

STARFINDER

DAWN OF FLAME

ADVENTURE PATH

THE BLIND CITY

BY RON LUNDEEN





PYRE WOEBRINGER

TIER 8

Huge bulk freighter

Speed 4; **Maneuverability** poor (turn 3); **Drift** 1

AC 20; **TL** 20

HP 200; **DT** 5; **CT** 40

Shields medium 120 (forward 30, port 30, starboard 30, aft 30)

Attack (Forward) gravity gun (6d6)

Attack (Aft) heavy laser cannon (4d8)

Attack (Turret) light plasma torpedo launcher (3d8)

Power Core Nova Heavy (200 PCU); **Drift Engine** Signal Basic; **Systems** basic medium-range sensors, crew quarters (good), mk 4 armor, mk 4 defense, mk 2 mononode computer; **Expansion Bays** cargo holds (4), general science lab, medical bay, recreation suite (gym), sealed environment chamber (2), synthesis bay

Modifiers +2 to any 1 check per round, +2 Computers (sensors only), +2 Piloting; **Complement** 30 (minimum 20, maximum 50)

CREW

Captain (1 officer, 2 crew) Diplomacy +16 (8 ranks), gunnery +10, Intimidate +16 (8 ranks), Piloting +16 (8 ranks)

Engineers (2 officers, 5 crew each) Engineering +16 (8 ranks)

Gunners (2 officers, 2 crew each) gunnery +12

Pilot (1 officer, 2 crew) Piloting +20 (8 ranks)

Science Officers (2 officers, 2 crew each) Computers +16 (8 ranks)

Pyre Fleetworks, an efreeti-run company on the Plane of Fire, manufactures the Woebringer, a large, cumbersome starship that many efreet use to haul slaves. It is slower and less armored than most efreeti ships of its size, but its wide cargo compartments contain rows of thick iron chains and neuroactive docility fields to ensure captives remain quiet and compliant during trips. In addition to standard slave quarters, a Woebringer holds two sealed environment chambers that can be configured for a variety of uses. Sometimes they are filled with water, alien gases, or even vacuum to maintain a minimum survival environment for special slave cargo. Other times, they are emptied of all furnishings and used as isolation chambers for recalcitrant slaves. Rebellions are rare aboard Woebringers, thanks to tales of would-be freedom fighters being thrown into one of the sealed environment chambers and left to suffocate as slowly and painfully as the ships' sadistic officers can arrange. A Woebringer is fitted with a massive gravity gun to grab smaller ships and haul them close enough for efreeti crew members to capture its crew as slaves.

Serving aboard a Woebringer is considered a favored posting, because the ships include reasonably comfortable crew accommodations, exercise facilities, and good opportunities to vent any frustrations on docile slaves. Officers aboard a Woebringer have even better accommodations and are permitted access to an entire wing of the ship containing the most opulent furnishings and delicacies.

Woebringers are rarely deployed for forward action. The same cargo chambers used to haul slaves can ferry soldiers for short journeys, although such quarters aren't comfortable. Most efreeti captains remove the chains and docility fields from the cargo chambers before loading them up with soldiers, although others have found that the presence of the chains serves as a good reminder for the fate the soldiers face if they fail in their tasks.

STARFINDER

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ON THE COVER



Amaldrel Vershian, an unexpected enemy, stands in the heroes' way in this cover by Matias Tapia.



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This book refers to several other Starfinder products using the following abbreviations, yet these additional supplements are not required to make use of this book. Readers interested in references to Starfinder hardcovers can find the complete rules of these books available online for free at sfrd.info.

| | |
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| <i>Alien Archive 2</i> | AA2 |
| <i>Armory</i> | AR |
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DAWN OF FLAME

ADVENTURE PATH

THE BLIND CITY

PART 1: READER'S RESCUE

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Cultists kidnap the expert the PCs need to decipher the writing on the horacalcum tablet they recovered in the previous adventure. The PCs must rescue this odd scholar to learn what the tablet says.

PART 2: A SOLAR OUBLIETTE

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The translated tablet serves as a map and a key to Ezorod, a structure deep in the sun. Once they arrive in Ezorod in the *Sun Diver*, the PCs search for a way to gain access to Ezorod's control center while contending with its ageless guardians.

PART 3: INTO EZOROD'S HEART

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Ezorod's center is a series of geometry-defying chambers called the Illuminant Heart. Within, the PCs can claim Ezorod's technology, but they must confront the master of the god-prison and risk unleashing its prisoner.

ADVANCEMENT TRACK

"The Blind City" is designed for four characters.

7

The PCs begin this adventure at 7th level.

8

The PCs should reach 8th level during their initial exploration of Ezorod.

9

The PCs should be 9th level by the end of the adventure.

ADVENTURE
BACKGROUND

In eons past, the Outer Gods came to despise a multipartite entity named the Eshtayiv, the Incandescent Doom, by its mortal pawns. Whether it is a rival deity or some other equally mighty being, the Eshtayiv represents a grave threat to all creatures that lurk in darkness. The Eshtayiv is a creature of light, but not one of warmth or growth. Instead, they are a force of consuming illumination, a radiance that destroys flesh while scorching the mind and soul. Drawn to lightless places, the Eshtayiv reaches out with their baleful and unmaking light, obliterating all they touch.

Agents of the Outer Gods couldn't defeat the Eshtayiv, so they imprisoned the being. To do so, they built bubbles of perpetual darkness and placed them within the sun that, from afar, look like little more than pinpricks of darkness within the dazzling light. Legend holds that during a titanic battle, the Outer Gods cast the Eshtayiv into the sun, where the god-thing could not detect the darkness of deep space but was instead drawn to the gloom of the prisons. Aware they had been fooled, but unable to pull their gaze from the dark anchors, the Eshtayiv began the slow work of illuminating and destroying the prisons. Now, only one of those anchors remains, a structure called Ezorod, powered by an ancient fusion of magic and technology. As long as Ezorod exists and maintains its darkness, the Eshtayiv remains a captive in the sun.

However, Ezorod is no safe harbor. The Eshtayiv's horrific spawn destroy anyone foolish enough to venture within. The original wardens of Ezorod were destroyed long ago in its halls of monumental stone. Although these former wardens could stave off a pervading curse called the Eshtayiv's Touch by keeping light with them, they eventually succumbed to darkness, died, and rose as undead creatures burning with their own eternal illumination. Soon, the only creatures that existed within Ezorod were those that shed their own light.

During the Gap, much of the lore regarding the Eshtayiv and Ezorod was lost. Only followers of the Outer Gods remembered their old enemy and the prison in the sun. The obscurity of the Eshtayiv's legend has served them well.

Until now.

During the previous adventure, "Sun Divers," the PCs gained a starship capable of traveling deep within the sun. They also recovered a strange horacalcum tablet with Aklo writing that squirms and writhes. This object is the key to finding and opening Ezorod. Although the PCs don't start the adventure knowing what this relic does, cultists of Azathoth, led by a wicked elf named Amaldrel Vershian, recognize the tablet's importance. They'll stop at nothing to destroy it.

PART 1:
READER'S RESCUE

The adventure begins when the PCs receive a message from Nib, the PCs' ysoki friend and liaison to the Deep Cultures Institute. When you're ready to start, let the players know Nib has called them together over refreshments at her favorite ysoki restaurant in Stellacuna, the White Rat. If Nib is on good terms with her wife, Taeress, the lashunta woman is also present. Read or paraphrase the following.

Nib bounces excitedly, twitching her whiskers as she says, "Listen, I know we've had trouble translating that tablet. It's weird. Hmmm..."

She looks around conspiratorially, then, after popping a yam into her mouth, says, "I found an expert on this bizarre stuff. Name's Otlo. I've talked to them before, but I needed to confirm we could trust them with this. A lot of... individuals... who speak Aklo aren't, well, that trustworthy. Otlo is. They can read Aklo..." Nib pauses to make air quotes, continuing with, "'stored in multidimensional encoding,' as they put it when I described the problem.

"Thing is, we have to bring the tablet to them. Comm video can't transmit the encrypted text, apparently. And I want you to come with me. We need to do this ASAP—after dinner, of course, if possible."

If the PCs have questions, Nib does her best to answer. PCs who attempt Computers checks to search for information have enough time to take 10 or even 20 on each check. Nib is eager, but she realizes waiting an hour, more or less, won't make a difference—especially considering the group is enjoying a meal.

You've spoken with Otlo? "Yeah. Only via text and vid chat, though. They're reclusive, with good reason. But they've got a personal connection to Aklo."

Good reason?/Personal connection? "Otlo... well... they're an orocoran."

Orocorans (*Starfinder Alien Archive* 90) are agender, sapient aberrations from the planet Aucturn, as any PC who succeeds at a DC 19 Culture or Life Science check knows. Members of the species tend to be malevolent and slothful, addled from overconsuming the black ichor that runs beneath Aucturn's surface. Nib is clear about Otlo's nature even if the PCs don't know what an orocoran is.

A PC who searches the infosphere for Otlo and succeeds at a DC 25 Computers check finds a series of essays describing Aucturn, its religion, its bizarre flesh and fluids, and the possibility of freeing orocorans from the planet's influence. These essays were authored by someone named Otlo. The work is scholarly, if eccentric.

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We should trust an orocoran? "We can trust Otlo. Listen, Otlo's not like the typical orocoran. Sure, they're not normal, but who is? Not me. Not you. None of us, that's who."

"Besides, Otlo's a scholar. They know a lot about wacky stuff like this. They've always come through for me in the past, and they had to reveal what they are to do this for us. Otlo's taking a risk, too."

Why do you want us along if you trust Otlo?

"Well, it pays to be safe, right? I mean, I trust Otlo, but others know about the tablet. It's a risk to remove it from the Deep Cultures Institute, even for a little while. Having you along," she smiles and winks, "reduces that risk."

Where is Otlo? "They use an abandoned clinic as a lab here in Stellacuna. It isn't far."

Abandoned Clinic? "Yeah, it was called the Salubrium. Rich folks used to get treatments and such there. It closed down years ago. Its owner died, I think."

A PC can search the infosphere and confirm this information by succeeding at a DC 19 Computers check. The Salubrium was a high-end clinic financed as a hobby by a wealthy dwarf named Sutrum Lem. If the check succeeds by 5 or more, the PC learns that when Sutrum died, his heirs were shocked to find that the clinic had been left to someone named Otlo, along with a small trust. Apparently, Sutrum's heirs managed to seize and sell most of the valuable equipment and medicine from the clinic, which promptly closed.

What's the hurry? "I'm a little nervous because one of my associates at the DCI has been pressing for the tablet to be sequestered until we know more about it. If he convinces the board he's right, who knows how long we'll have to wait for another opportunity to decipher and use it. Anyway, he said he believes the tablet is dangerous and should be put away until proven otherwise. So, if he gets his way..."

Who is this associate? "Name's Amaldrel Vershian. He's a specialist in solar religions and cults. A good scholar—educated, thorough, sharp. He seems pretty scared of this tablet, though. Got a little wild-eyed when he couldn't convince me to side with him on sequestering it."

Can he read it? "I don't think so. He claims to recognize it from myths he knows. He told me he thinks it's a key to a place called Ezorod, based on hints in the Aklo words we've seen—and if that's what it is, he claims it shouldn't be used. Ezorod is surrounded by dark legends, apparently, but he didn't tell me anything concrete. I think he probably doesn't know for sure. That means he's being irrational, if you ask me. Anyway, I wouldn't trust him to read it for us even if he could."

A. THE SALUBRIUM

The PCs have time to gear up, retrieve the tablet, and head for the Salubrium. Formerly a state-of-the-art clinic and lab, the closed facility now has only one occupant, the orocoran Otlo.

OTLO

Unlike most orocorans, Otlo enjoyed mental enhancement from consuming the ichor on Aucturn. Otlo began to examine the lore of the Old Ones, the chemical composition of the planet, and the possibility of creating a substitute that could free orocorans from the world's hallucinogenic influence. The scholar wrote factual essays and distributed them on fringe infosphere sites across the Pact Worlds, attracting the attention of cultists who considered Otlo's inquiries to be sacrilege. When these fanatics tried to murder Otlo, the orocoran fled from Aucturn. Otlo arrived on the Burning Archipelago and found soon after that the good-hearted Sutrum Lem was an admirer of Otlo's work. The philanthropist

offered Otlo a job at the Salubrium to continue this research. Since the clinic closed, Otlo has lived in the facility and used a small income from a trust Sutrum bestowed to quietly pursue intellectual goals. Otlo has had some success in producing an ichor substitute, but they have largely neglected the Salubrium's upkeep.

Jittery and telepathically talkative, Otlo has trouble sitting still for too long and shifts topics quickly. They mentally broadcast alliterative, repetitive phrases, such as "patter pat patter pat" or "say sibilant silence, say sibilant silence." Otlo can come across as peculiar, but they are a legitimate expert committed to helping the PCs.

Otlo subsists on a self-manufactured substance they call "ersatz ichor." Because their body contains no actual Aucturn ichor, Otlo lacks the *augury* and hallucinate abilities of most orocorans. However, perhaps as a side effect of not ingesting Aucturn's fluids, Otlo has several unique psychic powers.

OTLO

CR 6

XP 2,400

Agender variant orocoran (*Starfinder Alien Archive* 90)

CN Medium aberration

Init +4; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., *see invisibility*;

Perception +13

DEFENSE

HP 80

EAC 18; **KAC** 19

Fort +5; **Ref** +7; **Will** +9 (+11 vs. mind-affecting effects)

Defensive Abilities unflankable



A. SALUBRIUM

1 SQUARE = 5 FEET



Upper



Lower



OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee proboscis +12 (1d8+6 P; critical bleed 1d6)

Ranged corona laser pistol +15 (2d4+6 F; critical burn 1d4) or projectile vomit +15 (1d10+6 A)

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 6th)

1/day—lesser restoration

3/day—detect thoughts (DC 16), disguise self (DC 16), unseen servant

At will—psychokinetic hand

Constant—see invisibility

STATISTICS

Str +0; **Dex** +4; **Con** +2; **Int** +4; **Wis** +0; **Cha** +1

Skills Life Science +18, Mysticism +18, Physical Science +18, Stealth +13, Survival +13

Languages Aklo, Common, Dwarven, Elven (can't speak any language); limited telepathy 60 ft.

Gear business stationwear, corona laser pistol with 2 batteries (20 charges each); **Augmentations** standard datajack

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Projectile Vomit (Ex) As a standard action, Otlo can spew a thin stream of vomit at a target within 30 feet.

SALUBRIUM FEATURES

The Salubrium has the following common features, with exceptions noted where they occur in specific areas. The facility has a practical and severely institutional design. It also shows signs of its neglect, with sputtering electric lights, debris-littered floors, and other evidence of the hasty removal

of equipment and long-term abandonment. Most of its exterior doors and windows are locked, sealed, or both, and they're strong as steel. Interior plastic doors are unlocked, and most slide open with the squeal of their seldom-used and poorly maintained mechanisms. A sign outside a given area or room indicates its original function, though some of these indicators have been knocked off the walls or are missing. Ceilings are 12 feet high throughout the building. Most of the computers in the Salubrium are inoperable.

Small domes of transparent aluminum tinted with one-way-mirror material cover security cameras throughout the Salubrium. The PCs can easily determine that there is one camera in every area and two in larger areas. Only four cameras in the clinic still function: two in area **A13**, one in **A18**, and another in area **A21**. Others are inoperative.

ARRIVAL

When the group arrives, read or paraphrase the following.

This large building consists of a wide central entrance and a wing extending to either side. Although the curve of the entry's wall is made of transparent material, most of the windows have been painted over on the inside or sealed with opaque panels. The structure has the forlorn air of extended abandonment.

Otlo left the front doors unlocked so expected visitors can enter easily. Nib encourages the PCs to accompany her through the front double door.

THE BLIND CITY

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It is assumed the PCs enter through area **A1**. If the PCs instead circle the Salubrium, they might find the hidden door to the hallway in **A9**, and come to the loading dock (**A12b**). The smaller upper floor isn't obvious from the clinic's front, but it is apparent from the back. The hoverpad (**A22**) isn't discernible from the ground, since its landing lights are inoperable. If the PCs climb to the roof, they might find it and the nearby access door, as well as the elevator hatch on the upper story (see **A17**).

If the PCs take a different direction when entering the Salubrium, no cultists are initially present in any areas they explore, and the explosion (**Event 1**) hasn't affected any areas. The encounter order should only be adjusted if the PCs avoid meeting Otlo, who stays in area **A1** until the group arrives there.

A1. RECEPTION

An expansive, curved reception desk stands in the center of this vaulted chamber. Its front bears the words, "Welcome

to the Salubrium: Unsurpassed Compassion, Sophisticated Care." A curved transparent wall surrounds a double door to the south, although the windows are painted or paneled. A hallway labeled "Inpatient Wing" extends to the west. To the east is a corridor labeled "Research Wing." Behind the reception desk is a short hall bearing signs with the symbols of a lavatory, stairs, and an elevator.

Creature: Otlo squats awkwardly on the only chair at the reception desk, measuring substances in three small beakers. Nib greets the orocoran by name. In a buzzing telepathic "voice," Otlo asks everyone to keep their hands in sight and looks the visitors over, seeking any signs that indicate fealty to the Outer Gods. Otlo asks the PCs about any such marks, requesting to cast *detect thoughts* on anyone who seems suspicious. If Otlo finds no such signs or is satisfied with the answers given about those found, the orocoran asks to see the tablet.

When Otlo has the tablet, read or paraphrase the following.

Otlo's six eyes widen as they scan the tablet.

The orocoran's telepathic voice buzzes, imparting a feeling of surprise, saying, "This tablet tells of Ezorod. Tablet tells, tablet tells. Ezorod is especially ancient, an anchor of an elder entity, a dwelling of darkness deep in the sun. Dwelling darkness deep, deep. Who speaks of it? None you want to know. Wicked worshippers. Malevolence marks, marked malevolence. Layers of knowledge here, yes. Strata span strata, in veins vie various visions."

Otlo's eyes narrow. They chitter and rub their head.

"Takes time to translate. In interim, a small task I ask. Task I ask, task I ask. Orocorans eat Aucturn ichor. Far from there, I eat ersatz ichor, simulated sustenance, sustenance simulated. I refine recipe repeatedly. Within the western wing, in Storage and Sterilization," Otlo gestures with a claw, "I need a few flasks of phenotyll. Find them, fetch them. Find them, fetch them. Livid Lems left lookouts. Vex me, vex. New friends, strength superior to sentinels—destroy them for me. Strength solves. Small price, small price. For my help, finally fetch phenotyll."

"I'll stay here," says Nib. "I'd feel better if you take the tablet with you. Don't let it out of your sight."

Nib wants to stay with Otlo to find out more of what the orocoran already knows about Ezorod. She's nervous about having the tablet "out and about" and doesn't want to take any chances. The PCs, she feels, are the tablet's best guardians.

Otlo can clarify Storage and Sterilization's location (**A4**), and that it's clearly marked. Robots left by the Lems still guard the area, and they attack whoever ventures there. Otlo has been unable to defeat them. If the PCs ask what "Lems" are, Otlo briefly describes the family of his dwarven benefactor and how they left robots here to guard the remaining equipment and supplies they claimed ownership of when Otlo inherited the building. If the PCs press for more, Otlo gives more of the story related to Sutrum Lem until the PCs are satisfied.



A PC trained in Medicine or Life Science knows phenotyll is a component of a tier 2 mental excitant (*Starfinder Armory* 133), expensive but of little resale value on its own. If asked, Otlo can explain its use and confirms wanting the substance to heighten mental clarity and as a new constituent of ersatz ichor.

A2. INTAKE ROOMS

No signs mark these doors.

This small office contains an old desk, a few configurable chairs, dust, and a bit of debris.

Anyone trained in Medicine or an appropriate Profession (medical or psychological, or a similar consultation area) can tell these areas are intake rooms or doctor offices.

A3. WEST HALL

This wide hall has bare walls with lighter areas hinting that artwork or signage once hung on them.

A4. STORAGE (CR 6)

This room is clearly labeled "Storage and Sterilization" with a plaque outside the door.

This room contains racks and shelves holding sparse amounts of medical equipment, including bedding and towels. A whiter silhouette on the white wall and attachments left dangling indicate a large machine was removed from the northeastern corner. Doors lead out to the north and west, and a sign near the western door reads "Chemical Storage."

A character trained in Engineering, Life Science, or Medicine can guess the machinery removed from the room was used to sterilize various reusable supplies.

Creatures: When the Lem heirs looted the clinic, they sent the facility's security robots to this room to guard the remaining supplies, but the heirs never returned to claim them. The robots remain vigilant, one in each southern corner. They warn intruders that they have 10 seconds to leave. The robots then attack those who remain in the room or open doorway 2 rounds later.

PATROL-CLASS SECURITY ROBOTS (2) CR 4

XP 1,200 each

HP 52 each (*Starfinder Alien Archive* 94)

TACTICS

During Combat The robots remain separate and fire on intruders. PCs notice that, despite the stun setting common on tactical arc emitters, the robots use lethal force immediately. (A "gift" from the Lem heirs to Otlo.)

Morale Their programming gives the robots no option to flee. They fight until disabled or destroyed.

A5. CHEMICAL STORAGE

Metal cabinets line the walls of this room, each with a door of transparent material. Most of the cabinets are empty. One door is ajar, and a trail of viscous slime leads from the cabinet's interior to a puddle on the floor. An acrid tang hangs in the air. The room's only door is set into the east wall next to an emergency wash station.

A PC who succeeds at a DC 19 Life Science or Physical Science check can tell, based on the lack of any damage to the area, the acrid goo is harmless despite the odor. It must have needed refrigeration to remain stable, and the open door allowed its temperature to rise too high.

Treasure: The cabinets are neatly labeled, as are their contents. Finding several bottles of phenotyll is easy. The cabinets also contain 16 tier 1 medicinals (five analgesics, three antiemetics^{AR}, two antitoxins, one coagulant^{AR}, three excitants^{AR}, and two sedatives) and four tier 2 medicinals (two analgesics, one antitoxin, and one excitant^{AR}). The other chemicals in the cabinets are of little or no value by themselves but, if you wish, they could be used as components to make other medicinals.

A6. NURSES' STATION

Three chairs sit behind a desk, the top of which is five feet from the floor of the hallway it overlooks. North of the desk is an archway leading to a three-way junction. A sign over the arch reads, "Consider Our Patients. Quiet, Please."

This desk overlooks area **A3**. A computer panel, set into the desk's surface, no longer functions. The hall beyond the arch contains numbered doors (see area **A7**), and a door labeled "Mechanical" leads to area **A8** at the east end of this hall.

Event 1: Explosion occurs as soon as the PCs leave **A4** to return to **A1** after recovering the phenotyll.

EVENT 1: EXPLOSION (CR 9)

Amaldrel Vershian and his cultists assault the Salubrium. Each PC who succeeds at a DC 23 Perception check hears someone stealthily moving down the hall from **A1**, followed by a whisper in Common: "Duck and cover." Just after that, read or paraphrase the following.

A massive explosion rocks the clinic, sending shock waves through the hall. The eastern end of the passageway collapses with a roar and a cloud of dust.

Any PC who fails a DC 15 Fortitude saving throw falls prone due to the shock wave, but those who heard someone approaching receive a +2 circumstance bonus to this save. The explosion collapses the eastern end of the hall, destroying the easternmost room of area **A2**. It blocks passage to **A1** and destroys most of that area, too. The map

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A SOLAR
OUBLIETTE

PART 3:
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shows the blast area, which is blocked with a pile of rubble. A ring 10 feet beyond the blast area is difficult terrain due to scattered debris. For 10 minutes following the explosion, dust in areas **A1**, **A3**, **A6**, and **A17** is as thick as heavy smoke (*Starfinder Core Rulebook* 404).

It's obvious to the PCs that the entire front of the Salubrium is rubble. They must find a way around the destruction.

Creatures: Just 1 round after the explosion, three humans clad in metallic gold-and-white jumpsuits with red accents move down the hall toward the PCs, wielding glowing hammers. These cultists ducked into this hall prior to the explosion and avoided being caught in the blast.

AZATHOTH ASSASSINS (3)

CR 6

XP 2,400 each

Human solarian

CE Medium humanoid (human)

Init +3; Perception +13



AZATHOTH ASSASSIN

DEFENSE

HP 90 EACH

EAC 19; KAC 19

Fort +6; Ref +8; Will +11

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee solar hammer +16 (2d6+11 S; critical wound [DC 14])

Ranged resonant dirge pistol +13 (1d8+7 So; critical sicken [DC 14])

Offensive Abilities stellar revelations (black hole [25-ft. radius, pull 15 ft., DC 14], blazing orbit, stellar rush [3d6 F, DC 14], supernova [10-ft. radius, 7d6 F, DC 14])

TACTICS

During Combat Amaldrel, knowing the PCs are here, told these cultists to kill anyone they find in the west wing of the clinic. When they notice the PCs, the cultists' intent becomes clear—they were looking for the PCs. These killers pursue anyone who flees.

Morale In their zeal, the cultists don't back down. When one falls, the others use that as an excuse to seek revenge and continue the fight.

STATISTICS

Str +5; Dex +3; Con +2; Int +0; Wis +1; Cha +0

Skills Athletics +18, Mysticism +13, Stealth +13

Languages Common

Other Abilities solar manifestation (solar weapon), stellar alignment

Gear ysoki refractor suit, resonant dirge pistol^{AR} with 1 battery (20 charges), *least gluon crystal*

Treasure: In addition to their gear, each assassin wears an ornate pendant with an 8-pointed star cast in black and white metal. The geometry of the star symbol seems slightly out of alignment or phase, causing a sense of unease when viewed. Any PC who succeeds at a DC 15 Mysticism check identifies the symbol as that of Azathoth, the Outer God of devastation, entropy, and madness. These pendants are made of valuable metals, and due to that and their odd geometry, each is worth 100 credits. After the problems at the Salubrium are solved, Nib says the Deep Cultures Institute is willing to buy the symbols for the institute's historical records. At your discretion, the PCs might be able to acquire more from a collector.

Development: Once the fight ends, the PCs receive a message from Nib, breathing as if she has been running. Read or paraphrase the following.

"We're alive! Otlo's terrified. Says it's cultists of Azathoth. Says they're here for the tablet. Reception's collapsed. We ran up the stairs. Otlo says you can circle through a hall, employees only, near the patient area. I'm going silent. Be careful! And please, please find us!"

Nib closes communications, and the PCs receive no response from her thereafter. Cultists capture her and Otlo shortly after her message and take them to area **A21**.

A7. PATIENT ROOMS

Each of these rooms has a numbered sign, starting from P1 in the northwest corner and proceeding to P8 in a clockwise manner to the east, then back to the southwest. Each room is similar, but the southern rooms are larger, their furnishings more lavish.

This room contains a hospital bed, a private washroom, and a series of wall-mounted instruments.

In area **A7a**, the bed has a humanoid-shaped growth of foul-smelling mold with tiny writhing filaments. A PC who succeeds at a DC 20 Life Science check identifies this hardy but harmless fungus from Castrovel, likely resulting from contamination.

A8. MECHANICAL

This area houses machinery and control consoles to the east and south. The southern console flashes red.

A PC trained in Engineering can tell what these machines and control consoles do. To the south is an antigrav unit for an elevator housed beyond the southern wall. To the east are refrigeration controls for an adjacent storage area to the east. The fridge controls work and show the unit is set to 42° F. However, the antigrav unit shows the elevator has been knocked askew in the shaft by the explosion. A PC can reset the elevator with a successful DC 24 Engineering check but can't take 20 on this check, because failing causes the elevator to slip, increasing the DC by 5. Failing the Engineering check by 5 or more causes the antigrav unit to become broken. Fixing the unit requires 1 hour of work, 50 UPBs, and a successful DC 24 Engineering check.

A PC who succeeds at a DC 30 Perception check to search the area finds the secret hatch to the north. This hatch is designed for a Small creature. It opens into area **A10**.

Treasure: *Amk 1 null-space chamber* hangs on the back of the door. It contains dozens of pouches of Akitionian spiced jerky, a master key for the facility (this locks and unlocks internal doors via a physical mechanism), and a datapad. The datapad is a tier 1 computer that contains outdated maintenance schedules, work-related communications for a custodian named Verti Mino, and comprehensive schematics of the Salubrium. These schematics show the secret panel in this room.

A9. ACCESS HALL

The western door is marked "Employees Only" on the western side. Lights here are motion sensitive.

Ceiling lights flicker on in this long hallway. A few panels continue flashing while the rest glow steadily. The hall has a door at either end and two to the south in the hall's eastern half. A sturdier door stands to the north.

The northern door, marked "Emergency Exit" leads to an alley north of the Salubrium. It's hidden from the outside,

requiring a PC to succeed at a DC 30 Perception check to find it in the building's uniform siding. It's also locked, and its interior control panel is powered down. To open the door, the PCs must first reactivate the power and then disable the lock. Reactivating the power requires a successful DC 19 Engineering check from the inside, but from the outside, the DC of this check is 29. Unlocking and opening the powered door from the inside requires a successful DC 25 Engineering check to rewire the panel or a DC 25 Computers check to bypass the security. From the outside, which has no control panel, a successful DC 30 Engineering check can short out the door and force it open.

A10. CUSTODIAN'S OFFICE

The door is locked. A PC can unlock the door with the key from area **A8** or a successful DC 25 Engineering check.

This office contains a low desk, a low stool, and a large metal cabinet. A partially disassembled drone sits on the desk near a built-in computer console.

This room was likely the office of a Small humanoid. The cabinet contains an assortment of high-quality tools, and its bottom drawer pulls out into a small bed that's quite comfy.

A PC who succeeds at a DC 30 Perception check to search the area finds the secret hatch, designed for a Small creature, to the south. The hatch opens into this area but leads to area **A8**.

Treasure: The tools here are from three engineering specialty tool kits for building maintenance. The bonus from these kits applies to opening locks and rewiring security. Additionally, the cabinet holds a bin containing 1,000 UPBs. A partially complete elite deckhand drone (*Armory 101*) sits on the desk alongside a smaller bin of 250 UPBs. It takes 1 hour, 25 UPBs, and a successful DC 30 Engineering check to repair, reassemble, and activate the drone. Failure means more time and UPBs are required. If a PC takes 20 to succeed, the reassembly takes 20 hours and 500 UPBs. The drone speaks Ysoki.

A11. REFRIGERATED STORAGE

A sign, one outside each door leading into this area, identifies the room.

