light wounds*, *detect magic*, *light*, *purify food and drink*; 2—*find traps*, *hold person*, *silence 15 ft. radius*, *snake charm*; 3—*continual light*, *locate object*, *prayer*, *remove curse*; 4—*create water*, *cure serious wounds*, *neutralize poison*, *sticks to snakes*; 5—*finger of death*, *insect plague*, *quest*, *raise dead*; 6—*word of recall*). A *word of recall* is cast when Dealyn Rhó drops below 20 hp. She reappears in Area B38.

Combat gear: Ceallachan's +3 heavy mace, staff of striking;
Non-combat gear: bracers of defense AC 4[15], girdle of giant strength, ring of protection +3.



Personality: Dealyn Rhó is the embodiment of Hecate. Her dedication to the Brood and Hecate is unmatched. Despite her single-minded fervor, she approaches encounters with astute thought and calculating strategy. Her true age is difficult to discern, but she appears middle-aged. She has glossy black hair with streaks of gray that cascade over her stout frame.

Abhor Brazier, Dungeons

Hecate's most horrible minions live in these dungeons, where they torture a handful of captives. The halls are made of cut stone, and the underground is musty and lit by pitch torches. The halls are less tidy than the rest of the temple, befitting some of the inhabitants' tastes.

Area B28: Dungeon Stairs

Two sets of stairs meet at a landing before descending deeper into Abhor Brazier's dungeons. A trap in the center of the landing detonates if anyone not wearing an unholy symbol of Hecate crosses over it. The piercing shriek deals 2d6 points of damage (save for half) and alerts everyone on the dungeon level to intruders. The glyph is a final deterrent for escaping prisoners, although it serves equally well against intruders.

Area B29: Prison Pits

This barrel-vaulted room contains six pits covered by iron grates. From one of the pits comes the sound of crying and sobbing. Three barred iron cell doors with open speak-easy style windows sit along the back wall. Two cauldrons of burning coals at each end of the room light the chamber with a hellish glow. Long iron rods and spears protrude from the burning coals. Sitting between the cauldrons is a low stone slab table with manacles dangling off it. Racks of chains, whips, pokers, branding irons, knives and ropes line the walls.

The iron grates do not open, but do allow a full view of the cells below and their occupants (Area B41).

The center cell set into the chamber wall conceals a **bone devil** that tends to the prisoners and their daily torture. The bone devil was gated in to assist the Brood, a task it takes great pride and pleasure in performing. The bone devil routinely jabs the prisoners in the pits with the spears and hot pokers heating in the cauldrons. Prisoners are also brought to this room to be tortured so the other prisoners trapped

below can hear their screams and cries for mercy.

The bone devil tries to separate the party by casting *walls of ice* as PCs enter the room. It then uses *teleport* to engage separated individuals, preferring arcane spellcasters above more formidable combatants. It summons **14 lemures** into the empty adjacent cell when alerted to intruders. The lemures serve as cannon fodder as the bone devil attacks.

LEMURE DEMON: HD 3; hp 21; AC 7[12]; Atk 1 claw (1d3); Move 3; Save 14; CL/XP 4/120; Special: Regenerate (1hp/round).

OSYLUTH (BONE DEVIL): HD 10; hp 71; AC 5[14]; Atk 1 bite (1d8), 2 claws (1d6) and tail stinger (3d4 plus poison); Move 9, fly 12; Save 5; CL/XP 13/2,300; Special: magic resistance 20%, immune to fire and poison, resists cold and acid, poison, spell-like abilities: constant—fly, at will—teleport, invisibility, mirror image, wall of ice

Area B29-A: Lianhi's Cell

A puddle of water pools at the base of this rusty iron door. The bone devil often places a wall of ice against the door to make the cell bone-chillingly cold. **Lianhi** sobs in the chamber. She is a recent captive brought to Abhor Brazier for unspeakable reasons. She is a dedicated follower of Iseleine and was caught while traveling to the Hanging Gardens (see *Splinters of Faith 4: For Love of Chaos*).

