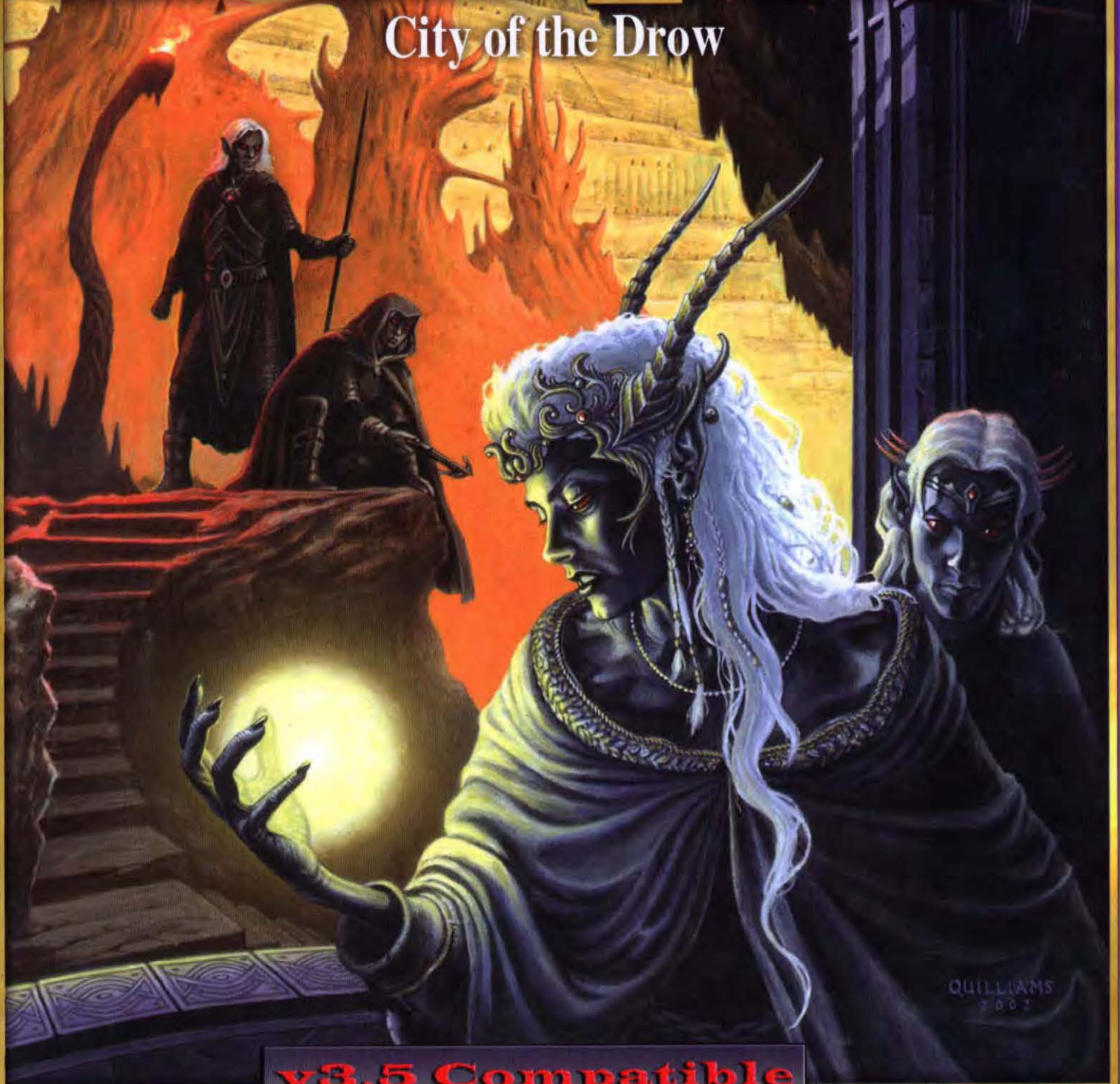


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SHEOLOTH

City of the Drow



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2002

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Sheoloth

City of the Drow

Sam Witt

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HISTORY

From the fleshbound pages of a rotted journal, found near the sole remaining copy of Karzai's Tome in a plundered crypt in the Vault of Tombs:

The elves claim they remember our sundering, the crimes we committed for which we were exiled. They tell the tales of horrors stirred by our magic and the deaths of thousands by our hands. The elves lie.

THE SCHISM

The time of our separation from those is nearly lost, even to those of us who have existed since our first, screaming days. There was a war, a battle between immortals, between brothers and sisters, mothers and sons, this we know. We lost and were harried and hunted from our ancestral homes by the victors, driven into the barren places where men feared to dwell and abominations stalked the earth. While we wandered the dark places, the elves branded us heretics and monsters. Our gods abandoned us and we were marked by their passing, our skin becoming black as night. Darkened, we descended into the darkness to heal our wounds and recover our strength. Long had our people known of the great Underdeep, the cavern realms of eternal darkness where we thought we could hide and rebuild. The schism was complete – defeated and weary, we abandoned the gods and lands of the elves to forge our own world of darkness.

THE BENIGHTED AGE

We were not prepared for the harsh realities of the Underdeep, or for the massive nations we would find there. The empires of the Flayers worm through the deepest caverns like trails left by gargantuan maggots burrowing through the ancient corpse of the world. Our hatred is pure and clean, a thing of focus and beauty, while their alien thoughts and obscure desires lead them into strange philosophies and reveries preventing them from crushing all others beneath their tentacled grip. Still, their power was great, and we had no choice but to avoid them when we could. Though we pledged to deal with them later, their strengths were greater than ours and we fled from before their dreadful gaze.

The dwarves, too, proved more difficult than we had anticipated. Their cities were surrounded by dozens of miles of tortured stone, the scars of their rapine mining operations. Like parasites boring through the pulp of a tree, they consumed the precious metals and gems they found and left behind crippled stone and crumbling tunnels. More than once we were driven from our rude caves by an exodus of strange and violent creatures disturbed and set free by foolish dwarven miners. Our hate for the dwarves grew and we killed them where we could, until they learned there were places they could not go, where death waited for them in the darkness. Though we longed to kill them en masse, we chose instead to strike from the shadows and enriched ourselves on the fruits of their labours. Many dwarven caravans went missing in those days, the guards slaughtered or taken as slaves

The Nature of the Schism

It is up to the individual GM to determine the exact nature of the Schism. Very few amongst the elves or drow even understand what caused the Schism and those who believe they know often hold only a part of the story, twisted by racial hatred and the natural distortion of time.

Perhaps the drow really were misunderstood and unjustly betrayed by their brethren and their hatred and evil are a direct result of the treachery of the surface elves. While this certainly does not change the currently evil nature of the drow, it does provide some justification for their all-consuming hatred for the elves and their allies.

In truth, the nature of the Schism need never be revealed in your campaign, because it will rarely affect a current storyline. The event occurred in the ancient past of the world, in most cases, and is only important as the catalyst for the genesis of the drow as a race distinct from the elves.

and the goods used to grow our people. The dwarves did not know of us then, blaming their misfortune on dark spirits and malignant gods, and we did nothing to enlighten them. If they only knew how much of their pathetic history was formed by our dark hand, they would fear and hate us all the more.

Thanks to the riches taken from the dwarves, we were able to carve out the first of our tiny settlements. A few hundred drow in a warren of dank, crystallized caverns, we feared daily for our survival. Though we were stronger, more powerful, and more arcanelly gifted than other races, we were few in number. A raiding force of Flayers, a sudden berserk assault by enraged dwarves, and decades of progress could have been destroyed. We wove magic around our city, hid it from the eyes of others and layered traps so thickly only a handful of us ever knew the safe routes to and from the city. Our home was little more than a prison, its security a choking fist around our throats.

We struggled on, using our superior intellect to take advantage of those who crossed our paths. We forged an alliance of sorts with tribes of deep gnomes, using our magical skills to enthrall and entice them into trading with us. Our predations on the dwarves continued and expanded, though we were forced to space our attacks over long distances and great periods of time to avoid rousing the stunted miners to action. The drow cut into their profits, to be sure, but not enough to pique their curiosity or goad them into taking greater caution. The progress was slow, but we were eternal and our time endless.

Through the deep gnomes we discovered others of our kind. Contact between the scattered groups of drow was tentative at first – we knew well the difficulties of survival in such a treacherous environment and gave our trust only grudgingly. We forged alliances with other, less established, drow leaders and brought them into our fold. Some came willingly, suborning themselves and their followers to the will of our leaders, swelling our ranks with their soldiers, wizards, and women. Others were recalcitrant and did not wish to give up the reins of leadership, spurning our offer to allow them safety in our nascent city. Some of these

upstarts we slaughtered and took their leaderless people into our embrace, while others we abandoned to their own foolishness, unwilling to mire ourselves in a pointless battle with inferiors who could be dealt with later.


The centuries came and went, we incorporated those who wished to join us into our number and our race grew in numbers and strength. After one thousand years of living far from the lands of the sun, our new home was finally a city, rather than a collection of caves and hewn tunnels. We dubbed it Oblarkash, The Hidden Home.

THE REIGN OF KARZAI, LORD OF OBLARKASH

In the ancient days, there were no councils, no noble families. We were led by Karzai Duvrensik, a drow skilled in both swordsmanship and spellweaving. His talents were diverse and his knowledge expansive, both as a result of his frequent consultation with all manner of demons and his own voracious thirst for study. He interrogated all of us frequently, plumbing the depths of our minds for every scrap of knowledge we contained, only to leave us confused and exhausted. Driven by his hatred for those who betrayed us, Karzai guided us all in the construction of Oblarkash even as he directed the efforts of our raiders and assassins. When he was not detailing his latest defensive schemes or laying out new plans for his subterranean city, Karzai was in battle, showing others how and where to attack our enemies. He is the exemplar for all drow, a creature of passion and instinct, honed by his intellect and experiences. I admired him, even though I knew he could not last long. The very things we admired in him, we also feared and envied. Amongst the drow, it is dangerous to be the subject of envy. I believe Karzai knew this, that his pursuits were in spite of his own certain fate. He sacrificed himself for us, his people, on an altar built from his hate for the elves.

Before his death, Karzai saw the completion of Oblarkash over the course of five centuries. As we built it, he constantly modified his thoughts and plans, improving the original designs and expanding them to take into account our growing numbers. We built strange, spiralling





passages inscribed with runes and built scalloped rooms for our arcane studies. Our warriors swung swords and picks, tunnelling into the unyielding stone around our home to create mazy fortresses studded with traps. We were like angry bees, buzzing day and night, carving out our niche in the darkened, desperate Underdeep. All the while, Karzai filled our heads with the old tales, and new ones, stories of elven maidens sipping nectar from crystalline goblets while we swilled rank water from the tips of stalactites. He told us of the ancient courts of elves, where every pleasure imagined was fulfilled and no need went unsatisfied, while our bellies were bloated from hunger and our bones ached from sleeping on stones. He was a military man, a politician, and a zealot, the perfect leader for our times.

In the end, I can only say he did his job too well. He convinced all of us we were gods under the earth, shadowed fiends who would one day rise up to destroy all those who betrayed us. When we battled the dwarves, he sang to us strange hymns of slaughter and madness, filling our eyes with blood and our hearts with the lava of hatred. He feasted with us on the flesh of the fallen and taught us to grind their bones for use in our own mystical rituals. When you walked with Karzai, you believed in him, but more importantly, you believed in your own invulnerability and strength.

Our raiders took more and more slaves to do their work for them, which greatly expanded our labour force, but also strained our living space and our ability to supply food. Many of the slaves were simply worked to death, as Karzai refused to allow them to expand Oblarkash to make room and would not condone expanding our foraging or farming efforts to feed them. The slaves were taken, but more often than not were simply left to die, stewing in their own filth, unused because Karzai refused to risk exposing his city by expanding its reach. He was pleased with what he had wrought, but others were not. Karzai had given us our first taste of victory and led us to unstoppable triumph over the course of nearly fifteen hundred years. His phenomenal success gave others the strength and will to strike out on their own.

THE NOBLES REBELLION

Five hundred years after the founding of Oblakarsh, our culture was at its breaking point. The tyrannical rule of Karzai gave us success, but it chained us to the will of a single drow. We were never creatures who followed, our appetites and desires drive us to strike out on our own, to attempt to make the world conform to our desires.

The issue with slaves was a chafing problem for us. One of the angriest and most impetuous drow captured dozens of slaves, of all races, and chained them at the gates of the city. They starved there, because Karzai would not be swayed and refused to divert the resources and food of the drow to the slaves. When the stench of their rotting bodies grew too much to bear, Karzai burned them with fragrant oils. He lit the pyre with the burning skull of the drow foolish enough to challenge his dominion, a message to other would be rebels, but Karzai knew his time was coming.

He disappeared for long stretches of time, leaving the city to run itself while he laboured in secret on a project he would divulge to no one. Even his most trusted advisors could not find him for long stretches of time. In his absence, the city took on a mind of its own. Those with the strength and courage to do so began expanding their holdings, burrowing out expansive manses within the crust of the earth and filling their homes with slaves. The fungal gardens bloomed on the bodies of the fallen slaves to produce food for the new generation and the sound of hammers on stone did not stop, day or night. Without Karzai to hold them back, the strongest drow let their excessive hungers run wild, going so far as to force others to bow to their will. Though none of these rebels would dare to ally themselves openly with one another, they knew well where they stood – not together, but definitely against the restrictive regime of their former lord and master.

Without Karzai to maintain order, the squabbling began in earnest. Weaker drow found themselves in a hard place. They could either work with the stronger, rebellious drow, or get trampled in the rush to flout Karzai's

laws. The few who dared to stand up to the mob found themselves killed or enslaved, their voices silenced or replaced with the gurgle of life's blood draining away.

I believe it was during this time we started down the road to where we stand now. It became a brutal struggle for survival amongst our number, a gladiatorial arena of life wherein the strong dominated the weak and the savvy used thugs to do their bidding. Once unified, albeit grudgingly, beneath Karzai's banner, we were now a loosely allied collection of armed camps. This was the birth of the noble houses, a bloody rebellion against an absent leader, a crushing defeat for those who believed in Karzai and a victory for his enemies.

His supporters quietly hoped Karzai would return and put an end to the chaos. Though we all longed for our freedoms to indulge ourselves as we saw fit, the madness of these upstart nobles reduced our numbers and split our strength. While a drow needs to be allowed free reign over himself, no culture can exist in a constant state of internecine conflict, which is what the rise of the noble houses brought us. The raiders stopped going out, because the noble houses were afraid to reduce the number of soldiers in their manses. The slaves were given the menial tasks of maintaining Oblakarsh's infrastructure, but their hatred of us led them to sabotage what they were supposed to maintain. The great city built by Karzai was falling into ruin only decades after he withdrew from his active rulership.

WAR OF VENGEANCE

The return of Karzai was, at first, met with fear and dismay. He simply appeared, one day, in the midst of the decay and squalor consuming Oblakarsh. With a sneer of disdain on his face, he began his search for those responsible.

He went to each of the leaders of the self-styled noble houses and demanded an explanation. He had no army at his back, but none dared raise a hand to stop his interrogation. In turn, Karzai let the destroyers of his vision survive; he even congratulated them on their courage and initiative. To the eight most powerful noble houses, Karzai gave a book, which he wrote while in self-imposed exile. It was a manual of

warfare, an instruction guide for the destruction of enemies. "When you understand this, none will oppose you."

The nobles puzzled over it for decades, while Karzai remained to help them put the city back together. He allowed the nobles to continue their mad expansion, but provided them with the guidance they needed to avoid falling into ruin. Oblakarsh grew and grew, its borders expanding so quickly the other races of the Underdeep were caught unawares. We annihilated a dwarven hold here, slaughtered a Flayer colony there. We even turned on other drow settlements, laying to waste those who would not join us. Where Karzai had been a proud tyrant, he ruled over those who accepted his leash. The nobles simply chose to destroy all who would not bow before them. I still shudder at the memories of those long days, of the centuries of our expansion over the bodies of those who could have so easily been our allies.

Karzai warned the nobles of their excesses, but made no attempt to stop their war. He instructed them to read his book, to digest its wisdom and apply it to their conquests. His words fell on deaf ears as the nobles, swollen with pride over their accomplishments, spurred their soldiers on to greater and greater atrocities. Any who opposed the drow, any who had earned our wrath in the long centuries of our time in the Underdeep, all fell before us. It was a glorious century of vengeance, and we drank deeply of the blood of our enemies.

TEARS OF STONE

Karzai was right, of course, in that our expansion was too fast, too greedy, too ill-protected. We stretched out our arms until the bones stretched and our fingers could no longer touch the other side of our holdings. The drow became an empire of ghosts, because there were not enough of us to hold the territories we took. Though our holdings were vast, our people were few, and our enemies began to notice this.

The dwarves, of course, were the first to take advantage of our folly. Their emissaries crawled into the sun and parlayed with the elves, telling the disgusting sun dwellers exaggerated tales of our conquest. The elves, of course, bought into the story and elaborated upon it themselves.



They gathered allies from amongst the barbaric human kingdoms and declared war upon us. No longer satisfied with our exile, the pale skinned hypocrites wanted us destroyed, our bodies burnt and the ashes scattered over salted earth. For their role in this, my hatred for the dwarves burns as brightly now as it did in the moments their betrayal became clear. The row of dwarf skulls adorning the top of my wardrobe does little to soothe my rage at their actions. Incapable of defending themselves, they went to the surface, bringing an ancient war into our world once again.

The elves ventured into the Underdeep, using their dwarven and human allies to carve out a fortress of their own in the depths. Elialosornol, the House of Retribution, they called it. Built of gold-veined marble, it was beautiful to behold, despite the hideous threat it posed to our survival. Though the elves made a great show of force in the early years of their invasion, they did not understand the nature of the Underdeep and their arrogance cost them dearly. When we encountered their scouts, we killed them and hid the bodies so they would never be found. For the most part, we avoided them and kept them from finding our hiding places. Their searches ventured further afield but many never returned. They were not prepared for the fangs in the darkness.

The dwarves could not find us. There were rumours, but the survivors of our attacks were few and far between. What little they knew was jumbled in their heads as a result of injury or madness, so we felt secure in our shadows. Still, Karzai warned us a reckoning was coming and urged the nobles to study his words on warfare, to learn what he had to teach us before it was too late. Some listened, but most were unprepared to accept the reality of war against a determined, prepared foe. The elves were haughty and weak, but they came in great numbers with allies known for their taste for blood. We were fools.

We were finally discovered. A group of elven wizards followed a scouting party. When we ambushed, the wizards used their magic to remain hidden and followed us to the very gates of Oblakarth. We would discover this later, thanks to our seers and their powerful magic, but we had no clue at the time. The wizards saw our

defences, knew we were spread too thin. The attack was coming.