This room's temperature is very cool. A mattress, several pillows, and disheveled blankets form a bed or perhaps a nest at the west end. A few tables set up nearby have numerous apparatuses on them. The adjacent shelves and clear-faced cabinets are stocked with chemicals and tools, though other storage facilities here stand empty. A door exits north, and another leads east.

The temperature here is 42° F. Otlo enjoys the cold temperature as a reminder of Aucturn, and the nest is their sleeping area. A character trained in Life Science, Medicine, or Physical Science knows that the tables and the equipment atop them comprise a small but serviceable life science lab. The lab is also Otlo's.

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A12. WAREHOUSE (CR 7)

This warehouse has several tall metal shelves. Supplies at the floor level are gone, but several racks hold pallets wrapped in sheets of translucent plastic on their upper shelves. Three doors stand on the west wall, the northernmost one labeled "Employees Only," the middle labeled "Refrigeration," and the southernmost labeled with a restroom symbol. Enormous bay doors to the east are open, revealing a loading ramp. South of those doors is a smaller entry door. An alcove to the southeast contains another door between two shelves, labeled "Lab."

Most of Amaldrel's cultists entered the Salubrium through this loading dock, rewiring the door's lock from the outside and not bothering to close the doors behind them. If the PCs investigate the open bay doors in area **A12b**, they

discover a downward ramp for shipping vehicles to park at the dock and a smaller ramp with a guardrail leading up to the southern entry door. A character who succeeds at a DC 20 Perception check or specifically looks at the bay-door controls discovers the panel has been rewired. A character trained in Engineering can determine the panel was rewired during a recent and successful break-in.

Area **A12a** is an employee washroom that includes sonic shower facilities.

The materials stored on the upper parts of several shelving units look like construction panels and struts. A PC trained in Engineering or a Profession related to storage or structural integrity can attempt a DC 20 check. On a success, the PC can tell that the racks are unbalanced and potentially dangerous, gaining a +2 circumstance bonus to notice the particularly unstable shelf related to the trap detailed below.

Trap: The cultists placed motion sensors on the shelves near the door to **A13**. Upon detecting movement from creatures larger than Tiny passing the midpoint in the alcove, these sensors trigger minor explosive charges. The explosions weaken the shelves along the alcove, which then fall, dumping the materials they hold and potentially crushing anyone in the area leading to the doorway to **A13**.

OVERLOADED RACK TRAP

CR 7

XP 3,200

Type technological; **Perception** DC 30 (notice the motion sensor); Computers or Engineering DC 19 to understand it must be disabled from outside the alcove and at least 5 feet away; **Disable** two checks; Computers DC 24 to hack the motion sensor with remote hack or Engineering DC 24 to direct an electrical charge at the sensor to short it out. With another suitable plan, the DCs remain 24.

Trigger location; **Reset** none

Effect falling shelves and construction materials (6d12 B; Reflex DC 17 half); multiple targets (all targets in 10-ft.-by-20-ft. area marked on map)

Treasure: If disabled, the trap can be disassembled into a detonator and a few compact charges that can be reused together to produce the effects of a frag grenade II.

Development: If the trap triggers, the noise is sufficient to alert the eel in area **A13** and the technomancer in area **A16**. The technomancer uses the Salubrium's remaining security systems to track the PCs' movements.

A PC who succeeds at a DC 20 (25 if the trap went off, due to the wreckage) Perception check notices a few scales the color of dull brass on the floor. A successful DC 25 Life Science check allows a PC to identify the freshly shed scales as those of a mountain eel, although the coloration is odd for that species.



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A13. LAB (CR 8)

Several overturned tables, pools of steaming liquids, piles of jumbled pills, and shards of shattered glass cover the floor of this lab. Several office doors on the east wall each bear small nameplates, while the west wall contains a heavy door near a metal-latticed window that looks into a small waiting room. Another door leads out to the northwest.

The floor is difficult terrain due to the debris and spilled liquids left by the creature here moving through the area.

Two security cameras in the lab are positioned to view the entirety of the room as well as **A15**. A PC who succeeds at a DC 20 Perception check notices minute green lights indicating that the cameras are active.

Names on the office doors here, from north to south, include Dr. Monaia Zahal, Dr. Lathea Hyl, and Dr. Shan Ki.

The door to **A15** is a sturdy steel security door.

Creature: Cultists brought a genetically engineered mountain eel with them to dispose of bodies and aid the assault. Amaldrel raised it from an elver on esoteric drugs to enhance its physique and gaze, giving its skin a brassy color and reducing its size. He calls it an Azathoth eel, and tattooed it with symbols of the entropic deity. The cultists left the eel here to guard the rear. If undisturbed, it remains curled up in the southeast alcove.

AZATHOTH EEL

CR 8

XP 4,800

Unique mountain eel (*Starfinder Alien Archive* 78)

N Large animal

Init +6; **Senses** low-light vision; **Perception** +16

DEFENSE

EAC 20; KAC 22

Fort +12; **Ref** +12; **Will** +7**Defensive Abilities** ferocity

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft.**Melee** bite +19 (3d4+12 P)**Space** 10 ft.; **Reach** 15 ft.**Offensive Abilities** ominous gaze (60 ft., DC 16), surprise charge

TACTICS

Before Combat If the eel is alerted by the trap in **A12**, the eel watches the doors, preparing to rush forth once several creatures it doesn't know enter the room. PCs who fail a DC 31 Perception check are surprised as the eel emerges.

During Combat The eel charges into combat against anyone it doesn't recognize, favoring targets that aren't paralyzed. Given multiple targets, it attacks the creature that recently dealt the most damage to it.

Morale Once blood is drawn, the eel attacks with such frenzy that it doesn't retreat. When its ferocity activates, it takes a full action on its next turn to attack as many foes as possible before it dies.

STATISTICS

Str +4; **Dex** +2; **Con** +6; **Int** -4; **Wis** +0; **Cha** +0**Skills** Athletics +21, Stealth +21

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Ominous Gaze (Ex) Looking into an Azathoth eel's strange compound eyes causes the muscles of most living creatures to freeze up and their minds to fill with horrifying visions. A living creature that can see and begins its turn within 60 feet of an azathoth eel must succeed at a DC 16 Fortitude save or be paralyzed for 1 round and then staggered for 1 round. A creature that succeeds at its save is immune to that Azathoth eel's ominous gaze for 24 hours.

Surprise Charge (Ex) An Azathoth eel can charge during a surprise round.

Development: The technomancer cultist in area **A16**, Lanis, sees the PCs enter on security monitors. If they win the fight here, she prepares for them, as described in that area.

A14. OFFICES

This dusty office contains an old desk and chair.

The office doors in areas **A14a** and **A14b** have nameplates that read "Dr. Nihau Tiase" and "Dr. Hobar Evellent," respectively.

A15. DISPENSARY

This room has two smooth plastic chairs, a door to the west, and a heavier metal door to the south. The west wall contains a lattice that extends from three feet up to about a foot below the ceiling. A shelf at the bottom of the grate has a security-transaction drawer large enough to hold a few tiny items that can slide into the next room to allow for secure exchange.

A PC trained in Medicine or a Profession requiring secure exchanges—such as banker, pharmacist, or security guard—recognizes this room as a place where people come to take materials from the lab in a secure manner. The lock on the heavy door to the south has long been disabled.

A16. SECURITY STATION (CR 8)

If the cultist, Lanis, is aware of the PCs, she hides near this room, waiting to ambush them (see Lanis's tactics on page 12).

This office has several wall-mounted view screens, most of which are dark. An empty weapon rack is mounted on the east wall, and the room's single door leads south.

Two screens show the laboratory (**A13**), one displays the upper hall (**A18**), and another depicts the interior of the operating room (**A21**). This last camera is askew, and its view screen shows Nib and Otlo bound together with barbed wire atop an

operating table. A figure in white-and-gold robe-like armor with long, blond hair and delicate hands prods them with a scalpel.

Creature: When the cultists assaulted the clinic, Amaldrel's second-in-command, a ysoki named Lanis, stayed here to keep watch. She identified Nib and Otlo as they attempted to flee upstairs and directed Amaldrel to find and capture them.

LANIS

CR 8

XP 4,800

Female ysoki mercenary technomancer (*Starfinder Pact Worlds* 175)

HP 105

TACTICS

Before Combat If forewarned of intruders, Lanis takes cover around the corner from **A16** toward **A17**. She hides there, preparing to cast *arcing surge* on foes in the hallway near **A16**. When she does so, she surprises any PC who fails a DC 31 Perception check.

During Combat Lanis casts *arcing surge* again if given the chance to hit most of the PCs. She otherwise favors *magic missile* each round unless she casts *entropic grasp* to deal with melee attackers. She then relies on that spell and her pistol until she needs to use another spell. Lanis is zealous and murderous, aiming to inflict maximum damage. She pursues foes who flee from her.

Morale When reduced to about half her Hit Points, Lanis facilitates her withdrawal by casting *invisibility* once to take up a position on the stairs in **A17** and continue the fight. At 25 Hit Points or fewer, she casts *invisibility* again to retreat to area **A20**, joining the cultists there.

Treasure: In addition to her gear, Lanis wears a holy symbol of Azathoth like those of the assassins in area **A3**. Hers also functions as an *anarchic fusion seal* (9th).

A17. LOWER LANDING

The curved northern wall of this landing is painted with a mural of smiling, well-dressed dwarves around an elderly dwarven man in a comfortable hospital bed. Script above the mural reads, "The Salubrium: Elegant Care." The mural incorporates a restroom door as if it were a console near the bed. A curving stairway leads up, but the explosion has damaged it. To the west, underneath the stairs, is an elevator.

The public restroom (**A17a**) is dusty and disused. Until repaired in area **A8**, the elevator (**A17b**) is nonfunctional. Once repaired, the elevator can be used to access the upper floor or return to this one. Until then, a PC must succeed at a DC 12 Strength check to open the elevator doors. Tools from area **A8** grant a +2 circumstance modifier to the check and allow a user take 10 on it.

The elevator has an emergency ceiling hatch 10 feet above the floor; this hatch opens easily to a shaft containing a

maintenance ladder the PCs can use to climb to the next floor, as well as to the top of the elevator shaft. Opening the elevator doors on the second floor from inside the shaft requires a Strength check identical to that required on the ground floor. A steel hatch at the top of the shaft opens onto the roof, but it's locked with a physical lock and barred from the inside. It takes a successful DC 25 Engineering check to open the lock; this lock is inaccessible from the outside. Opening this hatch from the roof requires breaking it (hardness 20, HP 60, break DC 28).

A18. UPPER HALL

This area connects the top of the stairs, a nearby balcony, an elevator, and a hall with several doors. Three doors to the west are labeled R1 to R3, and the sign on the door to the east reads "Surgery Scrub." The balcony contains a few sturdy chairs and a small pool of blood.

Cultists attacked Nib and Otlo here and captured them. The blood here is Nib's. A PC who succeeds at a DC 20 Medicine check recognizes the blood belongs to a ysoki and knows this amount of blood loss is sufficient to weaken but not kill one.

The elevator does not function unless the PCs repaired it in area **A8**. See area **A17** for more details.

A19. RECOVERY ROOMS

Each of these three rooms is labeled R1 to R3, going from south to north. They're similar to the patient rooms in area **A7**.

A20. SURGERY SCRUB (CR 8)

This room contains a few cabinets on wheels and a long trough sink. A sign on a door in the west wall reads "Your Road to Recovery Starts Now," while another on a door in the east wall reads "The Care You Deserve is Ahead."

Creatures: An Azathoth assassin named Oké and a cult initiate named Bisha are here, donning surgical gear to assist Amaldrel in torturing the prisoners in **A21**. How they react to the PCs' intrusion depends on previous events in the adventure.

If these cultists are aware of the PCs because Lanis warned them after retreating from area **A16**, the cultists move to hidden positions around the room and activate the environmental protections of their armor. They then detonate a charge on an anesthesia canister, filling the room with gas before the PCs arrive. A PC who succeeds at a DC 20 Perception check notices Bisha, but it takes a successful DC 28 Perception check to notice Oké and a successful DC 31 check to notice Lanis. The cultists gain a surprise round only if they all go unnoticed. Otherwise, those hidden at the start of a battle can use that state to their advantage on their turns.

If Lanis isn't here, or if you decide she hides and the other two cultists attempt a ruse, Bisha and Oké raise their hands. Bisha tries to distract the PCs, claiming she and Oké are friends

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of Otlo, here as backup if the PCs proved disingenuous. Bisha says she and Oké are also prisoners of the cultists. Surgical gear covers the pair's Azathoth pendants, weapons, and armor. A PC who succeeds at a DC 20 Perception check notices something odd, such as an exposed armor section, under the medical scrubs and gains a +2 circumstance bonus on Sense Motive checks against Bisha. A PC who succeeds at this Perception check by 5 or more notices the bulge of the pistol holstered on Bisha's hip, which is likely to foil her ruse, and on a success by 10 or more, the PC also notices the contour of Oké's Azathoth pendant on his broad chest. If Bisha manages to deceive the PCs, the cultists get the drop on the party and benefit from a surprise round. They both use their actions to activate the environmental protections provided by their armor.

OKÉ, AZATHOTH ASSASSIN

CR 6

XP 2,400

Male human solarian

HP 90 (see page 8)

TACTICS

During Combat Oké moves into melee as quickly as possible, using his revelations to keep foes from closing with Bisha or the door to area A21.

Morale A fanatic, Oké fights to the death.

BISHA

CR 4

XP 1,200

Female human cultist envoy (*Starfinder Pact Worlds* 168)

HP 45

TACTICS

During Combat If necessary, Bisha uses her first standard action to detonate a charge planted on a nearby anesthesia canister (see Hazard below). She then stays back and shoots at the PCs. When using her envoy improvisations, Bisha shouts mind-twisting pronouncements of doom at her targets.

Morale Bisha tries to flee if she's reduced to 15 or fewer Hit Points. She's unwilling to be captured, so she fights on if unable to escape.

Hazard: The cultists have placed a small explosive charge on an anesthesia canister stored here. The explosive itself is visible, and a PC can notice it with a successful DC 26 Perception check. Disabling it requires a PC to succeed at a DC 21 Computers or Engineering check. The device can be remotely hacked to disable its signal receiver.

If the cultists release the anesthetic gas, it creates a thin, sweet-smelling mist in the entire room 1 round later. Anyone breathing the air at that time is exposed to the soporific. A creature breathing the anesthetic must attempt a saving throw every round, ignoring the normal frequency until after the affected creature can breathe fresh air,

such as after it activates its armor's environmental protections. A creature affected by anesthetic gas can't be cured until breathing fresh air. Ventilation in the room clears the gas after 1 minute.

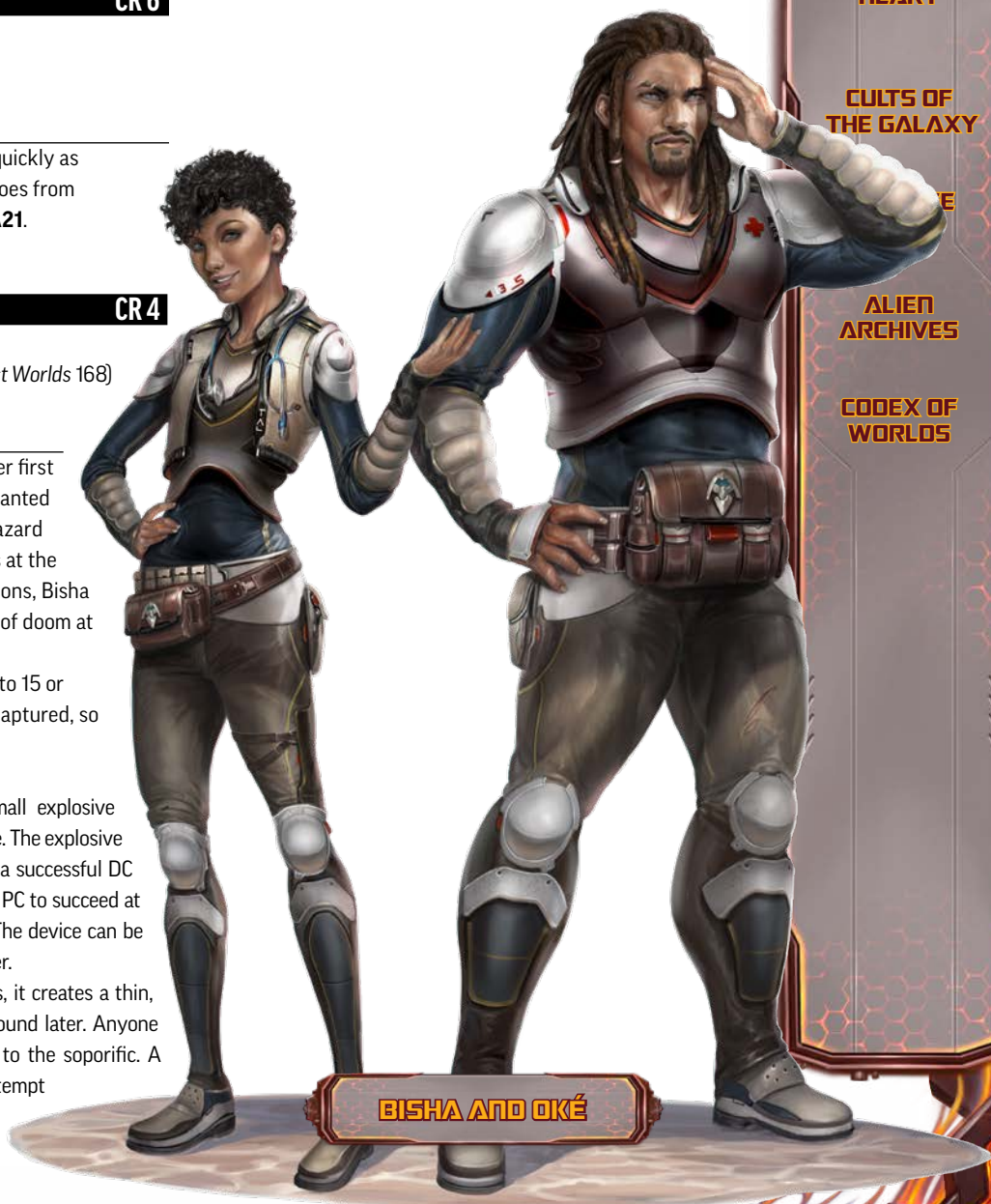
ANESTHETIC GAS

Type poison (inhaled); **Save** Fortitude DC 15

Track mental (no latent state); **Frequency** once every 2 rounds for 10 rounds

Effect Recovery requires only 10 minutes per step. A creature trained in Medicine that has a medkit or similar facilities can halve this time with a successful DC 15 check. If the check succeeds by 10 or more, the recovery time is 1 minute per step.

Cure 1 save



BISHA AND OKÉ

Treasure: Bisha has a detonator switch set to detonate the explosive charge on the anesthetic canister. The focused charge is so small it's useless for anything besides a similar application. Each cultist here wears a symbol of Azathoth like those of the assassins in **Event 1**.

Story Award: Even if the PCs manage to avoid the anesthetic gas, award them 1,200 XP for the hazard.

A21. OPERATING ROOM (CR 9)

Most of the equipment in this operating room is covered with sheets, although a bright light in the center of the room shines onto a metal operating table with a swivel tray holding an array of surgical instruments. The plastic door in the west wall contrasts with a door resembling an airlock to the east.

Operating the complex lever to open the heavier eastern door takes a move action, as does opening the heavy door itself. A character who succeeds at a DC 15 Strength check can pull the lever and open the door in one move action. If Amaldrel has unbarred the door (see his tactics below), a PC who examines it and succeeds at a DC 20 Engineering check or DC 25 Perception check can tell the complex barring mechanism is not in place.

Creatures: Amaldrel Vershian, depicted on the cover, is likely to be ready for the PCs. See his tactics for details.

He has bound Nib and Otlo together. She and the orocoran have each been reduced to 15 Hit Points and are under the effects of a strong drug with sedative and compliance effects. When the PCs arrive, Nib is coherent enough to warn the PCs who the elf is. Otlo telepathically babbles in Aklo. Nib and Otlo are unable to aid the PCs. The PCs can easily tell that using any area effects that would damage these NPCs could be enough to kill them.

AMALDREL VERSHIAN

CR 9

XP 6,400

Male elf operative

NE Medium humanoid (elf)

Init +9; **Senses** low-light vision; **Perception** +23

DEFENSE

HP 135 RP 4

EAC 22; **KAC** 23

Fort +8; **Ref** +11; **Will** +12; +2 vs. enchantment effects

Defensive Abilities evasion, uncanny agility; **Immunities** sleep

OFFENSE

Speed 50 ft.

Melee ultrathin switchblade +17 (2d4+11 S)

Ranged *called screamer decoupler* +19 (1d10+11 A; critical demoralize [DC 18])

Offensive Abilities debilitating trick, trick attack +5d8, triple attack

TACTICS

Before Combat Unless the PCs remain undetected while approaching from area **A20** or area **A22**, Amaldrel is aware of them and waits to act until they are about to enter area **A21**. He then activates his holographic clone ability, unbars

the door to area **A22** (if it hasn't already been opened), and takes cover in the northeastern corner. He's arrogant, so he mocks the PCs as they enter. Amaldrel believed he'd have to hunt the PCs down and is amused they've come to him, remarking that they've saved him time as he attacks.

During Combat Amaldrel activates his *haste circuit* on his first turn. He keeps moving, making trick attacks with his pistol against the most dangerous foe or capable healer. His mentalist's bane exploit and his amulet allow him to apply his formidable will against powers that affect his mind. He focuses his fire to bring down each PC one by one, ranting about the PCs' impending doom if they use the tablet. Amaldrel moves out onto the hoverpad (area **A22**) if he needs more space or if preparing for retreat.

Morale Amaldrel flees when he drops to 25 Hit Points or fewer, using Parting Shot if possible. He can jump off the hoverpad, land with his jump jets, and then attempt to lose the PCs in Stellacuna's nearby alleys and streets.

STATISTICS

Str +0; **Dex** +6; **Con** +0; **Int** +4; **Wis** +1; **Cha** +3

Skills Bluff +23, Disguise +23, Intimidate +18, Physical Science +18, Mysticism +25

Feats Mobility, Parting Shot, Shot on the Run

Languages Aklo, Common, Elven

Other Abilities elven magic, operative exploits (holographic clone [9 minutes], master of disguise, mentalist's bane, uncanny mobility, uncanny shooter), operative specialization (spy)

Gear advanced lashunta tempweave (purple force field, *haste circuit*, jump jets), *called screamer decoupler*^{AR} with 2 high-capacity batteries (40 charges each), ultrathin switchblade, *red dwarf captive star amulet*^{AR} (with symbols of Azathoth)

Treasure: A physician drone (Armory 102) is covered with a sheet here.

Development: If Amaldrel escapes, his cover is blown. He can't return to the DCI or normal life in the Burning Archipelago, so the PCs encounter him again only at your discretion.

A22. HOVERPAD

This rooftop platform provides a landing area for flying emergency vehicles. A heavy door to the west allows entry to the clinic's top floor.

The rooftop door is like an airlock barred from within. Opening it from the outside requires a successful DC 35 Engineering check that takes 1 minute as the engineer pries off parts of the seal to get at the barring mechanism. The PCs can also attempt to break the door (hardness 35, HP 160, break DC 40). If the PCs find a way to approach this door while Amaldrel is still in area **A21**, tampering with the door alerts him if they do nothing to silence their efforts.

RESCUING NIB AND OTLO

Amaldrel has been torturing Nib and Otlo for information about the PCs and anyone else who knows about the Noma tablet. Once Amaldrel is defeated and the two captives are freed, Nib and Otlo recover enough from their ordeal to thank the PCs, especially if the PCs offer aid. Finally, able to analyze the tablet in peace, Otlo spends several hours examining it. When the orocoran is ready to report, read or paraphrase the following.

Otlo says, "Tablet tells the trajectory to Ezorod, yes, tells trajectory, trajectory tells. Multifarious map. Serves as a key. Opens the black bubble of Ezorod, bubble black, a barrier of darkness. No door without the tablet.

"Tablet tells, too, of Ezorod's treasures. Treasures told, too. Magical machinery, machine magic. Cold contrivances cloak and conserve Ezorod in stellar fires.

"But, tablet tells, too, of the Eshtayiv. An eldritch entity, Ezorod imprisons. For you, deadly darkness, darkness is death. Keep to the light."

No information about Ezorod or the Eshtayiv is available on the infosphere. This lore is vanishingly rare; cultists of the Outer Gods have suppressed it for millennia. However, the PCs can question Otlo to learn more information, based upon whether they are trained in certain skills or succeed at specific skill checks, as indicated below.

What is the black bubble? "Ezorod lacks light. Lacks light, light lacks. Dark divides it from the sun. Dark divides. You'll know it when you see it. Divider, defender, doorway."

Otlo can explain that a very dark bubble encases Ezorod. The bubble has no door. However, the tablet can create one.

The tablet creates a door? "Yes, in part. The other part is your vessel. Modified shields. Contact opens the black bubble. Black bubble, the gate."

A character trained in Engineering understands that the tablet could be installed in the *Sun Diver's* shield generator. Doing so carefully enough so as not to imbalance the ship's systems would take no more than a couple hours.

Ezorod contains treasure? "Ancient artifacts. Ezorod's architects erected the enclosure, the black bubble, with eldritch equipment. It ensures Ezorod's existence over eons. We know nothing analogous, yet. Lost lore, lost lore. The tablet speaks of the Illuminant Heart, the treasure trove. Trove of treasures."

Any PC trained in Engineering, Mysticism, or Physical Science understands Otlo must be referring to hybrid equipment that creates a bubble strong enough to endure if not totally repel

stellar forces deeper within the sun, keeping out not only the destructive forces but also the light. Nothing like that exists in the known galaxy. Nib is excited about the possibility, since such a find could further the DCI's ability to explore the sun's interior. She requests the PCs recover any such tech they find.

Illuminant Heart? "Ezorod's center, it is there and not there. Placement puzzling, puzzling placement. It is inside, underneath, alongside, above. All sides and none."

Before Otlo goes on, a PC who succeeds at a DC 27 Mysticism check surmises that this bizarre orientation suggests an extradimensional space. Otlo either agrees with this opinion or offers it. If this heart is Ezorod's center and source, Otlo or a PC trained in Mysticism can venture this place has an access point within Ezorod itself.

The Eshtayiv? "Ezorod's eternal darkness anchors the Eshtayiv, a cruel creature of countless constituents conglomerated. An opponent of the Outer Gods, but no friend of ours. The Eshtayiv is, they are, a ravenous radiance, devourers of flesh and soul. Ravenous radiance. Named also the

Incandescent Doom."

A PC who is trained in Mysticism and succeeds at a DC 23 skill check understands immediately why Azathoth cultists wanted the tablet: Azathoth is one of the Outer Gods, and if these entities see the Eshtayiv as an enemy, they'd want Ezorod, the Eshtayiv's prison, to remain secure. Otlo can impart or confirm this information, as well.

Deadly darkness? "Ezorod is lightless. The Eshtayiv's attention curses the darkness. Their curse is death. Remain in the light and live. Light, live. Live, light. If the light departs, you die in the dark. Dark death."

Otlo recommends that the PCs carry light sources with them. If they insist that they already have such devices, Otlo recommends they acquire more, just in case.

PREPARING FOR THE TRIP

The PCs need to prep the *Sun Diver*, which appears on the inside covers of *Starfinder Adventure Path #15: Sun Divers*, for the trip to Ezorod. Allow the players to upgrade the *Sun Diver* to a tier 7 vessel. In doing so, they can also refit the ship's interior to comfortably accommodate a crew of the party's size. These alterations, along with the careful installation of the Noma tablet, have no chance of harming the *Sun Diver's* delicate systems.

In addition, Nib refers the PCs to Beran, the DCI's ysoki supplier, for extra gear. Beran is noticeably warmer toward the PCs after their success in the previous adventure, but she still



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always holds something in her mouth that she passes between cheek pouches. She requisitions 6 bulk of siccattite for the *Sun Diver*, 300 UPBs for the mk 3 culinary synthesizer (Armory 129) in the *Sun Diver*'s galley, and a credit line of 9,000 credits. The PCs can acquire items with an item level of up to 8 with these funds, contributing their own credits if need be. Beran once again lends the PCs a survey drone (a specialized spy drone with enhanced camera and shotgun microphone scanners; Armory 107) and datapad (a hardened tier 2 computer with a control module for the drone and secure data storage). Since Ezorod is expected to be dark, the normally solar-powered drone is fitted with a specialized battery pack that holds two ultra-capacity batteries. These are enough to power the drone and its systems for 100 hours, or half that time if the PCs add a beacon or another light to the drone. The dedicated data storage on the datapad allows the drone to download and store several days' of scanner data.

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Once the PCs are ready, they can take the *Sun Diver* to Ezorod. The trip takes 6 days.

EVENT 2: EFREETI INTERDICTION (CR 8)

As the PCs travel through the sun to Ezorod, about 2 days into their journey, an efreeti transport quite similar to the *Breath of Embers* from "Fire Starters" approaches. Read or paraphrase the following.

A hail comes over the *Sun Diver*'s communications system. A deep-voiced efreeti says, in Common, "Attention, crew of the *Sun Diver*. I am Captain Hamat of the warship, the *Ashen Rain*. You are in possession of technology known to allow entry to the deep-sun site of Ezorod. That territory has already been claimed and no trespass there shall be tolerated. You shall relinquish this technology and turn back, or you face annihilation. I give you ten minutes to choose your fate. Do so wisely."

The communication ends. Hamat already knows where Ezorod is and that the tablet is the key to opening it and landing there unharmed. Although the PCs have no way of knowing, Hamat is a servant of General Khaim. The general's forces learned of the tablet from the salamander Sulphrax's survey of Noma. A mole within the DCI confirmed the PCs have it, but Hamat and his crew otherwise know less about Ezorod than the PCs now do.

A PC attempting to claim they have no such technology must succeed at a DC 25 Bluff check. Hamat is amused if the PC fails this attempt, but if the PCs succeed, the *Ashen Rain* scans

the *Sun Diver*. It takes the *Ashen Rain* 5 rounds of scanning to discover the PCs are lying. The PCs can attempt to jam the scan (Computers DC 23), but doing so once garners a stern warning, and doing so again causes Hamat to attack.