The mage has been beaten severely by the Brood, and is tortured daily by the osyluth. Through it all, Lianhi has managed to stay calm and not lose hope. Lianhi, a devout follower of Thasizier, has prayed to her god for aid through it all. Her terror and dreams are the visions that Ayire Jaysa is now experiencing, but visions of the prisoner Ceallachan (Area B41-D) often creep into these shared dreams. Lianhi has seen the deva many times when he is brought to the bone devil's torture chamber for "fun." The tortures Lhiani endures daily have imprinted themselves on her psyche.

Lianhi requires rest and access to a spellbook. The Referee should determine her spells if PCs grant her such access. If freed, she aids in rescuing the prisoners and in defeating the Brood of Hecate. As a follower of Iseleine, she cannot memorize potentially lethal or damaging spells, but she will do what she can to bring down the temple so no one else goes through what she has suffered.

New Monster: Demon, Osyluth (Bone Devil)

Armor Class: 5 [14]

Hit Dice: 10

Attacks: 1 bite (1d8), 2 claws (1d6) and tail stinger (3d4 plus poison)

Saving Throw: 5

Special: magic resistance 20%, immune to fire and poison, resists cold and acid, poison; spell-like abilities: constant—fly, at will—teleport, invisibility, mirror image, wall of ice

Move: 9, fly 12

Alignment: Chaos

Challenge Level/XP: 13/2,300

Osyluths are the interrogators of the lowest planes, enforcing order for the worst of demonkind. The insect-like Osyluths – also known as bone devils – stand 9 feet tall, and have a fearsome stinger and all-but-useless wings. They are cruel and malicious.

The Coven of Hecate

Although not particularly welcome in Abhor Brazier, hags play a substantial role among Hecate's followers. Tired of the worship of their goddess being controlled by humans, the hags of the land insisted on their own representation within the ancient temple to their dark mother. A hag from each of the three common types was chosen to the prestigious viceroy position to represent the entirety of the hags.

The three hags currently serving the positions within Abhor Brazier are nasty combatants in their own right, but together, they are even more deadly. The three hags currently serving within Abhor Brazier are **Quavalave**, a seahag; **Makabyr the Atrocious**, an annis; and **Juká Blausk**, a green hag.

Area B30: The Coven of Hecate

The room is filthy and uncomfortably hot. A large boulder in the center of the room emits a blazing flame. If touched, the boulder deals 1d6 points of fire damage. The rock produces no smoke, despite the stone glowing an intense red. An impaled steer slowly roasts upon a

spit above the burning rock.

Oversized weapons decorate the walls, none usable by a human-sized PC. Items include 4 bastard swords, 2 steel shields, 2 flails, 8 helms, and 4 suits of plate armor. Each bastard sword has a hag's eye stone set in the pommel. The magical stones are used to scry on the guardroom. The gemstones appear as ornaments. Two sleeping mats of grungy fur and patchwork quilts lie on the floor near the rock, and two hardened leather bags sit near the mats. Each bag holds two crude but weighty gold necklaces (1,500 gp each), five thick gold rings (250 gp each), 20 gold nuggets (100 gp each), large hunks of dried meat and whetstones.

Assigned to guard the coven are **2 female fire giants**. The giants are fat and past their prime, but still take their position seriously. A *phantasmal force* spell cloaks the giants so that they appear to be ogres. The burning stone is the only concession made by the hags to make the chamber more hospitable to the giants. The giants are not above grabbing the rock and slinging it about the room to hit PCs.

Each giantess wields a huge *+1 flaming bastard sword* and wears full plate armor (AC 3[16]).

FIRE GIANTS (2): HD 11+3; hp 85; AC 3[16]; Atk *+1 flaming bastard sword* (5d6+1 plus 1d6 fire); Move 12; Save 4; CL/XP 12/2000; Special: Hurl boulders, immune to fire.

Area B31: Quavalave the Seahag

The stench of rotting fish wafts down the hallway leading to this room. The rusted iron door is deeply pitted and covered with a greenish slime that thrives in the room's humidity. Inside the room, brackish water thick with black algae fills a two-foot-deep sunken floor.