THE SECOND WAR OF THE ELVES

With their allies in tow, the elves fell on us like crows upon a midden heap. They hid their approach with the aid of dwarven druids who caused the stone to lie to our scouts. The army appeared at our gates nearly undetected and the noble houses struggled to respond in force. Slaves were mustered and armed with whatever was at hand. Shoved to the front of the battle many fled the field and were allowed to escape by the elves. With the fodder off the battlefield, the elves commenced our slaughter. They were beautiful in their rage and many of us believed they might be kindred spirits after all, so perfect was their hatred.

Over the course of the next months and years, we were driven from Oblakarth and the great city was cast down. Its buildings were shattered by dwarven hammers, its libraries of priceless arcane knowledge burned by barbaric hordes of primitive men. In less than a decade, nearly two millennia of work vanished, burnt and crushed by our enemies. I weep still for the loss and the cold flames of vengeance burn no less brightly in my heart now than then. Two thousand years is not enough.

Karzai died in the war while staging a brutal counteroffensive. His body was never found, but his death was felt by us all, a tangible pang of loss and horror. His words, however, lived on.

THE COMING OF THE DARK MOTHER

The survivors of Oblakarth were few in number but strong in spirit. Some of us had felt the sting of the elven lash twice in our lives now, and would not stand for it again. A lone copy of Karzai's book remained in our hands, and we studied it feverishly. Bitter tears were shed as we learned what it held, a secret and a curse. Karzai's truth was hard to swallow, but we took it for what it was and heeded his words. We

would no longer be free, but we would have our vengeance.

In his time wandering the dark spaces of the world, Karzai encountered the Adversaries, strange and horrible creatures who hated the world of elves and men. They were cast out, as well, creatures banished from the world they had known for ages. They held power, too, and needed only allies to bring them back to our world, to let them slake the thirst for vengeance they had nurtured for time out of mind.

To his credit, Karzai rejected their offer when it was made. He would no more chain his people to the whims of gods than he would slit his own throat. But he underestimated our foolishness, or the price our chaotic natures would exact from any society we formed. Without a strong hand to guide us, we become fractious and selfish, and our world falls to dust and tears. We hate the lash, but need the hand that wields it against us.

We used what Karzai left us. The bravest amongst us clouded our minds with fungal toxins and distorted our senses with alcohol and extremes of physical sensation. Pleasure and pain, blood and wine, we doused ourselves in it all and sent our minds drifting. We called out for vengeance, we cried for the gods to answer us. I half believed they would never hear us, that we would descend into a drug-fuelled madness and spend the last of our days screaming obscenities at the ghosts of our enemies. I was wrong.

After half a decade of struggle, we found our way to the Three. They heard our pleas and came back to the world with us. We opened the gates for them and they filled our minds with a vision of a future filled with terror and death. We embraced them and they consumed us.

While some of us struck a bargain with the Dark Mother and her companions, others were studying the more mundane, if still profound, words found in Karzai's book. We learned to demoralize our enemy, to strike at his weaknesses while avoiding his strength. In death, Karzai taught us more about victory and conquest than any living drow. His words gave us gods and the strength and cunning to carry out their orders.

The priests of the dark gods quickly adapted to the demands of their deity. The Dark Mother



reached into our minds and absorbed the form of the spider from our thoughts – whether to mock our convoluted lusts and plots or to reinforce the need for planning and traps, I do not know. She took only women into her priesthood and placed eight of these as our new nobility. They carried the words of the goddess to us and led the time of our reconstruction.

To assist us, the Dark Mother called up the arachnid of the deeps. She stirred the ancient behemoths from their petrified webs and brought them to us. They were glorious, alien creatures of horrible aspect and terrifying strength. There were few of us, but the spiders were many. Less than a decade after our near destruction at the hands of the hated surface dwellers, we were prepared to return the favour. The war with the elves began again.

WAR OF TERROR

There were no gleaming hosts in our war. We crept through the dark places and crawled through cracks in the stone of our world. Our sappers worked far from the elves, digging sloping tunnels to intercept the wells of the elves. Our mages worked spells of confusion and fear on the tunnels surrounding the elven fortress of Elialosornol while our spies watched and waited.

The dwarves and men had long ago left the elves to their own devices, content in their murderous deeds. The elves left below the world still hunted us, but they were few in number, and hated their work. The rush of battle was over and they had been unable to find us for long years. They were aggressors, not defenders, and were unprepared for our counter-attack.

Guided by the words of our fallen lord and the commands of our priestesses, we stole into the fortress by ones and twos. Our wizards gave us items of power to hide our attack and the spiders loaded our weapons with rotting venoms. We stole into their gleaming fortress of gold and crystal and we killed, over and over. We tortured and slaughtered with great passion, tearing the poison-bloated bodies of the elves limb from limb and gnawing their flesh with delight. We killed, brutally and horribly, then faded into the shadows, leaving behind

the ruptured organs and shattered bones of our victims as bloody messages.

We did not kill them in a sudden massive burst, but we whittled away at their numbers. They were confused and we found ourselves free from reprisal for a year or more. Drunk with our successes, we attacked with greater frequency and more ferocious atrocity. But our gods held us back, we were not allowed to finish the battle, to kill them all in a glorious night orgy of blood. Nor were our spider allies given leave to poison the wells with the deadly milk from their fangs. Frustrated, we gnashed our teeth and waited, impatiently. We trusted in the plans of our goddess and her minions and we were not disappointed.

Horrified by the brutal attacks in their subterranean fastness, the elves sent to the surface for help. The humans laughed at them and went about their brutish business – they had lost many to the battle against us in the dark below the earth and had no desire to do so again. The dwarves, always simple and crude, did not believe we had survived and blamed the attacks on the Flayers, creatures the dwarves were not willing to attack or enrage. The elves chose to bring the war to us again, alone.

An impressive force of elven soldiers and war wizards descended into the earth to do battle with us. They crawled through the deep and winding labyrinths of stone to the city so many of them had never seen. We heard them coming for weeks, the sound of their approach filled us with battle lust and we spent our waking hours preparing for them. Spells were prepared and hung around the fortress, like the webs of our goddess they were prepared to snare and destroy our enemies.

Our spiders pumped untold gallons of venom into the wells of the elves, poisoning their water supply. Smaller spiders crept into the lair of the elves and hid themselves in clothes and beds, preparing to strike when the gods proclaimed it time. The army of elves found its way to the fortress without incident and took up residence with their frightened and confused allies. The joy of the elves at the arrival of reinforcements was short-lived, as our plan began to unfold.

Within days of their arrival, the elves began to fall ill. The spells we had laid upon their fortress fell in on them, leaving them confused and their judgment clouded. The toxins in the water built up within their bodies and their pale and flawless skin erupted into pus-filled boils. Their blood turned black and thick, clogging their hearts with foul clots even as it ate away at their flesh. The strongest of their number fought through the effects of the poison, but were left weak and unable to defend themselves from the stings of the countless spiders lying in wait. Our tiny allies left even the most powerful elves powerless against us. We amused ourselves with their bodies for weeks. We played games in the fortress they had built, forced them to crawl to us on broken and crippled limbs while we laughed at their pain.

Our goddess instructed us in the treatment of our prisoners. We filled their bodies with the tainted seed of our spider brethren, infecting them with thousands of squirming eggs. Their minds were shattered by powerful spells and the sheer horror of our tortures. The feel of young spiders squirming below the surface of their skin was enough for many of them, it tore the last fragments of their sanity away, leaving them catatonic or gibbering.

Broken and infected, the elves were loaded onto the backs of spiders and secured with thick bands of rough silk webs. The spiders carried them away, to the surface, where they would be left to be discovered by their kin. On the return trip, the spiders and their wizardly minders destroyed the tunnels created by the elves, sundering the magic used to hold the path of the conquerors in place. The sound of crashing stone rang for weeks as it all came down, barring the path from the surface.

The elves we returned were, I presume, eventually found by their families and friends. I often wish I could have watched, as the first attempts to heal the broken bodies and fractured minds woke the dark magic of our goddess. The sight of the elves, screaming in horror as the bodies of their kindred burst like rotting fruit to unleash a plague of deadly spiders, is one I am sorry to have missed.

It seems to have had its effect, though, as the elves have not bothered to attempt to reclaim their once mighty fortress, and no further armies of the surface have tried to invade our realm and destroy us.

RECONSTRUCTION

The Dark Mother told us to take the home of the elves and make it our own. We transformed it, of course, and it became the seed for a new city, one to rival Oblakarth in size and power. With our new deities, we were able to bring our lost brothers back into the fold and we have grown mighty. Sheoloth, founded on the throne of our conquerors, is a horror of the Underdeep, the mightiest city of the darkened lands below.

For two thousand years, we have ruled. For two thousand years we have grown until our city covers miles and miles of the subterranean realms. But I fear a change is coming, a return to the dark days of our people. We are becoming ever more fractious, and even the priestesses are unable to stop conflict as they once did so effortlessly. The future is dark and murky, and I yearn for the ancient words of Karzai to echo again in my ears. But I hear nothing and my fear grows by the day.

Sheoloth in Your Campaign

The drow city you will find in this book is a place of dark grandeur, surprising beauty, and horrific evil. More importantly for you, it's easy to transport into your campaign world. The connections with the outside world have been intentionally left vague and, while the history above is provided for those who want an entire campaign setting in one book, can be easily removed to make way for your own drow history and origin myth.



CITY OF SHEOLOTH — AN OVERVIEW

Crouched within a vast cavern complex, the city of Sheoloth is a skeleton of stone wrapped in tortured flesh and clad in robes of woven silk. From its first beginnings as a captured fortress, Sheoloth has slowly expanded over the decades. This expansion, and the many caverns into which the city grew has given Sheoloth its other name- The Sprawling City. Expansion of the city eats away at the stone around it, leaving behind thick cores of marble and basalt to support the ceiling of the city. Glittering skull lights rise high above the city streets on pillars of spinal bone, providing illumination to both the estates of the nobility and the meanest hovel of the most poverty-stricken foreigners. It is a place of strange beauty and stark power, at once serene and filled with chaotic violence. Sheoloth is a true home to the drow.

LAYOUT OF THE CITY

This great and powerful city of the drow is built around an ancient shaft, at the base of which is a great cauldron of molten lava. Tunnels connect natural caverns to the main shaft and to drow-carved chambers. Near the upper end of the shaft lies the site of the original elven fortress. The stark white citadel raised by the elves still stands guard, albeit cloaked in shadowy webs and surrounded on all sides by the silken homes and shops of the drow. Known as the Glory Crypt, this fallen fortress reminds the drow of their victory over their hated foes, while reminding them of the eternal danger lurking in the lands of the sky.

On the level below the Glory Crypt crouches the Blood Tithe. This commercial centre contains one of the greatest markets in the known worlds. The drow have created a thriving economy within Sheoloth and are careful to nurture it as best they can. Though separated from the Foreign Ward, the Blood Tithe still manages

to see a great deal of goods from outside Sheoloth as a result of trade agreements the drow have forged with their foreign guests. In these winding streets and shadowed doorways, virtually anything can be purchased provided the buyer is willing to pay the price. The drow have slave traders here, as well as houses of pleasure and pain, drug dens, and more common goods such as food and wine are also available. Over the cries of the peddlers, one can hear the screams of tortured servants and the shouts of gladiatorial slaves attempting to convince potential buyers of their prowess.

If one follows a passage away from the Blood Tithe, the businesses give way to the homes of affluent commoners. Most of the homes crowded on the winding streets in this area of the city belong to merchants and traders who choose to dwell away from their business, yet remain close enough to deal with any problems or late-night customers should the need arise. The whole area is known as Silver Streets and its residents work hard to maintain the image of their neighbourhood by adorning their gates and walkways with hammered silver plates and flowing silver sculptures.

The Vault of Tombs is below, but connected by winding passages to, both the Blood Tithe and the Silver Streets and serves as the only banking area in the entire city. Promissory notes and letters of credit are issued from the banks here, where one may also inter the bones of the recently (or long since passed) dead. The Vault promises to keep all goods and bodies kept here safe, far from the hands of thieves or prying necromancers, out of sight until the items in storage are needed. Records of the accounts here are kept in a ridiculously complex code that is incomprehensible to most. While the church of the Dark Mother has keys to the codes used here, they rarely go to the effort to decode any records and take the information they are provided at face value.

Easily accessed from within the Vault, the Haedistika is the dark underbelly of Sheoloth. In a city renowned for the evil it presents to visitors, Haedistika is the darkest and least-discussed area. The drow come here to forget themselves, to indulge in passions and satiate hungers they are fearful to acknowledge, much

less analyze. The businesses found in this confusing warren of tunnels and pocket caverns cater only to the most perverse of drow needs and make a very tidy profit in the process. Outsiders who find their way here do not last long and are normally destroyed, spending their last hours as torture victims of the drow.

Across the main shaft from the Glory Crypt and nearer to the surface lies the Sun Gate, the uppermost ward of the city proper. Populated mainly by those drow who venture out to the surface to acquire goods and slaves, the Sun Gate is bustling with trade. Between the Sun Gate and the Glory Crypt, the Night Seal provides the military support needed should another invasion from the surface occur. The massive gates can be quickly sealed to prevent anyone from entering the Night Seal from the Sun Gate. Outside the secure walls of the city, though, lies the Wailing Way, the tunnel originally used by the drow to invade the Underdeep, it later became a massive crypt when it was collapsed atop retreating elven forces. As a result, the area is a frequent site for ghostly visitations, and gravebonders often go fishing for spirits to enslave near the collapsed tunnels.

The Falling Road (as the main shaft of Sheoloth is known) travels down from the level of the ancient elven fortress through Sheoloth before revealing the next layer of the city. Here lies the Noble Labyrinth, a collection of winding tunnels and reinforced caverns that are home to the public rulers of Sheoloth. The labyrinths are currently home to seven active noble houses, with an eighth major estate lying dormant after the recent slaughter of that ruling family. Some smaller, abandoned estates lie tucked away in narrow passages and cul-de-sacs, their residents killed or driven off by the brutal internal wars of the drow nobles. The spirits of the dead haunt some of these places, still, yearning for vengeance but unable to carry it out as they are chained to the homes in which they died.

The inhabited noble estates are large and well-defended, with barracks for their personal guard found on the grounds and stores fit to withstand a siege kept magically preserved for times of need. The drow who occupy these estates learned the lessons of those they slew on their

way up the social ladder and do not intend to be supplanted by other aspiring drow any time soon.

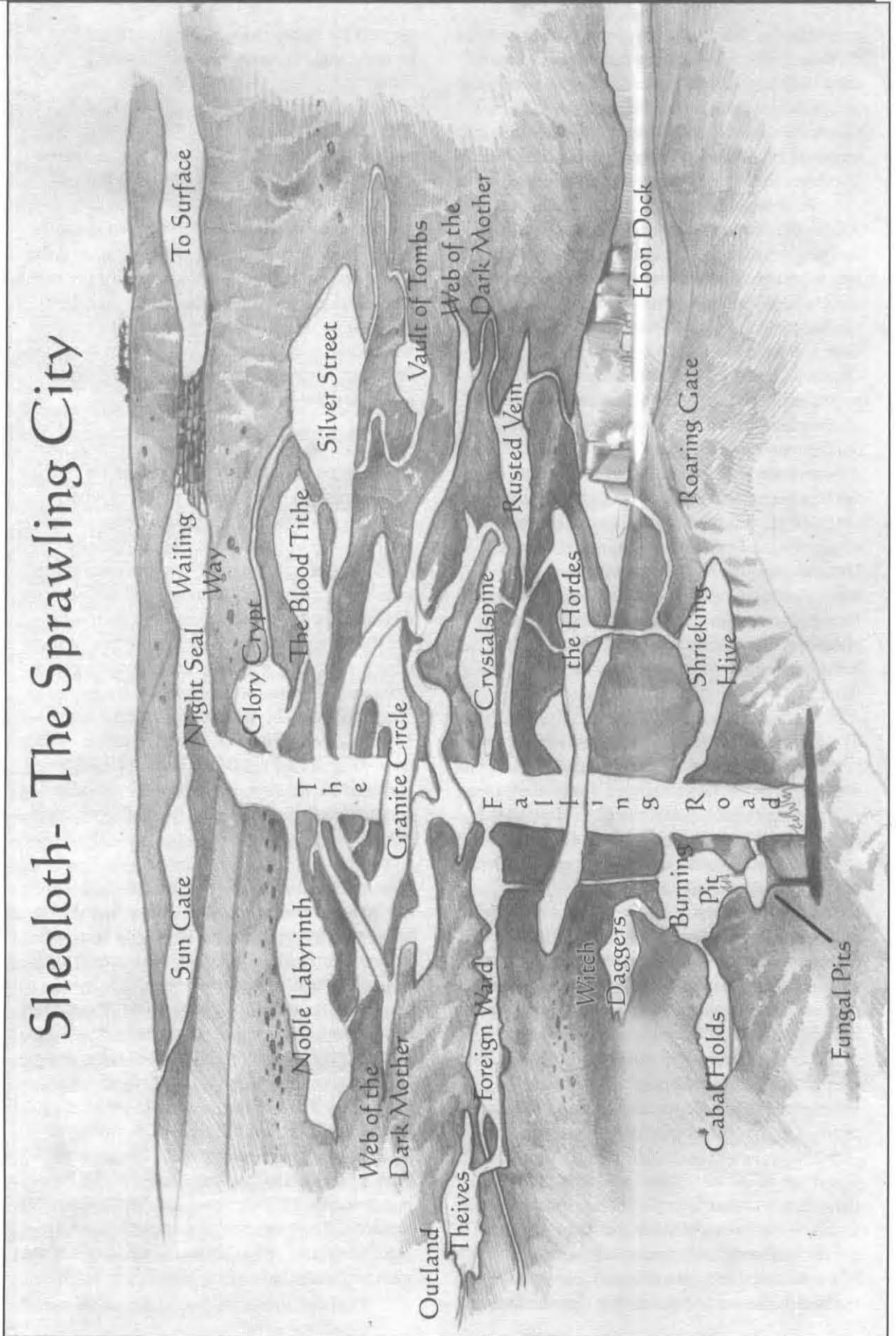
The homes in this area are constructed by the nobility as a reward for faithful service. Those who are in favour are allowed to live in these luxurious estates, but the ride can end very suddenly. Losing a house can happen instantly, and it is not uncommon for entire families to be tossed out on their ear to make way for the new serf of the week. Thus, those who make their homes here do well to safeguard their position and protect themselves by hoarding cash for the day when they will be tossed out and need to find a new home.