An engineer can attempt to remove the tablet from the shield generators before the scan finds the tablet. Doing so requires a successful DC 20 Engineering check. However, unless the PC succeeds by 5 or more, the power flow in the *Sun Diver* is harmed, and the power core begins glitching. The PC understands this condition is likely to tip off the *Ashen Rain*'s science officer, but a successful patch engineer action is enough to disguise the glitch during the scan.

If the PCs successfully foil the scan, Hamat contacts them again, warning them away from Ezorod. He then allows them to depart. Avoiding contact with the *Ashen Rain* on the trip to Ezorod requires replotting the course and taking an extra day of travel. Patching the tablet back into the shield generator requires repairing any damage to the power core and then spending 1 hour and succeeding at a DC 20 Engineering check. Taking 10 is possible on this attempt, but the *Sun Diver* is too delicate to allow for the hit-and-miss approach of taking 20.

If the PCs agree to relinquish the tablet, Hamat targets them with his gravity gun's tractor beam, ordering them to eject the tablet from an airlock or garbage chute. The PCs understand that complying with this order means they'll lose any chance of gaining entrance to Ezorod. The tablet must be removed as described above, except the PC has time to take 10. When the PCs eject the tablet, the tractor beam pulls the relic aboard the *Ashen Rain*. The efreeti vessel then leaves, and the PCs' attempts to recover the tablet or otherwise find entry to Ezorod are beyond the scope of this adventure.

Starship Combat: If the PCs fail to acquiesce to his demands or to fool him, Hamat initiates combat. Place the *Sun Diver* at one short edge of the map. The *Ashen Rain* starts 25 hexes away. Each vessel begins combat facing the other.

The area contains solar eddies. The PCs are initially aware of these phenomena only if a PC succeeds at a DC 25 Physical Science check during the initial helm phase. Once they witness the efreeti vessel attempting to use eddies, the PCs understand what's happening if any PC succeeds at a DC 20 Physical Science check. The solar eddies are unpredictable, but once the PCs grasp what's happening, their pilot can attempt the checks related to them.

If the number shown on the d20 result of a starship pilot's Piloting check in a given round is odd, the ship runs into a solar eddy during that round. Its pilot, if aware of the solar eddies, can attempt a DC 25 Piloting check. If successful, the pilot gains the benefits of the maneuver pilot action while still being able to take another pilot action, including glide. On a failure, the pilot is able to ride out the eddy but can't take advantage of its benefits. Failure to attempt this check or failing it by 5 or more indicates the vessel instead makes an immediate random turn (with a 50% chance of turning either 1 hex face left or right) and reduces its speed by half that turn.

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The solar eddies have a similar effect on tracking weapons. If a gunner rolls an odd number on the d20 for a gunnery check, the weapon's projectile hits a solar eddy. The gunner can then attempt a DC 25 gunnery check. On a success, the eddy slingshots the projectile, allowing it to move 1-1/2 times its normal speed. If the check fails by 5 or more, the projectile makes a random turn, then moves half its speed before its course can be corrected.

Losing shields in the sun can be deadly. At the end of a round in which a starship's shields are reduced to 0 remaining Shield Points, that vessel takes 5 damage from exposure to solar forces. The ship takes 10 damage at the end of each subsequent round it remains at 0 Shield Points. Creatures inside an affected ship are exposed to extreme heat (*Core Rulebook* 403) with 1 starship combat round equal to 1 minute. The inside of such a ship is also bathed in low radiation (*Core Rulebook* 403).

ASHEN RAIN

TIER 6

Medium transport

Speed 10; **Maneuverability** average (turn 2)

AC 20; **TL** 20

HP 85; **DT** —; **CT** 17

Shields medium 100 (forward 25, port 25, starboard 25, aft 25)

Attack (Forward) gravity gun (6d6), light particle beam (3d6)

Attack (Turret) linked laser nets (4d6)

Power Arcus Maximum (200 PCU); **Drift Engine** none;

Systems advanced short-range sensors, basic computer, crew quarters (good), mk 4 armor, mk 4 defenses;

Expansion Bays medical bay, recreation suite, specialized escape pod/brig, tech workshop

Modifiers +4 Computers (sensors only); **Complement** 6

TACTICS

During Combat The crew of the *Ashen Rain* uses solar eddies to outmaneuver the *Sun Diver*. Their goal is to capture the ship to use it as a key to Ezorod.

Morale If the *Ashen Rain* falls below 20 Hull Points, Hamat orders a retreat to replenish the ship's shields so it can survive being within the sun.

CREW

Captain Bluff +13 (6 ranks), Diplomacy +13 (6 ranks), gunnery +11, Intimidate +13 (6 ranks), Piloting +11 (6 ranks)

Engineer Engineering +18 (6 ranks)

Gunners (2) gunnery +11

Pilot Piloting +13 (6 ranks)

Science Officer Computers +17 (6 ranks)

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Fire Affinity The *Ashen Rain* is immune to the environment of the Plane of Fire and similar fiery conditions. It takes half damage from starship laser weapons.

Solar Channel As the *Sun Diver*'s ability of the same name.

Development: If the *Ashen Rain* is destroyed, a PC who succeeds at a DC 24 Computers check to scan notices an escape pod typical for an efreeti commissar jettisoning from the ship. If the PCs attack and hit the *Ashen Rain*'s AC, they destroy the pod.

If the PCs lose, Hamat uses the *Ashen Rain*'s gravity gun rather than risking a boarding effort. He grabs and tows the *Sun Diver* with the weapons' tractor beam capability, but the efreeti weapon also protects the *Sun Diver* from solar forces as if the *Sun Diver* had 1 Shield Point in each quadrant. However, the gun prevents the *Sun Diver* from regenerating its shields unless the engineer succeeds at a DC 15 Engineering check to allow normal regeneration or a DC 20 Engineering check to divert power to the shields. The pilot can attempt a DC 24 Piloting check to break free of the beam, but success also removes the gun's shielding benefit. Hamat reinitiates starship combat if the *Sun Diver* breaks free or regenerates more than 10 Shield Points. He threatens to destroy the PCs outright.

Story Award: If the PCs survive, they earn 4,800 XP as if they defeated the *Ashen Rain* in combat.

EZOROD ARRIVAL

When the *Sun Diver* arrives at Ezorod's bubble, read or paraphrase the following.

A lusterless black sphere becomes visible on scans. According to the coordinates, this dark bubble must be Ezorod.

At your discretion, PCs who eluded or fooled Captain Hamat might encounter the *Ashen Rain* here again. The efreeti vessel might have instead towed or chased the *Sun Diver* to Ezorod (or vice versa, if the PCs handed over the tablet).

Scans reveal that the sphere is an anomaly made of extreme force, like a mightier version of the bubbles of the Burning Archipelago. If the *Sun Diver* approaches the bubble with the tablet installed, read or paraphrase the following.

The black bubble extrudes a secondary bubble, in which a gap opens like a toothless maw.

When the *Sun Diver* enters the maw, this secondary bubble shunts the vessel into Ezorod. If the *Ashen Rain* is present, Hamat attempts to follow the PCs. Unfortunately for him, Ezorod's builders predicted such a possibility, and as the *Sun Diver* is shunted inside, the bubble-maw closes. The *Ashen Rain* crashes against the closed bubble, taking massive damage. With a pulse of gravitons, the dark bubble hurls the crippled efreeti ship deep into the sun. Whether Hamat and his vessel survive is up to you, but they aren't seen again in this adventure.

When the PCs enter, read or paraphrase the following.

Entering the bubble is momentarily disorienting. The interior is mostly lightless, although scanners show a massive structure floating within. On that structure is an open area large enough for the *Sun Diver* to land, as revealed by the hint of visible light.

The *Sun Diver* lands in area **B1**. If the PCs don't wish to land, they can leave the *Sun Diver* floating in the bubble wherever they like. Area **B1** provides Ezorod's only entrance, however.

EZOROD FEATURES

An immense ruin of blackened stones, Ezorod was built millennia ago by cultists of the Outer Gods to bind the Eshtayiv. Ezorod exudes a sense of great age and shows evidence of innumerable fires sweeping through it. Most areas are cavernous, with 25-foot-high ceilings.

Ezorod's few doors are made of blackened stone several feet thick. These doors have stone pivot-mounts that allow them to swing open easily. Only the Three-Key Door (area **B3**) is locked, and it's also magically sealed.

Ezorod is dark. Its occupants and some room features provide illumination. Read-aloud text assumes the PCs can see the areas they're in.

The creatures here are rare. This rarity affects the DCs to identify them with skill checks (*Core Rulebook* 133).

THE ESHTAYIV'S TOUCH

The essence of the Eshtayiv suffuses Ezorod, causing a curse called the Eshtayiv's Touch. A creature within an area of dim or brighter light is safe from this pervading affliction. However, to stand in darkness within Ezorod even for a moment invites doom. The Eshtayiv's Touch feels like a burning tendril inside the victim's body, seeming to hollow a creature out, sapping life and moisture as the effect progresses. Eventually, the victim withers into a husk.

THE ESHTAYIV'S TOUCH

Type curse; **Save** Will DC 17

Track Charisma (special); **Frequency** 1/hour

Effect The Eshtayiv's Touch doesn't affect the unliving.

The victim loses 7 Hit Points upon contracting the curse, and this loss can't be reversed until the curse is ended. The curse's track is the Charisma Poison track (*Core Rulebook* 417). A creature that dies from the curse becomes a pyric revenant (see page 60) 24 hours later.

Cure The victim must benefit from two successful castings of *remove affliction* within 1 minute, or the Eshtayiv must be separated from Ezorod.

VERTHANI EXPEDITION

The PCs aren't Ezorod's only recent visitors. More than a year ago, a verthani (*Starfinder Alien Archive* 118) xenoarchaeologist named Lod Coster discovered a magical gateway within a series of ruins on Aucturn. He investigated the portal archway and discovered it led to Ezorod. He thought the portal might still work, though he assumed incorrectly that Ezorod was an extraplanar destination. Lod took months to research planar travel and assemble a team. His group included a scholar named Evik Ventrek, a mystic named Halpetta Ornesh, a professional explorer named Themma Kett, and three bodyguards: Asan Delothi, Cazindira Emenios, and Isella Haland.

Five weeks ago, when he decided his team was ready, Lod enacted a ritual to open the portal. He succeeded, but his success resulted in disaster. Lod's ritual led the group to area

B. EZOROD

1 SQUARE = 5 FEET



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B1 but failed to keep the portal open, leaving the verthani cut off. They prepared to explore further when a trio of dimensional shamblers (see page 55) arrived, attracted to the ritual's energy.

Two bodyguards fell to the shamblers. The team fled to **B3**, where they encountered several pyric revenants (see page 60). Halpetta died there. The ill-fated expedition made its way through **B4** and into **B5**. There, given a few moments, Lod recalled a recent mystic vision from the Akashic Record that allowed him to find the secret door. This foresight didn't warn him of the colour out of space (*Starfinder Alien Archive* 2 28) imprisoned in the passage beyond. The colour set about feeding on the team, and Evik fled, setting off the hazard in **B5**, which he barely survived. His light was damaged, and it went out briefly, subjecting him to the Eshtayiv's Touch. He stopped to rest in **B2** and perished there.

The colour out of space slew or converted the remaining members of the team. Leaving the secret door in **B5** open, it used Lod to collect the keys to the Illuminant Heart. (The Eshtayiv causes the undead here to ignore the colour and colour-blighted creatures. See Lod Coster's story in area **C2** on page 30). Then, the colour and Lod went inside Ezorod's heart.

B1. PORTAL PAD (CR 8)

This open area is large enough to accommodate the *Sun Diver's* landing, especially since the vessel stands upright

when landed. When the PCs leave the *Sun Diver*, read or paraphrase the following.

Enormous circles ringed with runes cover this vast plaza of enormous fitted black stones. This area has no ceiling. To the north and east stands an imposing edifice also composed of titanic, blackened stone slabs. A giant archway opens near where the northern and eastern walls meet. Chunks of stone litter the ground along the north wall, from which they fell. A lanky corpse is splayed out among them, a light from a beacon on the body illuminating the area.

A PC who examines the runic circles and succeeds at a DC 22 Mysticism check can tell they were once anchors for teleportation magic. The etchings have tarnished silver in them, but gathering the metal would hardly be worth the effort.

Those who investigate the corpse see a verthani woman sprawled amid a pool of her own blood, covered in slashing wounds. She has a datajack, and her cybernetic dermal plating, arranged to match her tattoos, has ruptured in places from her wounds. In Vercite, the names "Asan" and "Isella"—along with symbols of affection—have been worked into her tattoos.

Creature: A dimensional shambler arrives via planar travel and watches the PCs, lurking in the northwest corner of the area before attacking the PCs. During the third round of combat, the pyric revenants from area **B2** (see that entry) drift to the entrance of that room and attack.

DIMENSIONAL SHAMBLER CR 8

XP 4,800

HP 125 (see page 55)

TACTICS

Before Combat When the PCs disembark the *Sun Diver* and move into the area, the shambler arrives. It then uses its *displacement* spell-like ability. Only those PCs who succeed at a DC 26 Perception check notice the lurking creature. Those who fail to do so are surprised when it casts *dimension door* to appear near the PC with the fewest allies nearby and attacks.

During Combat The shambler is a straightforward combatant. It focuses on the creature that hurt it the most during the previous round if the risk for doing so isn't high. With *displacement* active, it's willing to risk attacks of opportunity to do so until it takes a few hits using this tactic.

Morale When reduced to 60 or fewer Hit Points, the shambler casts *dimension door* to teleport inside the *Sun Diver*, where it tries to rip apart the starship's interior. The shambler can't do much damage, but the PCs hear it banging around. Once it drops to 25 or fewer Hit Points, the creature casts *plane shift* to escape. If it has a PC grappled, it might try to take that person with it.



Treasure: The verthani wears freebooter armor II with a jetpack upgrade and a lit beacon attached with a gear clamp. She has a small satchel containing two R2Es, a personal hygiene kit, a credstick (500 credits), and a high-capacity battery (40 charges). She keeps a warfan engraved with the name "Cazi" in Vercite on her belt. A static arc rifle with no charges remaining can be found near the body.

B2. ANTECHAMBER (CR 6)

This chamber contains a jumbled pile of scorched equipment.

Evik Ventrek succumbed to the Eshtayiv's Touch here.

Creatures: If they didn't join the battle in **B1**, two pyric revenants, the remains of Evik and Halpetta, linger here. One is willowy and almost 7 feet tall, and the other is closer to 6 feet. Each has black orbs for eyes, like a verthani, that writhe in flames. The remains of Evik's cybernetics—a datajack, a vocal modulator, and a hideaway limb—are apparent in the pyric revenant but constantly ablaze. The other revenant has a burning datajack.

PYRIC REVENANTS (2)

CR 4

XP 1,200 each

HP 50 each (see page 60)

TACTICS

During Combat The undead attack the closest creatures, cursing in Vercite. If fighting in area **B1**, they might attack the dimensional shambler. If they do, consider allowing the players to roll for them.

Morale The revenants attack until destroyed.

Treasure: The pile of gear belonged to Evik and contains a ruined estex suit II adorned with intact charms of numerous deities or planes (most made of valuable materials, worth 300 credits in total) and a gear clamp holding a beacon (currently off and malfunctioning—it flickers every 1d4 rounds while on). A pair of *aura goggles* (*Starfinder Alien Archive* 25), a steel belt and bandolier holding a holstered red star plasma pistol (containing a battery with 8 charges), and a sheathed tactical knife, along with three batteries (20 charges each) all remain intact. A satchel affixed to the bandolier contains an advanced medkit, a flashlight, a hygiene kit, a motion detector, a subdermal extractor (*Starfinder Armory* 108), six R2Es, a box of 300 UPBs, and a datapad (*Armory* 100) loaded with Evik's personal logs.

Development: Evik's datapad is locked. Bypassing his security requires a successful DC 17 Computers check. The logs on the device describe the verthani expedition, starting just after Evik was hired a few months ago. It talks unfavorably of Lod Coster and his insistence that a planar expedition, which could start anywhere, begin at a portal on "the cursed planet of Aucturn." Upon arrival in Ezorod, Evik and Themma Kett helped Lod take "planar measurements" and quickly ascertained the team was still on the Material Plane, but somewhere in the sun. Then three monsters attacked. (Evik's description of

these creatures matches the dimensional shambler the PCs encountered earlier.) "A monster grabbed Asan, one of Coster's mercenaries, and disappeared with him." The other verthani fled for safety as the mercs fired on the remaining creatures. Evik's convinced they killed one and drove the other off, but one of the mercs, who called herself Cazi, died in the fight.

Evik waxes cynical about his use of the word "safety." He's certain the shamblers were attracted to the magic the team used to arrive in Ezorod. The logs also mention that the "halls of Ezorod are filled with fiery ghosts and corpses." A pack of them killed Halpetta near the "Three-Key Door" with "fire we couldn't extinguish." Evik later fled in horror when the group encountered a bizarre, alien light in a secret passage—a light that "disintegrated Themma's flesh." He was then cut off from the group when the chamber he retreated into turned from an odd scene with undead "screeching in a wall of fire" to one "overflowing with burning undead." He fled back toward what he calls "the portal plaza." On the way, his beacon malfunctioned.

The final entry is dated about 5 weeks ago. In it, Evik describes the Eshtayiv's Touch, as follows.

"My light failed. For only a few seconds I was in utter darkness. In those moments, something immense and horrible touched me soul-deep. I can feel an emptiness spreading, consuming me. Curse Coster for bringing us here! Everyone has to be dead. I've got to get out of here, but I'm so tired. So tired. A short rest, then."

Although he didn't know it, Evik also suffered from the colour out of space's aura of lassitude. He remained in this area until he died, after which he rose as a pyric revenant.

B3. THREE-KEY DOOR

A stone cube, perhaps twenty feet on each side, stands in the middle of this room, nearly touching the ceiling. The southwestern corner of the cube has been cut diagonally, allowing space for a door that looks to be made of the same stone as the walls. It bears three indentations, each about three inches across: one in the shape of a long flame, one in the shape of a shining sun, and the last in the shape of an explosion. The door has a blackened-metal push plate instead of a handle, and its frame is carved with jagged runes.

Four heaps of ash are piled around the front of the door, badly burned humanoid skulls evident in each. Among them is a stack of gear and burned modern armor resembling robes, along with an inactive and charred drone.

Four halls lead away from this room, one in each direction.

The remains here are those of pyric revenants. A PC who succeeds at a DC 21 Mysticism check can determine the remains are those of fiery undead. Anyone trained in Mysticism can identify the remains without a check if the PCs discovered the information from Evik's logs.

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A PC who examines the walls and door of the central cubic structure can see inlaid threads of coppery metal in the carvings on the stone. A character who succeeds at a DC 22 Mysticism or Physical Science check can identify this as the starmetal horacalcum, likely alloyed with djezet as indicated by its color. A PC trained in Mysticism who learns this information can deduce the starmetal alloy aids in creating a magical barrier. The entire structure has a strong magical aura of the abjuration school.

The door here has a magical seal (with an aura of abjuration; caster level 17th) consisting of six bar locks, two of which are tied to each indentation in the door. Each indentation matches one of three keys—the flare key, the radiance key, and the nova key—kept elsewhere in Ezorod. A PC who touches an empty indentation sees a beam of light race from the door to the hallway inscribed with the symbol corresponding to that key, pointing to the section of Ezorod where that key can be found. The flare key indentation goes to area **B4**, the radiance key to **B9**, and the nova to **B13**. Only PCs who touch the door see the light, instead feeling an uncomfortable burning in their limbs for a moment. Touching the push plate before inserting all three keys in their proper indentations imparts only a flash of longing related to the unfilled indentations. Opening the locks from this side is impossible—they're bars on the other side of the 2-foot-thick slab that's flush with the opening holding it. However, for

the purpose of *knock* spells or similar magic devices, each bar has a DC of 35. In addition, a character casting *knock* or using such a device must succeed at a DC 27 check (1d20 + caster level or item level), or the door counters the spell or effect. The door has hardness 50, 400 Hit Points, a break DC of 45, and fast healing 20. A character who tries to open this door using means other than the keys triggers the hazard (see below). In addition, the area beyond the door contains a permanent *planar barrier*. Incorporeal travel through the door here is impossible, although it is possible from the other side.

If the PCs place all three keys correctly and push, the door opens for 1 minute, revealing stone stairs that descend to area **C1**. The door slams shut loudly after being open for 1 minute, and the three keys teleport back to their original resting places. Anything used to keep this door open is shunted into area **C1**, and the door then closes anyway.

Hazard: Any creature that tries to force open the door without using its keys is subjected to the curse of the zealous (*Core Rulebook* 418). For the effects of this curse, trying to force open the door without the keys thereafter is considered to be the first hostile action in a combat.

Treasure: The drone is broken, but other than cosmetic differences, it is identical to the one the PCs are borrowing from the DCI. As seasoned experts, the PCs know this drone indicates the professionalism of Lod's Coster's team. Halpetta's datapad contains recordings from the drone (see Development below).

In addition to the drone, Halpetta's gear includes ruined, robe-like business stationwear armor (along with a destroyed gear clamp and flashlight), a holographic sashimono (symbol of Eloritu, *Armory* 104), a carbon staff, and a frostbite-class zero pistol (with 17 charges left). A scorched but functional industrial backpack contains six R2Es, five batteries (20 charges each), and the control datapad for the drone.

Development: Halpetta used the drone much as the PCs might use theirs. The control datapad is unlocked and contains footage of the verthani expedition retreating into this area just after the dimensional shambler attack. In the scene, the verthani bodyguards can be heard fighting the shambler off-screen. The drone ascends from in front of Halpetta, a short verthani woman wearing fashionable robes and her holographic sashimono, as she cries, in Vercite, "It's on, Lod."

A muscular verthani man in an armored harness nearby on the screen says, "Good," then yells, "Fighting retreat, people!"

The woman, pistol in hand, orders the drone to follow. Then gunfire erupts in the room as four humanoids that appear to be burning skeletons or corpses rush from the hallway to the south. The recording is chaotic during the combat, and the spy drone is knocked to the floor. From

there, the tilted image shows one of the fiery undead striking the woman, who combusts. The feed then fills with flame and goes dead.

B4. FLARE ENTRANCE

Ahead is a symbol of a long, curving flame—like a solar flare—carved on the floor. The symbol and runes surrounding it sprawl across the entire floor from one wall to the other.

The symbol matches one of those on the door in area **B3**. When the PCs cross the symbol on the floor, they see a solar flare flicker before them. Each PC feels empowered with light and gains the flare stellar revelation (*Core Rulebook* 104) while in areas **B4**, **B5**, **B6**, **B7**, and **B8**. A PC who isn't a solarian can activate this revelation but can't use any aspect that requires being attuned. In addition, if such a PC used the flash from flare, the revelation ends. A solarian also uses aspects that require being attuned, and they retain use of the revelation even after they use the flash from flare.

B5. SANCTUARY (CR 8)

Before the PCs enter this chamber, they can hear the roar of flame from the illusory wall of fire in this room as well as several voices singing strange hymns.

A roaring wall of flame to the north illuminates this room, which has a vaulted ceiling higher than the fire. The bottom of a stairway emerges from the fiery wall on the western side of the chamber. A section of wall stands crooked, like a slightly inwardly open door, in a similar place to the east. Several rough stone columns rise from the floor, but none reach the ceiling. A statue in the room's center resembles a series of orbs stacked atop one another, with stylized fire and eyes carved into them. A few carved tentacles extend the orbs, but most are broken. The walls are scorched, particularly near the sheet of flame, and bear runic carvings, some matching those on the statue or depicting a figure resembling the statue. The walls also show figures donning robes, venerating the central statue, and walking through fire. Two doors stand in the east wall, and a wide passageway exits to the south, opposite the curtain of fire.

PCs who look closer at the wall of fire or seek the source of the singing notice the creatures (see below) in the sheet of flame. A PC who succeeds at a DC 16 Perception check also sees apparitions similar to the revenants in the flames. This might clue the PCs in regarding the pyric manifestation (see Hazard below).

When the PCs enter this room, they have 5 rounds before the hazard springs and creatures here attack. The only way to avoid this eventuality is if all the PCs leave this area and head into area **B4**, **B6**, **B7**, or **B8**.

The wall of fire is only 20 feet tall, ending 5 feet below the ceiling. It's also an illusion. Those who move near it feel intense heat, but they can see the sphere of darkness beyond the wall,

floating in area **B6**, as a disturbing circular blotch of shadow on the sheet of flame. A character who succeeds at a DC 20 Mysticism check guesses the fire is a form of religious trial given the hints in the wall carvings. Disbelieving the illusion requires a successful DC 25 Will saving throw, although a character who touches the wall or passes through it discerns the illusion immediately. The wall does not impede movement.

The pillars are also 20 feet tall and the surface of each is rocky enough that a PC who succeeds at a DC 15 Athletics check can climb one. From the top of any pillar, the balcony (**B6**) is visible over the wall of fire. The creature there is also visible.

The secret door to the northeast, which is slightly open into area **B7**, is carved to depict a pit radiating light. A character who examines the door can see inlaid threads of starmetal alloy similar to that in area **B3**. This door radiates an aura of abjuration, though the open door provides a breach in that aura.

Creatures: Two pyric revenants stand in the illusory wall of fire, wailing nonsense hymns in Aklo and gazing at the room's central statue. They initially ignore the PCs. However, if the PCs attack, the hazard triggers, and the undead return hostilities. The same thing happens if the PCs don't leave the room, as described above.

A pyric wraith floats behind a lectern in area **B6**. If the PCs trigger hostilities, the wraith joins the fight during the second round, making this a CR 9 encounter.

PYRIC REVENANTS (2)

CR 4

XP 1,200 each

HP 50 each (see page 60)

TACTICS

During Combat The undead split up to attack separate creatures and spread their burning curse.

Morale The revenants attack until the PCs retreat, at which point the undead return to their worship. Otherwise, they fight until destroyed.

Hazard: If the PCs set off the hazard by lingering too long or attacking the undead, read or paraphrase the following.

The wall of flame explodes outward in a sulfurous wave of heat. As it does, burning undead emerge from the floor and walls in a fiery mass, filling all available space and reeking of charred flesh and burned bone.

PYRIC MANIFESTATION

CR 6

XP 2,400

Type magical; **Perception** Mysticism DC 29; **Disable**

Mysticism DC 24; a creature that succeeds at the disable check deals the hazard 25 damage rather than stopping it from manifesting.

EAC 19; **KAC** 19; **HP** 80; **Fort/Ref** +6; takes half damage from nonmagical non-area attacks; can be harmed as if undead

Trigger location; **Init** +11; **Duration** 1 minute; **Reset** 24 hours

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Effect Quasi-real pyric undead swarm the area, filling the empty space from the wall of fire to 40 feet south of it, including the second row of pillars. This manifestation is only 7 feet high and has multiple effects, as follows.

- When the manifestation appears, each creature in it takes 3d6 fire damage (this is pyric fire; see the special ability on page 58; Reflex DC 16 half). A creature who fails the save is also knocked prone.
- Each move into an affected square counts as 3 squares of movement.
- Each creature that ends its turn in the area takes 3d6 fire damage (pyric fire, Reflex DC 16 half). A creature that fails this saving throw by 5 or more is also shaken for 1 round. This condition is a mind-affecting fear effect.
- At the end of each round, the area of the manifestation expands by 5 feet.
- Pyric undead in the affected area benefit from concealment against attackers within 5 feet. Pyric undead farther away have total concealment against their attackers.

B6. BALCONY (CR 6)

This balcony is 10 feet above the floor of the wider templelike area below it. A stone railing 3 feet high edges the balcony. From the central point along this railing rises a stone lectern. A sphere of darkness about a foot across floats just in front of the lectern, about a dozen feet above the lower floor. To the west, a set of stairs descends from the platform. On the wall along their length and on the wall behind the lectern, engravings show progressive images of a fiery ball, like the sun in relief, swallowing a circular concavity. Once the concavity is swallowed, tendrils from the sunlike form reach inside it and eventually fill it with fire.

A PC who succeeds at a DC 20 Mysticism check recognizes the carvings as a common spiritual motif of light banishing darkness. These images, however, suggest the light is consuming the darkness rather than banishing it.

The secret door to the east is like the door in **B5**, except it's closed. A PC searching the area finds the door with a successful DC 30 Perception check. PCs who've studied the door in **B5** can see enough similarities in the engravings on this door to reduce the DC by 5. The door opens inward with any application of significant pressure.

PCs can easily reach the sphere of darkness. Darkvision can't penetrate the sphere, although a creature that has the see in darkness ability can see into it clearly. Without such a benefit, a creature must stare into or study the darkness as a move action or longer to notice the jewellike, flame-shaped ornament within, as it briefly flashes with dim light like a vision on the edge of their sight. PCs who see this vague image recognize it as similar to the flare symbol on the door in **B3** and the hallway at **B4**.

As hinted at in the wall carvings, the dark sphere can be banished with a light shone directly on it or placed inside it. Flame applied to the sphere also works to banish the darkness.

Creature: If the PCs evaded the danger in area **B5**, a pyric wraith hovers at the lectern. It wails hymns like the pyric revenants standing in the illusory wall of fire. The PCs must claim the flare key (see Treasure below) within 5 rounds, or else the wraith attacks. If it does so, the creatures in **B5** join in, setting off the hazard there, except the hazard fills the entire area north of the wall of fire and south to include the two northernmost pillars.

PYRIC WRAITH

CR 6

XP 2,400

HP 80 (see page 61)

TACTICS

During Combat The wraith attacks the PC closest to it, prioritizing any PC investigating the sphere of darkness.

Morale If the PCs escape from the chamber, including into the secret passage, the wraith goes back to its worship. Otherwise, it attacks relentlessly until destroyed.

Treasure: The ornament within the darkness is the flare key, one of the three keys required to open the doorway in **B3**. A PC can claim the object by reaching into the sphere and grabbing it. The PC doing so feels the sensation of three points of heat passing near the limb placed into the darkness. If the sphere is banished with light or flame, then the key instantly floats to whoever did the banishing. This key raises the light level one step in a pulse that extends to a 20-foot radius for 1 round, then dims to a 5-foot radius for 1 round, and then repeats.

Story Award: If the PCs recover the flare key without setting off the hazard or fighting the monsters, award them XP as if they had (7,200 XP total). If the PCs later trigger those encounters, they don't earn additional XP for them.

B7. PLANAR PRISON (CR 6)

PCs can see the green light of the creature before they enter.