Quavalave, a seahag priestess of Hecate, decorates her chamber with sharp coral, fish husks, octopi skins and other castoffs from the sea to make it more "like home." Hundreds of animated skeletal fish hang from barbed chains hooked into the ceiling. The harmless fish flail about in a bizarre rhythmic dance of clacking bones.

A soggy bed of rotting seaweed lies in the corner. The seahag's treasure is buried within the rotting mound. The treasure consists of a partially eaten recent victim still wearing green-colored *+1 chain mail*, a *+1 bastard sword*, *+2 vs. giants*, and a large steel shield.

QUAVALAVE (SEA HAG): HD 9; AC 4[15]; Atk 1 bite (1d4); Move 6 (Swim 18); Save 6; CL/XP 11/1,700; Special: Death gaze, weakness gaze, casts spells as an 8th-level cleric (1—*detect magic, light*; 2—*hold person, silence 15 ft. radius*; 3—*cure disease, speak with dead*; 4—*create water, sticks to snakes*; 5—*finger of death, insect plague*)
Combat possessions: *boots of speed, bracers of defense AC 4[15]*.

Area B32: Makabyr the Atrocious

This iron door is bound in leather with the full skin of a man stretched over the portal. This skin is a **zombie**, but it is held helpless by heavy leather strips stitching it tightly to the door. The zombie's skin writhes and twists in vain to free itself from the door. The door is disturbing, but harmless. PCs gain no experience for killing the unfortunate creature.

While the door is gruesome, the room beyond is far more unsettling. Macabre humanoid bone sculptures and wind chimes crowd the room. Humanoid leather skins cover the floor like a spongy carpet. Wall hangings made of blood-painted humanoid hides decorate every inch of the chamber. A stack of mangy furs and scalps resembles a bed. Hundreds of strands of beads fashioned from dried eyeballs hang from the ceiling.

A bone cage hangs 10 feet above the floor from an iron chain. Within the cage is a plump, squatting **satyr**. For depraved and unfathomable reasons, a *polymorph object* spell has turned a giant frog into a satyr. The satyr leaps everywhere and tries to bite or flick its tongue at

nearby creatures. The frog-satyr has learned that humanoids feed it, so it follows any humanoid that sets it free, although it takes no other actions. It quickly dives into any body of water encountered and possibly drowns as it attempts to breathe.

This room is the lair of **Makabyr the Atrocious**, a foul **annis** and the undisputed leader of the coven of Hecate.

Standing around the edges of the room are **seven zombies**. The zombies do not attack unless commanded by the annis. Makabyr uses *disguise self* to appear as another zombie (for a total of eight creatures in the room) and attempts to position herself so she can flank and attack with her vicious touch.

Zombies (7): HD 2; hp 13; AC 8[11] or with shield 7[12]; Atk 1 weapon or strike (1d8); Move 6; Save 16; CL/XP 2/30; Special: Immune to sleep and charm.

MAKABYR THE ATROCIOUS (ANNIS): HD 10; hp 77; AC 1[18]; Atk 2 claws (2d8), 1 bite (1d8); Move 12; Save 5; CL/XP 12/2,000; Special: Hug and rend, polymorph, call mists, casts spells as a 12th-level cleric (1—*cure light wounds, detect magic* (x2), *light*; 2—*find traps, hold person* (x2), *snake charm*; 3—*continual light, locate object, remove curse, speak with dead*; 4—*cure serious wounds* (x2), *speak with plants, sticks to snakes*; 5—*finger of death* (x2), *insect plague, raise dead*; 6—*blade barrier*)
Non-combat gear: *Bracers of defense AC 2[17], ring of spell storing* (cleric) containing *animate object, find the path, speak with monsters*.

SATYR (FROG): HD 5; hp 14; AC 5[14]; Atk bite (1d4); Move 12; Save 12; CL/XP 6/400; Special: N one

New Monster: Green Hag

Armor Class: 5 [14]

Hit Dice: 9

Attacks: 2 claws (1d8)

Saving Throw: 6

Special: Mimicry, spell-like abilities (constant—*walk through flora, polymorph self*; at will—*invisibility, pyrotechnics*)

Move: 12, swim 12

Alignment: Chaos

Challenge Level/XP: 11/1,700

Green hags haunt swamps and tangled forests, each twisted crone harboring an intense hatred of beauty and purity. Green hags delight in assuming alluring forms to twist the desires of normal men. They can imitate the sounds of almost any animal found near their lair, and speak and understand any language.