Further down the Falling Road from the noble labyrinth one finds the houses becoming smaller and less impressive. The commoners who live here work for the merchants and nobility, providing labour and skills to keep the city running. Though not poor, the residents of this area are far from wealthy and live day-to-day on the earnings they bring home from their jobs. The residents of Silver Street know this, and use their positions of authority and fiduciary power to control these unfortunate drow. Known as Granite Circle, this area takes its name from the rising tiers of houses along the inside of a bowl-shaped cavern. Since it was originally constructed, the area has expanded considerably, and now tunnels radiate from it both above and below.

Across the Falling Road from the Granite Circle, the Web of the Dark Mother can be found. The home to the temples of the drow, the Web is a dark and forbidding place, surrounded by walls of jagged stone topped by serrated blades and tangles of fanged silk. The screams of penitents and victims echo from its dark, stone walls day and night. The sounds and sight of the place are constant reminders to those who traverse the Falling Road of the power and menace of their gods, and of the price of betraying or disappointing their priestesses. The gates of the Web remain closed for most hours of the day, but are opened for morning and evening worship services. The gates are also opened to accept 'sacrifices' and 'tithes' from the nobility and the merchant class, though only by appointment.



Sheoloth- The Sprawling City



Twisting passages descend from the Web of the Dark mother to the lower-income areas of the city, the Crystalline Spine and Rusted Vein. Both of these areas are packed with commoners who huddle in their small homes, thankful they have a place at all. The howls from the dispossessed below are enough to keep the commoners here praying they do not end up so destitute and wretched.

Below these neighbourhoods are the Hordes, a vast sprawl of houses populated by the poor and wretched. There is little in the way of organization or structural integrity here, as the paupers scavenge bits and pieces from wherever they can to construct their homes. Broken shards of stone are held together by nearly desiccated strands of construction webbing and crude tunnels are hacked into the walls and floor to increase the space available. The homes support one another grudgingly, they are crammed together so closely that knocking down one wall of a home will surely take the wall of another down as well. Though the slum dwellers must, by necessity, live very near one another, they are fiercely territorial. Bloody disputes are common here and, since the guards rarely put in an appearance in the slums, these can escalate into ugly brawls and brutal murders.

Even further down the shaft, the Shrieking Hive is the home of depraved and broken drow, creatures driven into madness by drink or drugs, or those who were broken by the justice of the priestesses and left to die in the dark and forbidding areas below. Though there are houses here, they are mean things built from cast-off fungus that is scavenged from more prosperous areas or from any other materials that can be found.

The Ashen Bulwark can be found across the shaft from the Crystalline Spine. Heavily fortified and commanded by the most sadistic of the drow commanders, this military hold provides defences against any outlanders who might try to infiltrate the city through the foreign ward.

Further out from the Bulwark one enters the Charred Gate, the site of a great battle between the drow army and an invading army of demons. Though the conflict was fierce, it was very brief

as the drow employed powerful arcane and divine magic to destroy the horde before it could make its way into the Falling Road and the rest of the city. The area has since been rebuilt and operates as a way for goods for the Foreign Ward to be brought into the rest of the city without the need for drow to shop amongst the degenerate outlanders.

The Foreign Ward can be found beyond the Charred Gate. It is a vast sprawl of homes and businesses inhabited and owned by those who come from outside the city. This area is surrounded by a massive wall designed to keep the outsiders from filtering into the city and taking up residence elsewhere. Leaving the foreign quarter to enter the other areas of Sheoloth requires a pass-tile, which can only be obtained via a noble sponsor. Needless to say, only a very few foreigners possess these coveted tiles. There is a thriving trade in forged documents, though few are good enough to pass the guards at the gate and even fewer stand up to any real examination. Though a handful are sufficient to get their holders through the gate and into the city, a chance meeting with a priestess or a guard with better training can be enough to earn a death sentence. Compared to the slums, this area is quite nice, but the buildings are very cramped and the merchants must handle their own security. This gives the whole Foreign Quarter a rather rough, frontier feel.

The homes of the wealthiest merchants, and those who support their lifestyle, can be found above the foreign quarter. Known to the drow as the Outland Thieves, this area is more comfortable than the Foreign Ward, though only just. Those who dwell here provide their own services to the merchants and are vital to the functioning of the Foreign Ward, as a whole.

A subterranean waterway falls some distance from the city, and tunnels built onto it to gather water later became wards in their own right. The Ebon Docks are found on the river and have become a fantastic trade port for the entire Underdeep. While the boats which dock here are not allowed to disembark their crews, armed escorts lead drow labourers aboard the ship to unload items the merchants of the city purchase or to load exported items onto the outlander's boats.



The Roaring Gate can be found nearer the shaft and connected to the Ebon Docks. Here, drow can shop without the need to deal with the lesser races, yet they have access to the goods recently unloaded from the boats. A popular shopping district, the area is a bit rundown and mouldy due to its proximity to the natural water sources.

Protecting the rest of the city from any assaults from the river side, the Leviathan Shield crouches between the Falling Road and the Roaring Gate. The area is efficient, as military operations go, though the soldiers and their commander here are completely crooked. The graft they take from the merchants who stop at the docks is phenomenal, allowing them all to live in lavish comfort inside their deceptively small and average-looking barracks.

At the lowest point of the city, the Burning Pits churn away, day and night. Here, iron is smelted into steel, hides are tanned, and all manner of noisy, filthy, smelly jobs are handled. The Burning Pits are found directly above a lava cauldron, which provides them with natural heat and plenty of chemicals and metals which can be magically extracted from the boiling magma.

A series of secret tunnels leads out from the far edge of the Burning Pits, though how well this secret is kept is open for debate. Most drow have seen nobles creeping through the poorer sections of the city on their way to secret assignments. The commoners also make use of these tunnels to foment their own plans and uprisings, making their location almost common knowledge. Referred to as the Cabal Holds, these twisting tunnels and small pocket

chambers twist and wind their way through the cavern walls west of the city. All who enter these places do so masked, disguised, or cloaked in illusions to protect their identity. This not only shields them from possible interrogation over events planned in the Cabal Holds, it also prevents the plotters from knowing exactly who they are dealing with. The haughtiest nobles and poorest peasants can meet here on relatively equal footing, making for odd pairings amongst those who plot for power.

After passing through a tunnel above the Burning Pits, one can see the glittering homes of wizards and sorcerers, the so called Witch Daggers. Carved through the interior of the massive stalactites descending from the ceiling, these inverted towers are connected by levitating platforms and bridges of magically hardened silk and crystal. The arcane spellcasters who dwell in these places keep to themselves, coming down to mingle with the commoners only in times of need or to purchase



necessary supplies. The friction between the arcane and divine adepts of the city necessitated this arrangement, which the arcane casters have accepted as a matter of course. Their city above a city has grown ever stronger since the split, as their freedom from the constant eye of the priestesses has given them the time and leeway they needed to truly come into their own.

Visited only by slaves and the very poorest drow, the fungal gardens can be found at the bottom of the falling road, where the waste materials of the city are dumped to compost. These deep pits are used to grow the fungus which provides food for the slaves and the poor. The rich operate these farms as feudal lords, with each merchant or noble with the money to afford buying one paying its workers in a take from the harvest. The majority of the harvest is taken in to restaurants and stores where it is prepared and sold to the wealthier citizens. The more exotic forms of fungus are exported, as well, for a premium price.

BUILDING MATERIALS

There are three materials used in the building of Sheoloth. Native stone, of many different types, is used as the basis of most construction. It is plentiful and easy to get, with the major cost being the labour spent to carve it away from the walls. The second most popular construction material for the city is the construction silk woven by spiders bred to produce the stuff in great quantities. Relatively inexpensive and very sturdy, construction webbing lasts for decades without any additional maintenance, once it is properly cured. Unfortunately, the webbing desiccates and becomes brittle if it is not properly treated, an all-too-common occurrence which leads to collapsing buildings in some areas of the city.

The third building material used in Sheoloth is also the most luxurious – living creatures. Fleshcrafted into walls, floors, and ceilings, unfortunate slaves spend the rest of their lives as homes for the drow. Though many of these fleshcrafted structures have no intelligence or awareness to speak of, some drow are experimenting with homes that are not only alive, but also able to experience their new life, even going so far as to leave heads intact so the

victim can speak to his masters and their guests. This type of fleshcrafting is very expensive and time-consuming, but is gaining popularity amongst the nobility and the very wealthy merchants.

Construction and Expansion

The city originally grew up within a great cavern used by the elves to create a subterranean fortress. The drow did not breed quickly, but the number of slaves they added to their fold combined with the passing of centuries to greatly increase their numbers. The fortress grew too small very quickly and the drow expanded their territory into the surrounding passages and small caverns.

After a series of attacks by Flayers and dwarves, the Sheolites decided to protect themselves by grouping together more closely. The walls between their tunnels were cut away and the ceiling expanded. Magic and engineering genius were used to hold the ceiling in place, and Sheoloth began to mutate into its present form.

Over the centuries since, the city has expanded numerous times, each time carving away the stone of the Underdeep to make room for more business, homes, temples, and slave quarters. The city expands infrequently, but when it does grow it happens at a frightening pace. Wizards and clerics work side-by-side to transform the stone, often using *transmute rock to mud* spells and other magic to enable slaves to more easily haul it away. Magically softened or transformed stone is then moulded into shapes useful for construction, typically blocks and bricks.

Poorer sections of the city use more traditional mining techniques to expand the city. The slums, in particular, expand the city without any sort of guidance or assistance from the clergy or arcane orders of the city. Though technically illegal, the slum dwellers carve out tunnels using picks and shovels to give themselves some breathing room. This is most common when merchants or other wealthy citizens decide to expand their own living space to the detriment of the slum dwellers, crushing the poor between the walls of the estates of the wealthy and the walls of the caverns. These makeshift tunnels



are dangerous and poorly engineered and dozens of the poor die in cave-ins and as a result of asphyxiation from released gases either while tunnelling through the stone or living within the tunnels.

Faster methods of construction involve building up, rather than down, as is seen in the Glory Crypt. Most common amongst business owners in congested areas, this type of construction uses construction webbing to add additional layers to the city. Accessible through ramps and staircases, the upper levels of the city are not nearly as congested as the lower levels and are currently much in vogue with the nobility. A particularly worthless and expensive project is currently under development to create an elevated system of roads and businesses, allowing the nobility to live above, literally, the rest of the populace. Though the clergy does not openly oppose this idea, they view the whole process as frivolous and wasteful.

FOOD AND WATER

The bulk of the food in the city is fungus of one sort or another, grown on the waste of the city in the deep pits below the slum. The wide varieties of fungal growth create a rich palette of tastes and textures, with the most skilled chefs able to create all manner of meals from their limited supplies. The church of the Dark Mother also provides the faithful with summoned feasts from time to time, using these rare meals to show the power of the church and the rewards it offers to the faithful.

Nobles make frequent use of summoned foods as well, and magic items that aid their preparation are very popular with those with refined tastes. Drow with magical abilities summon their own food for safety's sake, too – it is very difficult for someone to poison food between the time you summon it and the time you eat it a few seconds later. Though the fare in Sheoloth is of very limited variety, the chefs of its many restaurants do their best to secure spices and foreign foods to please their patrons.

The Sheolites remember the history of their city and know better than to rely on natural wells or the streams near their city for the water they need to survive. Those wells and streams were

poisoned by their ancestors and the drow know their enemies will do their best to poison them again if they attack the city.

When the drow overtook the elves and claimed their fortress for themselves, they also began working powerful magic to create permanent portals to the elemental plane of water. The water is taken from the portal as it is needed – only individual drow homes have any water containment vessels and these only hold enough water to get a small family through the day. Though these containers could easily be poisoned, doing so provides the poisoner with little benefit other than the murder of one family.

Since the city's inception, it has grown numerous times by enlarging the cavern. Each time, the Night Lodge has gone into the expanded territories and created new planar portals to provide water to those who reside in the new area. With so many small portals located throughout the city, there is no chance for the city to lose its water supply, altogether, regardless of the length of a siege.

The drow also trade water with a few deep gnome settlements – the deep gnomes take the water and return a portion of it as wine, fermented from their special and carefully guarded supplies of mushrooms. Drow nobles prize the alcohol and are more than happy to provide the gnomes with fresh water, which costs them literally nothing to acquire.

The city's sewer system is fairly primitive, however, consisting of little more than gutters running into chutes, which dump the streams of waste out of the city and down into the fungal gardens. The nobles all contribute to the cost of fleshcrafting slaves to slither down the chutes to keep them from clogging up. These slaves have short life expectancies; disease and parasites contracted from constant contact with raw sewage and other waste tend to end their lives within a year or two.

THE POWERS OF THE CITY

Sheoloth is a city in turmoil. There are three factions involved in a constant, subtle struggle for power within the city, each intent

on defeating the others and seizing absolute power over the drow in Sheoloth. Given the different strengths and weaknesses of these power centres, it is unlikely any will ever reign supreme over the others. Most know this instinctively. After all, the Dark Mother enjoys strife and chaos, both of which would be greatly reduced if a single power held control of the largest city sworn to serve her.

The Clergy

The churches of Sheoloth are all devoted to the Dark Mother, though each also contains small shrines to the other gods of the drow pantheon. Though the Dark Mother allows the other gods to receive their due, she ensures all drow understand her supremacy by limiting their worship to small shrines while her priestesses hold sway over massive temples.

Like the dark mother, the priestesses want the nobles to believe, at least on the surface, they are in charge of things. The clergy serves as advisors to the nobility, while appearing to let them make their own decisions. Of course, the priestesses have no problem pointing out that their advice comes from the Dark Mother. Who would doubt the words of the Dark Mother? Certainly not anyone who is faithful and devout.

The unspoken threat of heresy hangs heavily over the head of the nobility, forcing them to agree with the clergy even when doing so is often not in their best interest. The clerics could force the issue, but have chosen not to in order to protect themselves from potential reprisals. They limit their advice to issues they feel are important, while allowing the nobility to make their own decisions on the day-to-day running of the city.

Individual, clerics are quite powerful in the city and have unlimited freedom. Even novices are allowed to walk freely through the streets of

the city and are the only drow who may enter a noble estate without permission without fear of attack. New clerics are warned to avoid abusing this power, as doing so shames the nobles and may one day force them to act with hostility to prevent others from seeing them as impotent when compared to the clergy.

Overall, the clerics of Sheoloth make all the major decisions of the city, including what new laws will be passed, what trade agreements they will allow, and when the city will go to war against its enemies. They must leave the nobles alone, however, to run the city in other ways and trust the nobility to oversee the maintenance and construction of the city. To do otherwise



would force the hand of the nobles and invite a potential civil war.

Still, the church is never happy to allow the nobles to grow in power unchecked. They do their best to subtly undermine the plots and plans of nobles, using their own resources and contacts to quietly end those plots they feel are a danger to the church or the city as a whole. If they find a real threat, they may act openly, but the clerics much prefer remaining behind the scenes, out of sight, where their daggers can strike at the exposed backs of those below them.

Even within the church, though, the clerics are not always united. The priestesses of the Filth-eater, for example, often plot to hinder the work of the Dark Mother's minions, using their powers to promote their own order at the expense of others. Periodically, the priestesses of the dark mother go on bloody purges to rid the shrines of more troublesome servants and keep the clerics of other gods from getting above themselves.

The upper ranks of the Dark Mother's temples are also a hotbed of dangerous plotting and malicious activity. Becoming the new High Priestess is no more difficult than murdering the current servant of the Dark Mother. Doing so, however, requires the assassin to work alone and perform the deed herself. Those priestesses who succeed in destroying their superiors are always marked as successors by the Dark Mother, who covers them in a black glow for one week.

This battle for supremacy is dangerous for all concerned. The upper ranks of the church must be on constant alert lest a lesser cleric attack and destroy them. Those in the lower ranks must use caution when attempting to advance through homicide, because those who fail in their attempts to depose a superior are not only slain, but suffer the grave displeasure of the Dark Mother for their incompetence.

Of late, there have been rumblings from the merchants concerning the high tithes required by the churches of Sheoloth and their vice-like grip on trade flowing into and out of Sheoloth. Though the merchants are surely not anticipating any sort of open struggle with the priestesses,

it is certain they will attempt to evade at least a portion of the tithes and begin working their own smuggling operations if they feel too hard pressed by the religious edicts passed down from the church. The priestesses are still unsure how to handle the merchants. On the one hand, they need the money, goods, and slaves flowing into the city through the mercantile class. On the other, the clergy hates to appear weak and may resort to coercion, threats, or even assassination to keep the merchants in line if they feel a true threat to their power rising from that quarter.

The Nobility

The seven Great Houses of the drow are in control of most of the city, most of the time. They handle tax collection (which is different from the tithes required by the church), city organization, licensing of commercial enterprises, the defence of the city, and all the other book-keeping and organizational work needed to keep a city the size of Sheoloth operational. Despite their conflicts with one another and the extreme vengeance with which they pursue some of their personal vendettas, the nobles have done a remarkable job keeping Sheoloth stable and functioning. Given the harsh conditions of its surroundings, the many threats from outside sources, and the constant conflict within the city, the nobles deserve much credit for just keeping the city from collapsing in upon itself.

Collectively, the noble houses long ago created The Conclave. Each noble house is allowed a single representative to the Conclave, which meets twice a month to discuss the business of running the city. Each house is, ostensibly, given the same weight within the meetings of the council, but there is little truth to this conceit. Instead, the most powerful houses are able to coerce the weaker into agreeing with their plots and plans through a mixture of threats and bribery. This leaves three of the houses in real control of things, while the other four are reduced to rubber-stamping what the leaders want to push through.

The balancing factor of all this revolves around the role of the houses. Each of the houses has evolved over the years into a very specialized role. Though the strongest houses are very



heretics. This circumstance is as old as Sheoloth and no noble house has ever withstood the anger of the church for long. Even if the house is strong enough to destroy the church, the fanatical zeal of the Dark Mother's followers would punish such an action by destroying the House itself.

To protect themselves, the houses have recently begun working very closely with the larger mercantile guilds. Though they were previously antagonistic to these merchants and traders, the nobles now feel the moneyed commoners may be their only real weapon against the church. Their hopes are to use the growing dissatisfaction of the traders to unbalance the church and bring its chokehold on Sheoloth to an end.

strong in their areas of influence, they have some significant blind spots in the areas in which they have not focused their efforts. The smaller houses are often able to get their own laws and orders passed through the Conclave as a result of these blind spots. By exploiting the weaknesses of the more powerful houses, the smaller houses are able to gain concessions for their own areas of expertise. In the past, this sort of political wrangling has allowed relatively small and obscure houses to rise to power by carefully eating away at the support base for a more powerful base over the decades.

The recently fallen eighth Great House, Orishal, fell through just such a circumstance when its trade treaties were slowly taken away by the clever House Iniquin, which is now the most powerful trade-based house in the city.