The black stone in this broad, high passage is cleaner than elsewhere in Ezorod. The walls and even the floor and ceiling are etched with twisting runes and bizarre images of alien entities made of fire or stellar material. A reddish metal threads through the rock, especially among the runes. Near the center of the hallway is a pocked metallic nodule, cleanly broken to reveal a tiny hollow. North of the nodule is a heap of gear piled in a small mound of white ash.

Starmetal infuses the stone here, like the walls and door in **B3** and the secret door in **B5**. The walls radiate an aura of abjuration magic like those places do.

The broken nodule is a metallic meteorite, which a PC can identify with a successful DC 15 Physical Science check. An iridescent greenish tarnish coats the metal around the hollow

space inside it. The creature and ash are clues to the meteorite's origin. A PC who succeeds at a DC 25 Life Science check or, due to the ooze's eldritch nature—a Mysticism check using the same DC—identifies it as the “egg” of a colour out of space.

Creature: One of the verthani mercenaries, Isella, remains here as a colour-blighted creature, exuding greenish light. PCs can discern the nature of her affliction with the same checks used to identify the nature of the nodule here, and then use conjecture to identify the nodule and dust. Isella has little sense of self and pays no attention to events outside this hallway. However, she is aggressive toward those who aren't colour-blighted and attacks the PCs on sight.

ISELLA HALAND CR 6

XP 2,400

Female colour-blighted verthani soldier
(*Starfinder Alien Archive* 2 29,
Starfinder Alien Archive 118)

N Medium humanoid (verthani)

Init +5; **Senses** low-light vision;

Perception +13

DEFENSE HP 72

EAC 21; **KAC** 23

Fort +6; **Ref** +8; **Will** +7

Defensive Abilities guard's protection

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft., fly 30 ft. (jetpack, average)

Melee warfan +16 (1d8+9 S)

Ranged static arc rifle +16 (1d12+6 E; critical arc 1d6) or
flash grenade II +16 (explode [10 ft., blinded 1d4 rounds,
DC 14])

Offensive Abilities fighting styles (guard)

TACTICS

During Combat Isella falls back on her training, moving to take cover and throw her grenade first. She then focuses her fire to bring down one enemy at a time. During the fight, she moans (a PC who succeeds at a DC 20 Sense Motive check can tell she is in pain), accompanied by abnormal croaking. Occasionally, she says, “The colour... it burns,” and “Nothing... nothing,” or similar phrases in Vercite.

Morale Isella seeks an end to the constant pain she's in. She fights until slain. Then, with a sigh and a look of relief, she crumbles to white dust.

STATISTICS

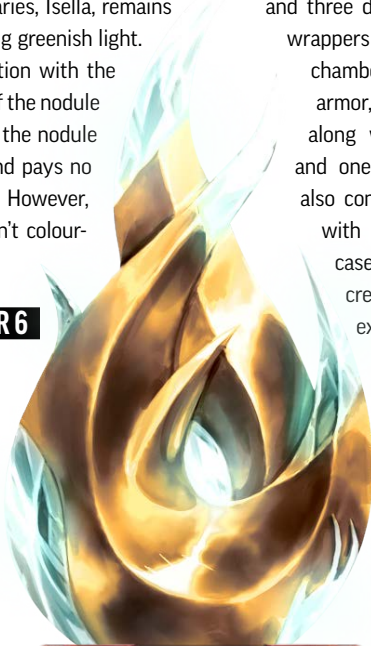
Str +3; **Dex** +5; **Con** -1; **Int** +1; **Wis** +0; **Cha** -5

Skills Athletics +18, Medicine +13

Languages Common, Vercite

Other Abilities armor training

Gear freebooter armor II (jetpack), static arc rifle with 1 high-capacity battery (40 charges), warfan^{AR}, beacon, gear clamp, satchel (3 R2Es, hygiene kit, credstick with 500 credits); **Augmentations** standard datajack, mk 1 dermal plating, prosthetic arm



FLARE KEY

Treasure: The gear in the white ash includes a suit of kasatha microcord III (with a beacon on a gear clamp), a belt with a holstered advanced semi-auto pistol, tactical knife, and a *mk 2 null-space chamber*. Inside the chamber are fifteen R2Es and three days' worth of field rations, along with empty wrappers and containers for used R2Es and rations. The chamber also holds engineering specialty tool kits for armor, weapons, and technological gear are inside, along with five mobile hotelier tents—four singles and one triple—each with one battery. The chamber also contains five *mk 2 serums of healing*, a grappler with 200 feet of titanium cable line, a compact case holding 1,000 UPBs, and a credstick (750 credits). The chamber might also contain any other exploration gear you care to add.

Development: The PCs might be interested in saving Isella rather than dispatching her. She has the colour-blighted template graft (normally she has Constitution +2 and Charisma +1) and is affected by the colour out of space's aura of lassitude. If the PCs manage to accomplish the difficult task of removing both effects, the mercenary is relieved to have survived her ordeal, though distraught at the loss of Cazindira and Asan. She wants nothing more than to flee Ezorod and prefers to wait aboard the *Sun Diver* while the PCs conduct their explorations.

B8. ABLUTION CHAMBER

The centerpiece of this almost cubic room is a trough-like pool filled with translucent fluid. Several stone pegs jut from the walls to the south and east. The only exit leads to the north.

A character trained in Mysticism recognizes the room as an ablution chamber, a place in which the devoted wash in preparation for sacred duties.

If a character disturbs the fluid, it ripples in a hypnotic fashion. The creature that disturbed the pool must attempt a DC 17 Will save. On a success, the ripples continue in a normal fluid motion. On a failure, the PC sees the ripples amplify until they rise and form an image only that character can see.

In the image, the entire party stands in this room, wearing matching robes of black, gold, and white with bizarre symbols on them. Another robed PC tells the viewer, as if instructing a child, “We must put our true faith aside and placate the Eshtayiv. In this way, we distract them while the others complete the oubliette to hold them until the universe dies.”

The PC's companions remove their robes to hang them on pegs before pulling cloaks of shimmering gold out of thin air that they immediately wear. They look to the envisioning PC.

The PC seems to speak, saying, “But does the Eshtayiv not love the darkness?”

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Another companion chides, “No, the Eshtayiv loathes the darkness, seeking to burn it away with hateful light, which is why they doom all they devour. Lest we imprison the Eshtayiv, they would bring an end even to the gods of the Dark Tapestry. Prepare and then come. We will wait for you.”

The PC’s robed companions then walk out of the room, and the fluid in the pool stills. As the vision ends, the PC experiencing it must attempt another DC 17 Will save. On a success, the PC senses a glow from a space in between realities. If the PC tries to interact with the glow, a shimmering gold *mk 2 diffraction cloak* (Armory 112) appears in their hand. Although any number of PCs can experience the vision, only one cloak ever appears.

B9. RADIANCE ENTRANCE

Ahead, a radiant star-bearing several flourishes and bizarre runes, is carved into the passage’s floor.

The symbol here matches one of the indentations on the door in area **B3**. When the PCs cross the symbol on the floor, they see a shining star flicker before them. Each PC feels energized and gains the glow of life stellar revelation (Core Rulebook 104), using their character level as their solarian level, while in areas **B9–B12**. A PC who isn’t a solarian can activate this revelation but can’t use any aspect that requires being attuned, and once they use the revelation, this effect ends. A solarian can use aspects that require being attuned and retains use of this revelation after activating it; in addition, they can use the revelation once as a swift action instead of a move action.

B10. CELLS (CR 8)

The PCs are likely to notice the light from the creatures that linger here.

This hall has several arched openings in the east wall, each five feet wide and ten feet high.

The bare cells along the hall contain only varying collections of soot and ash.

Creatures: One pyric wraith waits in the middle cell, and another lingers in the northernmost chamber. When one attacks the PCs, the other emerges to join the fight during the next round.

PYRIC WRAITHS (2) CR 6

XP 2,400 each

HP 80 each (see page 61)

TACTICS

During Combat The wraiths divide their attacks to light as many foes aflame as possible. They concern themselves little with attacks of opportunity until reduced to 40 Hit Points or fewer.

Morale These wraiths keep fighting until destroyed, and they chase foes who flee the area.

B11. MAP ROOM (CR 8)

The PCs can see the dim light the creature here sheds when rounding the corner from **B10**. This creature pretends to be an inanimate light; see its tactics.

The eastern and southern walls of this rectangular chamber bear a carving of a vast map of planets or something similar. Wide archways lead out of this room to the north and west.

The wall carvings here form a massive map of the sun’s interior. On the map are seven marked locations, labeled in Aklo. Six of the sites are scorched and gouged as if by three massive, fiery claws. PCs who try to read the final site realize, from seeing the word in Aklo before, that it bears the name “Ezorod” along with other information.

A character who can read Aklo not only learns the names of the other sites—Kybyu, Dalorod, Nyartat, Og, Thuugha, and Zadorod—but also realizes the additional information contains astrogation coordinates. A PC who succeeds at a DC 25 Piloting check can ascertain the location of each site on its own and relative to the others. All locales are within the sun. Each has also ceased to exist. A PC who succeeds at a DC 18 Mysticism check can guess the marring indicates this possibility.

Creature: A pyric harbinger hangs like a miniature sun in the southeastern corner of this room. With its life sense, it becomes aware of the PCs before they fully enter the room. When the PCs see the pyric harbinger, they might think it’s a decoration, though a character who sees the harbinger and feels the alien presence it exudes can recognize it as a creature with a successful DC 22 Life Science check. If this check succeeds by 5 or more, the PC knows what this rare creature actually is.

PYRIC HARBINGER CR 8

XP 4,800

HP 110 (see page 58)

TACTICS

Before Combat Mindful of its innocuous appearance, the harbinger waits for PCs to become complacent, perhaps even wandering into reach, before it attacks. It attacks immediately if it senses its prey knows it’s a creature.

During Combat The harbinger remains aloft and out of reach, firing its pyric beam.

Morale When reduced to 25 Hit Points or fewer, the harbinger flees to area **B12**. It makes a final stand there.

B12. SOLAR MODEL (CR 7)

PCs can see the glow of the model here as they approach from the hallway. The temperature becomes warmer as the PCs move closer to this room.

This irregular room contains a vast clockwork globe made of glowing curved metal pieces mounted on a metal armature connected to a spherical pivot in the center of the room. The

top of this pivot is hinged, like a lid. The air here is very warm compared to other areas of this structure.

A character who succeeds at a DC 25 Physical Science check can tell the globe is an elaborate model of the sun. Studying the model for 10 minutes allows a character to take 10 on this check, even if they previously failed the check. The PCs recognize that the model is made of siccattite. In addition, the model is hybrid technology, and it radiates an aura of conjuration. The model represents large swaths of the sun's surface, along with deeper layers, including some farther down than the PCs have yet delved. This model's details rival technological models produced in the Pact Worlds.

The model is comprised of metal plates mounted on rods that can be swung about to allow examination of the inner pieces. However, the closer the pieces are to the center, the more difficult it is to move aside the outer plates. The entire model, therefore, functions as a giant puzzle box, the center of which is visible but hard to reach. In addition, the siccattite pieces are hot to the touch, becoming hotter closer to the central spherical pivot.

The model has four layers. Reaching the pivot requires moving the pieces of each layer aside in a way that permits the inner pieces to also move. The pieces move only if directly touched by a creature with an Intelligence score of 4 or higher. Deciding how to move the pieces requires the character to first evaluate the model's layer with a successful Engineering, Perception, Physical Science, or an appropriate Profession skill, using the DCs listed for each layer of the model, below. One PC attempts the check, but others can aid the effort, though a PC can assist only if they are able to see a given layer, so after the first layer, such a PC must be in the model's space. This evaluation takes 10 minutes minus a number of minutes equal to the amount by which the evaluation check succeeded, to a minimum of 1 minute.

Once the evaluation of a given layer is complete, the PCs can attempt to move the pieces of that layer. One PC attempts an Engineering check (using the DC listed for that layer, below) to oversee and participate in moving the pieces, and other PCs can assist by using Acrobatics, Athletics, or Engineering. A PC can assist with moving the pieces only if they are able to touch a layer. On a success, the PCs can access the next inner layer. Moving the pieces takes only 1 minute. Failure indicates the pieces interfere with one another, stopping further movement. The PC must repeat both the evaluation and moving the pieces.

The PCs can instead disassemble the model, layer by layer, to forge a path. Doing so still requires a PC to successfully evaluate as described earlier. Disassembly of enough of the

model to allow passage requires a PC to spend 10 minutes and a succeed at an Engineering check with a DC 5 higher than that listed to move the parts of that layer. PCs can still use other skills to aid another.

Details of each layer are as follows. Temperatures described in this section refer to heat dangers (*Core Rulebook* 402). Radiation severity refers to rules on pages 403–404 of the *Core Rulebook*. Fire damage is dealt whether moving the layer was successful or not. Disassembling the model causes the fire damage to double and allows the environmental conditions of an exposed layer to leak into the whole room.

First Layer: Evaluation and moving require successful DC 16 checks. The air near this layer is hot, but not hazardingly so. Each PC participating in moving the pieces takes 1 fire damage.

Second Layer: The air between the first and second layers is very hot. Evaluation and moving the pieces require successful DC 18 checks. Each PC participating in moving the pieces takes 1d6 fire damage.

Third Layer: The atmosphere between the second and third layers is one of severe heat and low radiation. Evaluation and moving the pieces require successful DC 18 checks. Each PC participating in moving the pieces takes 2d6 fire damage.

Fourth Layer: The atmosphere between the third and fourth layers is one of extreme heat and medium radiation. Evaluation and moving pieces require successful DC 20 checks. Each PC participating in moving the pieces takes 3d6 fire damage.

Treasure: Inside the pivot is a small compartment that contains a luminous crystal in the shape of a shining sun. This object is the radiance key, one of the keys to open the door in area **B3**. This key increases the light level two steps in a 20-foot radius and one step for another 20 feet.

In addition, PCs who disassemble the model can gather 2 bulk of siccattite from the first two layers, and 1 bulk of siccattite from the third and fourth. The PCs can continue to disassemble the model for siccattite, but doing so takes many hours.

Story Award: If the PCs overcome the model to recover the radiance key, award them 3,200 XP.

RADIANCE KEY

B13. NOVA ENTRANCE

Ahead, a carving on the ground looks like an explosion. Runes and decorative trimmings cover the floor between the passage's walls.

The symbol matches one of those on the door in area **B3**. When the PCs cross the symbol on the floor, they see a sun glimmer before them and then explode into cosmic dust. The onrushing particles infuse the PCs, giving each access to the

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stellar rush stellar revelation (*Core Rulebook* 104) while in areas **B13–B17**. A PC who isn't a solarian can activate this revelation but can't use any aspect that requires being attuned, and once they use the revelation, it ends. A solarian can utilize aspects that require being attuned and retains use of the revelation after utilizing it; in addition, a solarian gains a +2 bonus to EAC while using the revelation and for 1 round thereafter.

B14. WORKSHOP (CR 9)

Stone tables line the walls of this room, although they contain only scattered shards and powder. Jagged runes pulsing with a sickly green light cover a door near the southeast corner.

This room was once a laboratory for the devices that power Ezorod. The door fills the whole room with dim light; it is an enchanted object that radiates an aura of abjuration and necromancy as part of the hazard (see below).

Creatures: Two pyric revenants recline on the tables farthest from the western door here. A pyric wraith paces in front of the trapped door, remaining within 10 feet of it until a battle starts.

PYRIC REVENANTS (2) CR 4

XP 1,200 each

HP 50 each (see page 60)

TACTICS

During Combat These revenants start combat prone, but they stand to attack anyone opening the western door.

Morale The revenants fight until destroyed, but they remain in this room.

PYRIC WRAITH CR 6

XP 2,400

HP 80 (see page 61)

TACTICS

During Combat The wraith focuses its attacks on anyone who tries to move toward the hazardous door.

Morale If the PCs flee, the wraith chases them. It keeps fighting until destroyed.

Hazard: Lod Coster set off a trap when he came here to retrieve the nova key. The active trap creates an ongoing hazard, which the glow of the creatures here mitigates, since the hazard doesn't affect the undead.

LIGHT-KILLING PULSE CR 6

XP 2,400

Type magical; **Perception** Mysticism DC 32; **Disable**

Mysticism DC 27 (while touching the door, suppresses the effect for 10 minutes); a creature that succeeds at the disable check by 5 or more disables the trap for 24 hours

Trigger location; **Duration** ongoing; **Reset** ongoing

Effect A perceptible pulse of abjuration magic dispels magical light and shuts off technological light by discharging

attached batteries. This pulse occurs at the start of every third round. The light endures (and battery charges remain) if the creature holding the light succeeds at a DC 17 Will saving throw. A creature that fails this save by 5 or more is blinded for 1 round + 1 round for every 2 by which they failed the save, up to 3 rounds.

B15. MIRROR VAULT (CR 8)

Multiple mirrored slabs stand in this room, each fifteen feet high, ten feet wide, and five feet thick. The light reflecting around these slabs is dazzling, and the heat is intense. Pulses of light and heat emanate from the southern end of the room.

The heat here is extreme (*Core Rulebook* 403). While the nova key remains in its niche (see *Treasure*), the heat and light emanations continue from the southern section of the room.

Ezorod's architects perfected the mirrors used in area **C5** here. These leftovers are imperfect but made of a composite as strong as a starship bulkhead (*Core Rulebook* 408).

Creature: A pyric harbinger wanders among the mirrors here, fascinated with its reflection. If it notices the reflections of any other creatures, it becomes enraged and attacks.

When combat begins, each PC must attempt a DC 25 Perception check. Those who succeed identify the harbinger's correct position. Those who fail initially believe two harbingers are in the room, and such a character has a 50% chance of targeting the monster's reflection instead of the creature itself. Anyone who fails by 10 or more believes four harbingers are present. Such a PC has only a 25% chance of targeting the creature accurately. Once the harbinger attacks, the PCs automatically identify the creature's correct location until the harbinger moves at least 30 feet on its turn.

PYRIC HARBINGER CR 8

XP 4,800

HP 110 (see page 58)

TACTICS

During Combat The harbinger remains mobile. If it moves at least 30 feet on its turn, it forces the PCs to reassess its position. However, the subsequent Perception checks are only DC 22, and a PC has at worst a 50% chance of choosing the wrong target on a failure.

Morale If reduced to 50 Hit Points or fewer, the harbinger flees through the crack in the southwestern wall. It circles the area and ambushes the PCs later near **B13**. There, it fights until it drops below 20 Hit Points. It then circles back to this room. If the PCs pursue it here again, it fights to the death.

Treasure: The monolith at the center of the room's southern end has a niche on its south side, 5 feet from the floor. This niche contains a jewellike object that looks like a star that just exploded. This object is the nova key required to open the

door in area **B3**. When removed from the niche, the room goes dark except for the light from the key, which is like that of the radiance key found in area **B12**.

B16. TECH VAULT (CR 8)

This room contains a few stone plinths at varying heights. Several badly corroded devices—little more than piles of powder—litter these pedestals. Similar grainy powder covers a large, square section of the floor in the eastern end of this room.

The builders of Ezorod stored devices here. Time and the eldritch attention of the Eshtayiv have caused most to corrode. When touched, they crumble into grainy powder just like that found in the eastern part of the room. However, this dust can be of value (see Treasure below).

Creature: A bizarre six-armed golem of Medium size and with an alien visage stands in the powder to the east. It opens its glowing eyes when the PCs enter the room and attacks.

CYBERNETIC GOLEM

CR 8

XP 4,800

HP 125 (*Starfinder Alien Archive* 2 66)

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Ranged red star plasma cannon +16 (2d10+8 E & F [explode DC 16]; critical burn 1d8)

TACTICS

During Combat The golem prefers melee attacks, and it avoids attacking multiarmed foes. Its programming is faulty. The golem knows to protect the vault, so it attacks the PCs, but it listens intently to anything they say. A PC who succeeds at a DC 27 Mysticism or Sense Motive check guesses the golem is listening for commands or a password. A character can cause the golem to cease its attacks for 1 minute by succeeding at a DC 15 Charisma check; language doesn't matter, only intent. The golem resumes hostilities if the PCs remain in this room after that time or attack it again at any time. The PCs can also calm a berserk golem as if they were its creators.

Morale The golem guards this vault relentlessly. It remains here if intruders retreat.

Treasure: A PC who examines the grainy powder and succeeds at a DC 25 Engineering or Mysticism check realizes the granules are similar to UPBs and could be used as such. The powdered objects here total 2,000 UPBs (2 bulk).

The cyborg's weapons are alien technology, but PCs who have witnessed their use need to attempt no checks to deduce their function. Removing the devices takes a character trained in Engineering a few minutes. Even if calmed, the golem resumes combat if a character attempts to remove its equipment.

Story Award: If the PCs calm the golem, reward them XP as if they defeated it in combat.

B17. TREASURE VAULT

PCs note the door radiates warmth before they enter this room. The door is hot to the touch. Hot air bursts into the cooler hall when the door opens.

Several stone chests here are heaped with precious metals and jewels. The wall to the east is cracked, and a narrow gap in the stone extends back to where a pulsing light is dimly visible.

The room is full of severe heat that becomes more intense closer to the crack in the eastern wall, though it never becomes extreme. The crack is 2 feet wide.

Treasure: The wealth here—silver, various other valuable metals, and gems—weighs 25 bulk. These trade goods are collectively worth 6,000 credits.

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Once the PCs have collected all three keys, they can open the sealed door in area **B3** and proceed into the heart of Ezorod, an area known as the Illuminant Heart.

C. THE ILLUMINANT HEART

The stairs from **B3** lead down to Ezorod's control center. This level, called the Illuminant Heart, is a small demiplane of warped geometry. Halls and chambers of the Illuminant Heart fold back on each other, making the level a loop. Despite its strange geometry, the Illuminant Heart has the same thick walls, omnipresent charring, and 25-foot-high ceilings as the rest of Ezorod. Ilvatri, a pyric heliacus who resides here, has altered parts of the area to suit him.

C1. LOWER LANDING

This oddly shaped chamber is made of charred stone, but its dimensions seem subtly wrong, as though its straight lines curve at the edge of vision. A wide staircase leads up to the

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north, narrowing dramatically as it ascends, and an opening to the east emits a feeble glow in a strange, greenish hue.

The stairs to the north lead up to area **B3**. From this side, the door opens easily. It swings shut again after 1 minute, as detailed in the entry for area **B3**.

The glow from the east is noticeable, but it doesn't illuminate this room sufficiently to avert the Eshtayiv's Touch. The light comes from the colour-blighted Lod in area **C2**. Identifying the color as similar to that which affected Isella in area **B7** requires a PC to succeed at a DC 20 Perception check. Due to the bizarre planar nature of the Illuminant Heart, the colour's light extends into this area, but its aura doesn't reach beyond areas **C7** and **C8**.

C2. OVERFLOW INTERSECTION (CR 9)

The green light of the colour out of space in **C7** is brighter here, emanating from just beyond the alcove.

This intersection has exits to the northwest, to the southwest, and in an alcove to the east. The floor contains strange carvings that appear to run in parallel or perpendicular lines but cross each other at angles just at the edge of vision.

Creature: Lod Coster stands here against the western wall, using his skin mimic ability through his clearweave and staring vacantly to the east. A thrall of the colour out of space, he appears to be a bizarre, glowing statue. When the PCs enter this intersection, Lod attacks. If any PC fails a DC 22 Perception check, Lod benefits from a surprise round.

| | |
|---|--------------------|
| LOD COSTER | CR 9 |
| XP 6,400 | |
| Male colour-blighted verthani mystic (<i>Starfinder Alien Archive</i> 2 29, <i>Starfinder Alien Archive</i> 118) | |
| N Medium humanoid (verthani) | |
| Init +2; Senses low-light vision; Perception +17 | |
| DEFENSE | HP 100 RP 4 |
| EAC 23; KAC 24 | |
| Fort +6; Ref +8; Will +12 | |
| OFFENSE | |
| Speed 30 ft. | |
| Melee carbon staff +18 (1d8+14 B; critical knockdown) | |
| Ranged refraction perforator pistol +16 (2d6+11 So; critical bleed 1d6) | |
| Mystic Spell-Like Abilities (CL 9th) | |
| 9/day— <i>mind probe</i> (DC 20) | |
| At will— <i>mindlink</i> | |
| Mystic Spells Known (CL 9th) | |
| 3rd (3/day)— <i>mind thrust</i> (DC 20), <i>tongues</i> | |
| 2nd (6/day)— <i>augury</i> , <i>force blast</i> (DC 19), <i>hold person</i> (DC 19), <i>mystic cure</i> | |
| 1st (at will)— <i>detect thoughts</i> (DC 18), <i>identify</i> | |
| Connection Akashic | |

TACTICS

During Combat As battle begins, Lod mutters in Common, "Ill luck to come so far and end here." It's unclear if he's talking to the PCs or to himself. He prefers spells such as *mind thrust* and *force blast*, casting *hold person* on foes who press him in melee combat.

MORALE DRIVEN BY ALIEN COMPULSIONS, LOD FIGHTS UNTIL RENDERED UNCONSCIOUS OR SLAIN. STATISTICS

Str +4; **Dex** +2; **Con** -2; **Int** +3; **Wis** +6; **Cha** -5

Skills Culture +17, Life Science +17, Medicine +22, Mysticism +22, Sense Motive +17

Languages Aklo, Common, Infernal, Vercite

Other Abilities access Akashic Record, peer into the future 1/ day, skin mimic

Gear clearweave II^{AR}, carbon staff, refraction perforator pistol^{AR} with 2 high-capacity batteries (40 charges each), *ring of sustenance*, 3 mk 2 *serums of healing*, advanced medkit, datapad

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Skin Mimic (Ex) See page 118 of the *Starfinder Alien Archive*.

Development: Lod's datapad is a tier 4 computer containing a data module with a wealth of information about Aucturn, cults of Verces, and planar gateways, along with a library of lore about the Outer Gods. Hacking into this datapad requires a successful DC 29 Computers check. It has a feedback countermeasure (*Core Rulebook* 217). If the PCs hack into the datapad, they obtain Lod's logs, which allow them to learn much about the verthani expedition. In addition, the datapad has information on numerous bizarre cults, the Outer Gods, and Ezorod.

Lod Coster was a serious man. He delved into lore of the Outer Gods not out of faith or curiosity, but out of greed. Lod realized that cults and fringe groups often discover and hoard ancient treasures, and even better, nobody misses these cults when they disappear. He tracked down such groups and took their ill-gotten gains for himself. After a lifetime of research and successfully disrupting numerous cults, Lod had amassed a small fortune. He spent much of it on a gamble to find Ezorod so he could plunder the relics he suspected it contains.

The PCs might want to save Lod as doing so can gain them a valuable ally. He is currently suffering the same afflictions as Isella (see area **B7**); he normally has Constitution +1 and Charisma +2. If cured, Lod returns to his former personality, which is arrogant, self-assured, and greedy. Lod is glad to be alive and far from broken up about the loss of his team.

If he recovers in Ezorod, Lod is hesitant to share the spoils. He joins the PCs, but he's used to being in charge and becomes coldly angry when disobeyed. If the PCs fail to heed his wishes, he could withhold his aid until the PCs change their attitudes.

In any case, if the PCs help Lod Coster survive, he might be a good contact for them in the future. Even if they don't, they might learn via a *speak with dead* spell how he ran afoul of the colour out of space and served it.

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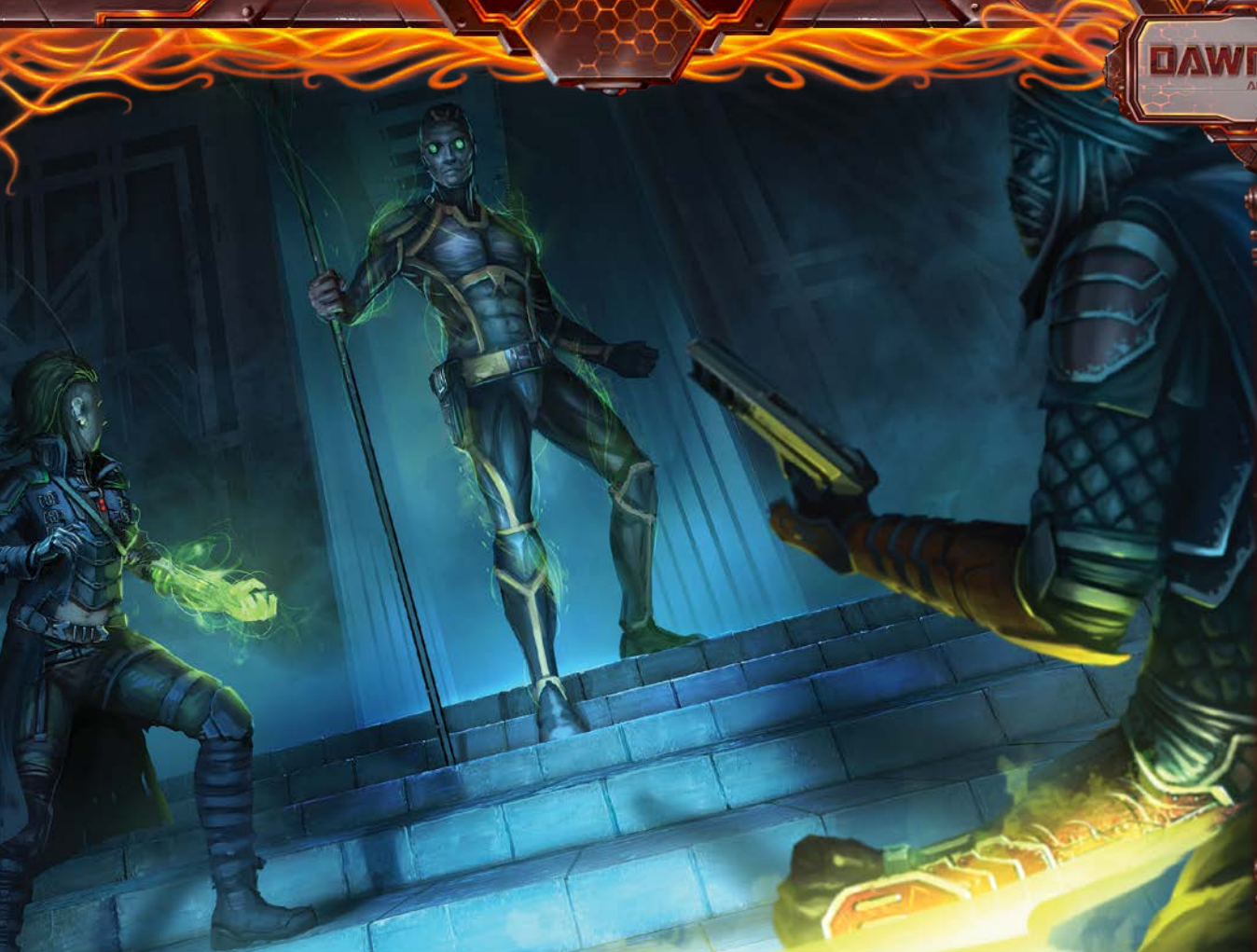
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If they save Lod or ask the right questions via *Speak with dead*, the PCs can learn the following information. The Eshtayiv doesn't make plans the way mortal creatures understand them, but they sometimes compel or influence other creatures to do their bidding. Unable to affect the darkness engine directly, the Eshtayiv called to a colour out of space to subvert the device. The colour arrived in Ezorod in a metal meteor that a corrupted guardian "discovered" and brought into the structure. Unfortunately for the Eshtayiv, the sentinels of Ezorod here were prepared for such invaders. They recognized the meteor was a creature in its embryonic form and imprisoned it in **B7** before it hatched. The colour lay forgotten in that chamber for ages until Lod Coster stumbled upon it.