Area B33: Juká Blausk, the Green Hag

Shelves crowded with trinkets, charms, bottles, spell components and bizarre keepsakes line the walls. Books on remedies, alchemy and anatomy lie scattered among various skull bookends. Cages of small animals such as doves, bats, lizards and insects hang from small silver chains set into the stucco ceiling. Dozens of bottles, hollow needles, glass tubes, copper coils and oil burners clutter a table. A hammock-like net in one corner serves as a bed.

The **green hag Juká Blausk** lives here. She remains invisible when not engaged in combat. The hag watches foes first to discover their weaknesses before engaging in combat.

On the shelves are potions of *invisibility*, *extra healing*, *giant*

strength and poison, and three vials of acid. The table also holds a cleric scroll containing *find traps*, *speak with dead* and *commune*.

JUKÁ BLAUSK (GREEN HAG): HD 9; hp 49; AC 3[16]; Atk 2 claws (1d8+6); Move 12; Save 6; CL/XP 12/2,000; Special: mimicry, spell-like abilities, casts spells as a 6th-level cleric (1—*cure light wounds*, *light*; 2—*hold person*, *snake charm*; 3—*locate object*; 4—*cure serious wounds*)

Combat gear: +2 chainmail armor, gauntlets of ogre power, potion of gaseous form.

Area B34: Summoning Chamber

An intricate octagonal star design cast with a metallic purple sheen adorns the floor of an alcove joining the corner of the chamber. The eight-pointed star pattern fills a rune-inscribed circle drawn in the round alcove. Lying on the floor within the circle is a **barbed devil**, a glowing longsword imbedded in its chest. Holy symbols of Arden adorn the sword's pommel.

The pattern is a summoning circle trapping **Olchobhor**, a powerful barbed devil summoned by Chariska the Conjuror (Area B36) to further her stature within the Brood. The barbed devil is powerless while trapped within the circle.

To further its release, the cunning devil cast *phantasmal force* over the circle's interior, creating the image of the longsword impaling it. When PCs enter the room, Olchobhor plays dead and concentrates on making the illusionary sword "speak."

Olchobhor (as the sword) attempts to persuade PCs into retrieving the blade to use in slaying the evil outsiders residing in the adjoining rooms. Olchobhor tries to convince PCs that the sword is a holy longsword named "The Exonerator." Once the summoning seal is crossed, the protective ward trapping Olchobhor is broken and the barbed devil is free to wreak havoc.

DEMON, HAMATULA (BARBED DEVIL): HD 12; hp 87; AC 3[16]; Atk 2 claws (1d8); Move 12; Save 3; CL/XP 14/2,600; Special: barbs; fear; magic resistance 40%; immune to fire and poison; resist cold and acid; spell-like abilities: at will—*teleport*, *hold person*, *phantasmal force*, *pyrotechnics*

New Monster: Demon, Hamatula (Barbed Devil)

Armor Class: 3 [16]

Hit Dice: 12

Attacks: 2 claws (1d8)

Saving Throw: 3

Special: barbs; fear; magic resistance 40%; immune to fire and poison; resist cold and acid; spell-like abilities.

Move: 12

Alignment: Chaos

Challenge Level/XP: 14/2,600

Hamatulas – known more commonly as barbed devils – are covered in barbs from the tips of their long, lashing tail to their fang-filled mouth. Anyone striking a barbed devil with a melee weapon, unarmed or with a natural weapon takes 1d8 points of damage from the barbs covering the creature's body. If a barbed devil hits a single opponent with 2 claws, it grabs the victim and inflicts 2d8 points of damage automatically as it impales the creature on its barbs. Any creature struck by a barbed devil's claws must make a successful save or flee in horror. There is a 60% chance they drop whatever they are holding. At will, a barbed devil can cast *teleport*, *hold person*, *phantasmal force* and *pyrotechnics*.