The greatest thorn in the side of the nobility, however, are the churches. These powerful organizations have the divine mandate to dictate law to the nobility, who must then pass it through the Conclave or risk being branded as

THE MERCHANT GUILDS

Though not as powerful as the nobles and lacking the divine favour of the churches, the merchant guilds have a vast amount of money. Individually, the merchants are no wealthier than the nobles (and in many cases are only marginally richer than any other commoner) but the advent of the merchant guilds has given them great collective bargaining strength. Together, their income and the income from the trading agreements they hold with outside forces, accounts for more than two-thirds of the entire city's income.

The largest problem facing the merchant guilds is the difficulty they face in organizing and presenting a coherent front. Each of the merchants within a guild is used to looking out for his own best interests, and each type of guild has been traditionally focused on serving the needs of those merchants who are members. This means, for example, that the Necrore mine

owners and the smiths of Sheoloth are not likely to find any common ground thanks to years of trying to get better prices or concessions from the other guild.

To some extent, the church and the nobility are galvanizing the guilds to action, however. The church has increased the demand for tithes lately, while the nobility are ratcheting up taxes. From the church's perspective, this is nothing more than an adjustment of the current tithe structure to take into account new trade contracts. The priestesses base the tithes on what they see in the city, and they have determined that the merchants are growing quite wealthy and must henceforth start adding a bit more to the coffers of the church.

The nobility, however, are using the tax increases to squeeze the merchants into making a hard choice. Taxes are the law – merchants who do not pay their taxes could suffer substantial fines and the possible loss of their license to buy or sell goods in Sheoloth. Tithes, however, are not mandatory, merely requested by the church, though those who fail to pay when asked by the church stand the very real risk of being branded as a heretic. This puts the merchants in a tough position, as they simply cannot maintain their business if the tithes and taxes increase any further.

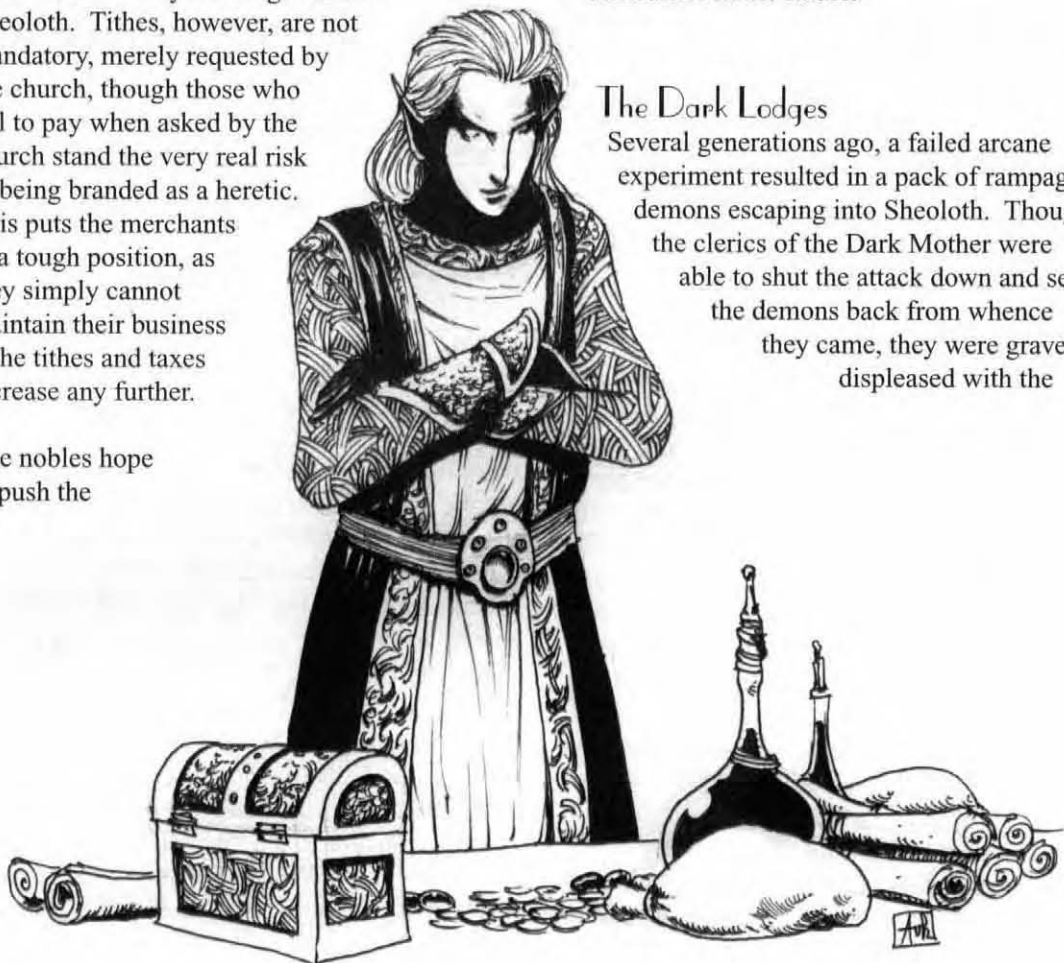
The nobles hope to push the

merchants into siding with them in forcing the church to lower its tithes. This would allow the nobility to free itself from a small measure of the control of the church, by enabling them to show the merchants as a tool of the nobility. After all, if their plan works, the nobility will be able to effectively limit the tithes taken in by the church, a powerful threat they may be able to use to gain concessions from the priestesses.

For their part, the merchant guilds want nothing more than to continue turning a profit, by whatever means necessary. They are working with several of the criminal organizations in Sheoloth, even now, in the event taxation increases to an unbearable level. The plan of the guilds is to work out some concessions with the nobility and, if that fails, to turn to smuggling and other illicit operations to make up the shortfall in their incomes caused by the excessive taxes and tithes. This plan will lead to a massive upswing in criminal activity in Sheoloth, which could lead to all manner of difficulties in the future.

The Dark Lodges

Several generations ago, a failed arcane experiment resulted in a pack of rampaging demons escaping into Sheoloth. Though the clerics of the Dark Mother were able to shut the attack down and send the demons back from whence they came, they were gravely displeased with the



damage wrought by what they perceived as the carelessness of the wizards. As a result, the arcane spellcasters of Sheoloth were forced up and out of the city proper, to locations where the damage caused by experiments gone awry would be limited. The result of this mass exodus is the Witch Daggers, the collection enormous stalactite enclaves of arcane spellcasters and the pathways of woven silk winding between them.

To insulate themselves from the pressures applied by the Dark Mother's priestesses, the arcane spellcasters formed the Dark Lodges. The lodges compete with one another for arcane knowledge, but present a united front against the divine spellcasters in Sheoloth. The wizards and sorcerers of the Dark Lodges have made it very clear they are willing to stay in their spires and work their magic in seclusion, provided they are left alone and are not persecuted by the priestesses.

Grudgingly the priestesses have allowed the arcane spellcasters to manage their 'aerial city' as they see fit. The last time they attempted to impose serious restrictions on the activities of wizards and sorcerers living above, the results was a long, drawn-out duel between arcane and divine magic that left both sides drained. In the end, the priestesses were forced to spend months clearing the temples of all the malign spelltraps the wizards left lying about.

This makes the Dark Lodges at least a small power in the city, as they are able to stand up to the clerics without fear of instant death. Nobles and merchants often employ the wizards for this very reason, as the Dark Lodges are perfectly willing to supply those who will pay with whatever magical items they desire, illegal or not. This is a major source of income to the Dark Lodges, and one the priestesses would dearly love to shut down – if they could be sure it wouldn't result in another expensive magical conflict.

There are currently six dark lodges operating in Sheoloth, one in each of the stalactites which form the Witch Daggers. The Dark Lodge of the Blackened Nail focuses their efforts specifically on battle magic and the explosions that rattle through their enclave often echo throughout the nearby areas for hours at a time. With their

intense focus on conjuration, the Dark Lodge of Night Summons is constantly filled with the screams of their summoned creatures, upon which all manner of tortures are tested. With no real specialization of their own, the Dark Lodges of Luzirok, Viris and Rothlik are still potent and united forces, as each is based around a powerful patriarch and the males of his clan. Though there are female members of the so called "familial lodges" they are rarely seen and are widely believed to suffer horrific abuse at the hands of the oppressed males in their families.

The last of the lodges is also the most potent. The Dark Lodge of the Burning Heart all focus on either evocation and divination, and their ability to deliver death from afar and to spy upon their enemies makes them a fearsome group indeed. While they are not officially in charge of anything, the Burning Hearts are respected and feared by the other Lodges, who view them as the de facto governing body for the arcane spellcasters of Sheoloth.

The Underground

Criminals are a real force in Sheoloth, assassins and thieves have a great deal of work in the dark city if they are any good at their jobs. What transforms the thieves and racketeers from small collections of illicit activity in the greater city is their organization. The outlaws work very closely with the humans and other races in the Foreign Ward, providing another outlet for the goods the outlanders are not allowed to bring into the city, due to quotas or other restrictions.

To protect themselves, the thieves and smugglers have banded together to form a very efficient operation. Thieves steal goods for sale to the outlanders, while smugglers bring the goods from the outlanders to the city's black market, which the underground also runs.

The biggest dangers facing the criminals face at this juncture are other criminals. If there is ever a crack in their façade of unity, the end result will be dozens of dead thugs in the street and the very real possibility of a massive crackdown by the priestesses.

Their most useful function in the city is to funnel even more money into the vaults of



the nobles. While the thieves and smugglers believe they are rebelling against authority, the nobles quietly fund their operations and make clandestine deals to take possession of smuggled goods after they enter the city. The criminals do all the hard work; the nobles make most of the profit.

The Outlanders

At the bottom of the power pyramid, the outlanders squat and pick at the scraps from the drow banquet tables. The drow are rich, they create magical items and other goods no one else can produce, both of which make them a very lucrative trade partner for a savvy merchant. Outlanders have carved a niche for themselves in Sheoloth. A hundred years ago the first outsider managed to convince a drow noble to allow him to build a small shop in the nether portions of the city and soon other nobles had pet merchants of their own. To protect

the city from infiltrators and to gain a stronger grip on these outsiders, the clergy of Sheoloth created the Foreign Ward and restricted all non-drow to living in that portion of the city. Walled, gated, and guarded, the Foreign Ward became a virtual prison for those who chose to dwell within its confines.

The payoff, however, has been huge. Merchant houses from gnome cities soon established a foothold within Sheoloth, trading alchemical potions and supplies for drow weapons and magical items. Duergar followed, establishing a small enclave within the Foreign Ward in which they trade not items, but skills. Necrore processing is something the duergar are quite adept at, and their necrore weapons and magical implements are in high demand within the city. Other races have followed suit, creating small merchant outposts within the Foreign Ward in order to take advantage of the offered trade opportunities.



The outlanders have some power, but not much. Their ability to leave the city and refuse to trade with it any further are somewhat of a threat, but there are so many merchants who would leap to take their place it is doubtful anything other than a mass exodus from the Foreign Ward would even be noticed by the drow. Where the outlanders have real power is in their dealings with the criminal underground of the city. The outland merchants are the safest way for the criminals to move their stolen goods, giving the merchants here a small bit of leverage. Because the noble houses are tied up in the criminal underground, this leverage extends a bit further into drow society than would otherwise be possible. Clever foreign merchants are just starting to use this to their advantage, gaining some important tax breaks and trade concessions for their efforts.

The body was lying in a heap of rubble and filth, half buried when he found it. A trio of drow toughs, out for whatever blood they could get were poking it with the sharp tips of their long daggers, trying to see if there was any life left in it. It had not been difficult to get them to flee; all Blade had to do was let them see him for who he was. A deadly assassin with a reputation of cruelty beyond even drow norms was more trouble than any of them had wanted, and so the group quickly became a race to see who could vanish first. Any other day, he would have just laughed and then hunted one of them down as a lesson to the others.

But today was different. He was not even sure why, but the body had caught his attention and he was not leaving it until his curiosity was satisfied. In Sheoloth, even carrion was a commodity and if he did not claim the body now, it would not be around long enough to come back to. After warning off another potential rival with the flash of sudden steel, he entered the alley and began cleaning off the refuse.

Just as he had figured, the body was brutalized and bleeding, but he was surprised to find the whisper of a pulse in the boy's wrist. Tattered clothing clung to his grey-skinned frame, barely enough to cover and probably far less than he had been wearing before his attack. Blade noticed that any hint of a belt was gone and that several loops on his pants were burst. That suggested a robbery, but he was certain the reason for the attack was far more personal than that. The boy's delicate bones and slender ears that ended in slight points told him everything he needed to know. 'Half drow,' he murmured to himself.

That almost made him turn around and let the half-breed expire in the garbage, but he swallowed the reaction. He despised his own kind as it was, so a racial reaction like this one was pretty much hypocritical. Besides, a half-drow boy might have his uses, especially one that owed him his life. It went against his better judgment to do this without knowing anything about the child, but he picked the limp form up and carried it home.

An hour later, he was sitting in a chair across from his spare bed, one dagger twirling in his hand and a troubled expression furrowing his brow. He had brought the nearly dead boy home, treated his wounds, and bathed him. It was only then that the 'he' turned out to be a she. A she... Blade hated women. The scars across his back from his trips to temple were testaments to that hatred and here he was, tending a woman in his own home. He had saved the female's miserable life, something he *never* would have done if he had known its gender back in that alley.

He put the blade of his dagger against his arm and rose to approach the bedside. The girl was still unconscious, droplet of violet healing elixir clinging to her thin grey lips. He sighed deeply, looked at this frail thing that was only barely a woman but would become one if he let it live. He turned the dagger around, held it above her heart, and debated driving it down through her chest. She would certainly be a liability, a half-drow female with no home, no money, and no status.

As he pondered, her eyelids fluttered and she drew in a deep breath. The motion almost startled him into strike anyway, but he controlled the impulse and slid the dagger up her body to the underside of her throat. His crimson eyes stared into her steel coloured ones, his face a mask of disappointment and hostility. She did exactly the right thing, the only thing that could save her life in that one instant- she froze in sheer, unabashed terror.

Blade always reacted best to fear. He had engendered it in others for so long, it only amused him these days. That moment's humour made him decide *not* to slit the child's throat. Instead, he brought the black edge up along her chin and caught the tip of her ear with its point. The dagger easily parted the thin flesh there, leaving a sting of pain and a thin trickle of blood to run down its edge.

'You live exactly as long as I decide you do. Understood?'

The girl, who could not be possibly more than twenty or thirty years old, gave the slightest of nods. It was enough motion to convey her understanding without being enough movement to make him nervous. She had strong survival instincts, at least. That was a good sign. She might survive a while after all.

'You are mine. I will keep you as long as you remain useful. When you become more trouble than you are worth, female, I will make you wish you had died in that alley.' With that, he sheathed the dagger not in her chest but in a metal scabbard along his leg. He unbuckled its straps and dropped the weapon on the table next to the girl's bed. 'I'll see that you get food. In the morning, we begin.'

He was almost out the door when the girl's thin voice caught his attention and made him pause. 'B-b-begin what, l-lord?'

He smiled to himself. Lord, he liked the sound of that. 'Your training, of course. You do want to become useful, don't you?'

He did not bother to wait for the answer.



LIFE IN SHEOLOTH

Living in Sheoloth is exciting and dangerous. The city bustles with life at all hours, as its citizens have little concern for day and night and drive their slaves mercilessly. Sleep is taken when time allows, but the drow have so little need for it their activities go on through most of the day. Slaves and visitors to Sheoloth adapt to the rapid pace of activity within the city as best they can, with slaves grinding away their lives on a couple of hours of sleep each day and visitors often sharing their duties with another to fill the needed hours. Whatever the time of day, there is always something happening in Sheoloth.

In this chapter you will find information about the different types of people who live in Sheoloth, from the drow nobility down to the lowliest disposable slaves, and what they do each day. Each of the following sections describes a different layer of Sheolite culture using an identical format, allowing you to easily compare and contrast the lives and lifestyles of those who make their home in this city of terrors.

DISPOSABLE SLAVES

The drow have an insatiable desire for slaves. They use flesh the way others use tools and are in constant need of more bodies to do their work or suffer their tortures. Disposable slaves are the least of those brought in for the drow, crippled in mind or body, they are fit for very little outside of menial labour or experimentation and generally have short, brutal lives within Sheoloth. While some do graduate from their wretched status to become more valuable to their masters, most die horribly within a few months of being sold to their drow masters.

Birth

Very few disposable slaves begin their lives within Sheoloth. The conditions the disposable slaves are kept in are so horrible and lead to such rampant malnutrition it is rare for an impregnation to occur, much less lead to a

full-term gestation and birth. Given the drow penchant for cruelty, those pregnant slaves who do approach the date of birth are often used in some hideous experiment or subjected to a torturous drow party game (see below).

Those few children born into the lives of the disposable slaves normally have their lifespan measured in days. Unable to feed or properly care for the infant, slave mothers sometimes smother the child and dispose of the body during their daily duties. Sadly, other slaves often account for the deaths of such children, devouring them like a pack of dogs discovering a wounded lamb. The few who, against all odds, do manage to survive to term and survive for any length of time after their birth are invariably discovered by slave overseers who take the child away.

Most of those children so taken end their lives as fleshcrafted pets for the drow or, more rarely, are trained to become valued slaves by the drow.

Childhood

Children who are sold into slavery have even shorter lives than adults. Unable to defend themselves from the other slaves, they are often starved to death, abused, and even killed by the desperate and depraved. The drow rarely waste their money purchasing children as disposable slaves, because the investment rarely pays off at all.

Starting the Day

Most disposable slaves are kicked or doused with waste water to rouse them from their exhausted sleep. A meagre breakfast of cold table scrap stew is doled out, but there is never enough to go around and even those who do get a bowl of the slop barely manage to stave off the effects of starvation. When the overseers are not around to put a stop to them, brutal fights over stew are not uncommon, and weak slaves are often killed for their food by their stronger counterparts. In the worst drow houses, those killed over battles for food trigger an orgy of cannibalistic gorging as the other slaves tear them apart to sate their own hunger. Cruel drow masters sometimes encourage this behaviour by not feeding their slaves for days, even weeks, at a time and enjoy the sight of intelligent beings

reduced to such an animalistic struggle for survival.

The Work Day

After whatever passes for breakfast, the slaves are hauled out one by one and given a work detail for the day. Hours are long and work is often tedious, backbreaking, and dangerous. Hauling rock from mine collapses is not an uncommon job for the disposable slave, often in unstable areas. The number of such crushed to a jellied pulp by slabs falling from the ceilings of mine tunnels is so great the drow have categorized no fewer than three types of undead produced by such accidents.