The colour then used Lod to gather the keys and make its way to the Illuminant Heart. Most of Ezorod's current inhabitants, indirect offspring of the Eshtayiv, ignored the colour and its thrall. When the colour arrived in **C7**, it left Coster to his fate. It inhabited the darkness engine, slowly infusing the darkness around Ezorod with its alien hue.

C3. CRACKED GLASS HALL

This angled hall contains two alcoves, each with countless pieces of half-melted glass inset into the scorched stone of the walls. A large block of translucent glass is also set into the floor, and a hallway is just barely visible beneath it. Openings lead out of the hall to the west and east.

The alcoves (**C3a** and **C3b**) once bore depictions of the first wardens of Ezorod and contained fragments of their souls. Over the eons, the Eshtayiv's rage caused the glass to melt and fracture, making the images unrecognizable and nearly obliterating the soulstuff trapped within. Each piece of glass is only an inch or so in diameter, and if touched or jostled, a fragment and those near it shatter, dealing 1d4 piercing damage (Reflex DC 17 half) to creatures within 5 feet and releasing a flash of psychic energy. A creature that takes damage is also confused for 1 round (Will DC 17 negates). Each mosaic contains hundreds of glass pieces, but an effect that shatters them all causes the glass to deal no more than 10d4 damage to nearby creatures.

The translucent glass in the floor is, despite its appearance, just as sturdy as the stone throughout Ezorod. It allows a view into **C6** as though that area was directly below this room. A PC who succeeds at a DC 20 Perception check when peering through the translucent glass can hazily make out the three stone cubes and the orb there, provided their light source can illuminate the floor 25 feet below.

C4. PURIFICATION FONTS

This passageway angles slightly to the west. The northern wall contains two triangular alcoves, and in each of them is a large, semicircular basin jutting from the wall three feet from the floor.



C. THE ILLUMINANT HEART

1 SQUARE = 10 FEET

The basins here were once used for ritual purification purposes. The basin in the eastern alcove is cracked and empty, while the basin in the western alcove contains a shallow pool of gritty, gray sludge.

Treasure: The sludge looks repulsive, but it is valuable. A PC can recognize its effects by taking a few rounds to examine it and succeeding at a DC 17 Mysticism check. The substance is equivalent to *serum of enhancement* (sensate). The basin holds enough for 3 doses.

C5. ENDLESS HALL (CR 10)

This long, straight hallway contains mirror-bright walls that converge at a point that seems impossibly distant.

This east-west hall looks impossibly long and, indeed, a creature walking down it carelessly can do so forever and never reach an end. Mirrored monoliths set into each of the northern and southern walls create this spatial dilation. These monoliths are essentially the same as the mirror slabs in area **B15**, although these objects are perfected versions. They create a teleportation field that affects anything, matter or energy, in the hall.

The field instantly teleports anything moving east or west down the hall back to the entry side, making an apparently infinitely long trip as the same 20 feet of hallway repeats over

and over. The teleportation field creates the visual illusion that this corridor is made of a series of mirrored blocks 20 feet wide and 25 feet tall, though in reality only two of these blocks actually line the hall. Because of this field, anything to the east of the mirrors is invisible to and cannot be reached by anything to the west. Similarly, anything to the west of the mirrors is invisible and cannot be reached by anything coming from the east. Anything entering the space between the mirrors can leave the side it entered by turning around and walking back. No matter how far a creature thought it moved forward, upon turning around and going back, the return distance is never more than 20 feet.

The field produces a detectable conjuration (teleportation) aura, but a PC can overcome the effect in a manner similar to disbelieving an illusion. A PC in the field can attempt a DC 18 Will save each round. On a failure, the PC remains in the field for 1 round. On a success, the PC permanently overcomes the effect, can move through the area normally, and sees the 20-foot section of hall as it actually is. A PC who witnesses another creature move normally out of the seemingly endless field gains a +4 circumstance bonus to overcome the effect. A creature that has discerned the effect can't carry an affected creature out of the field. The affected creature still teleports back to the entry point.

Creature: A greater solar fire elemental waits at the east side of this hall, out of sight of anyone approaching from

the west. This guardian watches intruders in the teleportation field. As soon as a creature overcomes the field and can see the elemental, it attacks.

GREATER SOLAR FIRE ELEMENTAL CR 9

XP 6,400

N Huge variant outsider (elemental, extraplanar, fire)

Init +8; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; **Perception** +17

DEFENSE HP 145

EAC 22; **KAC** 24

Fort +13; **Ref** +11; **Will** +8

Defensive Abilities void adaptation; **DR** 10/—; **Immunities** elemental immunities, fire; **Weaknesses** vulnerable to cold

OFFENSE

Speed 50 ft.

Melee slam +22 (2d10+15 B & F; critical burn 2d4)

Space 15 ft.; **Reach** 15 ft.

TACTICS

During Combat The elemental stays on the east side of the field, reaching into the field to strike with its slam. From the perspective of any PC that hasn't overcome the effect, the attack looks like an impossibly long fiery fist coming from the end of the hall, striking, and then pulling away.

Morale Here to prevent anyone from going farther into the Illuminant Heart, the elemental fights until destroyed.

STATISTICS

Str +6; **Dex** +4; **Con** +3; **Int** -3; **Wis** +0; **Cha** +0

Skills Acrobatics +17, Athletics +17

Feats Mobility

Languages Ignan

Other Abilities solar adaptation

Story Award: The spatial dilation here increases this encounter's challenge. Award the PCs 3,200 extra XP when they overcome it.

C6. ARMORY (CR 7)

Three stone cubes, each about five feet on a side, stand in this hallway. Each holds a strange device—one a mask, the second a bracer, and the third a crystal. A spiny sphere about five feet in diameter sits on the floor among them, under the easternmost section of part of the ceiling made of translucent glass. This glass provides a hazy view of a hallway above.

Unlike the items in **B16**, the items here remain in good condition because of the timeless nature of the Illuminant Heart. Ilvatri has studied these devices and left them here, trapped to foil intruders.

Trap: In the center of the area, placed so it can hit anyone near a plinth in this passageway, is a spiny sphere built as a trap rather than a treasure. If the PCs touch the sphere or any other object here, they trigger this trap. Its spikes burrow into flesh and seek out vital organs.

BREATH-STEALER MASK

The following item is found in area **C6**.

BREATH-STEALER MASK

LEVEL 7

HYBRID ITEM (WORN)

PRICE 6,800

BULK L

This mask of dark stone is just large enough to fit over the nose and mouth of a human, although it has a hole about an inch across in the center. A ring of brassy metal, an alloy of djezet and mithral, surrounds this hole on the mask's outside. The mask counts as a worn magic item unless you install it in armor, taking up one upgrade slot.

As a standard action while wearing the mask, you can forcefully inhale. If you do so, creatures that need to breathe within a 30-foot-radius spread of you must succeed at a DC 17 Fortitude saving throw or become short of breath, rendering them fatigued for 1 minute. You can exclude any number of creatures from this effect. Environmental protections offer no benefit against this effect. A target exhausted by the mask can attempt a saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending that condition on itself if successful. A target that succeeds at such a save still remains fatigued for the full duration.

Once you use this item, you can't do so again until you take a 10-minute rest during which you could regain Stamina Points. If you use any *breath-stealer mask*, you can't use another for the same period. If you try to use any *breath-stealer mask* more than three times per day, the mask targets you and every breathing creature it can within range of its power. You can spend 1 Resolve Point to activate the mask without being subjected to these limitations, but you can spend no more than 2 Resolve Points per day to activate any *breath-stealer mask*.

SEEKING-SPINES ORB

CR 7

XP 3,200

Type hybrid; **Perception** automatic to see the spiny orb;

Mysticism DC 30 to sense the pent-up energy and recognize it as a trap; **Disable** Mysticism DC 25 (dispel the spikes' animation magic from a distance)

Trigger touch; **Duration** 5 rounds; **Reset** none

Effect spine +19 ranged (3d4 P); multiple targets (all targets in 40-ft. radius); **Secondary Effect** at the end of each of its turns, an affected target must succeed at a DC 17 Fortitude save or take 1d4 piercing damage; on each failure, the damage for the next round increases by 1d4, to a maximum of 5d4 after the fourth failed save; a target that succeeds at 2 consecutive saves ends the effect; a target that takes 10 or more damage in a single round from this ongoing effect is stunned until the end of its next turn.

Treasure: Three alien devices remain here on display: a *breath-stealer mask*, an *arriver soul projector*, and a bizarre crystal equivalent to a *minor gluon crystal*. See the sidebars on pages 33

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SOUL PROJECTOR

The following item is found in area **C6**.

SOUL PROJECTOR

LEVELS 9-20

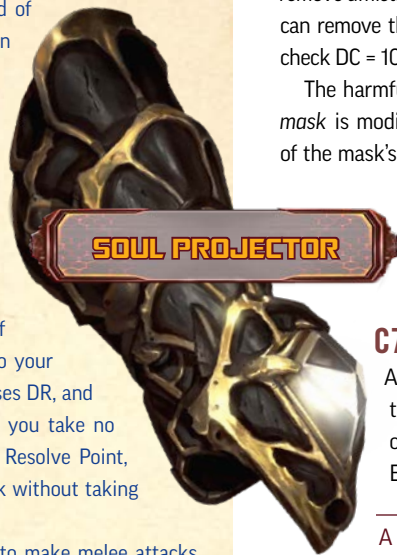
| HYBRID ITEM (WORN) | | BULK L |
|--------------------|-------|---------|
| MODEL | LEVEL | PRICE |
| Arriver | 9 | 15,000 |
| Returner | 15 | 120,000 |
| Awakener | 20 | 900,000 |

A *soul projector* is a bracer of dark stone accented with brassy metal. While you wear the bracer, you are proficient with it, and you can't be disarmed of it. The bracer counts as a worn magic item unless you install it in armor, taking up one upgrade slot. Unliving creatures can't use a *soul projector*.

Each time you attack with a *soul projector*, it draws forth a tiny bit of your essence to power itself, and you lose a number of Hit Points equal to the number of damage dice the projector deals to your target. This drain of vitality bypasses DR, and the *soul projector* fails to work if you take no damage. However, if you spend 1 Resolve Point, you can cause the weapon to work without taking this damage.

You can use the *soul projector* to make melee attacks or ranged attacks with a range increment of 60 feet. These attacks target EAC and deal piercing damage that has the force descriptor. A *soul projector* is also a boost weapon, although boosting the weapon increases the Hit Points the weapon drains from you, with the total amount remaining equal to the total number of damage dice rolled. The amount of damage the weapon deals depends on the model of the *soul projector*: an arriver deals 3d4 damage (boost 1d4), a returner deals 6d4 (boost 3d4), and an awakener deals 10d4 (boost 5d4). When you score a critical with the weapon, you recover the Hit Points you lost activating the *soul projector*, as the weapon replaces your spiritual drain with a portion of your target's spirit.

When your character level is within 2 levels of that of the next-highest model of *soul projector*, you can upgrade the item to its next model. To do so, you must acquire magical ingredients including djezet, mithral, and diamond worth the price of the more powerful *soul projector*, less 30% of the value of your current projector. You then use the ingredients in a 1-hour ritual to upgrade your *soul projector* to the higher-level model. You must also pay to upgrade any weapon fusions you wish to keep on the weapon as if transferring each of those fusions to a higher-level weapon.



SOUL PROJECTOR

and 34 for descriptions of the first two items and page 180 of the *Core Rulebook* for the crystal. The crystal's function is apparent to any solarian. Determining the function of an item otherwise requires at least 10 minutes of evaluation and a successful Engineering or Mysticism check (DC = 15 + 1-1/2 × the item's level). A PC can aid another using either skill. If a check succeeds by 5 or more, the PC realizes that the item has been modified to make it dangerous for the user. The *detect affliction* spell detects the modification as if it's a curse. Removing a modification works as if repairing a broken object of the item's level, but doing so requires at least 2 hours and one successful application of *remove affliction* (DC = 14 + the item's level). *Break enchantment* can remove the limitation without requiring repair (caster level check DC = 10 + the item's level).

The harmful modifications vary by item. The *breath-stealer mask* is modified so the wearer is also affected by every use of the mask's power. The *soul projector* is rigged to drain three times as many Hit Points from its user. Finally, the crystal is altered to inflict the crystal's critical hit effect on its user if the user rolls a 1 on an attack roll using the crystal.

C7. DARKNESS ENGINE (CR 10)

As the PCs enter this room, they are close enough to the colour out of space to experience its aura of lassitude. An affected PC can't willingly leave Ezorod.

A strange, coruscating light of a greenish hue suffuses this odd-shaped chamber, emanating from a massive machine of metal and stone that squats in the southwest corner. Carved grooves in the floor around this device resemble bizarre circuit boards. These grooves extend out through a passage to the west and north through an opening blocked by a curtain of darkness.

The hybrid machine here maintains the darkness of Ezorod that keeps the Eshtayiv bound. This "darkness engine" resembles a solid-state computer server bank made of stone and dark metal in a cube 10 feet on a side. It has no moving parts. Only a low rumble and a few blinking lights indicate it's functioning. Constructed to operate for eons without maintenance, the machine still requires occasional calibration. However, the darkness engine can't be adjusted from this room. It is instead operated from area **C8**.

Each 5-foot-cube of the darkness engine is as tough as a starship bulkhead (*Core Rulebook* 408). Designed to repel any form of sabotage, the engine also magically bleeds off damage it takes through the "circuitry" in the floor. If the darkness engine takes damage, the grooves on the floor flare with energy. Half of the damage travels through the grooves into area **C2** and half travels into area **C8**. Creatures in those rooms take this damage, electricity with the force descriptor, as the grooves in those rooms flare. If multiple creatures are in a given room, the

damage is divided equally among them. If no creatures are in a room, the damage shunted there returns along the circuit in the opposite direction, seeking viable targets in this room. In any case, the darkness engine takes damage only if this cascading energy finds no targets.

Ilvatri is aware of the colour out of space, but he is considering his next move. As a precautionary measure, the heliacus sealed one direction of the passage between this chamber and area **C8**. Creatures can come from area **C8** to this chamber, but not vice-versa. The curtain of darkness here is a magical effect that acts as a one-way *wall of force*.

Creature: The colour out of space occupies the space around the darkness engine, and it can feed upon the darkness engine as though it were a Drift engine. However, in the short term, its feeding has had no effect on the device. It might be centuries before the colour brightens the sphere around Ezorod enough to set the Eshtayiv free, but the Eshtayiv and the colour are both patient, nigh-immortal creatures.

COLOUR OUT OF SPACE

CR 10

XP 9,600

HP 140 (*Starfinder Alien Archive 2 28*)

TACTICS

During Combat As soon as it detects other creatures in the room, the colour starts to feed, switching to its disintegrating touch if opponents attack it or prove resistant to its feeding.

Morale Confident in its defenses and prodigious immunities, the colour out of space doesn't retreat until reduced to fewer than 30 Hit Points. If sufficiently injured, it flees through the Illuminant Heart back to area **B3**, then flows through the bubble and leaves Ezorod forever.

Development: Ilvatri can open the curtain of darkness between this area and area **C8** at any time. However, if the PCs defeat the colour out of space before meeting the heliacus, the curtain remains in place. Ilvatri hopes the intruders perish to other dangers before reaching him.

If a PC attacks the darkness engine, then Ilvatri in area **C8** takes any overflow damage. He watches to see whether the grooves in area **C8** continue to flare. If so, he makes his way here to prevent further damage.

C8. CALIBRATION ROOM (CR 10)

If the PCs turn the corner from area **C6** to area **C8**, they can see the glow of the heliacus and the machinery before they enter.

Ancient metal-and-stone devices, many bearing glowing jewels in a variety of colors, rest in indentations on consoles. A curtain of darkness obscures an entrance to the west, and several circuit-like grooves span the floor beneath the curtain to a console in a northern angled alcove. A dark orb studded with luminous gemstones that pulse like breathing creatures sits atop the console.

Any PC who succeeds at a DC 22 Engineering or Mysticism check can tell this area is some sort of control room. Analyzing the equipment requires more time than the PCs have if the creature is present (see Development and Treasure on page 36).

Creature: The heliacus Ilvatri broods here. He knows the PCs arrived in the Illuminant Heart through his connection to the devices here, just as he knows of Lod and the colour out of space. The latter creature Ilvatri considers to be his real problem, since he wishes Ezorod, his home, to endure. If the PCs have already defeated the colour out of space, Ilvatri tells them they've served a greater purpose—his. He spares them long enough to exchange knowledge—see the Development section. If the colour endures, Ilvatri sees a use for the PCs. When they arrive here, read or paraphrase the following.

A gigantic creature that looks like a blackened corpse mantled with fire stands and gestures grandly. It wears garments of coppery metal and dark stone.

"Welcome!" says its deep telepathic voice. "I am Ilvatri, master of this place. Please, do not allow my appearance to set your limited, fretful minds into a state of irrationality. Listen instead! I have an offer for you."

Ilvatri considers the PCs to be his lessers, and so he is arrogant and rude. He pauses for pleasantries and introductions. If the PCs allow him, he continues.

"You are uninvited here. Nevertheless, you have come, and like you, another creature has invaded my sanctum. This bizarre colour has begun to defile the darkness engine. I want you to destroy this creature. In return, rather than killing you where you stand for your impudence, I shall entertain your questions and exchange knowledge with you."

Ilvatri is careful to avoid any suggestion that he won't slay the PCs later—he intends to. In truth, he hopes to claim their starship and, after learning how to use it, eventually leave Ezorod. The heliacus is a poor bluffer, but PCs who are pliable due to the Eshtayiv's Touch might believe him anyway. Some possible interactions the PCs can have with Ilvatri follow. Use them to guide other avenues of conversation.

What is this place? "This is the center of the Illuminant Heart. It calibrates the darkness engine and the extradimensional connections. In turn, it keeps the Eshtayiv bound."

Why are you here? "I was born here, long ago, from a mortal shell. Unlike my kin, I ascended from hungering fire to this glorious form."

Kin? "Other undead here could become like I am, but the pyric fire consumes their minds. I have tamed the fire."

Pyric fire? "Magnificent in its form is the fire of pure death. It burns that which can't be burned, for nothing can escape death in the end."

Why don't you destroy the colour? "I could. However, I admit the pyric fire is weak against it. You have other tools

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at your disposal. I can offer you an additional one, which only those of your limited nature can use." If asked what he means by "limited," Ilvatri shrugs and replies, "Mortal. Living."

If the PCs have the items from area **C6**, Ilvatri reveals that each has a limitation he can remove. He offers to do so. To PCs who lack those items, Ilvatri describes the objects and their location, pointing out that his research indicates the *soul projector* is an ideal weapon against the colour out of space. He also warns of the trap in that area and explains how to disarm it. (If the PCs speak of disarming this trap, Ilvatri mockingly congratulates them on their cleverness. It's clear he doesn't mean the compliment. He admits he isn't surprised if the PCs confess to falling victim to the trap.) Ilvatri won't go to the armory to disarm the trap himself. The PCs have to take the risk.

Other Topics: If the PCs try to engage Ilvatri about other topics—such as the technology in this room, the Eshtayiv, or the verthani explorers—he waves a fiery hand dismissively and insists that such information is a reward for a task well done.

If the PCs agree to attack the colour out of space, Ilvatri points out the passage to area **C7** in the west end of the control room. He also reveals that the passage is one-way. The heliacus vows to reopen the passageway when the colour is slain, and he honors this promise when the time comes.

Further Discussions: When the PCs return after defeating the colour out of space, Ilvatri talks to them for a while. The heliacus is a font of information. He can relate the purpose of Ezorod clearly, although he doesn't know its history, which spans the Gap. Ilvatri also describes the machines here, which serve mostly to calibrate the darkness engine that keeps the Eshtayiv captive.

One machine allows its user to observe other parts of Ezorod. A character touching the machine can cause it to create a magical sensor in any one area of Ezorod that user visualizes. Doing so requires a successful DC 20 Mysticism check, and the sensor acts like an *arcane eye* within the visualized area. The same machine allows a user to create a curtain of darkness, like that between areas **C7** and **C8**, on either entryway to area **C8**. Doing so also requires a successful DC 20 Mysticism check.

In addition, one user can psychically bond with this machine. While Ilvatri exists, no other creature can do so. Once Ilvatri is destroyed, bonding with the machine requires 1 hour and a successful DC 25 Mysticism check, on which the user can't take 10 or 20, though failure merely extends the amount of time required to forge the bond. A bonded user has a +4 circumstance bonus on Mysticism checks to use the machine and can sense when someone or something new arrives in Ezorod. Such a user also discovers a vast library of esoteric lore stored in the machine, which is conveyed to the mind in Aklo. What the connected PC might learn is up to you, but no information exists from before or during the Gap.

If asked, Ilvatri describes the dark, bejeweled orb on the console in the angled alcove as a *solar inverter*. The bonding machine can also convey this lore to a bonded user (see Treasure below for more information).

Ilvatri is curious about the PCs and interested in how they learned of Ezorod. He asks where they came from and how they got here. He also inquires about PCs who have magical powers, asking about their traditions and methods. Despite his thirst for knowledge, Ilvatri remains haughty, and he is especially scornful of religion.

Eventually, the heliacus tires of the PCs. He attacks, perhaps right in the middle of a conversation.

ILVATRI

CR 10

XP 9,600

Male pyric heliacus (see page 59)

HP 145

TACTICS

During Combat Ilvatri toys with the PCs, dividing them with *wall of fire*. Initially mocking, he becomes deadly serious when reduced to half his Hit Points, concentrating on killing PCs who are the most seriously wounded.

Morale If reduced to fewer than 35 Hit Points, Ilvatri abandons area **C8** and flees to area **B1**. He ambushes the PCs and makes a last effort there, fighting to the end to prevent the group from leaving Ezorod with the *Sun Diver*.

Treasure: The *solar inverter* is a piece of hybrid technology that dampens the heat and brightness of the sun to create cool darkness like that in Ezorod. Identifying the device without Ilvatri's help works like identifying the devices in area **C6**. This object is a part of its console, which is like the modules that project and maintain the bubbles around the enclaves of the Burning Archipelago. However, the *solar inverter* is an extra component, making Ezorod's bubble far stronger and more efficient than anything known in the Pact Worlds. Its salvage, which Nib requested, is sure to revolutionize solar-bubble tech and could stabilize the *Sun Diver*'s systems, enabling the vessel to perform better in the future. In any case, the object merits study, and the DCI is likely to be the best place for that analysis to occur. Removing the *solar inverter* from its console will eliminate the darkness from Ezorod's bubble, making it more like the polarized spheres of the Burning Archipelago; doing so requires 30 minutes of careful work.

Development: If the PCs fail to otherwise gain the info, they can spend time learning more about the alien tech here. Doing so without help requires 4 hours, less a number of hours equal to the amount by which a PC exceeds a DC 30 Engineering or Mysticism check (minimum 30 minutes). PCs trained in Computers, Engineering, Mysticism, or Physical Science can aid on this check. Taking 10 is also possible, but taking 20 requires 10 hours of work, less 1 hour for each PC who aids in the task.

CONCLUDING THE ADVENTURE

Once the PCs remove the *solar inverter*, the darkness engine cycles down to a lower level of function. The darkness in the sphere around Ezorod fades over the course of 10 minutes. As it does, Ezorod begins to quake violently, as if a massive creature

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were thrashing inside it. Psychic quakes also occur, allowing each creature affected by the aura of lassitude a new saving throw with a +4 circumstance bonus.

Ezorod begins to crumble from the shaking. Play this crumbling up for effect to push the PCs back to the *Sun Diver*. Falling debris might seem to threaten the PCs, but it doesn't stop them. Similar wreckage might smash foes in the PCs' way or cut those opponents off from making an effective pursuit.

Shortly after the PCs take off in the *Sun Diver*, Ezorod implodes. A massive psychic roar reverberates inside the sun, momentarily overwhelming the PCs. Anyone still afflicted by the Eshtayiv's Touch is immediately cured, its hollowing grip on their soul loosening and then pulling away. Although the PCs can't know for sure what has happened, evidence suggests they might have released the Eshtayiv. That ambiguity is intentional. The Eshtayiv shows up again in the campaign only if you decide they do. The premature destruction of Ezorod could instead have destroyed the Eshtayiv or banished them to some other plane.

While the PCs consider the ramifications of this occurrence, they also feel an oppressive psychic force they weren't aware of loosen. Any PC who has telepathy or training in Mysticism intuitively that Ezorod, its prisoner, or both was a psychic dampener of sorts, gathering and suppressing such signals.

As this fact becomes clear, a strong sense of impending doom washes over the PCs. Lashuntas recognize this sensation as a stronger version of that which the lashuntas of Asanatown constantly feel. The source must be the same.

Read or paraphrase the following.

The feeling becomes despair, but then it clarifies into a mix of fear, desperation, and resolve, as well impressions that communicate the emotions are associated with someone of feminine gender. The telepathic feeling then shifts into a voice.

She says, "I sense you receive me. I—Faefell, Protector of Kahlannal—greet you. Efreet have attacked our city, bent on conquest. No one in the bright, burning void or the darkness between will be safe from them for long. Take our warning. Come! Help us and help yourselves. I beg you!"

The PCs not only feel and hear this psychic message, but they also see brief visions. In these visions is a cityscape similar to the Burning Archipelago with significant enough differences. Eight bubbles make up the city, connected by shielded tubes and with a spiral tower in the center. Efreet and other creatures of fire war on alien humanoids in the metropolis. A dragon with scales like coruscating plasma appears. It and the city recede into solar fire, until the PCs see the *Sun Diver*, then themselves. They intuitively understand where the city of Kahlannal is, but the *Sun Diver* can't reach it without refitting. Any PC trained in Engineering, Computers, or Physical Science suddenly has an algorithm, a countermeasure code, in mind. PCs who receive this algorithm know it must be programmed into the *Sun Diver*'s computer to allow the starship to enter the city of Kahlannal.

The exploration and liberation of this city occur in the next adventure, *Starfinder Adventure Path #17: Solar Strike*!



CULTS OF THE GALAXY

"I was working a dull customs job on Vesk-2, and when the sensors notified me that the mass of that Aballonian ship didn't match the manifest, I went to take a look just to stretch my legs. That thing they built around the power core... it was beautiful, in a weird way. I'm pretty sure some part of a vesk was in there. One of its mouths moved. I never heard what it said. I just blew the whole thing up, knowing I'd get fired. But I didn't. In fact, a couple of agents from the Division of Disloyal Organizations showed up, said they believed me, and offered me a new job with them. I kept the old one. I don't mind the boredom anymore."

—Jeskazurai, cargo-evaluations officer

Groups dedicated to ideas that diverge from the mainstream—often venturing into questionable or downright evil practices along the way. In a galaxy of countless worlds and myriad societies, there is no way to effectively document every cult lurking in the shadows, though they all share a few common themes. Most are secretive, offering “true knowledge” only once a member has been properly initiated, and most cults discourage their members from leaving. Some curtail communication with the outside world entirely. Many demand contributions of financial resources, service, political connections, or some combination of the above from their members. All of them promise some benefit to members, whether health, wealth, happiness, truth, or righteousness, even if the delivery of such benefits is limited.

Perhaps the best-known cults in the Pact Worlds are those of the Outer Gods, particularly with the rising fame of Aucturn's Carsai the King. The Cult of the Devourer also appears regularly in Pact Worlds media; see pages 46–51 in *Starfinder Adventure Path #2: Temple of the Twelve* for details on this notorious organization. Players interested in exploring their characters' relationship to cults might choose the cultist theme (*Starfinder Pact Worlds* 147) or the cult hunter theme presented in this article.

ATAXXEA

The Shadari Confederacy (*Starfinder Core Rulebook* 468) is the home of fugitives and refugees from dozens of worlds, many of whom were uprooted by the neighboring Azlanti Star Empire. The most powerful bloc within the confederacy is the parareligious philosophy of Ataxxea.

According to Ataxxea, the inevitable course of entropy is to be honored. Followers of Ataxxea refrain from preventing the natural decay of the universe, creating only items that hasten this decay through the use of negative energy. The mysterious sceaduinars, native outsiders of the Negative Energy Plane, quietly support Ataxxea with weapons, other technology, and their very existence.

MEMBERS

Ataxxea has a widespread following, but its cradle lies in the Shadari Confederacy. Its power is so great that even followers of competing philosophies and religions in the region find it expedient to offer lip service. Many individuals in the border regions around the Azlanti Star Empire adhere to Ataxxea as a sign of rebellion or simply to have an ally in the fight. The cult's message that the world should be left to rot resonates with these unfortunates, even if they don't have time to delve into the intricacies of its esoteric philosophy.

Ataxxea's true believers are easily identified, having received tattoos of the Eye of Enlightenment. The ink used is infused with negative energy, which makes the mark incredibly long lasting and often grants the recipient supernatural abilities.

LEADERS

The preeminent leader of Ataxxea is **Shabarae the Ascendant** (NE female draelik solarian). Having risen through the ranks due to her skills in manipulating negative energy, Shabarae has proven a focused and ruthless leader. Although she holds no official position in the Shadari Confederacy, her input sways many Low Council decisions, and she controls the hierarchy of priestlike leaders, known as Enlightened, who command vast influence throughout the confederacy.