Area B35: Chariska's Antechamber

Luxurious tapestries embroidered with bronze symbols of Hecate and the transmutation magic discipline adorn the walls. A woven rug with a symbol of an eight-pointed star surrounded by a glyphic band sits on the floor. A single throne-like chair sits against the far wall, and a podium beside it has an open book on it.

The book contains the true names of various evil outsiders. While the book is nonmagical, anyone so much as speaking one of the names aloud has a 5% cumulative chance of attracting the attention of an evil outsider. These devils go to great lengths to obtain this book, which is useful only if summoning and bartering with an evil outsider named in the tome. Using the book is a dangerous and evil act, and always results in terrible consequences.

Area B36: Chariska's Private Chamber

This chamber is enchanted to prevent extraplanar travel such as *passwall* and *dimension door*. A modified *monster summoning VII* spell on the locked door summons a **bone devil** into the chamber when the portal is touched. This immediately alerts **Chariska, the Mystic Theurgist of Hecate**, to intruders in her private sanctum. Chariska casts *monster summoning IV* to protect herself while **Plud**, her dretch familiar, summons 1d4 giant rats to aid his mistress. Slightly paranoid, Chariska always expects attacks, although none within the Brood of Hecate would dare challenge her.

The bedchamber is furnished with white wood furniture. A bed sits on a raised dais opposite the entrance. Thick woven rugs completely cover the floor. Four detailed paintings hang from each wall. These works of "art" portray scenes from nightmarish planes, complete with portraits of their fiendish rulers. Each painting is valued at 1,000 gp if the right buyer can be found. A massive desk with stacked books and rolled scrolls sits to the right of the entry. Seven of the scrolls on the desk are *monster summoning I-VII*. The other papers describe detailed and specific magic circles for trapping and holding summoned outsiders.

Behind one painting lies a locked secret panel that is trapped with a *fear* spell. Within the small compartment are three sheets of leathery parchment. These papers are contracts with evil outsiders that Chariska forced into her service. The fiends are currently elsewhere carrying out specific tasks for the Brood. Destroying these forms releases the fiends, but allows them to roam freely to fulfill their desires. The Referee is encouraged to flesh out these fiends and what horrible endeavors they may pursue if set free. Each might even want to personally "thank" the PCs for freeing him.

OSYLUTH DEMON (BONE DEVIL): HD 10; hp 71; AC 5[14]; Atk 1 bite (1d8), 2 claws (1d6) and tail stinger (3d4 plus poison); Move 9, fly 12; Save 5; CL/XP 13/2,300; Special: magic resistance 20%, immune to fire and poison, resists cold and acid, poison, spell-like abilities: constant—*fly*, at will—*teleport*, *invisibility*, *mirror image*, *wall of ice*

PLUD (DRETCH DEMON): HD 4; 27 hp; AC 2[17]; Atk 2 claws (1d4), 1 bite (1d6); Move 9; Save 13; CL/XP 6/400; Special: **Magical abilities.**

Description: Plud lives in constant fear from the abuse Chariska doles out on the poor familiar. He never leaves her side, however, fearing the powerful devils and hags roaming Abhor Brazier who would delight in inflicting worse punishments.

CHARISKA, THE MYSTIC THEURGIST OF HECATE (CHAOTIC HUMAN FEMALE MAGIC-USER 12): HD 9+3; hp 55; AC 2[17]; Atk *flaming staff* +3 (1d6+3 plus 1d6 fire damage); Move 9; Save 5; CL/XP 14/2,600; Special: Spells (1—*charm person*, *detect magic*, *hold portal*, *magic missile*; 2—*dark-*

ness 15 ft. radius, knock, mirror image, web; 3—dispel magic, fireball, hold person, slow; 4—confusion, fear, monster summoning II, wizard eye; 5—feeblemind, hold monster, telekinesis, wall of stone; 6—monster summoning IV)

Combat gear: flaming staff +3, bracers of defense AC 4[15], ring of protection +2; **Non-combat gear:** medallion of ESP, robe of eyes.

Personality: Chariska is a thoroughly unpleasant woman. Her underhanded and corrupt personality matches her unpleasant appearance. Except for Dealyn Rhó, Chariska distrusts and despises the rest of the Brood, remaining separate from the haughty and snobbish members. Chariska's figure is lumpy and twisted with age, and her skin resembles a banana left in the sun too long.