Other common tasks including hauling waste from the vast cisterns beneath the noble estates to the dumps on the outskirts of Sheoloth, feeding particularly dangerous gladiatorial beasts, or reporting for experimentation to some drow wizards tower. Whatever the job, all disposable slaves are exposed to some type of danger all day, every day. Ill-fed and abused, they wander through their days confused and beaten, their spirit shattered inside the tortured husks of their bodies.

Disposable slaves work 20-hour shifts. They are fed one meal at breakfast, then another twelve hours later. The second meal of the evening is generally composed of waste from the meals eaten by the staff of the house throughout the day. While still hardly enough to survive on, this meal has the advantage of coming from food that is marginally fresher than what is normally provided for the morning meal.

Leisure Time

Slaves, especially disposable slaves, do not have leisure time. The closest they come to leisure is the three hours sleep time they are given at the end of their shifts. Exhausted, they slump to the cold stone floors of their common cell area and do their best to avoid the unwanted attention of the guards or other slaves. The more dangerous slaves often pick this time to attack the others, making rape and murder quite common amongst the slaves. Though the guards could stop this behaviour, they rarely put forth the effort, preferring instead to watch and jeer at the fate of the victim. Only in cases where there is danger

of a slave uprising or general panic brought on by the predations do the guards step in, brutalizing any who cross their path and often leaving many wounded and dying.

In Society

The slaves of the drow are not considered living beings, they are tools and property. They are not allowed to speak to any free member of Sheolite society and even looking at a drow noble is grounds for immediate execution. Worse, any drow noble may legally destroy another's slave, provided he provides recompense to the owner for the cost of replacing the slave. Given the ridiculously low price of disposable slaves, bored nobles have been known to slaughter every slave they come across during the day, coughing up the relatively puny replacement costs as they go. These 'bloodwalks' are very popular amongst the jaded young nobility who are not yet immersed in the Game of Bones.

Disposable slaves frequently provide the entertainment for drow parties, as even commoners can afford a few of these wretched creatures for their revels. This entertainment takes many perverse forms, all of which end in the death of the slave. A party favourite involves leaving a slave tied to a post in the centre of the party area with a collection of knives hanging from a chain around his waist. Guests are encouraged to carve their names or sigils into the flesh of the unfortunate, who usually bleeds to death by the end of the night. The flesh is then removed from the body and may be cured and hung as a decoration for future parties. These grisly drow guestbooks are considered low-class by many nobles, but the commoners love them and often have extensive collections from parties past.

Death

Slave death is common and few slaves expect to last more than a few months. Accident, attacks by other slaves, and the cruel whims of guards and overseers tend to bring slaves to a tragic end sooner, rather than later.

THE VALUED SLAVE

More expensive than the disposable slave, as well as more useful, the valued slave has some training or other attribute prized by the drow.



These slaves still have harsh existences, but they are at least well-fed and allowed to carry out work for which they possess some aptitude. A few suffer through terrifying ordeals as pleasure slaves, but most spend their days as scribes, laboratory assistants, smiths, or in other trades.

Birth

Where possible, the drow enjoy raising the children of valued slaves. It allows them the opportunity to fashion a slave to their liking as they manage its upbringing and oversee its training. This means valued slaves are often allowed (even required) to breed with other slaves, though their partners are typically selected by their masters to ensure the right mix of qualities in the offspring. The children of such unions also provide useful leverage for more rebellious slaves and the drow do not hesitate to use them as bargaining chips should they prove necessary.

Childhood

Born into slavery, the children of valued slaves are treated relatively well. They are expected to remain silent unless spoken too and are given only the most rudimentary of toys, but are not otherwise mistreated or physically abused. The drow consider these children as investments in the future, because a slave raised by their own hand is both more loyal and more adequately trained than one they purchase from an outside source. Contrary to popular belief, these children offer the drow very little in the way of cost savings – a child raised from birth to an age when he can do useful work will cost the drow considerably more than simply buying an adult slave.

Some drow treat the children of their slaves like exotic pets and take great delight in teaching them to perform various tricks for other drow. In the most extreme cases, the drow use the breeding of slaves much as a mental exercise and strive to get the most exotic mix of features, or

the most useful blend of physical and mental attributes from the pairing of their slaves. Some whisper of the strange results of such unions and there are many myths about abominable children who, affected by sorcery during their gestation, are kept locked away by the drow who created them.

For most children destined to become a valued slave, their formative years are spent studying with a drow tutor and learning the skills and philosophies their master finds valuable. Though harsh and demanding, this upbringing is not entirely without its benefits, as most valued slaves lead relatively peaceful, lengthy lives.

Starting the Day

A valued slave is always on call and must respond to any order given to him at a moment's notice. Scribes are often roused in the dark

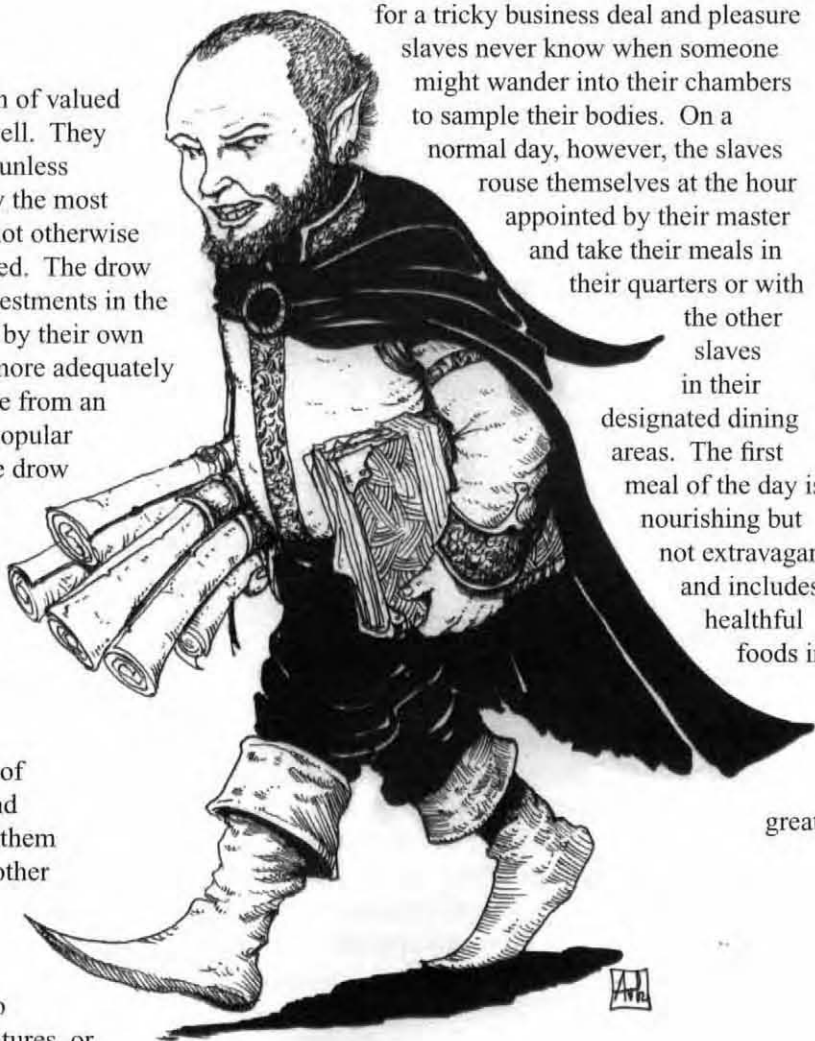
of night to help in completing the contracts for a tricky business deal and pleasure

slaves never know when someone might wander into their chambers to sample their bodies. On a

normal day, however, the slaves rouse themselves at the hour appointed by their master and take their meals in their quarters or with

the other slaves in their designated dining areas. The first meal of the day is nourishing but not extravagant and includes healthful foods in

great



enough quantities to keep the slave well nourished and able to perform. The poorer houses do not necessarily fill the bellies of their slaves, but they do not subject them to starvation conditions, either.

Slaves are then given their assignments for the day, or report to their standard posts. Depending on their function within the house, this may involve following their master around during the day and obeying his orders or they may have their own work space to which they report each day.

The Work Day

Valued slaves have a specific function within the drow household and are expected to perform that function every day of their lives, to the best of their abilities. New slaves often work under the guidance and watchful eyes of more experienced slaves or drow commoners, who know what is expected and the quality of work the drow see as acceptable. When a slave first comes into the possession of his new master, he will often perform only menial tasks and will not graduate to more difficult work until his overseer deems him worthy. This can take anywhere from a few months to a few years, but those who take too long to prove their worth to the drow may suffer a horrible fate – consignment to the pits and a short, savage life as a disposable slave. The drow are loathe to waste money in this fashion, but it is sometimes necessary to do so to remind the other slaves of the penalty of disappointing their masters.

Valued slaves often spend ten to twelve hours of their day actively working. Pleasure slaves or those who specialize in servicing the drow needs in other ways (butlers, for example) are technically on duty at all times of day and night but are rarely needed more than eight hours in a given day.

The drow see sleep as a weakness, but understand the need most races have for it. Valued slaves receive six to eight hours of sleep each day and sometimes manage to sneak in a few naps when their services are not needed. While the life of a valued slave does not consist of the kind of backbreaking labour suffered by the disposable slaves, they are kept quite busy.

Leisure Time

While slaves do not technically have any free time, so to speak, they often manage to snatch a few hours here and there. Most spend what time they manage to liberate for themselves with other slaves, playing simple card games or idly chatting about the events of their daily lives. A few are given the privilege of attending drow social events as pets or retainers, and a very, very privileged few are even allowed to leave the estates on which they serve and seek their amusement in the greater city of Sheoloth.

Most, however, are content to simply do nothing while they are not actively working for their masters. They rest, talk, play, and just spend time with other slaves, pretending their lives are their own and hoping they can hold onto their tenuous station in life and not be cast down amongst those even more unfortunate than themselves.

In Society

Unlike disposable slaves, a valued slave is afforded a significant amount of protection simply by belonging to his master. Though they are still little more than tools or property, they are expensive tools and property. Another drow could kill a valued slave, but would be on the hook for the cost of the slave which is often a significant sum of money. More importantly, valued slaves are valued for a reason and a noble whose slave is killed is liable to be quite displeased with the killer. In most cases, a drow who wishes to kill a valued slave will ask permission from its owner first. If the slave truly has done something to offend another drow, or has violated the proscriptions against certain slave behaviours, then permission is normally granted. Asking for permission to kill a valued slave who has done little wrong, however, is usually grounds for a rebuke from the master and may even lead to an open fight between two nobles.

Valued slaves must abide by the following restrictions at all times:

- † A slave must not speak to a drow unless first spoken too.
- † A slave must obey the orders given by



any drow or overseer, provided those orders do not conflict with any standing orders given by the owner.

† A slave must immediately attempt to follow any orders given by its master.

These three rules govern the lives of every slave, while the masters of individual slaves may also have their own rules and regulations they expect to be followed.

Valued slaves are rarely found in areas other than the estate of their owner. Some are given more freedom and travel through Sheoloth on errands for their owner, but these are quite rare and tend to be very old slaves who have proven their loyalty and dependability.

Death

Valued slaves die from old age more than any other cause. They are kept around as long as they are useful and are then retired to more menial tasks, but even ancient valued slaves are rarely put in with the disposable slaves. Instead they spend their final days training a new generation of slaves, before they quietly pass away from natural causes. This is not sympathy from the drow, but simple efficiency – they want their trained slaves to train the new slaves to the proper degree, something not possible if they simply kill off all the old slaves.

THE FLESHCRAFTED SLAVE

More expensive and more wretched than the valued slave, the fleshcrafted slave is a freakish mutant created to the specifications of its owner by the Fleshcrafter's Guild. These wretched creatures are often transformed into killing machines and used in gladiatorial battles, while others are completely transmogrified and become living pieces of a noble estate. Such horrific changes leave the slave with little capacity for thought, but they are quite capable of experiencing all of the pain and suffering inflicted upon them.

Birth

Many drow keep a stable of breeding slaves who do nothing but produce material for

fleshcrafting. These broodmares are often fleshcrafted themselves and it is not uncommon for a single female to have several sets of reproductive organs and for males to be likewise transformed to allow for the fertilization of more females. The children born to these deformed parents are usually whisked away immediately and prepared for their new role in life. Such children may be allowed to grow to relative maturity, all the while undergoing alchemical treatments and training to make their eventual fleshcrafting go that much simpler, but many infants are immediately fleshcrafted into useful items for the drow, becoming water pumps, drug dispensers, or other tools and amusements.

Broodmares and their mates are not chosen for intelligence, but rather the sturdiness of their flesh and bones. The children they produce are of the same type – strong and durable, but lacking any sort of real intelligence or ability. Though able to understand their suffering and fear, these poor creatures spend most of their existence confused and depressed.

Childhood

Those children destined for a fleshcrafted future are fed alchemical solutions and drugs from the moment of their birth all through their developing years. This accelerates the growth of their bodies, at the cost of often severe damage to their minds. This leaves the children larger and much less intelligent than normal, while instilling their flesh and bones with a greater malleability than is found in nature. Depending on the purpose of their fleshcrafting, these abused children are given proper training. Gladiators and soldiers are taught to fight on command and to remain quiescent at all other times. Further use of drugs to control behaviour is common, with children given sedatives to keep them quiet outside of training and stimulants to bring them to fighting strength at a moment's notice. This use of drugs to control the fleshcrafted continues throughout their lives, leaving them slaved to the whims of their masters and the chemicals pumped into their bodies.

Children who will be fleshcrafted into buildings or other inanimate forms are given different treatment. They are kept sedated throughout

their life, which is spent floating in a tank of warm water. This prevents their muscles from developing properly while allowing the drow to drastically increase their mass for better utility. Alchemical concoctions thicken and strengthen their bones, providing them with the strength the fleshcrafters find useful in their work.

Childhood for these slaves is generally ten years or so, after which they are fleshcrafted and put to work.

Starting the Day

Most fleshcrafted slaves are fed each morning and given their daily dose of drugs or alchemical cocktails to prepare them for their tasks during the day. Those which are not required for work during a given day are fed, sedated, and left for the next feeding (usually a few hours after the first). Special handlers are responsible for caring for the fleshcrafted slaves and take their work very seriously. They treat their charges carefully and with care not to damage them, often using disposable slaves to work closely with the fleshcrafted slaves to keep themselves out of danger.

The Work Day

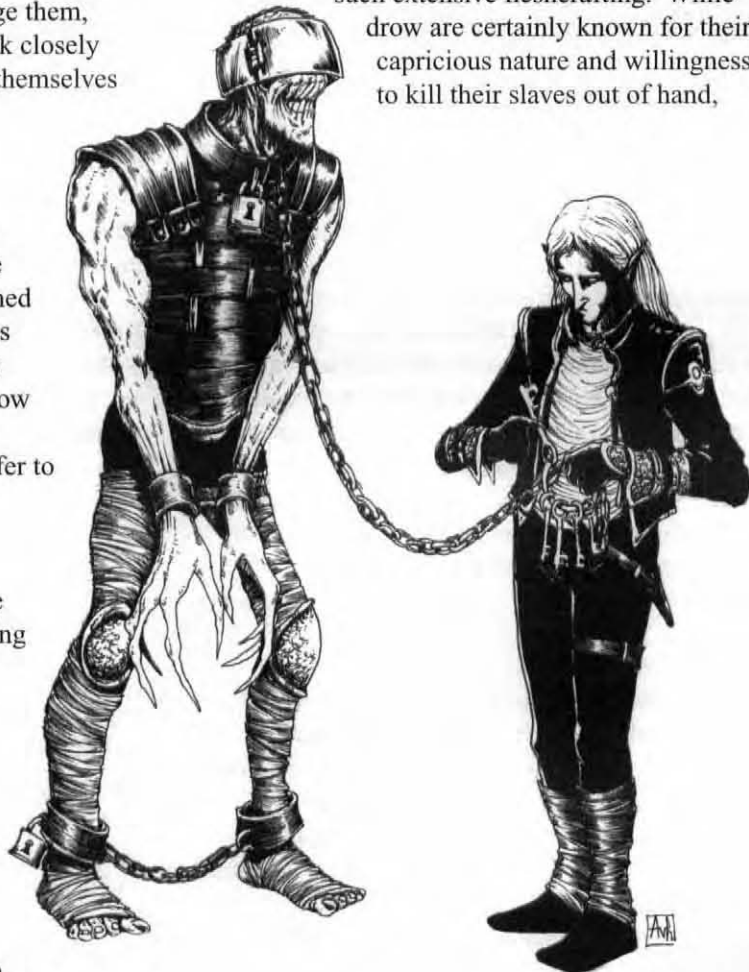
Fleshcrafted slaves are of two types – animate and inanimate. Inanimate slaves are those who have been formed into buildings, walls, or other objects which no longer move (more details can be found in the Magic of the Drow chapter); all further discussions of fleshcrafted slaves in this chapter refer to their animate counterparts.

Fleshcrafted slaves always have a specific purpose, be it fighting in the pits, carrying heavy loads, or guarding an area. They are completely unfit for other duties and are normally kept sedated and fed until they are needed. Thus, the ‘work day’ for a fleshcrafted slave may only roll around a few times a week, while they spend the rest of their lives drugged or chained up in a cell. These slaves are fed several times a day to keep their strength up, though the food is often tainted with alchemical

concoctions or drugs to keep them tractable and to keep fleshcrafted alterations from reverting to their original state.

When a fleshcrafted slave is needed, he is awakened by drugs or spells administered by his handlers. He is then transported to the location where he is needed and put to work. For gladiators, this usually means a few hours work in the pits, slaughtering or being slaughtered by whatever monsters or other gladiators are available for battle that day. Given the extreme value of fleshcrafted gladiators, few are put to any serious test, but are instead used as a spectacle for the crowd and given free rein to lay waste to their enemies in any way they see fit.

Slaves fleshcrafted for labour likewise are given proper treatment and rarely die in accidents or from overwork. They are valuable because they are able to do something other slaves cannot and because it is expensive to perform such extensive fleshcrafting. While drow are certainly known for their capricious nature and willingness to kill their slaves out of hand,



destroying such an expensive investment is usually not done without good cause.

Leisure Time

Fleshcrafted slaves do not have leisure time. They are either sedated, working, or training.

In Society

Even more so than other slaves, the fleshcrafted are seen as tools – very expensive, very temperamental tools. They are rarely seen outside of an estate and, when they are in the streets, they are always accompanied by handlers, guards, and healers to tend to their needs and protect them from the crush of the crowd. Though most of these abominations are viewed with disgust and revulsion by the drow, a few have gained some status as cult heroes amongst the populace. A fleshcrafted gladiator who destroys his foes with a massive stinger is one favourite, as is another with the face of a lamprey who drains his victims of blood with a sloppy feeding frenzy after a victory.