The sceaduinars, in as much as anyone has communicated directly with these hate-filled outsiders, do not adhere to Ataxxea so much as support its spread across the Material Plane. The cult upholds these creatures as all but deific—an ideal of existence—and as patrons who offer guidance and gifts to further their goals.

GOALS

The philosophy's grand goal is to shepherd along the stately advancement of entropy, largely through negative energy technology like the draeliks' iconic shadowstaves. One belief of some Ataxxeans is that once enough negative energy has entered the universe this way, the rightful path of the universe toward decay will be restored... and unstoppable.

One tool, provided by the sceaduinars themselves, is the Unmaker. Ataxxea's leaders believe this being, a wounded creature hailing from the creation of the universe, holds the key to reversing that creation. After decades of study, Ataxxeans have tested the secrets of unmaking on several small worlds, leaving them lifeless and covered with crystals that glow with negative energy.

A smaller project of the faith—though no less significant—is an attempt to fabricate a soul composed of negative energy, rather than positive. Some of the cult's members, including Shabarae the Ascendant, cultivate rumors that they have made themselves into beings of negative energy akin to sceaduinars, but to date no one has managed to make anything close to a new soul. Most attempts have resulted only in the creation of various types of undead.

ENEMIES

Ataxxeans have few allies. They scorn most deities, who they feel betrayed the sceaduinars at creation, and they view undeath as a disease that perverts negative energy. While outsiders see little difference between the philosophy of Ataxxea and the Cult of the Devourer, Ataxxeans resent such comparisons and see followers of the Devourer as little more than children trying to break a toy they don't understand.

But it is the Azlanti Star Empire that most threatens the Shadari Confederacy by working to purge those who adhere to Ataxxea wherever they find it. Ataxxea, in turn, reaches out to other enemies of the Azlanti. Many refugees have been shepherded to safety and resistance fighters gifted horrifying weapons in exchange for simply listening to the philosophy of Ataxxea.

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THE FORGIVEN

One of the major tenets of Sarenrae's religion is the constant striving to offer redemption to those who embrace evil. According to the cultists calling themselves the Forgiven, this means the best way to glorify her is to do the worst possible things, be the worst possible person, and then ask for—and accept—forgiveness.

The idea originated on Nukalara, a Near Space world, where the high priest of a particularly corrupt church began preaching the doctrine as a justification for his own vile behavior—via far-reaching multimedia broadcasts. The idea quickly caught on among the selfish and the cruel, and it has spread still farther in recent years.

MEMBERS

Though the cult arose on a Near Space world, it rapidly spread, given its leader's growing celebrity status and the appeal of the philosophy. Most of the Forgiven uphold the doctrine in a facile sense to provide blanket justification for a hedonistic lifestyle utterly free of guilt and shame. These followers are less prone to spreading the ideology—leaving that task to the sect's head—but the sheer number of them lends credibility to the group as a whole.

More recently, a number of young people have embraced the philosophy ironically, but more than a few are brought into the cult proper—typically at extravagant, debauched parties—before they realize that they have begun upholding its tenets in earnest.

LEADERS

High Priest **Laroedahn** (CE male aasimar^{AA2} envoy) is the undisputed leader of the Forgiven, having originated the philosophy to provide a cover for his own terrible abuses of power. He has since built a galaxy-spanning media empire founded upon the ideology. This adoration has convinced him of the truth of his views, which he now espouses far more faithfully than he ever did the doctrines upheld by most of Sarenrae's church. Less than a year ago, he claims he was confronted by a pair of angels sent by Sarenrae in “the ultimate test of his faith,” an encounter he often recounts in media interviews and that only furthers his sense of righteousness. He surrounds himself with a court of sycophantic and equally despicable priests.

GOALS

Laroedahn doesn't dream of anything so grand as ascending to godhood or ruling the universe. Instead, he'd like to acquire a private planet where he can indulge in his vices without having to follow any rules of decency. He will offer the cult's growing political clout to any faction that can make that dream come true.

Most of the cult's followers are concerned only with having a good time through various debauches. Those in the inner circles, however, end up spending just as much time covering for themselves and one another as they do enjoying the excesses of their faith. Much of the cult's considerable resources goes toward destroying evidence, disposing of bodies, silencing witnesses, and blocking investigations.

ENEMIES

The core church of Sarenrae has found that the more it overtly condemns the Forgiven, the worse the cult's behavior gets and the larger its following, and so the church has begun to enlist outside aid in the form of independent investigators and even the occasional team of adventurers to curb the faction's worst abuses. Local authorities (in areas where they haven't been paid by the cult to look the other way) are also a major problem for the Forgiven, as most of the cults' activities are not merely vile but outright illegal.

KEEPERS OF THE LIE

Shortly after the end of the Gap, a group of vesk soldiers and researchers on the icy wastelands of Vesk-8 uncovered a being encased in the ice. Though it couldn't move, the entity telepathically informed the vesk they were being lied to, their entire existences simple contrivances, as the universe had been created from whole cloth after the Gap.

From that seed grew an organized crime empire, now called the Keepers of the Lie, that has since spread throughout the Veskarium. The call to throw off the bonds of race, family, religion, and past continues to draw the disaffected to their ranks. Along with gaining a new family in the Liars, as these street-level members are often called, they also learn the ways of smuggling, extortion, and slavery. But within that vast enterprise, the story told by the mysterious frozen entity remains the driving force of the False Witnesses, the organization's innermost circle.



LAROEDAHN

MEMBERS

Still centered in the Veskarium, the Liars draw most of their members from races found in that system. Vesk are naturally the most numerous, closely followed by pahtras (*Starfinder Alien Archive* 2 94) of Vesk-6.

After an introductory mission, often symbolically chosen to help the initiate sever their connection with the past, the new Liar is given a new name and assigned to a gang. The gangs intentionally include members of as many races and backgrounds as possible, working to break down old ties to make way for new ones.

LEADERS

The False Witnesses are the central council for the criminal network, with one member representing each world on which the Liars have a substantial presence. One last seat, representing Vesk-8 despite its desolation, is held by the form they cut from the ice centuries ago. Still frozen, now through mechanical means for its own safety, the shadowy form rarely speaks—but when it whispers, the council inevitably accepts its judgment. Even the creature itself does not know its own story. It awoke from the Gap knowing that it was once the herald of a god but had been cast down. Without knowing the reason for its dismissal or even which god it had followed, it seeks a new truth for itself just as much as any of its followers.

GOALS

Although street-level members are mostly concerned with daily criminal operations and burying their own pasts, the inner circles of the organization use the resources at their disposal to destroy the “lie” of the Gap. Smuggled artifacts are destroyed, historical buildings are demolished, and databases containing pre-Gap information are targeted for deletion. Long-lived beings who recall times prior to the Gap are seen as tools of the gods’ control to be discredited or even killed.

Naturally, the False Witnesses do not currently have the means required to wipe the slate clean, and so the organization is always on the lookout for new opportunities, legal or not, to gather more resources.

ENEMIES

The Keepers of the Lie consider the followers of Lao Shu Po to be their greatest enemy. A ysoki representative on the council was revealed to be a spy for Grandmother Rat’s church, beginning a vicious series of purges and reprisals that have soured relations to this day.

The Veskarium’s official Division of Disloyal Organizations was originally founded to help prevent the spread of the Keepers of the Lie, and later expanded its mission to control similar organizations. Some believe the division has itself been infiltrated by the organization, as it seems far more effective against other factions than it is against the Keepers of the Lie.

The true mission of the central council sets the cult in opposition to the Starfinder Society, but the groups haven’t

engaged in any sort of open conflict yet. However, as the council recently appointed a member to represent Absalom Station, that seems likely to change.

LIGHTS OF NHIMBALOTH

The list of the Outer Gods seems endless, and even the strangest among them have mortal followers. One such cult is dedicated to Nhimbalothe, the Outer Goddess of despair, ghosts, and swamps. In ancient times, she was relegated to desolate shorelines and tangled swamps, a parallel for her own existence on the edges of the River of Souls, consuming those predators that prey upon the spirits of the dead. A mysterious cult referring to itself as the Lights of Nhimbalothe believes that the Drift is a type of waterway with its own unique predators and that Nhimbalothe encourages them to hunt those beings in the same manner as she stalks the River of Souls.

MEMBERS

The members of the Lights of Nhimbalothe patrol the twisted stretches of the Drift in starships bristling with weaponry, searching for creatures and other vessels that attacked travelers and killing them in return. However, these crews aren’t focused on protecting innocents; they usually wait until travelers in the Drift are defeated by their foes before swooping in to destroy those attackers. The Lights of Nhimbalothe are ruthless when they strike, giving no quarter and expecting none in return.

Many of the Lights of Nhimbalothe are sentient undead piloting starships with corroded hulls and engines that should by all rights be nonfunctional. Whether living or dead, the members of this cult cover their faces with masks or shawls, presenting blank, empty visages. They also tend to go about their deadly work in utter silence.

LEADERS

As most Lights of Nhimbalothe operate in small groups aboard their starships, there isn’t any real organization or power structure to be had, though a few individuals have been around long enough that they’ve earned the respect of others who know about them.

GOALS

The cult has no true overall goal; they merely enjoy the thrill of battle against those who prey upon travelers within the Drift. They tend to live aboard their starships, stopping to restock and refuel on the Material Plane only when necessary.

Some followers believe they are the chosen of Nhimbalothe and aim to expand her influence over the universe. These cultists seek to call her forth by leaving the carcasses of Drift predators floating through the plane surrounded by beacons that flash in particular patterns to catch the goddess’s attention. None can say whether these sacrifices are effective, as the bodies often are swallowed by clouds of Drift energy before they can be found again.

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Few know about the Lights of Nhimbalo, and those who do often see them as a force of justice, avenging those who are killed in the Drift by violent forces. However, the Stewards keep an eye for Lights of Nhimbalo vessels that return to Material Plane space, suspecting some might be responsible for leading predators to prey, though it is difficult to identify their vessels by sight alone.

Many priests of Triune see the Lights of Nhimbalo's presence within the Drift as an affront to their deity. A small faction of the cult has recently infiltrated Alluvion, the city at the center of the Drift, and provided the city's coordinates to their allies, allowing them to resupply without returning to the Material Plane. Triunite officials are busy attempting to ferret out these cultists, all the while wondering why Triune would allow them to approach their holy city.

PORTALSEERS

When a collection of rifts that looked out onto other planes was discovered under the surface of Nazerum, a frozen world orbiting the flickering core of an ancient star in Near Space, the planet quickly became a tourist destination. Scientists briefly studied these "windows" and determined nothing could pass through them, and soon people from across the galaxy came to witness breathtaking vistas of the Elemental Planes, Heaven, Hell, and other planes in relative safety. Some believe an ancient civilization created the portals as entertainment, while others think they are naturally occurring.

However, when stories began to circulate a few years ago that the energy from the rifts could heal almost any affliction, a pseudoreligious group coalesced from those wishing to control and benefit from this phenomenon. They came to be known as the Portalseers and gained complete control over Nazerum. They now control access to the rifts, and access comes at a high price.

MEMBERS

Membership in the Portalseers is small, and the group has only a few dozen members. Though they come from several different planets, all of them now live on Nazerum in a bunker that straddles the entrance to the mystical underground caves. Most members rotate their duties within the bunker and the caves, keeping the business of allowing visitors to the rifts running smoothly. A scant few others operate on other worlds, finding those who both need and can afford the portals' powers and ferrying them to and from the planet.

LEADERS

The leader of the Portalseers, **Kaelee Cadlucaas** (NE female human envoy), keeps her past a secret, not even deigning to speak the name of her original home planet. Kaelee is fond of saying that Nazerum is her home now, and many of the Portalseers follow suit. Kaelee controls nearly every aspect of the Portalseers' lives, establishing duty rosters and having

final say on which visitors are allowed access to which rifts. The Portalseers view her as a kind, motherly figure—an image reinforced by Kaelee's gray hair and smiling eyes.

GOALS

Ostensibly the Portalseer's goals is to aid the sick by using the planar energies of the rifts, but their effectiveness is questionable. The Portalseers seem to take in those whose maladies are ill defined and, some would say, psychosomatic. Of course, guests to Nazerum return home claiming to feel recharged and energized, their expensive treatment worth every credit. This word-of-mouth praise and the air of exclusivity fostered by the Portalseers mean they will always be able to find clients among the rich and gullible.

Though Kaelee claims that every credit the Portalseers take in is used to maintain their facilities and study the effects of the rifts, she secretly has a private bank account that is quietly growing through embezzlement. Only a handful of other Portalseers are aware of this account, and they do everything in their power to deflect suspicion away from Kaelee, though it is unclear how she has engendered this loyalty.

ENEMIES

The Portalseers don't allow outsiders to study the rifts and haven't accepted a new member since their founding. This hasn't stopped a small group within the priesthood of Eloritu from attempting to infiltrate the Portalseers to discover Nazerum's secrets. So far, they have posed as wealthy clients but have been turned away twice.

Kaelee's hidden wealth has also attracted the attention of the Aspis Consortium, who sees the supposed scam of the Portalseers as another financial windfall it can control. Several Aspis agents have sent communiqués to Kaelee to establish terms for this merger but have received only thinly veiled threats in response.

SCALES OF THE CONQUEROR

Although worship of Damoritosh is widespread throughout the Veskarium, the Conqueror and his church do not recognize all who claim to follow him. One sect has been gaining popularity lately, known as the Scales of the Conqueror, by advocating for strict enslavement of conquered worlds.

MEMBERS

The members of the Scales are exclusively vesk, generally recruited while serving in the Veskarium military, as several commanding officers and some entire units have been turned to the Scales' cause. Even after military service, many of the members remain supporters of the sect in civilian life, leaving the Scales with an unknown number of supporters throughout the Veskarium.

Under threat from the families of those they have killed, the main church of Damoritosh, and the Veskarium government, active members of the Scales wear masks with the doshko

blades of Damoritosh's holy symbol rearranged to form an interlocking shield. For now, this anonymity protects the Scales of the Conqueror as their numbers continue to swell.

LEADERS

Symbolically, the head of the organization is Damoritosh, spreading his commands through warmonger devils (*Starfinder Alien Archive* 2 36) summoned from his divine realm. These messengers pass on orders that are then filtered through the Scales' strict hierarchy.

However, the secretive **First Scale** (LE female vesk technomancer) is responsible for summoning the devils and feeding the summoned creatures their lines to be spoken in Damoritosh's name. She firmly believes that Damoritosh's priests are cowards, unwilling to encourage full iron-handed dominance over the other citizens of the Veskarium.

GOALS

The Scales find the limited self-rule offered to species like skittermanders to be incredibly galling, tantamount to abandoning Damoritosh's holy mission. Ultimately, they wish for the Veskarium to embrace their view of the Conqueror's will, likely with the First Scale installed as a ruler above the high despots.

In the meantime, members spend most of their time leading normal lives, only occasionally gathering to violently enforce their will on conquered populations. These attacks are often carefully chosen to attract retaliation and gather more vesk support to the Scales' cause. The First Scale believes the residents of Vesk-2 in particular are close to open revolt, and she is watching for the right spark to allow for a broad crackdown.

ENEMIES

The Veskarium's Division of Disloyal Organizations and Damoritosh's actual church are deeply interested in extirpating the Scales, particularly because its members frequently disobey direct orders from their military commanders or their god. However, popular support is high enough and the Scales' membership secretive enough that no large-scale purges have occurred.

The Scales also clash with the Keepers of the Lie, whose vesk members they see as traitors. The First Scale strives to rein in these fights, however, as the Scales aren't yet powerful enough to take on the much older organization.

THOSE WHO CREATE

The anacites of Aballon were created by a mysterious precursor race known as the First Ones. Among the anacites, Those Who

Become believe they should take over the First Ones' mission to colonize new worlds, while Those Who Wait believe that all anacites should prepare for the return of the First Ones.

The anacites known as Those Who Create stand apart from both sects in their belief that anacites were abandoned by the First Ones and that they should be spending their effort not waiting for or emulating failed leaders, but building better ones. They consider the machine god Epoch, now part of Triune, to be a proof of concept that such a thing is not only possible but within their grasp.



FIRST SCALE

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MEMBERS

Although founded by anacites, Those Who Create welcome all who would work toward their goals. Some androids and SROs (*Starfinder Pact Worlds* 213) have joined the cause, along with a few of the cult's surviving experiments—beings that are equal parts organic and technological, infused with planar energies.

LEADERS

Each cell of Those Who Create builds and incessantly improves upon its own "First One," which whispers strange and often confusing commands. The individual cells sift meaning from the nonsense, but all pay heed to the cult's most successful creation.

This being, known as Apex-01, is a collection of computers, cultured tissues from dozens of species, and several bound outsiders. It is fragile, kept on a massive ship hidden somewhere in the Vast, but commands a tremendous intellect. Though its observations are often delayed due to the transmission time involved, Apex-01's insights on matters ranging from interplanetary politics to quantum-particle research and development are terrifyingly precise. Bereft of immediate purpose, it spends its cycles designing successors, but none of these creations have approached Apex-01's insight, a problem that frustrates the intelligence endlessly.

GOALS

Each cell of Those Who Create is attempting to build its own First One, often by dismantling androids, other anacites, outsiders, or organic life forms for parts. As these creations come online, they begin to whisper nonsense, slowly coalescing into comprehensible commands that the cell follows to the best of its ability.

A cell's activity is typically chaotic as its First One awakens, beginning to grasp for understanding and meaning. However, except for Apex-01, these artificial First Ones seem to fall into logical loops, growing predictable after they pass their initial learning stage, and the older cells' activities reflect this. Eventually, failed First Ones are abandoned, their cells often breaking up to form new groups or join other existing cells.

ENEMIES

Aballon is a hostile environment for Those Who Create, as Those Who Wait and Those Who Become both seek out the cult for its blasphemy and its myriad crimes in gathering living components. Generally, Those Who Create do little more than recruit members on Aballon, conducting the majority of their work on other planets or in the Vast.

VOROC CARRIERS

The winged people known as strix (*Pact Worlds* 214) recently warned Pact Worlds authorities that a group of their kind, who fled into the Vast hundreds of years ago to seek a cure for a psychic disease, has returned at the behest of its newest leader.

Unfortunately, the returned are still infected with the disease, which the warning strix have called "voroc," an ancient strix word that loosely translates to "plague of the mind."

The voroc carriers were once typical strix who underwent rituals to open their minds to the universe after the Gap in an attempt to learn more about this period of mass amnesia. Strix historians believe that something in the dark beyond the stars, answered and set their minds on fire. The afflicted strix became telepathic, but any creature that they contacted with their minds also became a voroc carrier. Those in charge of Qidel, a major strix enclave on Verces, sent the afflicted away before it became an epidemic or spread to other species.

Now, centuries later, the voroc carriers have returned, having been convinced by their leader that the cure to their disease lies in psychically contacting as many different species as possible and that the right combination of foreign thoughts will burn away the plague.

MEMBERS

Voroc carriers are exclusively the descendants of those strix who left Verces years ago. Fewer than 30 of them live on an unnamed vessel that is currently traveling through Near Space, its origin point unknown. They have a fervent religious devotion to their leader, whom they believe will free them from their lifelong curse.

LEADERS

The voroc carriers' leader is **Brydier** (CN male strix^{PW} mystic), a fervent and driven individual whose only goal is to cure his followers of their plague. From the bridge of his starship, he contacts civilizations as the vessel passes, claiming to be looking for refuge for his people. Any planet or moon the voroc carriers land on is quickly subjected to their telepathic intrusions. Brydier and his strix then move on, leaving a trail of mental illness in their wake.

GOALS

The voroc carriers simply want to be rid of their disease, but they are adamant that Brydier's way is the only true method. They refuse to accept any other assistance, medicinal or spiritual. Unfortunately, this has led to a handful of deaths in Near Space systems, as non-strix victims who are infected with voroc are stricken with incredibly high fevers and terrible hallucinations, leading eventually to a full shutdown of the nervous system.

ENEMIES

The Stewards are aware of the voroc carriers but remain uncertain how to control the threat. A few more reactionary agencies, having learned of the voroc carriers through their spies and contacts within the Stewards, have sent out hit squads to eliminate the voroc carriers, but all have been fatally exposed to the disease. As Brydier's vessel approaches the Pact Worlds, the authorities are beginning to grow desperate.

CULT HUNTER

+1 WIS

Your life's work is to ferret out cults and free those who have fallen into their clutches. You've studied their methods, and you know that they hide in plain sight more often than not, and that confronting them requires a combination of keen intellect, scrupulous attention to detail, and a fair share of defensive—and sometimes offensive—training. You may work for a legitimate agency like the Veskarium's Division of Disloyal Organizations or the church of Abadar, you might pursue the cults for your own purposes, or you could even work directly for a cult yourself to eliminate the competition.

THEME KNOWLEDGE (1ST)

You're obsessed with cults and know where to find them. Reduce the DC of Culture checks to recall knowledge about cults and of Diplomacy checks to gather information about cults by 5. Sense Motive is a class skill for you, though if it is a class skill from the class you take at 1st level, you instead gain a +1 bonus to Sense Motive checks. In addition, you gain an ability adjustment of +1 to Wisdom at character creation.

CONSPIRACY WEB (6TH)

You can spend 10 minutes to lay out the evidence you've gathered about a specific cult, as long as, at the GM's discretion, that evidence is enough to specifically identify that organization. This helps you prepare against that cult's tactics and methods, but doesn't count as a resting to regain Stamina Points. You gain a +2 circumstance bonus to Perception and Sense Motive checks against members of that cult and a +1 circumstance bonus to saving throws against its members' spells and effects. This bonus lasts until you create a new conspiracy web. You can benefit from only one conspiracy web at a time.

FLASH DEPROGRAMMING (12TH)

The process of deprogramming a cult member is long and arduous, but you've learned tricks to grant a moment of lucidity to even the most entrenched members. When attempting a Diplomacy check to change a creature's attitude, you can spend 1 Resolve Point to do so as a standard action rather than taking a full minute. In addition, when you use this ability on a creature under the effects of a charm or compulsion effect whose save DC is lower than the result of your Diplomacy check, that effect is suppressed for 1 minute. The effects of this ability are temporary, but repeated applications could help a cult member begin a journey along the road to recovery.

INSPIRING PREPARATION (18TH)

When you take 10 minutes to prepare to face a specific cult using the conspiracy web ability, you recover 1 Resolve Point.

Alternatively, you can take 10 minutes to study a conspiracy web you've already created to recover 1 Resolve Point; this doesn't count as resting to regain Stamina Points. You can recover Resolve Points in these ways up to twice per day.



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STRANGE GEAR

“Pick a creature, any creature, and I shall play you the song of their soul! Every living being, every atom, every particle in the Pact Worlds can be broken down into the harmonic frequencies that represent it. Think you have nothing in common with an electrovore? How about a squox? With just a chord played on my Harmonic Reassembler, I can prove you’re closer to these creatures than you think. There is little difference between the inner resonance of the mundane and the monstrous! Prepare yourself, for the very fabric of your being is about to be warped by the reality-bending power of song!”

—Rumdigo, composer of the “Concerto of Shapes”

Each of the unusual technological, magical, and hybrid items that follow can be found or have been created in the Pact Worlds or beyond. Much of this strange gear poses a significant danger to the user or is just plain disgusting. Other items can be used in ways adventurers might not anticipate, result from extradimensional anomalies, or represent the strange machinations and experiments of distant worlds.

Some of this equipment is deliberately defective or cursed and can't normally be purchased from a standard merchant. They might be found in stashes among more mundane items or given as "gifts" by double-crossing individuals.

TECHNOLOGICAL ITEMS

Though strange, some of the following technological items use a normal battery and are thereby subject to special abilities that affect items using batteries, charges, or technology. Others are one-use items.

BLABBERSPONDER

LEVEL 6

| TECHNOLOGICAL ITEM | PRICE 4,550 | BULK L |
|--------------------|-------------|-------------|
| CAPACITY 40 | | USAGE 1/day |

This small, rectangular box is approximately the size of a handheld computer, with a nondescript carbon-fiber housing attached to an external chip interface that can be plugged into the computers of most starships. A blabbersponder's case is filled with a compact array of microsensors (often composed of inubrix) connected to a miniaturized computer (treat as a tier 0 computer equipped with a control module) that, bolstered by a signal booster, analyzes and actively transmits a starship's vital data to another source. While no astute starship captain would ever install a blabbersponder on their own ship, such devices are often sold in gray markets to saboteurs serving the whims of corporations, or bounty hunters who wish to gain vital information about a specific starship's defenses. Some clever pirates of the Diaspora are also rumored to sell blabbersponders to gullible spacefarers by offering them as upgrades to starship communication systems. They then use the data they collect from the device to determine if the cargo, defenses, weapons, and crew aboard the ship warrant the effort of intercepting and ambushing it later.

To install a blabbersponder on a starship computer, you must succeed at an Engineering check (DC = 15 + 1-1/2 × the starship's tier). Once installed and activated, the blabbersponder's internal computer uses its control module to automatically hack into the computer it's attached to. The control module reads and broadcasts all data related to the starship's systems, allowing any science officer aboard another starship within passive sensor range (*Starfinder Core Rulebook* 301) of the blabbersponder's ship to use the scan action on that vessel, even if the two ships aren't engaged in starship combat. Because of the detailed information provided by the blabbersponder, the science officer performing this scan action gains a +5 circumstance bonus to the associated

Computers check, and the broadcasting ship doesn't add the bonus from its defensive countermeasures to the DC.

Detecting that a blabbersponder is in fact an instrument of sabotage and not a benign technological device before it is installed requires a successful DC 25 Engineering or DC 30 Perception check. Discovering an installed blabbersponder aboard a starship requires a successful DC 28 Computers check. When an installed blabbersponder's battery is depleted, it recharges itself using the starship's power core in a process that takes about 5 minutes; on the day this occurs, you receive a +2 circumstance bonus to the Computers check to notice the sudden, short surge in power use and discover the blabbersponder on your vessel. Once discovered, a blabbersponder can be easily unplugged.

FLUSHBUSTER

LEVEL 8

| TECHNOLOGICAL ITEM | PRICE 1,300 | BULK L |
|--------------------|-------------|--------|
|--------------------|-------------|--------|

A flushbuster is a palm-sized, malleable, one-use satchel charge designed specifically to travel easily through any water-propagated waste-removal system (such as those found on many planets with standard gravity and aboard some starships). It resembles a vacuum-sealed plastic bag divided into two pouches, one containing a substance that looks like purple clay, and the other containing a substance that resembles green gelatin. The bag itself is made of a time-release polymer that instantaneously disintegrates after 1d4 minutes of immersion in water, allowing the two volatile substances within to mix into a composite explosive that immediately detonates. Once the bag disintegrates, the mixture of the composite explosive and water generates a massive pressurized explosion that overloads the pipe system, causing any toilet or latrine within 100 feet of the device and connected to it by pipe to explode violently. Each creature or object within a 10-foot radius of any exploding toilet takes 4d6 bludgeoning damage (Reflex DC 12 half) and watery sewage begins flooding into the room (filling a 15-foot-by-15-foot room with 1 foot of water per round). A creature that begins its turn within this sewage must succeed at a DC 12 Fortitude save or gain the sickened condition for 1 minute. Any creature adjacent to an exploded toilet can spend a full action to attempt a DC 20 Engineering check to stop the flooding in that specific room.

NEUROPOPPET

LEVEL 14

| TECHNOLOGICAL ITEM | PRICE 65,000 | BULK 1 |
|--------------------|--------------|-------------|
| CAPACITY 40 | | USAGE 1/use |

A neuropoppet is a small simulacrum of a featureless humanoid creature, composed of a malleable eggshell-white polymer that is wirelessly linked to a tiny needle-shaped neural receiver. The receiver can be loaded into any ranged weapon that uses darts as ammunition, though it deals no damage to a target when fired (nor can it impose any critical hit effects). Instead, the receiver embeds into the target's body, injecting a small numbing agent into the target's bloodstream, making them unaware of the embedded receiver unless they or an adjacent

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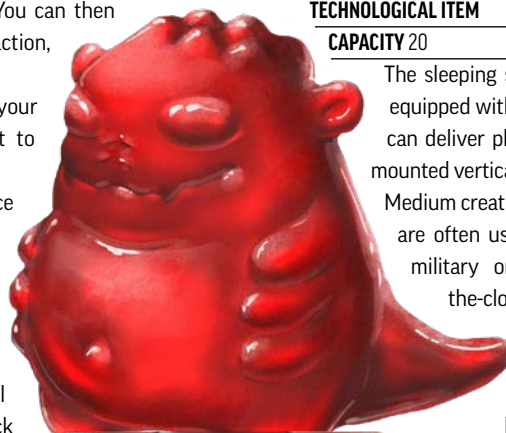
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ally succeeds at a Perception check (DC = the result of your attack roll to embed the receiver). Once found, the receiver can be removed with a standard action and a successful DC 30 Medicine check. The signal sent from a neuropoppet to the neural receiver can be jammed with a signal jammer.

While the neural receiver is embedded in a living humanoid target within 60 feet, you can manipulate the neuropoppet as a full action with two hands (this uses up one of the item's charges), causing the receiver to send subtle electrical signals through the target's nervous system. You can then designate the target's next standard action, chosen from the list below.

- Attempt a combat maneuver of your choice against the creature nearest to the target (determined randomly).
- Distract a creature of your choice using harrying fire.
- Take the total defense action.

After the target creature attempts the action you designate, it can attempt a DC 25 Will saving throw. If the save is successful, the neural receiver sends a blast of haptic feedback to the neuropoppet, dealing 6d6 electricity damage to you (Reflex DC 25 half).