Area B37: The Cold Room

This room is inexplicably cold, although the bitter chill has no ill effects other than to cause PCs to shiver slightly. A frosted ornate bronze urn filled with clear icy water sits in the room. The sounds of splashing water (from Area B38) can be heard from behind the east wall.

Two rounds after a Lawful PC enters this room, the Brood of Hecate's mistress of Necromancy (Area B39) takes notice and investigates.

Area B38: The Crypt Abode of Aliak Tal Ashon

These sealed chambers serve as Abhor Brazier's crypts. Rows of burial niches holding ornamental urns line each room from floor to ceiling. The majority of urns contain the ash remains of beloved members of Hecate's Brood.

A fountain in the middle of the room splashes water over a human-sized statue of Hecate depicting her in the days before her decline into dark magic. The water trickles from a golden chalice the statue holds above its hand. The water flows down the statue's arm and over its body in a fine sheen of water. The liquid drips into a small basin at her feet. The water never stops and its source cannot be discovered.

Aliak Tal Ashon (Area B39) frequently wanders into this chamber to revere Hecate.

Area B39: Sanctuary of the Darkened Soul

A huge statue of Hecate stands against the rounded wall of this niche-filled chamber. Hundreds of urns line the niches, each inscribed with a name and phrase describing the person within. The statue's arms are raised over an altar of dull black stone. Lying upon the altar are the dusty skeletal remains of **Aliak Tal Ashon**, a ghost cleric of Hecate. Her form still wears the deteriorating priestess robes she was buried in. A ceremonial +4 silver dagger is embedded in her ribs.

Aliak Tal Ashon has haunted the dungeon of Abhor Brazier for nearly 300 years. She is the Brood's undisputed master of Necromancy. While not the most powerful member of the Necromantic arts, she nevertheless slew all challengers to her position.

Aliak Tal Ashon flies into a rage if anyone penetrates the tomb. Unlike most ghosts, she desires to remain on this plane and retain her position within the Brood. She has an agreement with Dealyn Rhó to not harm the high priestess if she or her familiar are forced to retreat to this chamber via their contingency spells.

To lay her soul to rest, her body must be properly burned and her remains interred. PCs could accomplish this by placing her ashes in an urn and placing the urn in an empty niche within the crypt.

ALIAK TAL ASHON (CHAOTIC FEMALE GHOST CLERIC 12): HD 9+6; hp 57; AC 0[19]; Atk +2 *ghostly heavy mace*

(1d6+2); Move fly 18; Save 5; CL/XP 15/2,900; Special: Incorporeal, corrupting touch, spells (1—detect good, detect magic, light, protection from good; 2—hold person (x3), silence 15 ft. radius; 3—continual light, locate object, remove curse, speak with dead; 4—cure serious wounds, protection from good 10 ft. radius (x2), speak with plants; 5—dispel good, finger of death (x3); 6—blade barrier)

Combat gear: +2 *ghostly heavy mace*, +1 *ghostly plate mail*, +2 *ghostly heavy steel shield*.

Corrupting touch: A ghost's touch does 2d6 points of damage that manifests as physical wounds on its victims.

Personality: Aliak Tal Ashon was a promising young Brood member. Her stance and beauty guaranteed her a quick rise in power. Jealous and fearful of her potential, the other members of the Brood sacrificed Aliak and left her body unburied in one of the many hidden crypt rooms below Abhor Brazier. The chamber was sealed to further the humiliation. Aliak returned a week later to slay the Brood member who drove the dagger into her body. The remaining members of the Brood bargained with the ghost, granting her the position of power within the temple's ranks.

Aliak possesses an unearthly beauty, which turns to ghostly rage when she is angered.