Though fleshcrafted creatures have absolutely no rights, they receive more protection than any other slaves and actually cannot be harmed by anyone other than their owner as a matter of law. The expense and difficulty of maintaining these slaves keeps them from being tossed aside or casually destroyed.

A few fleshcrafted creatures are used as guards and hunters by Sheolite law enforcement and can be seen patrolling the fringes of the city or rooting out heretics or rebels in the city proper. When such creatures roam the streets, it is best to simply avoid them and try not to attract their attention, for they are vicious and unpredictable at the best of times.

The priestesses of Sheoloth keep a number of males in their temple, all extensively fleshcrafted and merged together to form a giant mass of flesh. This monstrosity is used only for breeding purposes, delighting the priestesses with its perversity and the pain and horror experienced by those unfortunate creatures bound into its communal form.

Death

Never ones to waste good flesh and blood, the drow often preserve their fleshcrafted creations long after their deaths. By raising these creatures from the dead, the drow are able to create horrific zombies and use them in wars with their neighbours. Though the disgusting undead are of no use on a drow estate, they are put to good use on the fringes of the city and all drow are expected to turn over the bodies of their dead fleshcrafted slaves to the priestesses.

THE OUTSIDER

Though the bulk of Sheoloth's population is composed of the drow and their slaves, a significant number of visitors can be found living and working within the city. These visitors are at the mercy of the drow at all times and may suddenly find themselves the victim of a drow killing spree, but many find the danger worth the risk. The majority of these visitors are merchants or traders of one sort or another, facilitating commerce between the surface, other Underdeep communities, and the drow. The drow allow them to remain within specific areas of Sheoloth because it is convenient for them to do so – having goods and services brought to them lessens the danger the drow would otherwise put themselves in while attempting to trade with other races.

Known as outsiders, the non-drow who dwell within Sheoloth live in a constant state of danger and fear. They must weight the balance between the risk of sudden drow aggression against the continued flow of drow gold and goods into their coffer and knowing when to get out of town. Only the bravest, greediest, or most foolish would dare live the life of an outsider in Sheoloth.

Birth

Outsiders are never born within Sheoloth – it is forbidden by law and no outsider has ever tested the law to see if it will be enforced. When an outsider woman becomes pregnant, she is spirited out of the city at the first opportunity and does not return until she has delivered. Even then, most mothers do not wish to raise their children amidst the violence and fear of Sheoloth, preferring instead to remain among their own kind.

Childhood

As noted above, outsiders come from many different cultures and do not raise their young within the city of Sheoloth. Most fear the chance of a drow noble taking a fancy to their children and hauling them away to be the subject of drow slavery or used in some perverse rituals of pleasure and pain. The outsiders are right – the drow are puzzled and beguiled by the children of other races and nothing good ever comes of their contact with such young and fragile creatures.

Starting the Day

Unless the outsider needs as little sleep as the drow, they must decide when to start their day. The drow do most of their shopping in the very early and very late hours of each day, leaving most outsiders to pick one or the other periods to be awake and open for business. Smart business owners will work with others in the same field, combining their shops and remaining open all day and night, alternating shifts to keep the place staffed no matter the time of day.

Outsiders have the same access to food and other supplies as the drow, provided they are willing to pay for them, and start their day as is the custom for their race. Most begin with a simple meal shortly after waking, perform their toiletries, then prepare for a day of business.

The Work Day

Outsiders have many different jobs within Sheoloth, but all involve commerce of some sort or another. This usually means operating a shop or a trading stall, with the day spent inside buying and selling to whomever comes into the establishment. A few have made their fortunes as intermediaries, however, and have no business of their own. Instead they negotiate with the drow and the outsiders, taking orders from one side and delivering to the other. They take a small cut off the profits of the sale and tend to do well for themselves, but their frequent exposure to the drow can shorten their lives dramatically.

The short sleep cycles of the drow make for very long days for those who sell to and buy from them, so most outsiders can expect to work twelve to sixteen hours a day while within the

city. This is exhausting for most, who can only handle a few years within the city before they need to take a break and turn their business over to a relative or sell it for a tidy profit.

Whatever else can be said about the drow, centuries of pillaging their neighbours have left them fantastically wealthy, able to pay very well to those merchants who can deal with them.

Leisure Time

If an outsider has any leisure time, it is spent in the Foreign Ward, where they are able to freely travel and mingle with other outsiders. The outsiders have created their own dance halls, theatres, gambling dens, and other sources of amusement for themselves. Given their long work hours, however, few really have the time to make any use of these facilities, which do a surprising amount of business with the drow who come to the Foreign Ward for a bit of slumming and to poke fun at the outsiders.

In Society

Outsiders exist as merchants and businessmen within drow society. As far as the drow are concerned, these petty creatures have no other use or purpose than to facilitate commerce. The drow do not allow them to travel freely in Sheoloth, restricting them to the Foreign Ward and punishing any who stray from their territory with sudden and painful death.

The society of the outsiders, however, has developed a rich texture all its own. Though there are no formal nobles or other titles, the outsiders respect those who have been within Sheoloth for the longest and defer to their judgment when necessary. Rather than rely on drow law, which is likely to end in pain and sorrow for all involved outsiders, the merchants of the Foreign Ward have created their own informal court composed of the most experienced of their number.

While this seems dangerous and prone to self-serving judgments, the merchants long ago learned the necessity of working together. The council does its best to handle disputes equitably, but reserves the right to make summary judgments that are decidedly unfair. Without this ability to dispense rules to the



outsiders, the council would have no teeth and it is likely the entire Foreign Ward would devolve into a constant state of conflict as merchants struggle to drive their competitors out of business. The power of the council comes from the number of merchants who follow their rule – if an upstart tried to go against the council, his neighbours would quietly have him killed at the earliest opportunity. Everyone can have a piece of the pie if they follow the rules, but those who attempt to upset the pie cart will find themselves dead or worse very quickly.

The council has another, secret, purpose. It serves as a spy organization to keep an eye on drow aggression and their plans. By carefully recording the goods and services bought and sold within Sheoloth, the council has learned to predict the probably actions of drow nobles with a great deal of accuracy. A sudden increase in bat guano sales, for example, probably indicates a coming round of magical aggression, while the sale of excess arms and armour surely points towards a prolonged period of relative peace and a lack of external warfare.

This aspect of the council is known to very, very few. Other merchants report their sales and purchases to and from the drow in order to help the council keep an eye on the economic health of the Foreign Ward but do not understand what is done with that information. The council sends coded messages with outbound traders, providing neighbouring communities with information about the drow and their activities – information the council is well-paid for.

If the drow ever discovery this treachery in their midst, the entire Foreign Ward is going to go up in flames and the streets will run with blood. The drow allow the foreigners in their city to help them and if they ever discover doing so has hurt them, their vengeance will be a horrible, horrible sight to behold.

Death

Most outsiders attempt to leave Sheoloth before they die, or at least have their bodies shipped far from the city at the time of their death. Those who do not get their corpses out of the city fall under drow law which dictates the disposal of all bodies. For an outsider, this means their body

is reanimated and put to work, or used as a lever by which their spirit can be made to reveal its secrets to the drow. If an outsider comes across the corpse of another outsider, it is customary to arrange for the secret burning of the body and disposal of its ashes in the waterfalls near Sheoloth. No one wants the drow probing into the secrets of the dead, especially those of the Foreign Ward who have a great deal to lose if their secrets are ever exposed.

THE COMMONER

Though firmly above all slaves and outsiders, the commoner is still quite low on the totem pole. These drow were likely born and raised in Sheoloth, but have no nobility in their family, no real wealth, and no prospects for increasing their standing in Sheolite society. This tends to make them angry, vicious, and volatile when dealing with those below them in power, while they are equally obsequious, servile, and flattering when dealing with those above them in the society of the drow. Trapped in this in-between position in society, the commoners plot and scheme often, but rarely organize the resources to do anything about their lot in life.

Birth

The commoners must make use of ovarisites just as other drow in order to have the best chance of conceiving and carrying a child to term. The cost of these creatures is prohibitive for most commoners, who must petition the priestesses for the use of communal ovarisites. This means most drow are forced to wait an extremely long time between bearing children or to take their chances with the riskier, less pleasant natural methods. The difficulties in bearing children, coupled with the drow disdain for breeding to begin with, keeps the families of drow commoners quite small, with children born once every 50 to 100 years.

Drow children born to the ovarisites are returned to the parents immediately following their birth, but must return to the temple at the age of five for a five-year long course of study. Other drow children are expected to attend the same course, but some are instead trained within the home of their parents, often with heretical results. Those who bear children on their own and do not seek temple training are regarded with suspicion

by their peers, and may have some serious explaining to do to the Questioners.

Childhood

The early years of a common drow's life are spent in the company of one parent or another. The male usually sees to the raising of the children as the female uses her position in drow society to free herself from the difficulties and unpleasantness associated with small children. The females breastfeed the children until the age of one year, after which the male takes over all childrearing duties.

At the age of five, the children are sent off to the temple (usually) for training in drow etiquette, religion, and societal expectations. This training requires five years, during which the child is also given the basics of reading, writing, and arithmetic. Those who show a possible flair for the religious life are watched closely through their training and may be asked to stay on to become priestesses when their initial training is complete.

Children asked to join the clergy of the Dark Mother (or another of the drow deities) enter an intensive period of study lasting twenty or more years. They are trained in every aspect of drow culture from its mysterious beginnings at the Schism of the Elves to the events which led to the formation of Sheoloth. They study the book of Karzai, along with the teachings of ancient drow philosophers, and learn the 'truth' of drow superiority and their divine right to slaughter and destroy. When they emerge from their training, they are transformed into the perfect vessels for their gods' will, prepared to do whatever is asked of them and to rule over drow society with an iron fist and a burning sceptre.

Common children who are not selected for the clergy spend twenty or so years after their birth fumbling around in the family business or running with packs of street kids. One way or another they learn of the dog-eat-dog nature of the drow

and revel in the near-bestial nature of childhood. During this time, drow make their first kills, learn to commit crimes, and fully involve themselves in all manner of evil plots. While the children of all races tend to be carefree and unable to fully comprehend the dangers or implications of what they do or say, the drow quickly learn what they can do to cause the most pain and disruption to those around them.

This leads more than a few drow parents to quietly arrange accidents for their children. Parents, fed up with the constant assaults and tricks of their children, can hardly be blamed when they decide it might be better for everyone if little Shizlee fell down the well on her tenth birthday. This further reduces the number of drow children and the overall drow population. While infanticide is a crime in Sheoloth, drow adults hate children so much it is rarely reported.

Drow childhood normally lasts from twenty to thirty years, after which point the drow are sent packing and are expected to make their own way



in the world.

Starting the Day

Needing only four hours of meditation each day, the drow set their own hours and spend most of each day active in one way or another. Beginning their day with extensive bathing and grooming, the drow are normally ready to start their day after an hour or two of preparation. Drow do not normally take breakfast, preferring instead to get a jump on the schemes and work of the day. After going about their business for four to six hours, the drow stop for their first meal of the day, feasting richly on whatever is available. Drow dining is not particularly sophisticated amongst the commoners, with scarcely cooked meat and hotly spiced fungus making up the majority of their diet.

The Work Day

Drow work in all manner of jobs, but most serve the nobles in one capacity or another. Commoners make up the staff of noble estates, finding work as butlers, major domos, and slave overseers. They are also found operating businesses under the direction of the noble houses (or very rarely, as independent business owners), or spend their days working in one or more of the city's many criminal enterprises. Whatever their role in society, the common drow can be seen going about his business on the city streets every day.

Most drow put in 12 hour work days. Those nearer the upper end of the economic spectrum generally put in fewer hours, from 8 to 10 in most cases, while drow nearer the poorer end work longer hours and commonly put in 16 hours or more each day. Drow have a phenomenal work ethic, however, seeing their jobs and duties as simply one more way for them to prove their superiority over others. Competition between drow workers and businessmen can become very bitter and very fierce in short order, making their 'price wars' violent and ugly affairs. This drive to be the best leads drow to put in whatever hours are needed to succeed, so even very wealthy drow commoners might find themselves working 20 hours a day in order to reach that next tier of success.

The most ambitious drow also spend a

significant portion of their off-work hours digging into new realms of study and attempting to gain an edge on their compatriots in that way. After all, a drow who can read seven languages is more likely to be of use to his employer than one who speaks only five, and a drow with a rudimentary grasp over the nature of magical gems will be more valuable than one who thinks all pretty rocks are the same. This desire to perfect themselves, to prove their power and dominance over their co-workers and competitors, gives drow an unflagging dedication to self-improvement.

Leisure Time

Depending on how fiercely they are working, drow may have as much as 12 hours a day of leisure time, which they fill with entertainments of every sort. Drow are social creatures, despite (or perhaps because of) their fierce territorialism and desire to dominate one another, and most of their leisure activities are social in nature. Drow like to play competitive games, bet on the outcome of such games, and engage in all manner of social play. Gladiatorial games are a favourite amongst the commoners and the money they spend on gambling ensures a steady supply of games to watch and bet on.

Drow also enjoy games of intellect and logic, putting great store in card games that emphasize skill over luck and boardgames that involve strategy rather than simple tosses of the dice. These games often gain significant audiences and attract bettors in great numbers. Even common drow may rise to prominence by proving themselves proficient at games such as Dragon Castles or Bloodlithe. The celebrity afforded to drow who excel at these games, as well as the prizes offered in tournaments organized by nobles, are a strong lure to many young drow who study the games of the drow with great determination day in and day out.

Seduction is another favourite drow pastime and commoners often arrange parties intended to allow members of both sexes a shot at engaging in this sexual sport. As with all things drow, seduction is a game of dominance, a tricky dance of hormones and hatred designed to allow one member of the pairing to prove their dominance over another. Women learn this art

from a very early age, as they must often trick males into their beds. Using sex as a way to gain entry into a noble house or as a method to shame or control one's peers is a common tactic amongst the drow, and these parties are often significant social battlefields.

While few common drow can afford the expense of hosting such an event, torture revels are another drow favourite. Disposable slaves are most often the only entertainment in commoner parties. Chained to central tables in the room, these slaves are tortured and killed, often cannibalized, and abused by the drow in as many ways as they can imagine. Often smaller and more intimate than seduction parties, torture revels are shared amongst those who share a special bond or between those who wish to attempt to establish a bond of some sort. Rich businessmen will often invite prospective allies to such parties, showering one another with gifts of steaming blood and shredded flesh.

As noted above, drow do spend some of their leisure time alone, studying and otherwise working on self-improvement. Strenuous exercise programs and martial training are common, even amongst the commoners, because one never knows when one might be pulled into a brawl or desperate fight for life.

In Society

The drow commoner is the lifeblood of Sheoloth. Though the nobles govern with an iron fist, nothing much happens without the involvement of the commoners. Revolts amongst dissatisfied commoners have also deposed nobles and led to rampages that destroyed much of the city in the past, leading the nobility to carefully consider how their edicts and demands will be seen by the common folk. Which is not to say the commoners have any real say in the government of Sheoloth.

Guards and military personnel patrol the streets of Sheoloth in search of those who plot against the nobility. When they find seditionists, the results are always the same, with executions performed in public among much fanfare. Because of this, the commoners rarely speak openly about their dissatisfaction and uprisings are very rare. But, if pushed too far, the

commoners will rise up to strike down those who oppress them.

On the other hand, the commoners do not respect weakness, either amongst their number or in the nobles who rule them. If ridden too roughly, commoners will try to throw off the reins of government, but if shown too much lenience they will bite the hand holding those reins, often with disastrous results. Drow want freedom, but they cannot be trusted with too much of it.

All drow are trained from birth to realize their place in society and to attempt to improve their position at all costs. Social climbing is not merely engaged in by some drow, it is practically a biological imperative for all drow. Only those who are able to improve their social standing are regarded with anything but contempt, and a drow who actually slides down the social ladder will find himself despised by all drow who know their fate.

Drow commoners may be able to rise to the ranks of the nobility, because noble houses are ruled over not only by blood, but also by ability. Any noble house may elevate any commoner to noble status by adopting them into the house. This is not a common event, but every year a few drow are given the gift of nobility as a result of their outstanding performance in their fields of expertise. While musicians and artists often receive such elevations as a result of their favour by a particular noble house, they receive very little respect within the house and are kept around as pet artists. Successful businessmen and warriors, however, can find real work within the noble houses after their elevation, and a weak noble house can grow to become quite powerful if they choose whom to elevate wisely.

Death

Though drow have no qualms about delivering death to one another or in slaughtering members of a 'lesser' race, they have some peculiar beliefs about the nature of death. For example, they greatly fear death by infirmity or disease and find such topics extremely unpleasant in conversation. If a member of a drow family falls ill and cannot be rapidly cured through magical or herbal means, the stricken drow is



often taken far from the city and left to die. In other cases, drow families have been known to quietly wall up a room inhabited by a sick member of the family, sealing it off and waiting for the drow inside to die. Such death rooms are never opened and the entire family denies their existence, no matter the evidence offered for their presence.

For the drow, then, there is no shame or fear in dying in battle or in killing an enemy with poison or other nefarious means. But the slow slide into debility and helplessness brought on by disease or extreme age are seen as horrifying signs of weakness. If given the chance, most drow will end their own lives before being allowed to come to such an ignoble demise, showing a rare compassion in saving their family from the horrors of dealing with their declining condition.

Drow burial ceremonies vary by the method of death. As noted above, those who die from sickness or old age are simply forgotten. Those who die in service to the family or who perish as a result of a feud with an enemy are given an elaborate funeral, however, including sacrifices and expensive coffins or crypts. Other drow are given funerals based on their accomplishments in life or their relative wealth, with those of means being buried in the gilt mausoleums of Death Roost.

THE MERCHANT

Resting uneasily between commoners and the nobility, merchants are the maligned and mistrusted affluent of Sheoloth. Lacking the resources to protect themselves from the machinations of nobles and without the anonymity provided by being merely one of the commoners, the merchants must walk a fine line each day to retain their position and avoid coming to the attention of all the wrong people. With their significant income and businesses, the merchants often find themselves forced to take on an alliance to one of the noble houses or criminal syndicates in order to avoid being killed or having their businesses or homes destroyed.

Being a merchant in Sheoloth is not easy, but it is profitable. Those who are able to maintain their businesses do very well for themselves and the richest of their number are so near to the

wealth of the nobles they can nearly buy their way into noble society.

Birth

Merchants use ovarisites just like other drow, though they have the cash to buy 'surrogate' children to pay off the ovarisites rather than use their own children. Though buying the infants of the poor is a time-honoured tradition amongst the upper classes of drow society, it does little to further goodwill between the rich and the poor, giving the merchants one more bit of friction to worry about. Still, most find it easier to accept the animosity of those beneath them than to give over their own children to the ovarisites for some nefarious purpose. This is not out of any particular love for their children, but rather to prevent the alien creatures from using the offspring against their parents. Merchants are nothing if not careful about revealing their weaknesses.