REPLENIGEL MEGAVITAMIN

REPLENIGEL MEGAVITAMIN

LEVEL 4

| TECHNOLOGICAL ITEM | PRICE 300 | BULK L |
|--|-----------|--------|
| <p>Replenigel is a nutritional gelatin interwoven with nanites that bolster the immune system. Originally designed by Abadarcop during the war between the Pact Worlds and the Veskarium, replenigel is intended to provide a soldier with all of their daily nutritional needs and an added resistance to afflictions, while digesting slowly enough to require a soldier to eat only once per day. To minimize packaging costs, Abadarcop commonly shipped replenigel to the front lines in 50-pound blocks that, unappetizingly, resembled marbled sulfur. After the conflict with the Veskarium ceased, the corporation found itself with a surplus of replenigel cubes and no way to sell them. A particularly savvy marketing executive realized that subtle tweaks to the product's aesthetics could have a dramatic impact on its commercial viability. After extensive focus-group testing, Abadarcop created Nutrimanders, reshaping the gelatin into sizable, 1-pound megavitamins molded to look like skittermanders and available in various artificial flavors and colors.</p> | | |

It takes 5 minutes to consume a replenigel megavitamin. You gain 10 temporary Hit Points and a +2 circumstance bonus to Fortitude saves against diseases and poisons for the next 24 hours. In addition, you don't need to eat food or water for 24 hours. If you subsist on replenigel megavitamins for 5 consecutive days, you must attempt a DC 17 Fortitude save at the end of that fifth day and on each subsequent consecutive day you continue to eat these megavitamins; the bonus from

the megavitamin doesn't apply to this save. Failure means you develop a waxy sheen on your skin that makes you smell vaguely like a fermented version of the flavor of megavitamin you most recently consumed. Your skin remains this way for 1d4 days, during which time you take a -4 penalty to all Charisma-based skill checks; if you consume another megavitamin during this time, the duration is increased by 1 day.

SLEEPING SENTRY

LEVEL 5

| TECHNOLOGICAL ITEM | PRICE 2,750 | BULK 15 |
|--------------------|-------------|--------------|
| CAPACITY 20 | | USAGE 1/hour |

The sleeping sentry is an exoskeletal harness equipped with an automated medical unit that can deliver pharmaceuticals intravenously, all mounted vertically atop a disk large enough for a Medium creature to stand on. Sleeping sentries are often used by eccentric corporations or military organizations that want round-the-clock non-automated security patrols but who don't want to pay for multiple shifts. You activate a sleeping sentry by leaning back into the exoskeletal harness, allowing it to gently lock you into a standing position while supporting your neck, spine, legs, and arms. The automated

medical unit then injects you with a cocktail of barbiturates that puts you instantly to sleep for the next 8 hours (or until awoken by the sleeping sentry); an unwilling creature forced into the harness can attempt a DC 17 Fortitude save to remain conscious. Shortly thereafter, antigravity circuitry within the disc activates, suspending the entire structure approximately 1 inch off the ground and moving along a preprogrammed patrol route at a speed of 20 feet. The disc can move over land and over water, but not underwater.

Creatures who come within 30 feet of an activated sleeping sentry must succeed at a DC 25 Stealth check to fool the sleeping sentry's motion detectors, or else an integrated high-frequency proximity alarm sounds, waking you and releasing you from the harness to confront the threat. Any creature that is more than 30 feet away from a sleeping sentry must succeed at a DC 22 Perception check to recognize its occupant is asleep or a DC 20 Engineering check to identify the device.

MAGIC ITEMS

Spellcasters have known for millennia that magic isn't always reliable, especially for those who haven't mastered the craft. Each of the magic items presented here has a slight drawback or unusual way of functioning.

ELDRITCH ENCEPHALON

LEVELS 8-18

| MAGIC ITEM (WORN) | | | |
|-------------------|-------|-------|------|
| MODEL | LEVEL | PRICE | BULK |
| Mk 1 | 8 | 3,500 | L |

| | | | |
|------|----|---------|---|
| Mk 2 | 13 | 12,500 | L |
| Mk 3 | 18 | 450,000 | L |

Eldritch encephalons were originally created in yah-thelgaad experiments when brain collectors sought to replicate the way they use the brains of deceased spellcasters, allowing other agents of the Dominion of the Black to also share brains among themselves. An *eldritch encephalon* is a lifeless, severed humanoid head inscribed with necromantic glyphs that run from just above each eye, over the scalp, and end at the base of the skull. A mass of slender, writhing tentacles extends from the neck or skull of the *encephalon*, often roiling and trembling as if attempting to grasp something that isn't there.

When placed on your shoulder, or on any patch of exposed skin that can support the weight of an average humanoid head, an *eldritch encephalon* burrows its tentacles into your flesh and merges with your physiology in a process that takes a full 24 hours to complete. Once attached, an *encephalon* counts as a worn magic item and can be sundered, but not disarmed. Once this process is completed, the command words to activate the *encephalon* are transmitted psychically to your brain, and the head seems to come to life as its runes begin to glow. The *encephalon* occasionally speaks of its own volition, espousing the thoughts and opinions of the spellcaster it was in life. You can never be bonded to more than one *encephalon* at a time, and removing one is a time-consuming process requiring a special necromantic ritual that takes several hours to perform. Any *eldritch encephalon* that has not been joined with a host creature for more than 12 days withers rapidly, disintegrating into dust.

An *eldritch encephalon* allows you to cast a small selection of spells as spell-like abilities depending on the item's model, using your character level as your caster level. The DC of any spell cast using an *eldritch encephalon* is equal to 10 + the level of the spell + your Charisma modifier.

- **Mk 1:** *Command*, *mind thrust* (1st level), and *reflecting armor* each once per day.
- **Mk 2:** *Hold person*, *mind thrust* (2nd level), and *see invisibility* each once per day.
- **Mk 3:** *Charm monster*, *mind thrust* (3rd level), and *remove affliction* each once per day.

Unfortunately, being bonded with an *eldritch encephalon* has its drawbacks. Whenever you roll initiative for combat (or otherwise enter a very stressful situation, at the GM's discretion), there is a 50% chance that the *encephalon* attempts to take control of your body. To fight off this other mind, you must succeed at a Will saving throw (DC = 15 + half

the *eldritch encephalon*'s item level). Failure means you gain the confused condition for 1d4 rounds.

FALSEBOND TATTOOS

LEVEL 3

| MAGIC ITEM | PRICE 1,500 | BULK – |
|------------|-------------|--------|
|------------|-------------|--------|

A *falsebond tattoo* is designed to specifically mimic the partner bond between a dragonkin creature and a non-dragonkin creature, such as that experienced between many members of the Skyfire Legion. *Falsebond tattoos* come in pairs (with matching designs) and must be purchased and applied at the same time; the listed price is for two tattoos. The tattoos can be applied to any non-mindless creature regardless of its type. Once applied, a mystical link is formed between the recipients of the two tattoos. These creatures can communicate with each other as if they had telepathy with a range of 100 feet. In addition, once per day, linked creatures that are within 30 feet of each other can roll initiative checks separately and

treat the higher result as the result for both of them. However, when the creatures use this benefit, their brainwaves become so in sync that they might be overwhelmed with sensory information; each creature must succeed at a DC 14 Will save or gain the off-target condition for 1 round.

A *falsebond tattoo* doesn't count as a worn magic item, and it can't be disarmed or sundered. Most dragonkin, ryphorians, and members of the Skyfire Legion view these tattoos as perversions of a sacred bond and, at the GM's discretion, a character wearing a *falsebond tattoo* takes a –4 circumstance penalty to Diplomacy checks when interacting with such individuals. You can attempt to hide a *falsebond tattoo* with a Disguise check opposed by any onlookers' Perception checks; this counts as altering a minor detail (Core Rulebook 140).

STARSHIP IN A BOTTLE

LEVEL 10

| MAGIC ITEM | PRICE 17,500 | BULK 2 |
|------------|--------------|--------|
|------------|--------------|--------|

When purchased or crafted, a *starship in a bottle* looks like a miniature model of a generic starship within a plain, narrow-necked glass bottle. However, when placed in a prominent location on a starship's bridge for 24 hours, the model links to that starship and transforms into an exact replica of it. During starship combat, the replica can sometimes be seen to turn and twist in the same maneuvers the linked starship is performing. A member of the linked starship's crew (meaning anyone holding one of the major starship combat roles) can hold the *starship in a bottle* in two hands and concentrate for 10 minutes to transfer all the Hull Point damage of the linked starship to the replica. The linked starship is returned to full Hull Points, while the various dents, scratches, and even holes



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in the linked starship's hull visibly transfer to the replica. Up to 150 Hull Points of damage can be transferred to the replica before it loses all its magic, becoming a mundane trinket of a wrecked starship inside of a bottle. A starship can be linked to only one *starship in a bottle* at a time.

A spellcaster can cast either *mending* or *make whole* on the *starship in a bottle* to repair the replica's Hull Point damage once per day, but doing so creates a feedback loop between the spellcaster and the magic item. The spellcaster takes an amount of Hit Point damage equal to twice the number of Hull Points restored; this damage can't be reduced in any way (though it can be healed as normal). There is no other way to repair the Hull Point damage done to the replica.

WEATHERWEAR

LEVEL 5

| MAGIC ITEM (WORN) | PRICE 2,750 | BULK 1 |
|-------------------|-------------|--------|
|-------------------|-------------|--------|

Millennia ago, an enterprising guild of azer mystics discovered how to weave garments entirely out of planar essence from the Plane of Fire. This newfound fashion of flickering flames was dubbed *infernowear*. It wasn't long before the same azers figured out how to make similar clothes interwoven with planar fabrics from each of the Elemental Planes, creating garments of shifting sands, roiling snowfalls, or writhing lightning (dubbed *dustwear*, *blizzardwear*, and *boltwear*, respectively). These crafting techniques were thought to be lost during the Gap until an environmental scientist and amateur tailor found examples of these garments at the Brass Bazaar in the Burning Archipelago. She was able to reproduce these garments and began selling them under the general name of *weatherwear*, though the items have an unfortunate side effect, as detailed below.

Each type of *weatherwear* can be integrated into any style of nonmagical clothing (*Starfinder Core Rulebook* 230), granting the benefits of that clothing in addition to its own benefits, though *weatherwear* must be worn over armor and you can wear only one type of *weatherwear* at a time. While wearing a specific type of *weatherwear*, you gain resistance 5 to the energy damage type associated with the garment's elemental fabric (acid for *dustwear*, cold for *blizzardwear*, electricity for *boltwear*, and fire for *infernowear*). In addition, once per day, you can reroll a failed saving throw that would result in you taking energy damage of the corresponding type. However, if you roll a 1 on that second saving throw, you lose the provided energy resistance and instead gain vulnerability to that energy type for 1 minute.

ARTIFACTS

Artifacts are powerful, one-of-a-kind magic items that can't be purchased or crafted. The full rules for artifacts can be found on page 118 of *Starfinder Armory*.

HARMONIC REASSEMBLER

LEVEL 20

| MAGIC ITEM | PRICE PRICELESS | BULK 22 |
|------------|-----------------|---------|
|------------|-----------------|---------|

While the true origin of this artifact was lost in the Gap, some believe it was created by a gnome inventor who sought to

permanently reverse the course of the Bleaching that affects all of gnomekind. The *Harmonic Reassembler* is a large musical instrument comprising a series of glass bowls overlapping one another and set around a shaft of pure noqual. The bowls are spun by an internal engine, and a musician gently touches them to produce haunting tones, which can be adjusted by a series of pedals and levers that send mild electrical currents through the shaft. Some scholars believe the noqual shaft was selected for its ability to resist magical effects, allowing it to serve as a sort of nullifying "ground" for the instrument's transformative effects. When certain chords are played on the *Harmonic Reassembler* by a trained musician, it can produce incredible magic.

Before you can produce any magical effects with the *Harmonic Reassembler*, you must first learn one of the specific chords described below. Doing so takes 1 week of study and a successful DC 30 Profession (musician) check; if you are being taught the chord from someone who already knows it, you gain a +4 circumstance bonus to this check. Once you know a chord, you can play it as a full action; an additional successful Profession (musician) check is required to produce the desired effect, as noted in each chord's description. Playing a chord on the artifact is dangerous, as the magic can backfire if you aren't a talented enough musician. You must be adjacent to the *Harmonic Reassembler* to play it, and you can include yourself as a target of its effects if you wish. Each effect produced by the artifact can target only living creatures that can hear the music, so each effect is sense-dependent.

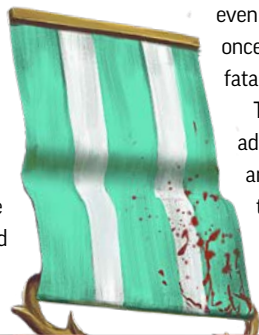
Chord of Baleful Transformation: Playing this chord requires a successful DC 34 Profession (musician) check. When you do so, you can choose up to four creatures within 30 feet (no two of which can be more than 30 feet apart) that can hear the *Harmonic Reassembler* to transform them into Small creatures of your choice. This effect functions as per the 6th-level version of *mass baleful polymorph* (*Starfinder Alien Archive* 2 148) with a Will saving throw DC of 29. The effect lasts for a maximum of 20 rounds as long you play the *Harmonic Reassembler* each round (a standard action); otherwise, the effect is immediately dispelled (unless you have chosen to make the duration permanent, as noted in the spell). If you fail the Profession (musician) check by 10 or more, you must attempt a DC 29 Will saving throw or be immediately and permanently transformed into a Small animal or similar beast, as per the final step of the 6th-level version of *baleful polymorph* (*Starfinder Alien Archive* 2 147).

Chord of Disassembly: Playing this chord requires a successful DC 34 Profession (musician) check. When you do so, you can choose up to three creatures within 100 feet that can hear the *Harmonic Reassembler* to be affected as if they were struck by the ray produced by *disintegrate* (Fortitude DC 29 partial). If you fail the Profession (musician) check by 5 or more, you are affected by the *disintegrate* spell instead (and must attempt the same DC 29 Fortitude save). If you fail the Profession (musician) check by 10 or more, you take a -4 penalty to the saving throw.

Chord of Reincarnation: Playing this chord requires a successful DC 30 Profession (musician) check. When you do so, you can choose up to four living creatures within 30 feet that can hear the *Harmonic Reassembler* to have a seed of rebirth grow within them. The next time that creature dies within the next 30 days, it is immediately affected by the *reincarnate* spell; it takes 1d4 rounds for the creature to gain its new form. The target also doesn't suffer any of the negative levels or Constitution drain normally imposed by *reincarnate*. If you fail the Profession (musician) check by 5 or more, you take 2 Constitution drain (no save). If you fail the Profession (musician) check by 10 or more, you also take 2 permanent negative levels (no save).

Chord of Rewiring: Playing this chord requires a successful DC 32 Profession (musician) check. When you do so, you can choose up to 10 living creatures within 100 feet (no two of which can be more than 30 feet apart) that can hear the *Harmonic Reassembler* to partially turn them into robotic beings. This effect functions as *mass rewire flesh* with Will and Fortitude saving throw DCs of 29. The effect lasts for a maximum of 20 rounds as long you play the *Harmonic Reassembler* each round (a standard action); otherwise, the effect immediately ends. If you fail the Profession (musician) check by 10 or more, you instead take 20d6 slashing damage as your organs turn to steel components; you can attempt a DC 29 Fortitude save to halve this damage.

The *Harmonic Reassembler* is currently in the hands of a wealthy gnome composer and musician named Rumdigo who uses it to transform paying audiences into squoxes and other harmless creatures for brief periods. Some believe he is the artifact's original creator, though he vehemently denies this. He is currently attempting to discover new chords that can affect nonliving creatures and objects.



CONQUEROR'S STAR



continued to slash at Harakoye's neck and stabbed out her eyes, Harakoye hacked away at him. It was not until her head was removed completely that Harakoye was finally slain, and even then, soldiers of the Veskarium claim her body rose once more, headless, to attack one final time, dealing a fatal blow to her assailant.

The *Conqueror's Star of the Headless Vesk* is an adamantine medallion set atop an eight-pointed star and molded into the form of a vesk hand clutching the bleeding heart of an enemy in its claws. It is spattered with Harakoye's blood and affixed to a gore-soaked turquoise ribbon. No matter how much anyone attempts to clean the medal or the ribbon (even using magic), the blood spatter always reappears within 2d4 hours. While you are wearing the medallion, you gain 20 temporary Hit Points that replenish after 8 hours of rest. If you are surprised by an attack while wearing the *Conqueror's Star of the Headless Vesk*, you can call any one weapon you own immediately into your hands as if it had the *called* weapon fusion. In addition, if you would be reduced to 0 Hit Points by an attack while wearing the artifact, you can attempt a Fortitude saving throw (DC = 10 + the CR of the creature whose attack reduced you to 0 Hit Points + 5 if the attack was a critical hit) to be reduced to 1 Hit Point instead.

Each time beyond the first that you activate this ability within 1 week, the save DC increases by 5. If you fail this Fortitude save, you can immediately make a melee attack against an enemy within your reach before you are reduced to 0 Hit Points.

Unfortunately, wearing the artifact has a major drawback. Any time you are struck with a melee weapon with the wound or severe wound critical hit effect, the attacker acts as if they had rolled a 20 on the Wounding Weapons table (*Starfinder Core Rulebook* 183), and you must roll the Fortitude saving throw twice and take the worse result.

HYBRID ITEMS

A few of the pieces of gear presented here are the result of a glitch in a normal technological or hybrid item.

CONQUEROR'S STAR OF THE HEADLESS VESK

LEVEL 20

MAGIC ITEM (WORN)

PRICE PRICELESS

BULK L

Stories told by Veskarium warriors speak of an ancient Vesk captain named Harakoye, who was awarded the Conqueror's Star, a coveted Veskarium military decoration, for slaying an overwhelming number of enemy soldiers in a glorious battle against all odds. Harakoye so prized the emblem, she slept with it hanging around her neck. But one night, when sleeping in the same barracks as her unit, Harakoye was betrayed by an assassin who had posed for months as a loyal comrade. As the assassin slit her throat, Harakoye awoke from slumber and grabbed the doshko she kept by her bedside. As the assassin

ADJUDICATOR'S EYE

LEVEL 9

HYBRID ITEM

PRICE 12,500

BULK L

A few years ago, a Qabarat-based news agency broadcast an investigative report about a small planet in the Vast called Aurok 6, which featured a near-utopian civilization on its surface but a complicated infrastructure of prisons below. According to the report, Aurok 6's aboveground nations enjoy peace and quiet due to the contributions of a planetary law enforcement agency with international jurisdiction, known only as the Adjudicators, who wield psychic technology and governmental authority to

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act as judge, jury, and executioners when pursuing criminals. Since the broadcast, several weapons manufacturers have secretly visited the planet, and now examples of experimental "judgment tech" weapons accessories can be found on various dark infospheres throughout the Pact Worlds. The most notable of these is a scope, known as an *adjudicator's eye*, that can supposedly determine the guilt or innocence of a target.

An *adjudicator's eye* functions as a combined laser scope and nightvision scope (*Starfinder Armory* 61), but it also contains mnemonopathic sensors capable of scanning a target's memories for recollections of a specified crime or attempted crime. Once per day, in a process that takes 1 minute, you can program the scope's sensors with a single yes-or-no question testing responsibility for a particular crime, such as "Did the target attempt to blow up my starship?" or "Did the target plant the explosive device in the Eoxian embassy?" Three times per day, you can activate an *adjudicator's eye* attached to a weapon as a move action. For the next 10 minutes, when aiming or looking through the scope, the sensors automatically scan targets to reveal their perception of guilt or innocence in regards to that question. Each target must succeed at a DC 18 Will saving throw or the *adjudicator's eye* searches their memories for information about the specified question. These memories indicate only whether or not the target remembers themselves as being innocent or guilty of the crime in question, and they do not necessarily reflect the truth (as in the case of someone who has been affected by *modify memory*). The scope places a "guilty" indicator over any target that recalls participating in the specified crime, and an "innocent" indicator over any target that has no memory of the crime or who succeeded at the Will save. Deactivating an *adjudicator's eye* is a move action.

The *adjudicator's eye* imposes a -2 penalty on attack rolls made with the weapon it is attached to against any unscanned target or any target the scope has deemed innocent.



A series of tuning forks of varying lengths, which protrude from the top of the apparatus, move when a large mechanical crank affixed to one side is operated. Three times per day as a standard action, you can aim the device at a single creature within 30 feet and turn the crank clockwise five full turns; this requires the use of two hands. This causes the *dimensional modulator's* engine to generate bright flashes of energy, the symbols on its display to change rapidly, and the tuning forks to spin, rise, and fall, emanating an eerie tone. The target must then succeed at a DC 22 Fortitude save or be immediately transformed into a two-dimensional creature for 1d4 rounds. If the target succeeds at the saving throw, there is a 50% chance that you are affected by the *dimensional modulator* instead. You must attempt the

same saving throw, but if you fail, you are transformed for 1d6 rounds instead.

Any creature that becomes two-dimensional in this way is perfectly flat and thin as paper, as if the creature is an animated painting or living shadow. Any equipment a two-dimensional creature is holding at the time of transformation transforms with the creature. Such a creature can only move and take the combat banter action to speak. They can pass through other creatures' spaces without provoking attacks of opportunity and can move along ceilings, floors, walls, and other flat surfaces as if affected by *spider climb* (though they need not have any limbs free to do so) at double their normal land speed. A two-dimensional creature can attempt Perception and Stealth checks, gaining a +10 circumstance bonus to Stealth checks if they move along a wall covered in paintings, graffiti, or other images. A two-dimensional creature can still be the target of attacks, spells, and special abilities, but they gain a +8 circumstance bonus to Armor Class, a +4 circumstance bonus to all saving throws, and DR 20/magic. If a creature dies while two-dimensional, their image is etched permanently onto the flat surface where they perished.

Some believe the aliens who created the *dimensional modulators* are still alive today, having transformed themselves into creatures perceived in more dimensions than most denizens of the Pact Worlds can comprehend.

DIMENSIONAL MODULATOR

LEVEL 14

HYBRID ITEM

PRICE 56,000

BULK 2

Suspected to have been left behind by an ancient alien civilization that abandoned its home planet sometime during the Gap, a *dimensional modulator* looks like an asymmetrical computer with a display depicting several vertical columns of glowing digital runes that continuously morph and shift. The display is attached seamlessly to a cylindrical clockwork engine the approximate size and weight of a fire extinguisher, containing myriad ancient-looking cogs and gears incongruously integrated with more modern parts.

HIVEJACK

LEVELS 3-15

HYBRID ITEM (WORN)

| MODEL | LEVEL | PRICE | BULK |
|-------|-------|---------|------|
| Mk 1 | 3 | 1,500 | L |
| Mk 2 | 9 | 13,750 | L |
| Mk 3 | 15 | 108,000 | L |

During the combined efforts of the Veskarium and the Pact Worlds to repel attacks from the Swarm, an enterprising research team composed mostly of shirren and vesk mechanics

developed the first *hivejack* to allow a user to “hack” into the hive mind of the Swarm in an effort to detect and manipulate the thoughts of individual Swarm components. A *hivejack* consists of a pair of small spherical applicators that are placed just above or below your visual sensors; it takes an uninterrupted 24 hours for the item to adjust to your mental patterns before you can use it. Each applicator is connected to a long, wispy tendrill that lies flat upon your head or dangles from your face; this tendrill taps into the Swarm’s hive mind through replicating specific pheromones, electrostatic fields, and psychic signals while, at the same time, blocking your own thoughts from the hive mind. Creatures with racial telepathy cannot use a *hivejack*. These items have not seen much use since the invasion, however, as prolonged use the technology leaves you vulnerable to being dominated by the Swarm hive mind. The effects of a *hivejack* depend on its model, as described below.

- **Mk 1:** You can understand the telepathic communication between members of the Swarm within 30 feet of you. As a result, you gain a +2 insight bonus to Perception checks to notice any Swarm creatures attempting to use Stealth in that range and a +2 insight bonus to initiative checks in a fight against Swarm creatures that begin within that range.
- **Mk 2:** A *mk 2 hivejack* functions as a *mk 1 hivejack*, and you also gain a +1 insight bonus on attack rolls against Swarm creatures within 30 feet as you can anticipate their movements. In addition, your bonus to initiative checks increases to +4.
- **Mk 3:** A *mk 3 hivejack* functions as a *mk 2 hivejack*, and three times per day as a standard action, you can attempt to influence a single Swarm creature within 30 feet as per *suggestion*, using your character level as the caster level. The DC of the saving throw is equal to 10 + half your character level + your Charisma modifier. If you have successfully used this ability against another Swarm creature that is within 30 feet of your target, that target takes a -2 penalty to the saving throw.

Continued use of a *hivejack* is not without its risks. Once you have worn a *hivejack* for 1 week, you must attempt a Will saving throw the first time each day you get within 30 feet of a creature with the Swarm mind ability (DC = 10 + the *hivejack*’s model number + 1 for each previous saving throw). If you fail, you feel an overwhelming desire to act as part of the Swarm. You must then attempt another Will saving throw as if you had been struck with the energy ray produced by a *dominate person* spell cast by the Swarm creature with the highest CR within 30 feet, with a saving throw DC equal to 10 + 1-1/2 × the CR of the Swarm creature. You can attempt a new saving throw to shake off the dominating effect each day as long as you haven’t come within 30 feet of a Swarm creature within 24 hours.

NULL-SPACE TUMOR**LEVEL 5**

HYBRID ITEM

PRICE 3,050

BULK 1

While it is rare, some adventurers claim that exposing a *null-*

space chamber to powerful teleportation magic (such as *plane shift*) can result in an unusual metallic growth appearing within the chamber. Scholars have yet to determine the true nature of these anomalies, which they call *null-space tumors*. A *null-space tumor* seems to have no obvious use or purpose, and merchants might sell you a *null-space chamber* with one inside without realizing it. The listed price and level is for a *mk 1 null-space chamber* with a *null-space tumor* inside; rumors persist that larger and more disruptive *null-space tumors* exist. A *null-space tumor* has 1 bulk and can’t be permanently removed from its associated chamber. You can’t purposefully call up a *null-space tumor* from its chamber, but each time you call up another item from the chamber, there is a 20% chance that the *null-space tumor* appears instead. When that happens, the tumor’s unusual properties randomly cause one of the following effects (roll 1d8 to determine the effect), after which the *null-space tumor* immediately teleports itself back into the chamber. The only way to destroy a *null-space tumor* is to destroy the *null-space chamber* it’s attached to.

D8 Effect

- 1 You and all your gear become invisible for 1d4+1 rounds, but you move as if through a thick soup; your speed is reduced to 10 feet during this time.
- 2 Duplicates appear around you, as if you were affected by the spell *mirror image* for 1d4 minutes. However, you see doubles of every creature and object, meaning you have a 50% miss chance to attack a creature and a 50% chance to waste your action when you try to pick up or manipulate an object.
- 3 You gain the benefits of *comprehend languages* for 1 hour, but anything you write down or type on a computer during this time instantly vanishes as per *erase*.
- 4 You gain the benefits of *keen senses* for 10 minutes, but you take a -2 penalty to saving throws against sense-dependent effects during this time.
- 5 The tumor produces a wisp ally (as per the spell of the same name) that lasts for 1d4+1 rounds, but you don’t control it. The wisp ally chooses its targets and effect randomly.
- 6 You instantly regain 1d6 Stamina Points, but lose the same number of Hit Points. If you have all your Stamina Points, you instead belch a ring of iridescent smoke.
- 7 The next weapon you touch is affected as per *supercharge weapon*, but it immediately gains the broken condition after it is used to attack. You must touch a weapon within 1 minute or lose this ability.
- 8 You gain a small degree of telepathy and can detect thoughts (as per the spell of the same name) for the next 5 minutes. However, your idealized self-image appears 15 feet away from you, as per a 1st-level casting of *holographic image*, and you have no control over this image.

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ALIEN ARCHIVES

"The Eshtayiv is a horrible enigma. They seem to be a community of lesser creatures. They are an enemy to the Outer Gods, but they are no ally to others who oppose eldritch beings such as Azathoth. Instead, they seem like a virus of light and fire that spreads itself through flesh and spirit. This infection seeks an end to darkness, an impossible universe of fire and light. The constituents of the Eshtayiv had been encountered throughout the galaxy before the destruction of Ezorod. Troubling is that this event might have released a multitude. But where?"

—Renyé Zi, DCI Xenoarcheology

DIMENSIONAL SHAMBLER

CR
8XP
4,800

CE Medium outsider (chaotic, evil, extraplanar)
Init +3; Senses darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +16

DEFENSE

EAC 20; KAC 22

Fort +11; Ref +9; Will +9

Defensive Abilities resist conjuration; DR 5/lawful

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee claw +20 (3d4+13 S plus grab)

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 8th)

1/day—displacement

3/day—dimensional anchor (see sidebar), plane shift

At will—dimension door

STATISTICS

Str +5; Dex +3; Con +5; Int -2; Wis +2; Cha +0

Skills Mysticism +16, Sense Motive +16, Stealth +16,

Languages Aklo

Other Abilities dimension mastery, planar mastery

ECOLOGY

Environment any

Organization solitary, pair, or gang (3–8)

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Dimension Mastery (Ex) After being affected by *dimension door*, a dimensional shambler can take actions normally. In addition, the shambler can attempt a Mysticism check to ignore effects that prevent planar travel (DC = 10 + the level or CR of the effect or its creator, whichever is higher). If successful, the shambler ignores the effect for 1 round.

Planar Mastery (Ex) When a dimensional shambler uses *plane shift*, it does so as a full action during which it shimmers and fades to transparency. The shambler can arrive in a specific location if it succeeds at a DC 20 Mysticism check. In addition, a dimensional shambler can take one unwilling creature with it when it uses *plane shift*, provided the shambler has the target grappled or pinned. The creature can negate the *plane shift* effect on itself with a successful DC 16 Will save.

Resist Conjuration (Ex) Dimensional shamblers are immune to effects that have the calling or summoning descriptors. A shambler can sense when it has been targeted by such an effect and use *plane shift* to travel to the location of the effect's creator.

Dimensional shamblers are lean, humanoid-shaped beings that move as if intoxicated. They are relentless planar explorers. Violence and abduction define their interactions with other creatures.

DIMENSIONAL ANCHOR

School abjuration

Casting Time 1 standard action

Range medium (100 ft. + 10 ft./level)

Targets one creature or object

Duration 1 minute/level

Saving Throw none; Spell Resistance yes (object)

You fire a ray at the target, making a ranged attack against its EAC. On a hit, the target is covered in a shimmering field that prevents planar travel. The target can't be affected by any effect that causes the target to move extradimensionally or to another plane, such as teleportation, summoning, plane shifting, astral travel, ethereal travel, and so on. An affected starship can't enter or emerge from Drift travel.

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MAGMA OOZE

CR
7

XP
3,200



N Large ooze (fire)

Init -2; **Senses** blindsight (vibration) 60 ft., sightless;

Perception +14

DEFENSES

EAC 18; **KAC** 19

Fort +11; **Ref** +7; **Will** +4

Defensive Abilities molten body, split; **Immunities** fire, ooze immunities

Weaknesses petrified by water, vulnerable to cold

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft., climb 20 ft.

Melee slam +16 (2d6+12 B & F plus grab; critical burn 1d6)

Ranged hurl magma +14 (2d6+7 B & F; critical burn 1d6)

Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft.