New Magic: Ghost Weapons and Armor

Ghosts cannot wield corporeal weapons or armor. However, ghostly versions of many weapons, armor and shields can be worn or wielded normally by ghosts and normal beings alike. Other than being slightly intangible and translucent, these weapons and armor act just like their normal counterparts, but are half the normal weight. Most ghost weapons are created spontaneously after their wielder dies in battle, but some say powerful magic can duplicate the effect. Some examples include:

Ghostly Weapon	Damage	Weight
Dagger	1d4	1
Hammer, war	1d4+1	3
Bastard sword	1d8	5

Ghostly Armor	Effect on AC	Weight
Leather	-2[+2]	13
Plate	-6[+6]	35
Shield	-1[+1]	5

Area B40: The Room of Fire

A *permanent wall of fire* horizontally covers the pit entrance to this room, the flames dealing 1d6 points of damage (no save) to anyone passing through them. The walls, floor and ceiling are also covered by *permanent wall of fire* spells. PCs entering the pit automatically suffer 5d6 points of damage per round (no save). The intense heat can be felt on the walls in the halls near Area B34 and B35. The 20-foot-deep pit contains various deep gouges in the walls that the iron golem hydra at the bottom of the pit uses to climb to reach Area B2. The massive golem fills the pit. It is so large that it can anchor itself using the gouges to attack normally while most of its bulk remains hidden.

At the bottom of the pit (beneath the hydra golem) is a three-foot-thick stone lid that hides a few prized possessions of the Brood. The lid weighs 3,200 pounds. The iron golem moves the lid for the Brood.

The cache holds an adamantite bastard sword, a +1 *dwarven war hammer that returns to hand*, an *amulet against scrying* and a *horn of blasting*, an illumined tome about controlling dragons, 6 diamonds (500 gp each) and 2,000 gp.

Area B4I: The Prison

The corridor takes a turn and descends a steep flight of stairs to a 50-foot-long hall. Three iron doors line each wall. Small iron-grated windows allow a view into the cells. Each cell is locked from the hallway and cannot be opened from the interior once closed. The doors are warded with a trap on both sides (1 in 6 chance to spot) that inflicts 2d6+2 points of damage to anyone touching the portal. The wards automatically reset one round after being discharged.

Area B4I-A: Cell

This cell holds **Thurid Hrolf**, an infamous assassin from Bargarsport who was hired by Devarsi to slay Dealyn Rhó. He failed, and Dealyn has not yet had the chance to interrogate him.

Thurid still maintains his disguise of a female priestess of Hecate. He has thus far been unable to escape. If confronted, he claims to be a lesser priestess who had a change of heart. “She” was imprisoned here for her kindness to other prisoners. Thurid flirts with susceptible male PCs to gain his release.

THURID HROLF (CHAOTIC HUMAN MALE ASSASSIN 9): HD 7; hp 38; AC 6[13]; Atk +1 long sword of extra attack (1d8+1); Move 12; Save 5; CL/XP 9/1,100; **Special:** None
Combat gear: +1 leather armor under priestess robes, +1 long sword of extra attack, **Non-combat gear:** potions of invisibility and extra healing.

Area B4I-B: Cell

This cell holds 4 human male commoners from a nearby mountain village. They have little to offer PCs other than a feast in their honor upon their safe return home.

Area B4I-C: Cell

This cell is currently contains Thurid Hrolf’s weapons and potions (see Cell A). The Brood tossed the weapons into this empty cell for safekeeping when they captured Thurid and brought him to the dungeons to await Dealyn Rhó. They’ve all but forgotten about the failed assassin and his gear.

Area A4I-D: Cell

This prison cell holds **Ceallachan**, an **astral deva** suffering the worst tortures Abhor Brazier’s inhabitants can inflict upon him. The deva, who is barely alive, was ensnared and brought here months ago to endure torture beyond mortal comprehension. Ceallachan was on a mission to investigate the return of Akruel Rathamon, but was captured by the witches of Abhor Brazier.

In a methodical and calculating attempt to turn Ceallachan into a being of vile corruptness, Dealyn Rhó patiently persecutes the angel to the limits of his immortal soul. He is chained to the floor by shackles bolted to the floor through an adamantine ring. The ring must be broken to free the shackles.