Like other drow children, the offspring of merchants are sent to the temples of the Dark Mother for training during their early years. No merchant would risk the wrath of the temples by breaking with tradition – they wisely allow their children to be educated by the priestesses to avoid any possible threats of heresy or disloyalty. While most children of drow merchants exchange their fanatical loyalty to the church for a love of money early in life, there are a few years of conflict when they return home and berate their parents for their 'worship of money.' This can be a trying time for the parents and more than one merchant family has been destroyed by accusations of heresy from their own young.

Childhood

The children of drow merchants lead a pampered, but regimented life. While the common men with their workshops and small trades often train their children in the family business, they do not have the sort of concerns and needs of merchants. A merchant's business is often complex and involves dealing with other businesses, from those who supply raw materials to those who purchase the goods. Once the children return from their mandatory five years of training at the temples, the merchants put them to work in the stores and keep a careful eye

on their progress.

Tutors are a popular form of education for the children of merchants, and one can find tutors in virtually all fields, from mathematics and reading to combat and sexuality. Merchants of Sheoloth know very well how important it is to appear cultured and knowledgeable at all times, lest they be mistaken for commoners unfit for dealing with the nobility and other merchants.

Despite their intense educational needs, the children of merchants in Sheoloth are also given a great deal of freedom when they are not working or at school. With the money and influence of their parents behind them, these brats get into all manner of mischief and are the bane of lower-class children all over the city. It is one thing to be abused by a member of your own class – you can return the favour at your leisure with them. It is quite another to be savagely beaten by the children of merchants, because you cannot fight back without risking inspection by the Faceless Watch or the Eight-Eyed Masks.

This combination of pressured study and work along with freedom to do pretty well as they please turns the children of Sheoloth merchants into privileged, dangerous, intelligent, adversaries. Desperate to improve their lot in life, but with enough money to already have most of what they need, these children are ruthless creatures who hate being denied and will take their vengeance out on any who oppose them.

Starting the Day

Merchants spend a few hours at the start of each day going through their business records and making sure everything is in order. Though most businesses are owned and operated by the same family, unless the books are carefully kept, checked, and reconciled on a daily basis, embezzlement and other problems are sure to crop up. The wise drow knows that preventing his underlings from getting out of hand is much easier than trying to catch them once they've gotten up to no good.

The Work Day

Businesses are open as much of the day as the owner can manage, which means most operate for sixteen hours a day. A few remain open



at all hours, but this means the owner cannot personally oversee every aspect of the business, which few owners are able to tolerate.

Merchants do whatever they can to remain competitive and their business dealings are cutthroat and utterly ruthless. Outlanders who supply drow merchants must quickly learn to adapt or die, and there is very little room for error. Suppliers have been ruined by drow contracts when they could no longer provide the goods promised, and drow law allows for the execution of those who break such deals.

During the day, most merchants spend their every waking minute dealing with clients, customers, or other business contacts. The economic warfare these merchants engage in is brutal, and turnover in business ownership is not uncommon when a deal goes sour. The merchants of Sheoloth all have their stories of great rises and falls in fortune, often over a very short period of time. The so-called Beggar Prince of Sheoloth once took control of every business in the Blood Tithe through a complex series of negotiations. Sadly, once he had control he could not keep it and was murdered within a few days as a result of a contract he was forced to break by a consortium of traitorous suppliers.

Leisure Time

Drow businessmen spend their free time much as do the commoners, though they dine in finer restaurants and generally live at a higher lifestyle than the commoners.

In Society

While commoners are the labour force of Sheoloth, the merchants keep the money flowing into and out of the city at a rate that keeps the nobility satisfied. Without the machinations of the business people, there would be much less for the nobles to tax and very few ways for the city to enrich itself on the efforts of outsiders. From the slavers who bring in even cheaper labour to the commodities traders who exchange drow-produced goods for rare and expensive items from the surface, merchants form the backbone of Sheoloth's economy.

This also places them in the position to exert some control over the way in which the city operates. Though attempting to overtly control any aspect of the city would surely bring about the wrath of the ruling elite, merchants have learned to band together and use their communal power to subtly convince their rulers to favour them in different ways. These powerful merchant guilds do their best to avoid conflict with one another, but the heated competition between related guilds can lead to some ugly problems.

Overall, merchants are respected members of society, provided they remember their place. Though actively disliked by the commoners (who see them as predatory and opportunistic) and feared by the nobility (who view merchants as upstarts attempting to get above their station), most merchants live relatively peaceful, profitable existences.

Death

Merchants, perhaps more than any other members of Sheoloth society, tend to view death with fear and revulsion. Because they must constantly struggle to get ahead and must then fight tooth and nail to hold onto their tenuous position in society, death is hateful to them, as it robs them of the rewards for which they have so long struggled. Because of this, merchants are more prone to fall to the Undeath Heresy than any others. They plot and plan for their eventual unlife, paying exorbitant sums for even the slightest chance to avoid the final death.

THE DROW NOBLE

Nobility is not a matter of lineage, alone, in drow culture. Anyone who shows significant promise or initiative may find themselves favoured by a noble house and inducted into the ranks of the ruling class. Conversely, a drow family who falls from power can be stripped of their noble titles and replaced by an upstart commoner clan if things go poorly for them. Noble houses, then, fight tooth and claw to keep their position and do their best to ensure no one else ever gains the power to challenge them for their role in drow society. While being a noble definitely has its perks, the constant risk of death and destruction makes such perks a bit less enticing.

Birth

Those born into the noble families are always conceived as directed by the house matron and gestated with the aid of an ovarisite. Grown to fruition in the bodies of broodmares, the children of noble families are then handed over to the temple for their early training. Though nobles are given the option of training their children themselves, few families are confident enough in their place in society to risk the wrath of the temples.

Like commoner children, young noble drow are taught the histories and lessons of drow culture during their time in the temples. They receive additional training, however, in the art of rulership and the duties of the nobility. This latter training adds five years to the time young nobles spend in the temple, so few see the outside world again until they are eleven or twelve years old. This additional training focuses primarily on the need for the drow to respect the religion which gives structure to their lives and society, specifically the responsibility of the nobility to support the clergy at all times.

A few noble children disappear shortly after conception and implantation in a brood mare. This is a known risk the drow nobility prefer not to speak of and is a result of the ages-old agreements between the drow and the ovarisite race. These children are taken away to be raised by ovarisites and may or may not be returned to drow society. To the drow parents, this is an acceptable risk and they do not speak of those children lost to the ovarisites. Because implantation happens so quickly after fertilization, the drow are not even sure how many children are taken in this way each year. Shame and fear keep the drow from speaking of it and keeping an accurate tally.

Childhood

Noble children have lives of privilege and excess. They are spoiled by their parents, who instil in their children a sense of entitlement and righteous indignation towards anyone or anything attempting to inhibit their happiness. In large estates, the children are encouraged to compete with one another for prizes, leading to an early brush with the survival of the fittest theme of drow life. Such competitions can turn

deadly and nobles accept this as a natural part of growing up for the young drow.

When not attempting to kill one another, young drow are given extensive teaching on the nature of their family, their allies, and their enemies. Noble families provide their children with the advanced education they believe they need. Families founded on mercantile concerns train their children to excel at financial transactions, while warrior families start weapons training early and do their best to toughen their children.

The young drow are also given their first tastes of power when they are assigned their own disposable slaves. Considered too volatile for valued slaves, adolescent drow have two or more disposable drow available for their use and abuse at all times of day or night. The young drow use these slaves to explore their own limits, experimentation of various sorts, anatomy lessons, and to fulfil the perverse desires so common to young drow. Without the restraint or sophistication of older drow, the young nobles often burn through their slaves at an alarming rate, killing dozens over the course of their childhood years and maiming countless others.

A drow noble is considered an adult when he is 30, and then enters the noble house as a full member, with all the privileges and difficulties that entails.

Starting the Day

Nobles vary in their dedication to their houses, but most start the day as early as any commoner. Nobles do take an elaborate breakfast, however, to fuel themselves for the rigor of the day and to further differentiate themselves from commoners. Heavy breakfasts laden with steaks of various sorts, alcoholic beverages, and intoxicating deserts are all common. To the drow noble, such elaborate meals are a sign of their affluence and the more excessive the waste the more successful they are. It is common for most of the drow's breakfast meals to be thrown out when they eat only a bit here and there and drow often judge their worth by the amount of waste food thrown out by themselves and their neighbours.

Depending on their predilections, drow then



engage in a few hours of study or leisure time, with arcane spellcraft and torturing slaves the most common activities early in the day. Both get the blood flowing and provide the drow with the confidence boost to start the day on the right foot.

The Work Day

All adult nobles are expected to take part in the running of their estate, using their abilities to help the estate in whatever manner they can. During the typical 12 to 14 hour work day, the drow nobility often leave their estates to oversee their businesses or other operations. Drow who leave their estates bring guards and retainers along with them and often travel the city in palanquins. For the wealthiest nobles, nothing other than a fleshcrafted walkerbeast will suffice, though few can afford this extravagance.

In a given day, a commoner may see four or five noble retinues passing through the streets of the business section of Sheoloth, while those who work in the Glory Crypt can expect to make way for a dozen or more noble processions in the course of a day.

Drow who are not out in the city spend their time overseeing the operation of their estate and the slaves and servants within it. This boring duty often leads to the torture and other excesses the drow are well-known for and slaves learn to fear the days in which all members of an estate are at home and not otherwise occupied.

Leisure Time

The Sheolite nobility have more free time than any other members of their society, but their leisure time is also very often business-related.

Blade sent most of the next three days putting the girl through every physical test he could think of. Of course, some of these 'tests' were born of his continuing resentment at her anatomy. Tests like 'let's see if she can dodge this dagger' were rather impromptu and only resulted in the loss of more expensive healing potions. Through it all, she had never uttered a complaint or cried out in pain. He did not want to appreciate anything about this little female, but she did at least know what it took to stay alive in a place like Sheoloth. In fact, the only thing she did not seem to know was how to fight.

That, he ascribed to her half-blood nature. She was probably the bitch child of some dallying priestess and a human merchant, kept alive on a lark and escaped from a temple dungeon before she could be sacrificed. He would have asked about this, but he did not want to seem curious about her at all. Showing interest was a sign of weakness and he would be damned if he was going to let any little waif-girl have that kind of satisfaction from him.

Instead, he tried to wear her down with all of these tests. She kept enduring them, even the ones that left her battered and bruised, without a single word of protest. Even when the child was obviously too exhausted to go on, she kept stumbling among to his orders. Eventually, he relented each day and took her back to bed for some desperately needed rest. Killing her with exhaustion would just be wasteful, and that was precisely the behaviour he hated in the other drow of Sheoloth.

It was on this third night of brutal testing and dire fatigue that, from her bed as he left, the girl finally spoke. 'Did I... do all right?'

Her voice stopping him at the doorway was becoming a bad habit. He turned to look at the grey skinned little wretch and considered his response. 'You are weak and slow, but you cannot help being small. For now, you will do.'

The girl's eyes lit up slightly, if wearily. 'I get to live then?'

He snarled slightly, but there was little real venom in it. 'Do not presume anything, child! I will let you know whether you live or die when you feel my knife and not a moment sooner.' With that, he grabbed the hilt of one of his daggers and hurled it across the room. It sailed an inch over her face and buried three inches into the hard webbing wall.

The girl's eyes widened and her mouth closed. Blade saw the reaction, approved, and left her to rest.

Every social event attended by a noble has the potential to turn into a struggle for social dominance and the parties they throw are blatantly aggressive and designed to show up their peers and climb into the spots currently held by their superiors.

Because of this, the drow train themselves to be expert in all forms of social discourse and study etiquette and fashion relentlessly. This turns their leisure time into a gruelling extension of their work day, providing the nobles with few chances to relax and let their guard down.

The only time a drow noble ever allows himself to be less than his best is amongst his own family. Though it is quite possible for a son to try and take control of an estate from his father, both know the importance of trusting one another as far as possible. Without any time to relax and let go, drow nobles would go insane faster than they already do.

In Society

The drow nobles openly rule over the rest of the drow, save for the clergy which exists outside of drow society. The commoners may not always respect the nobility and may chafe at their demands, but they fear the forces marshalled by the nobles. The commoners also fear the enemies of the drow, who wait not far from the defences of their city for the chance to bring the drow to ruin. These twin fears are played upon by the nobility, who present them as heartless defenders of Sheoloth and insane ravagers willing to visit all manner of horror and depravity on those who oppose them.

In addition to their role as the stick which keeps other drow in line, the nobles are also the carrot used to reward those who excel and prove themselves useful. Because the nobles can elevate other drow to a position of nobility at any time, the commoners learn to suck up to and do their best to please the existing nobility.

The real responsibility of the nobles is to serve as a filter between the words of the clergy and the common man. The drow wish to believe the nobles rule them, though it is the priestesses who make all the hard decisions and pass down the true laws of Sheoloth. While the nobles are

allowed to handle the work of managing the city, providing for its defences and managing its trade, it is the clergy who truly hold the reins of rulership.

Death

The drow nobles do not accept death as a reality. Though they know it can come to them as a result of poor decisions or bad luck during battle or in a duel, they do not accept it as a natural part of the world. They spend inordinate sums of wealth on prolonging their life or, barring success in that arena, in securing their position amongst the ranks of the undead. Because of this, drow nobles often live for many, many hundreds of years and there are tales of those who have lived millennia.

Like commoners, drow fear sickness and the wasting caused by extreme age. Whenever a drow noble begins to show signs of senility or faltering physical health as a result of age, his family may very well lock him away in a dungeon or seal up his chambers and wait for him to die from starvation. The drow hate death and fear it as the ultimate show of weakness, avoiding discussion of it or witnessing it in their own number as much as possible.

CLERGY OF THE DROW

Most powerful of all drow, the clergy rule over the nobility, using other drow to enforce their edicts and carry out their orders. The clergy answer directly to the gods of the drow and brook no interference with their plots and schemes. Though the priestesses and their assistants claim no direct power over the drow, the truth is known to those who pay attention to such things. Crossing a member of the clergy is a quick path to death, or worse, and few drow are willing to take their chances.

Birth

The drow priestesses are not related by blood, but are chosen from those drow who enter temple training. There are few honours more keenly appreciated than having one's daughter chosen for such a task, and all drow who send their children to the temple for training secretly hope to see one of their own selected by the priestesses.



In Sheoloth, the priestesses have also begun quietly raising their own children within the temple, in the hopes one or more of them will be suitable for life as a priestess. Those children gestated by the ovarisites within the temple who prove themselves unworthy of the Dark Mother's attentions are generally killed or sold as pleasure slaves. The priestesses do not tolerate failure in their offspring well at all, nor do they wish to be reminded of their inadequacy for any longer than absolutely necessary.

Childhood

Children destined to join the clergy are treated just as all other drow children. They are trained for a period of five years in the temple, then receive an additional 20 years of training in preparation for joining the priesthood. This training is intensive and consumes much of the child's formative years. Because only women are ever allowed to become full members of the clergy, young girls are studied very closely during the initial five years of training for promise. Only those who prove themselves exemplary are chosen for further education, the rest are returned to their parents.

Young boys, though they may not become priestesses, are occasionally chosen for their intelligence, comeliness, and general physical health. These children are destined for the life of a temple consort, which is fraught with pain and horror of such extremes no amount of training can prepare anyone. These young boys continue their training with the other children until they are ten, and are then enter a program of intense physical training for a period of a decade. At that point, they are physically mature enough to begin their duties as a consort and are taken away to the breeding pits.

Consorts have no upward mobility and are used for nothing outside of providing pleasure and children for the priestesses. They live in virtual isolation, are kept sequestered in small cells and are brought out only when needed. To say their lives are tortured is an understatement and few live more than a few decades before expiring under the ministrations of their mistresses.

Starting the Day

Young priestesses begin the day with their devotional, spending at least two hours praying to the Dark Mother and waiting to hear Her voice in the quiet of their sleep cells. At the end of their prayers, priestesses take a communal meal in the temple's great hall, where they receive the lessons for the day from one of the advanced priestesses. These lessons are used to reinforce the training of the priestesses and to guide them in their daily duties. By tailoring the sermons to offer advice on any current issues facing the city as a whole, the priestesses are able to guide their acolytes subtly, while still allowing them to think they have reached suitable conclusions on their own.

Those priestesses who are given sensitive assignments, or on whom much responsibility lies, are often pulled aside after these sermons to speak to the High Priestess and her assistants. They receive specialized instruction and are given information they will need to complete their duties for the day. These priestesses are marked for great things, provided they do not fail in their current endeavours.

Less promising priestesses are then given their daily work assignments, which normally consist of overseeing the maintenance and expansion of the temple and its holdings. A short step above book-keepers and janitors, these priestesses are often frustrated and bitter at the direction their careers have taken. Though serving the Dark Mother is certainly better than being a mere merchant or common wife, these priestesses cannot help but feel they have fallen slightly short of the power and wonder promised to them when they joined the clergy.

The Work Day

The high priestess and her assistants have very full days. Not only must they provide assistance and guidance to other members of the clergy, they often meet with nobles and merchants to help the city stay on course. These meetings can be very stressful – the priestesses must balance the word of their goddess against the will of the nobles, often exerting pressure on the supposed rulers of Sheoloth while attempting to keep the peace. Though the Sheolite nobles have no desire to start a war of power with

the priestesses, they also have no intention of allowing the clergy to completely control their every action. This is the delicate balance the priestesses must constantly maintain, lest they end up without the support of those they need to keep the city running.

Beneath the upper council of the priestesses, the rest of the clergy has a great deal of work, as well. Some priestesses must travel through the city to keep an eye on the businesses of the church and meet with influential merchants the church wishes to influence. These priestesses are often given permission to make tax concessions, offer the services of the church, or otherwise provide incentive for the targets to view the church favourably. In most cases, these are attempts by the church to develop a strong base of loyalty in individuals and groups they believe may one day ascend to noble status.

Lesser priestesses, or those with little experience, are often assigned relatively menial tasks. They spend their days looking after the temple slaves, meeting with drow who seek spiritual guidance (and are not important enough to warrant an audience with more powerful priestesses) or tending to those in need of healing magic or other divine services.