STATISTICS

Str +5; **Dex** -2; **Con** +4; **Int** -; **Wis** +2; **Cha** -4

Skills Athletics +14 (+22 to climb)

Other Abilities mindless

ECOLOGY

Environment any underground

Organization solitary

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Hurl Magma (Su) A magma ooze can hurl magma at a range increment of 20 feet to a maximum range of 100 feet.

Molten Body (Su) Any melee weapon striking the magma ooze takes 2d6 fire damage, ignoring hardness. If the weapon's wielder fails a DC 15 Reflex save, the weapon gains the burning condition, which deals 1d6 fire damage that ignores hardness.

Petrified by Water (Ex) When exposed to a least 1 bulk of water, such as in heavy rain or a pool, the magma ooze is staggered for 1 round. A magma ooze is also staggered for 1 round if it starts its turn in such conditions. A magma ooze staggered in this way for 5 or more consecutive rounds becomes petrified. It remains petrified until the source of the petrification is removed and the ooze succeeds at a DC 20 Fortitude saving throw, which it can attempt at the end of each of its turns.

Split (Ex) If a magma ooze takes cold damage, provided it has at least 12 Hit Points remaining, it splits into two oozes. The new magma ooze appears in an adjacent unoccupied space. If there is no such free space, the ooze doesn't split. Each ooze has half the original's remaining Hit Points. The new ooze acts just after the original ooze in the initiative order.

Magma oozes are living pools of bubbling molten rock that churn and move of their own accord.

They can be found on the Plane of Earth and the Plane of Fire. On the Material Plane, they arise spontaneously from planar influences or bizarre magic, usually in the vicinity of volcanoes. Magma oozes have also been known to form when molten rock is suddenly pulled into the Drift.

A magma ooze has an extraordinarily high body temperature. An agitated magma ooze can jettison chunks of its superheated mass as projectiles of burning rock and protoplasm.

Although mindless, a magma ooze instinctively avoids water and extreme cold.

Cold causes the ooze to split, while water causes its body to harden. Prolonged periods of submersion might even harden the ooze's surface into a stiff shell, rendering the creature totally immobile until it emerges and becomes molten once more.

A typical magma ooze is 10 feet wide when its body is spread 6 inches thick. It weighs 2 tons.



MAGMIN

CR
3XP
800

CN Small outsider (elemental, extraplanar, fire)
Init +2; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; **Perception** +8
Aura searing (5 ft., DC 12)

DEFENSE

HP 32

EAC 15; **KAC** 17**Fort** +6; **Ref** +4; **Will** +3**Defensive Abilities** molten body; **DR** 5/magic; **Immunities** elemental immunities, fire**Weaknesses** vulnerable to cold**OFFENSE****Speed** 30 ft.**Melee** slam +11 (1d6+4 B & F; critical burn 1d4)**STATISTICS****Str** +1; **Dex** +2; **Con** +4; **Int** -1; **Wis** +0; **Cha** +0**Skills** Acrobatics +8, Athletics +8, Stealth +13**Languages** Ignan**ECOLOGY****Environment** any land (Plane of Fire)**Organization** solitary, pair, flow (3–8), eruption (9–24)**SPECIAL ABILITIES**

Molten Body (Su) Any melee weapon striking the magmin takes 1d4 fire damage, ignoring hardness. If the weapon's wielder fails a DC 12 Reflex save, the weapon gains the burning condition, which deals 1d4 fire damage that ignores hardness.

Searing Aura (Su) A magmin radiates volcanic heat, and any creature that starts its turn in the aura must succeed at a DC 12 Fortitude save or take 1d4 fire damage.

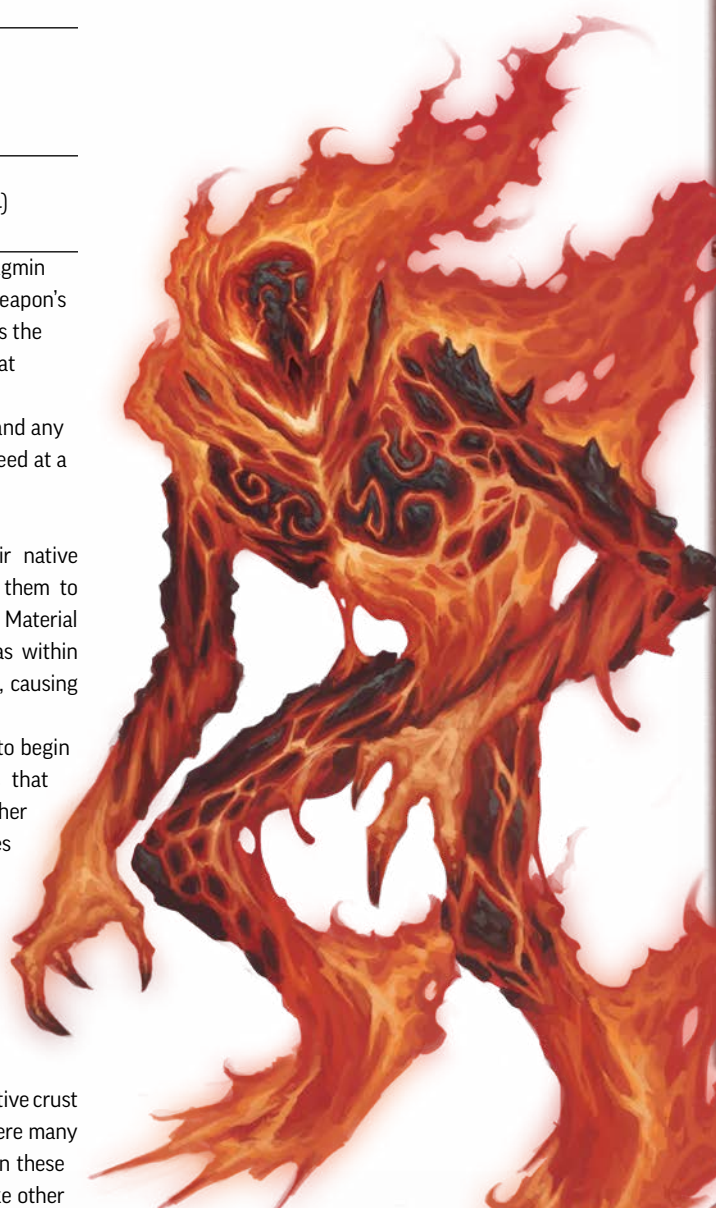
The mischievous magmins seek places where their native Plane of Fire touches the Material Plane, allowing them to slip between planes. When a magmin appears on the Material Plane, it does so in places of immense heat, such as within lava. An influx of magmins can disrupt magma flows, causing volcanic eruptions and earthquakes.

Though few mortals know what causes magmins to begin their exodus from their home plane, the truth is that magmins aren't very imposing in comparison to other creatures that inhabit the Plane of Fire. Such creatures regularly push magmins around or annex their territory, forcing magmins to migrate, sometimes in large groups. Ousted magmins are untrusting and inquisitive, bombarding intruders with questions in a harsh tone. If magmins dislike the answers to these interrogations, they can become aggressive, even against stronger beings.

Magmin settlements can be found within the protective crust of magma pillars caused by geyser-like eruptions, where many pools of lava can be found. Magmins enjoy dwelling in these pools and use them for all sorts of purposes, much like other

species use hot springs. Unlike other species, magmins also use these pools to kill interlopers and cook them, consuming the ash, bones, and minerals left over as a tasty treat.

Magma flows through a magmin's veins and washes over its body, giving off extreme heat. A tiny, fiery heart burns within a magmin, like the core of a terrestrial planet. Few have seen a magmin's heart, however. Magmins cool quickly when they die or disintegrate into the surrounding lava. Cracking a dead magmin open reveals only dense rock and, sometimes, a few even denser gemstones. What magmins lack in height, they make up for in weight. They stand roughly 4 feet tall and weigh around 300 pounds due to their rocky makeup.



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PYRIC HARBINGER

CR
8

XP
4,800



CE Medium aberration

Init +6; **Senses** darkvision 120 ft., see in darkness, sense through (life) 30 ft.; **Perception** +16

Aura alien presence (30 ft., DC 18, sickened 1d4 rounds)

DEFENSE

EAC 21; **KAC** 21

HP 110

Fort +9; **Ref** +11; **Will** +7

Defensive Abilities amorphous, ash consumption, void adaptation; **Immunities** bleed, death effects, disease, electricity, exhaustion, fatigue, fire, paralysis, poison, sleep, stunning

OFFENSE

Speed 10 ft., fly 60 ft. (Su, perfect)

Melee tendril +17 (1d12+8 F plus pyric curse; critical burn 1d8 F)

Ranged pyric beam +17 (1d0+8 F plus pyric curse; critical burn 1d8 F)

Space 5 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft. (15 ft. with tendril)

Offensive Abilities pyric fire

STATISTICS

Str +0; **Dex** +6; **Con** +2; **Int** +2; **Wis** +0; **Cha** +4

Skills Acrobatics +16 (+24 to fly), Intimidate +21, Mysticism +21, Sense Motive +21

Languages Aklo; telepathy 100 ft.

Other Abilities brightly illuminated, compression, phase, solar adaptation, spaceflight (Mysticism), undying

ECOLOGY

Environment any

Organization solitary or pair

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Ash Consumption (Su) When a creature within 30 feet takes fire damage, a pyric harbinger regains a number of Hit Points equal to the damage the creature took, up to a maximum equal to the harbinger's CR per round.

Brightly Illuminated (Su) Light within 30 feet of a pyric harbinger increases by two steps. Light for 30 more feet beyond that increases by one step. Magical darkness decreases this light only if the darkness is from a source with a CR or level higher than the harbinger's CR.

Phase (Su) A pyric harbinger can move through objects as if it were incorporeal.

Pyric Beam (Su) Once per round as a standard action, a pyric harbinger can project pyric fire out to a range of 120 feet. This attack has the line weapon special property.

Pyric Fire (Su) The fire damage of a pyric harbinger burns body and spirit, ignoring fire resistance and dealing half damage even to creatures with fire immunity. A creature burning due to this fire can gain no bonuses to end that condition. A creature that dies due to pyric fire damage becomes a pyric revenant (page 60) 1d4 hours later.

Undying (Ex) Pyric harbingers don't age and have no need to eat, drink, or sleep.

PYRIC CURSE

Type curse; **Save** Fortitude DC 18

Effect A creature that fails the save gains the burning 1d8 condition. This flame is pyric fire (see special ability). While affected, the creature succeeds at saving throws against other pyric curses of the same or weaker potency.

Cure 1 save; successful saves against the burning condition are successful saves against the curse.

Though called "the spawn of the Eshtayiv," pyric harbingers are the constituents of this entity rather than its offspring. These rare creatures travel through space to find dark places to illuminate and beings to slay, creating terror and pyric undead.

A pyric harbinger looks like an orb of fire, but within that flame is a gelatinous sphere that is 5 feet in diameter and mostly maw. Those who've studied a harbinger's ashy remains estimate they weigh only 100 pounds.

PYRIC HELIACUS

CR
10XP
9,600

NE Large undead

Init +5; **Senses** darkvision 120 ft., see in darkness, see invisibility, sense through (life) 30 ft.; **Perception** +19**Aura** alien presence (10 ft., DC 19, sickened 1 round)**DEFENSE**

HP 145

EAC 22; **KAC** 22**Fort** +9; **Ref** +9; **Will** +15**Defensive Abilities** ash consumption; **Immunities** fire, undead immunities**OFFENSE****Speed** 30 ft., fly 30 ft. (Su, average)**Melee** slam +18 (2d8+10 B & F plus pyric curse; critical burn 2d4 F)**Ranged** arcing pyric beam +18 (3d4+10 F plus pyric curse; critical burn 2d4 F)**Space** 10 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft.**Offensive Abilities** eclipse shroud, implosion, pyric fire**Spell-Like Abilities** (CL 10th)

1/day—greater invisibility, wall of fire (pyric fire)

3/day—dispel magic

Constant—see invisibility, nondetection

STATISTICS**Str** +0; **Dex** +5; **Con** —; **Int** +2; **Wis** +8; **Cha** +3**Skills** Acrobatics +19, Intimidate +24, Mysticism +24**Languages** Aklo; telepathy 60 ft.**Other Abilities** illuminated, unliving**ECOLOGY****Environment** any**Organization** solitary**SPECIAL ABILITIES****Arcing Pyric Beam (Su)** As pyric beam (page 58). In addition, once per round after hitting a target, the heliacus can bend the line, causing it to continue along a new trajectory.**Ash Consumption (Su)** See page 58.**Eclipse Shroud (Su)** As a standard action, a heliacus can force a creature to succeed at a DC 19 Will saving throw or take 4d8 cold damage and become blinded for 1 minute. An affected creature must repeat the saving throw at the start of each of its turns, taking 4d8 cold damage on a failure and ending the blinded condition on a success.**Illuminated (Su)** Light within 10 feet of a pyric wraith increases by two steps. Light for 10 more feet beyond that increases one step. Magical darkness decreases this light only if from a source with a CR or level higher than the heliacus's CR.**Implosion (Su)** When destroyed, a heliacus implodes, becoming a gravitational singularity, as the spell (+22 to attack, 5d6 damage), in a random square of its space for 3 rounds.**Pyric Curse (Su)** See page 58; Fortitude DC 19, 2d4 fire damage.**Pyric Fire (Su)** See page 58; Fortitude DC 19.

A few sapient pyric revenants master the spiritual fires within them, becoming pyric heliacuses instead of pyric wraiths. With phenomenal mental discipline, a heliacus can bend fire and light, including cutting victims off from warmth and sight. Heliacuses hunger for knowledge as much as flesh and spirit, so they converse with other beings and seek out repositories of lore. However, heliacuses are imperious and malevolent, consuming anyone who fails to edify or impress them.

As a heliacus's enlightenment grows, so does its body, until the creature tops 12 feet. However, as little more than flame, skin, and bone, a heliacus weighs only 300 pounds.



THE BLIND CITY

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PYRIC REVENANT

CR
4

XP
1,200



CE Medium undead

Init +3; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; **Perception** +10

DEFENSE

EAC 16; **KAC** 18

Fort +6; **Ref** +6; **Will** +5

Immunities fire, undead immunities

Weaknesses susceptible to water

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee slam +12 (1d6+9 B & F plus pyric curse; critical burn 1d4 F)

Ranged pyric bolt +10 (1d4+4 F; critical burn 1d4 F)

Offensive Abilities pyric fire

STATISTICS

Str +5; **Dex** +3; **Con** –; **Int** +0; **Wis** +1; **Cha** +0

Skills Acrobatics +10, Athletics +15, Intimidate +10

HP 50

Languages Aklo

Other Abilities dimly illuminated, unliving

ECOLOGY

Environment any

Organization solitary, pair, or horde (3–10)

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Dimly Illuminated (Su) Light within 10 feet of a pyric revenant increases by one step. Magical darkness decreases this light only if it's from a source with a CR or level higher than the revenant's CR.

Pyric Bolt (Su) A pyric revenant can launch a bolt of pyric fire with a range increment of 20 feet and a maximum range of 100 feet.

Pyric Curse (Su) See page 58; Fortitude DC 13, 1d4 fire damage.

Pyric Fire (Su) See page 58; Fortitude DC 13.

Susceptible to Water (Su) A splash of water deals 1d4 acid damage to a pyric revenant, while a large amount, such as heavy rain, deals 2d4 acid damage. Full immersion in water deals 4d4 acid damage per round to a pyric revenant. However, water can't reduce a pyric revenant to fewer than one-fifth of its Hit Points (typically 10). Ice does not trigger a pyric revenant's water susceptibility.

When pyric fire kills, it roasts flesh while kindling the spirit. Left unchecked, this otherworldly flame awakens a slain creature as an undead of ash, embers, and fire. Some pyric revenants smell of charred meat, which can be the first indication one is nearby.

A pyric revenant retains negative traits, such as low cunning or the desire to seek out and torment previous adversaries. The revenant might remember unfinished business and important people, and attempt to destroy such vestiges of its former life. If undirected, however, the creature is straightforward in its malice. It carries out no long-term schemes.

PYRIC REVENANT TEMPLATE GRAFT (CR 3+)

Pyric fire can turn a creature into a pyric revenant.

Required Creature Type: Undead.

Suggested Array: Combatant.

Traits: Immunity to fire, dimly illuminated, pyric fire, susceptible to water; melee attacks deal half fire damage and impart pyric curse; gains a pyric bolt ranged attack that deals fire damage; speaks Aklo and might retain one or more languages spoken in life.

Burning Attacks: A pyric revenant's attacks have the burn critical hit effect that deals damage according to the creature's CR, as follows: 3–5, 1d4; 6–10, 2d4; 11–15, 3d4; 16+ 4d4.

Suggested Ability Score Modifiers: Strength, Dexterity.



PYRIC WRAITH

CR
6XP
2,400

CE Medium undead (incorporeal)

Init +5; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; **Perception** +13**DEFENSE****EAC** 18; **KAC** 18**Fort** +5; **Ref** +10; **Will** +8**Defensive Abilities** ash consumption, incorporeal;**Immunities** fire, undead immunities**HP** 80**OFFENSE****Speed** 40 ft., fly 40 ft. (Su, average)**Melee** touch +16 (2d4+6 F plus pyric curse; critical burn 2d4 F)**Ranged** pyric ray +16 (1d10+6 F plus pyric curse; critical burn 2d4 F)**Offensive Abilities** pyric fire**STATISTICS****Str** +0; **Dex** +5; **Con** —; **Int** +0; **Wis** +3; **Cha** +2**Skills** Acrobatics +13, Intimidate +18, Sense Motive +13**Languages** Aklo**Other Abilities** illuminated, unliving**ECOLOGY****Environment** any**Organization** solitary or pair**SPECIAL ABILITIES****Ash Consumption (Su)** When a creature within 30 feet takes fire damage, a pyric wraith regains a number of Hit Points equal to the damage the creature took, up to a maximum equal to the wraith's CR per round.**Illuminated (Su)** Light within 10 feet of a pyric wraith increases by two steps. Light for 10 more feet beyond that increases by one step. Magical darkness decreases this light only if from a source with a CR or level higher than the wraith's CR.**Pyric Curse (Su)** See page 58; Fortitude DC 14, 2d4 fire damage.**Pyric Fire (Su)** See page 58; Fortitude DC 14.**Pyric Ray (Su)** A pyric wraith can launch a ray of pyric fire with a range increment of 30 feet and a maximum range of 150 feet.

Over centuries, pyric fire consumes a pyric revenant's flesh, leaving behind an apparition of ash and embers. This pyric wraith is made of swirling cinders rippling around a heart of brighter flame. The smell of ash and smoke often precedes a pyric wraith.

A pyric wraith retains only a desire to burn living things and consume the energy released. These beings rarely make full use of their incorporeality. Overwhelming malice compels them to kill without stealth, inspiring horror as they do so. Further, pyric wraiths hate passing through the darkness within objects.

PYRIC WRAITH TEMPLATE
GRAFT (CR 5+)

A pyric revenant can eventually become a pyric wraith. The example in this entry was once human.

Required Creature Type: Undead (incorporeal).**Suggested Array:** Combatant.

Traits: See in darkness, immunity to fire, ash consumption, illuminated, pyric fire; gains a touch attack; gains a pyric ray ranged attack; attacks deal fire damage, impart pyric curse, and have the burn critical hit effect (see Burning Attacks); speaks Aklo and might retain one or more languages spoken in life.

Burning Attacks: As a pyric revenant; see page 60.**Suggested Ability Score Modifiers:** Dexterity.THE BLIND
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ASTEVIINT

The Lantern World

Diameter: $\times 1/2$; **Mass:** $\times 1/8$

Gravity: $\times 1/2$

Location: The Vast

Atmosphere: Normal

Day: 27 hours; **Year:** 902 days

The planet Astevint shines brightly in the Vast, orbiting a dying orange sun. The stones of Astevint are charged with a strange energy, causing them to radiate photons without emitting heat or other energy. As a result, the entire planet shines like a dim star. Only the planet's natural stone glows, including any particulates like gravel or sand, causing anything else to cast strange shadows. Although Astevint rotates as most other planets do, it doesn't have a typical day/night cycle—the planet is perpetually illuminated.

Plant life is abundant on Astevint, particularly clover and a form of massive, broad-leaved fern. Plants here draw sustenance from the soil, but also gain energy from the ground's illumination rather than from the light of Astevint's distant sun. Such plants grow most densely in areas of rocky soil rather than in deep loam, and bear leaves that are low to the ground and inverted. As such, the low-lying ferns and shrubs are the lushest and healthiest, while those with

leaves on tall stalks must subsist on illumination refracted through the atmosphere and are usually stunted and twisted. A rare few petrified "beacon trees" radiate Astevint's shining energy from their tall trunks, providing eerie radiance even when the ground cover is too dense for any of the planet's light to shine upward.

Stone removed from Astevint quickly loses its illumination, although very dense stones shed light for as long as a month, and transplanted beacon trees glow for up to a year if fed and watered. Physicists specializing in the obscure field of esoteric optics maintain research bases on the planet to study the planet's peculiar illumination. These bases are usually located near groves of beacon trees, where physicists and botanists work together. What originally turned Astevint into a planet-lantern is a mystery, but scientists posit that some ancient calamity—perhaps caused by the builders of the eons-old brass ruins that dot the planet's coastlines—permanently altered the world long ago. A few roving packs of violent bryrvaths (*Starfinder Alien Archive* 24), glutted on Astevint's illumination, appear to be the planet's only other intelligent life-forms. Whether these creatures are descended from the planet's original inhabitants or are later arrivals remains a mystery, as the bryrvaths are perpetually addled and entirely uncommunicative.



NEXT MONTH

SOLAR STRIKE

By Mark Moreland

Forces loyal to efreet from the Plane of Fire have nearly conquered Kahlannal, the deep-sun settlement of the anassanois, a peaceful telepathic people. The fiery creatures threaten to destroy the anassanoi way of life before it can be understood. The heroes must infiltrate the occupied city, make first contact with allies within, and defeat the oppressors. As a strike team, the group takes out high-value targets, opening the way to take the fight directly to the occupiers' leaders. But when they accomplish this mission, the heroes learn that this attack is merely a beachhead for an efreeti invasion that threatens the sun and all the Pact Worlds!

KAHLANNAL

By Mark Moreland

The city of Kahlannal is home to the anassanois. These refugees from a distant, dying star are trapped far from the rest of their kind and isolated even from the nearby cultures of the Pact Worlds. The Gap robbed the anassanois of their

history and forced their culture to regress, but Kahlannal remains their home. This survey of the metropolis presents additional locations the PCs can explore and equipment they can use during their adventures there.

DEEP CULTURES

By Kate Baker

The Pact Worlds sun, Mataras, isn't the only star containing living creatures or the remnants of dead civilizations. From the Azlanti Star Empire to the Vast, other stars in the galaxy support strange beings or hide ancient mysteries, their origins lost to the eons or the Gap.

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THE BLIND CITY

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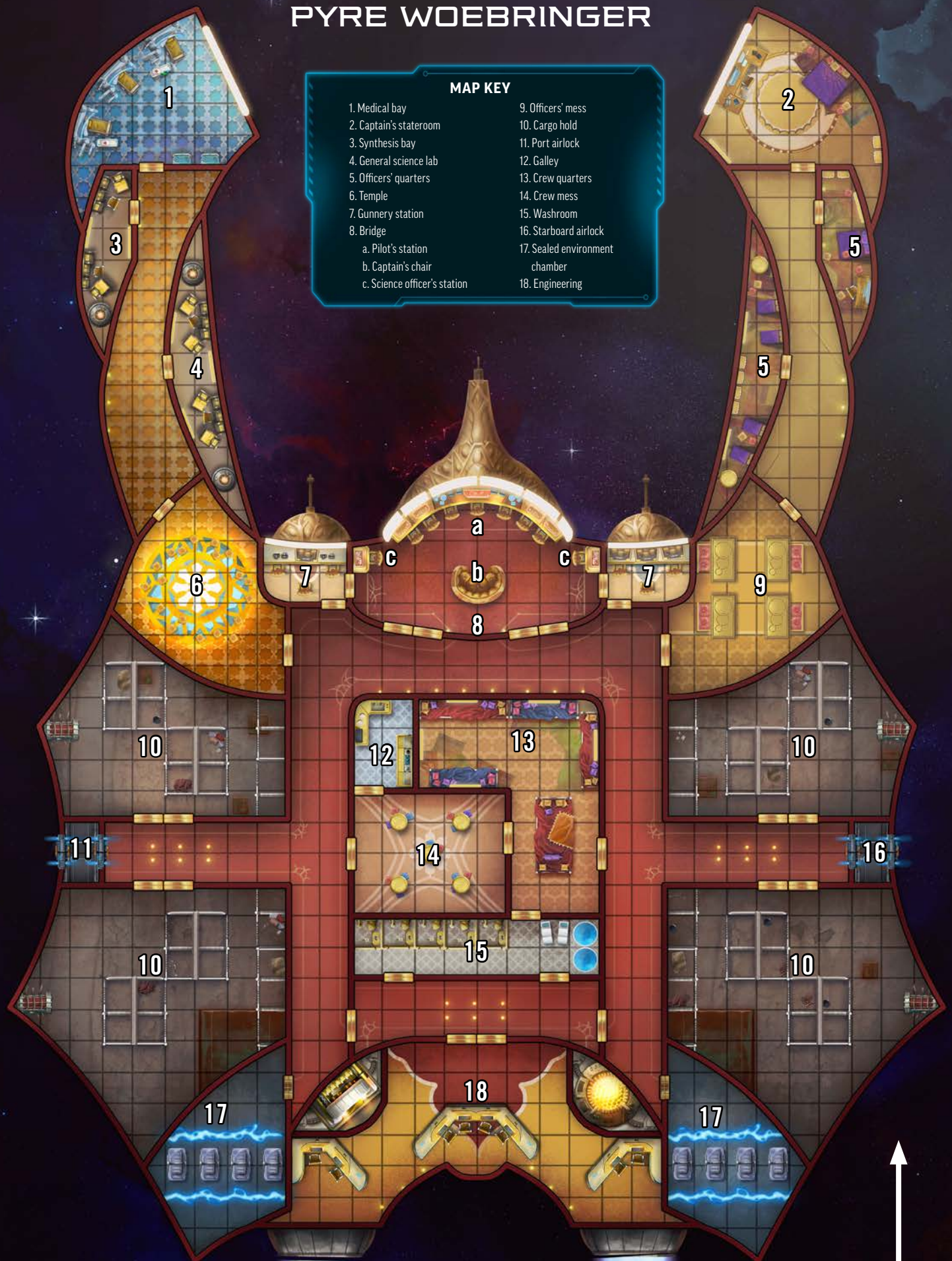
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PYRE WOEBRINGER

MAP KEY

- | | |
|------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1. Medical bay | 9. Officers' mess |
| 2. Captain's stateroom | 10. Cargo hold |
| 3. Synthesis bay | 11. Port airlock |
| 4. General science lab | 12. Galley |
| 5. Officers' quarters | 13. Crew quarters |
| 6. Temple | 14. Crew mess |
| 7. Gunnery station | 15. Washroom |
| 8. Bridge | 16. Starboard airlock |
| a. Pilot's station | 17. Sealed environment chamber |
| b. Captain's chair | 18. Engineering |
| c. Science officer's station | |



1 SQUARE = 10 FEET

FORWARD

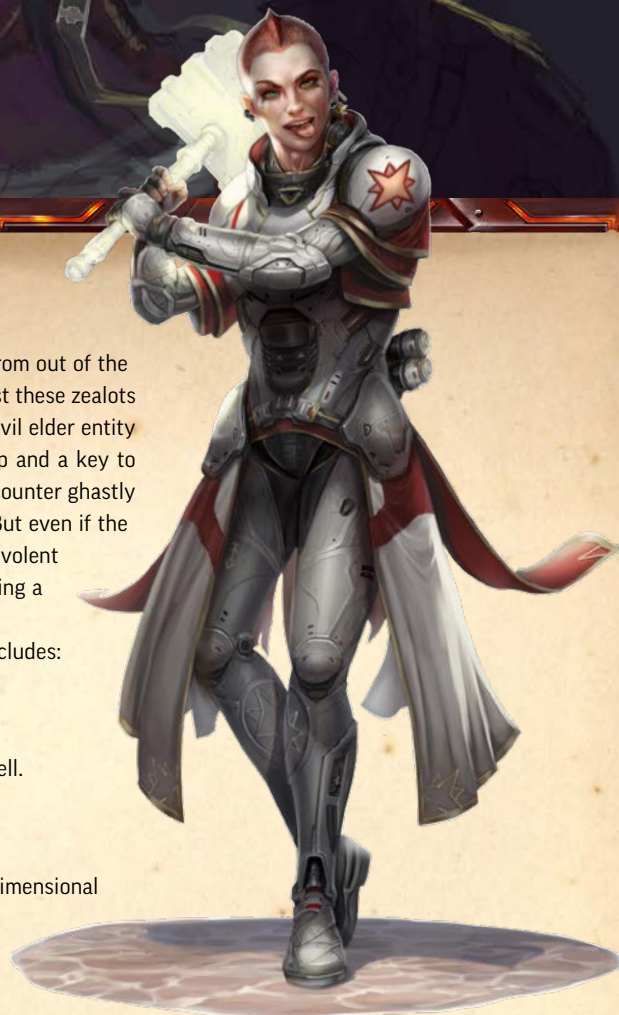


TRAPPED IN THE DARK

When the heroes seek an expert to translate an ancient, eldritch tablet, a sinister cult strikes from out of the shadows, intent on destroying the relic and all who know of its existence. After facing off against these zealots and deciphering the tablet, the heroes learn of another deep-sun locale called Ezorod—and the evil elder entity that has focused its attention there. The heroes quickly discover that the tablet is both a map and a key to Ezorod, allowing them to enter and explore this weird and lightless oubliette. There they will encounter ghastly creatures and uncover sophisticated technology that could advance sun-diving by light-years. But even if the PCs manage to escape the deadly solar dungeon, they'll be forced to wonder about the malevolent being they have unleashed upon the galaxy—even as they receive a mysterious message heralding a future confrontation!

This volume of Starfinder Adventure Path continues the Dawn of Flame Adventure Path and includes:

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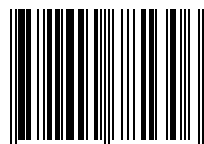


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