Ceallachan has lost all spell-like abilities but still barely retains his Lawful alignment after the evil that the Brood has inflicted on his body and soul. He knows he can never return to his former glory and that his only future freedom is death’s release. Ceallachan pleads to any rescuers to end his tortured life and free him of the evil taint he now harbors. He knows that only an act of self-sacrifice in the cause of good or the intervention of a deity can save him from eternal damnation. Ceallachan is more than willing to sacrifice his life energy to empower the *Scepter of Faiths*. He sees it as the last noble act even his corrupted soul can perform.

CEALLACHAN (NEUTRAL MALE ASTRAL DEVA): HD 14; hp 25 (current); AC 2[17]; Atk slam (2d8); Move 15, Fly 18; Save 3; CL/XP 16/3,00; **Special:** magic resistance 25%; immune to acid, cold and petrification; resists electricity and fire; **spell-like abilities:** at will—*continual light, detect evil, dispel evil, dispel magic, invisibility, remove curse, remove disease*; 7/day—*cure light wounds*; 1/day—*blade barrier*

New Monster: Astral Deva

Armor Class: 2 [17]

Hit Dice: 14

Attacks: +2 warhammer that destroys undead (1d8+2) or 1 slam (2d8)

Saving Throw: 3

Special: magic resistance 25%; immune to acid, cold and petrification; resists electricity and fire; spell-like abilities (at will—*continual light, detect evil, dispel evil, dispel magic, invisibility, remove curse, remove disease*; 7/day—*cure light wounds*; 1/day—*blade barrier*)

Move: 15, Fly 18

Alignment: XX

Challenge Level/XP: 16/3,200

This tall human has long, feathery wings and glows with an inner radiance that makes it difficult to look directly at the being. A sense of serene peace radiates from the creature.

Area B4I-E: Cell

This cell holds **Friedric**, a fattened commoner captured a month ago (Lawful human male). Dealyn Rhó plans to bribe the Coven of Hecate with this tasty morsel.

Area B4I-F: Cell

This cell is empty, although bloodstains cover the walls.

Ending the adventure

The PCs need to successfully find Ceallachan and convince him to sacrifice himself to power the *Scepter of Faiths*. Ceallachan readily welcomes the chance to redeem his darkened soul, and the Seminary holds a massive ceremony to help “purify” the deva before the *Enchantment of Power* rite is performed. This final blessing demonstrates how the good of many can be saved by the sacrifice of one. The martyr spends eight days of prayer, penance and fasting before freely impaling the scepter into its heart. The time Ceallachan has spent in Abhor Brazier’s dungeons more than exceeds the eight days. The ceremony is unnecessary, but it does ease Ceallachan’s mind somewhat that his soul is clean enough for the soon-to-be holy relic.

The blessing requires that at least 12 life levels be freely bestowed into the scepter during this final blessing. The life sacrificed cannot be restored by any means other than divine intervention and must come from a single being that willingly makes the sacrifice. This final blessing demonstrates how the good of many can be saved by the sacrifice of one.

After Ceallachan plunges the scepter into his chest, the Seminary’s dome glows brilliantly, blinding all within the chamber for 1d6 rounds. When everyone’s vision returns, the glowing *Scepter of Faiths* lies on the floor — and a second block of stone encases Ceallachan’s form. The new crystal block stands beside the one

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already housed within the Seminary. Where Ceallachan's face once was dejected and miserable, contentment now is written across his peace-filled face.

Bringing down Abhor Brazier is an admirable goal, but not required to complete the adventure. Any members of the Brood who remain alive after PCs invade the temple do their best to track the invaders and exact vengeance.

Once the ritual is complete, the *Scepter of Faiths* gains a final +1 bonus to attack and damage (a total of +4 bonus enchantment). The scepter also gains a Lawful alignment. The *Scepter of Faiths* becomes intelligent and has free will to use its powers. It immediately requests that its wielder complete its destiny and destroy Akrue Rathamon. The *Scepter of Faiths* immediately begins asserting its will to seek out and destroy the death-priest. The scepter speaks in Ceallachan's voice.

Over the years the scepter held Akrue immobilized, it gained the knowledge that Akrue cannot be slain by normal means. It realizes that something else must be powering Akrue's immortality and desires to travel to Al-Sifon to discover this source. Its overall goal is the destruction of Akrue Rathamon, and it works fervently toward achieving this.



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