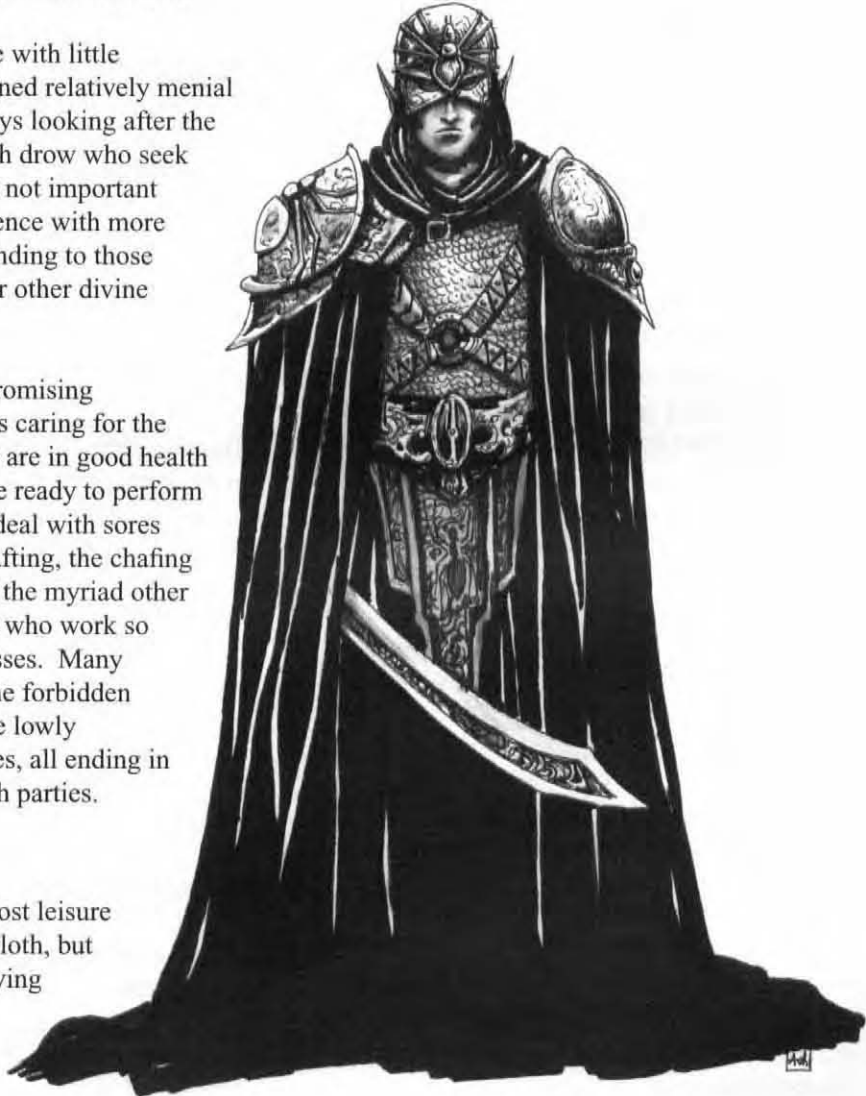
The very newest or least promising priestesses spend their days caring for the consorts, making sure they are in good health (at least physically) and are ready to perform when needed. They must deal with sores left from improper fleshcrafting, the chafing of breeding harnesses, and the myriad other maladies suffered by those who work so intimately with the priestesses. Many drow tales centre around the forbidden relationships between these lowly priestesses and their charges, all ending in tragedy and sorrow for both parties.

Leisure Time

The priestesses have the most leisure time of any citizen of Sheoloth, but they have a hard time enjoying it. Young priestesses are given plenty of time to

themselves, but their natural competitiveness and a desire to advance through the clerical ranks often leads them to use this time to further their studies or prepare for the next days' duties.

The only real leisure time most of the priestesses allow themselves are the vast parties held in their honour by various noble houses and merchant guilds. These fetes are intended as a show of respect for the priestesses, but normally devolve into frenzied parties ending in bloodshed and horror at some point. The priestesses view them as a real opportunity to vent their anger and vicious resentments against those who live better than themselves, with predictable results.



In a rare show of solidarity for drow, the priestesses rarely use what they witness at such events against one another. What happens in such events is left behind when the priestesses return to their temples, though there are the occasional sly glances or shared laughs over the memories of particularly enjoyable festivities. When commoners see priestesses emerging from their temples for these parties, they wisely get out of their way, as the priestesses consider the party started the moment they leave temple grounds.

In Society

The priestesses are the ruling class of Sheoloth, though the fact is often politely ignored when in the presence of nobles. Technically, the nobility is in charge of the city, but everyone knows the priestesses are the ones who make all the real decision. As a result, the priestesses have a great deal of unofficial power but relatively little legal authority. Though the nobility could use their titles and temporal strength to attempt to overthrow the clergy, no one has any illusions this would work.

Fear is the tool of the clergy. Because the Dark Mother has such a direct presence in the lives of her people, none doubt the priestesses when they claim their divine sanction. After all, if the Dark Mother did not approve of their strong-arm tactics and savage rulership, surely they would have been visited by her hellish wrath.

To back up their claims, the priestesses occasionally order the death or maiming of a noble, striking at them on their own estate in order to create the greatest fear and anxiety amongst the nobility. The commoners, for their part, do not need any further prodding to fear the priestesses; they have witnessed their cruelty and evil firsthand.

From time to time, the priestesses move through the city, meting out punishments to all who cross their path. These gifts of the Dark Mother are used to 'enlighten' the people, but have the side effect of keeping the common drow far from the reach of the priestesses at all times.

Death

Priestesses do not die – ever. When their bodies begin to weaken, they are taken off by the ovarisites and undergo a powerful ritual designed to ease them into a new stage of life. This is covered more fully in the Darkness and Heresy chapter.

AIR, FOOD, LIGHT, WASTE, AND WATER

The air below the surface is not to be taken for granted. Thick pockets of noxious gas can gather in caves where waste material is deposited, with methane and ammonia gases being particularly prevalent, especially in areas where bats can be found. To prevent their city from choking on its own waste gases, the priestesses of the various churches and the wizards of the Witch's Daggers have long worked together to produce modified *wind fans*, which constantly produce a flow of fresh air into the wards. There are easily a hundred such fans in every ward, and they gently waft fresh air from their hidden locations. The flow of air from the fans is directed outward, providing fresh air as it washes through the ward and carrying the waste gases out into the Falling Stair, where it is carried up and out of the city on the powerful thermals rising from the magma below.

These modified *wind fans* are carefully hidden in the stone of the caverns, secreted into small pockets within the stone and connected to the rest of the ward through a dozen or more small shafts. There are more than enough fans to provide air for as many as twice the number of people currently residing in Sheoloth, so saboteurs would have to be extremely effective to seriously hamper the production of air in the city. Even were *all* the *fans* in Sheoloth to suddenly stop functioning, there would still be several hours worth of air in the city, plenty of time for the spellcasters of Sheoloth to start getting things operational.

As an underground community, Sheoloth does not have access to verdant fields for farming or vast tracts of rolling plains on which they can support herd animals. They have adapted, however, and are able to adequately meet their

needs for food and water through magical and natural means.

Several well houses were constructed in each ward and new ones are created from time to time as needed. Each of these houses contains a *decanter of endless water*, which has been modified to keep a 5,000 gallon cistern filled at all times. The decanters themselves are kept in small vaults beneath the cisterns, and stop and start automatically. Periodically, the city maintenance crews will haul water from a well house to a water storage area where 5,000 gallon tanks are filled with water in the case of an emergency.

There is no plumbing in Sheoloth, so citizens must fetch their own water from the well houses each day. They must also haul their waste out, each day, where it can be collected by slaves. The slaves load the waste onto the carts they haul through the city. When a cart is filled, it is taken out into the Falling Stair, and its contents poured down special ramps. The waste falls down the centre of the great shaft before it is burned away in the deep magma below. Though hundreds of years of waste dumping has yet to significantly pollute the magma, there are those who believe it is only a matter of time before the waste chokes off the flow of magma, completely.

Food is a bit more complex of a problem, but one which the drow have met conquered. The mushrooms from fungal gardens provide the primary source of food for the city and each ward has several deep pits below it from which the food is created. These gardens are fed on the waste of the city and produce enough food to keep the citizens fed, if not particularly satisfied.

In times of duress, the churches can also provide some food for the people of Sheoloth, though not enough to keep the drow from slowly starving. Though it would delay death, the city would certainly need a new source of real food within a few weeks.

Outsiders also provide food to the drow, often trading surface meats, fruits, vegetables, spices, and other foodstuffs to the drow in exchange for necrore or finished goods. The end result is a well-fed group of drow, though some tire of the endless diet of mushrooms they must endure.

The nobles and the wealthy, on the other hand feast on delicious meats and other gourmet dishes purchased from outside the city.

Light is provided to the city in some areas, but not others. Where public lighting exists, it comes in the form of *corpselights*. These large magical items are not truly dead, but are the barely living bodies of non-drow. Nailed to iron posts, these unfortunates burn with a brilliant white flame that devours the fat of their bodies. Creatures burn for one month for every 20 pounds of weight, until the last of their fat is burned away and their skin is filled with sizzling grease. The spell keeps these unfortunates alive and they are fed and watered daily. Their moans and screams occasionally punctuate the hubbub of the city, bringing a smile to the faces of passing drow and reminding the slaves of their fate should they step out of line.

LAW AND ORDER

For the drow, law is a malleable concept at best. Those who can get away with breaking a law often will, while those in power will attempt to enforce those laws which bolster their position in society while doing their best to ignore laws which inhibit their freedom. This society in which might makes right and deception is more important than truth, sees the law in a dim light, as a tool used to oppress or a weapon used to destroy an enemy.

As a result, the laws of the drow are convoluted and difficult to understand, with dozens of contradictory laws woven together to create a tapestry of tyranny. Those who are in power prefer difficult to understand legal systems, which give them the power to interpret laws and set precedent as whims take them.

This has given rise to a web of competing court systems, each of which may or may not be superior to the others depending on the moods of the priestesses at any given time. The first court is known as the Halls of Hearing. Here, priestesses of little power or influence spend their days listening to the woes and complaints of the common folk. Justice here is often harsh, summary, and painful to all involved, to dissuade 'frivolous' suits from the common folk. If one is willing to risk the pain of judicial



involvement, filing a case with the Halls of Hearing is a simple affair. The petitioner must complete a case report at any of the Halls' many offices, which requires a 20gp fee and roughly an hours' time. A scribe on hand will help the claimant fill out his claim, which is then filed in the area records.

Each day, two dozen such files are taken from the records for a given area and are heard by a priestess acting as judge. Note that no case ever receives more than fifteen minutes to complete, from the time the priestess calls the defendant and claimant until the time both parties are out the door and preparing to carry out the judgment. On average, a case filed in any area of the city will take 1d4 weeks before it can be heard. Despite the capricious judgments of the priestesses when dealing with commoners, there are still a large number of cases filed each day. Some drow see the court system as a way to get back at their enemies, while others have legitimate grievances and hope for some slim justice by filing a case. Either way, few drow tangle with the court more than a handful of times during their long lives, out of fear of receiving some horrifying and arbitrary punishment from a priestess.

The Halls of Hearing only hears cases involving commoners and merchants, complaints lodged against merchants or nobles must be passed up to the Halls of Judgment.

Theoretically, the Halls of Judgment oversee disputes between nobles or, in some rare cases, between nobles and commoners. In reality, it is rare for a commoner to ever see his case against a noble actually get taken to the Halls of Judgment, because of the convoluted process necessary to get the case filed in the first place.

The Halls of Judgment are overseen by priestesses of significant power and influence within the city, most of which have better things to do than sit around listening to the squabbling of those below their station. Because of this, the Church of the Dark Mother instituted a series of bizarre and ever-changing requirements, which must be met in order for a case to be filed with the Halls of Judgment. This has given rise to the position of the Advocate. These highly paid individuals do nothing but keep up with these

requirements and file cases for their clients. Though difficult and dangerous (Advocates who offend either their noble clients or the priestesses are liable to have a very short life), the position of the Advocate is very profitable and influential.

After a case is filed, there is a standard waiting time of three months before it will be heard. Though the priestesses likely could hear cases in as little as a few weeks given their light work load, the waiting period gives all parties in the claim the necessary time to prepare their case and hire Advocates if necessary.

In the past few decades, Advocates have expanded their roles, somewhat, and now also serve as an initial arbitration service for their clients. Rather than risk a lengthy, potentially disastrous court appearance, a client can hire an advocate to work out a deal with the other party in a claim. Quite often, both parties are able to come to an agreement that enriches the advocates and provides the clients with some measure of satisfaction.

Should a case go to trial in the Halls of Judgment, the priestesses allow a mere three days for the entire hearing. The first days is used to present the arguments of the claimant, then the defendant presents his own arguments on the second day. At the start of the third day, the priestess announces her current judgment and allows both sides to attempt to sway her opinion. At the end of the third day, the judge announces her position and closes the case.

There are no appeals in the Halls of Judgment – once a case is closed, the priestesses' judgment is final and both parties are bound by her decision. This can be very dangerous for everyone involved, because the argumentative process is not bound by the case at hand. Defendant and claimant can use any trick in the book during the three days of the case, and it is not uncommon for a defendant to become the claimant, and vice versa, during a particularly convoluted case. It is during these hearings that the advocates truly earn their keep, using all of their skills to get their client where he wants to be at the end of the third day.

Finally, there is the criminal court, the Chamber of Punishment. The most sadistic and dark-

hearted of the priestesses are given charge over this court, and they relish their position. Those brought before the Chamber are there because they were caught committing a crime by the Faceless Watch or were apprehended sometime later as a result of an investigation by the Eight-Eyed Masks. Therefore, all brought to the Chamber are there for sentencing, as their guilt has already been determined. Torture, execution, slavery, and other sentences are routinely carried out here, much to the delight of the audiences in the many viewing galleries lining the inside of the Chamber.

Notably, all manner of drow find themselves before the Chamber. The Faceless Watch and Eight-Eyed Masks do not discriminate in their pursuit of crime, so nobles are just as likely to be strung up in the Chamber as commoners or even outlanders. During this century, however, the nobles have been making fewer and fewer appearances thanks to the Rite of Guilt's Passage approved by the Filth Eater's Covenant. A noble can purchase a ritual slave (for an exorbitant price) from the Filth Eater's clergy and the slave can then be given over to the Chamber for punishment in the noble's stead. While this privilege is available to any who can pay the cost, there are few below the noble station with the resources necessary to avoid death or maiming as a result of a visit to the Chamber.

The most distressing fact for those who find themselves in court is the concept of judicial review. At various times throughout the year, the Church of the Dark Mother opens various completed cases from earlier in the year and passes them off to one of the courts which did not originally hear the case. The case is then reviewed and a different judgment may be handed down. This means that a problem between two merchants that is handled in the Hall of Hearing may, with no warning, suddenly be heard in the Chamber of Punishment. This threat is often enough to keep the average drow out of the courts.

The Laws

There are surprisingly few laws in the city, but their precise meanings and the method of their enforcement seem to shift quite often. The following things are all definitely illegal, but

how illegal and the punishment for committing each action can vary considerably depending on who hears the case.

† **Theft.** Stealing from someone is a crime, with the value determining the punishment. Thefts of less than 100gp are normally handled through fines, thefts below 500gp often have prison terms of a few weeks, and thefts above this amount are normally punished by death or enslavement.

† **Unjustified Murder.** Killing someone without a good reason, such as self-defence, is considered unjustified murder. Killing a commoner can bring a sentence of enslavement or execution, but normally only requires the payment of restitution (decided by the court) to the family of the deceased. The same is true for merchants, though the death penalty is always the answer if the killer cannot pay restitution. Killing a noble is grounds for immediate execution, the sentence of which is often carried out immediately and on the spot by any guard who witnesses the act. Killing a drow of less than commoner status carries no real penalty, often a small fine or restitution to the owner of a slave, while killing a foreigner is not considered a crime at all. Some foreigners, however, have the protection of the noble houses, who may retaliate against those who harm their pet merchants.

† **Carrying Weapons.** Citizens may carry weapons openly in all areas of the city except for the Web of the Dark Mother and the Noble Labyrinth. Anyone caught with weapons in either area is subject to summary execution.

† **Damaging the City.** Inflicting damage on buildings or other structures (including the caverns themselves) within Sheoloth is a crime with severe repercussions. At the minimum, the criminal will have to pay a fine equal to twice the cost of the repairs. Significant damage is subject to the death penalty, often carried out by the Faceless Watch on the scene.

† **Assault.** Attacking a member of a higher class than yourself is a crime, but the punishment is dealt on the spot by the defender and is not handled by the Watch at all. Attacking a member of a lower class than



yourself is never a crime, though the defender is allowed to protect himself to the best of his ability. A noble, for example, who attacks a merchant, must accept the fact that the merchant can now fight back and may actually kill him. Fights between members of the same social class are not a matter for the Watch, though they will break up fights that threaten to erupt into riots.

† Heresy. If you are caught worshipping any god other than those approved by the local churches, you may be summarily executed. If you are caught creating undead without the blessing of the church, this is also considered heresy, and may end in your immediate execution.

† Trading Without a License: The Church of the Dark Mother and the nobility provide a number of trade licenses for use each year. Those who get a license have them in perpetuity, but one may not practice any form of trade in Sheoloth without such a license. Those who trade without a license, including those who run a workshop out of their home, are subject to having their goods confiscated and their shops appropriated by the city. This becomes de facto slavery, as the trader must continue to operate the shop for the city until his sentence is rescinded (which can take years and may not happen at all). Despite the harsh penalties for trading without a license, it is a very common practice in Sheoloth. There simply are not enough members of the Watch and the Masks to keep an eye on this sort of crime, so it flourishes.

And those are the laws of Sheoloth. Permutations of these laws appear from time to time, but these are the most common and most commonly enforced. Given the shifting nature of the drow legal system, however,

criminals should not be surprised if they are given extraordinary sentences for seemingly innocent crimes, or are given passes on crimes they were sure would result in execution. The courts like to keep people guessing, as it promotes fear and paranoia, which keeps the people passive.

The Faceless Watch

Other than the military, the Faceless Watch is the most powerful armed force in the city. Working directly for the Church of the Dark Mother, the Watch patrols the streets of Sheoloth. With 3,000 trained combatants on its payroll, all of whom can enforce the law as they see fit, the Faceless Watch is a fearsome group within the city.

The name for the organization comes from the masks they wear to protect their identities. Before reporting for duty, each member of the Watch dons a form-fitting, featureless mask.



These magical masks shield the wearer from divination spells and greatly enhance the normal senses of the guards who wear them. Keyed to the first individual who wears them, these masks will crumble to useless dust if another person attempts to don them.

The Church of the Dark Mother chooses those it wishes to recruit for the Dark Watch according to guidance provided through ritual communication with the goddess. Every three months, the Church holds a special communal circle which performs the ritual necessary to select new members of the Watch to replace those who have fallen to bring the number of Watch members to 3,000. In some months, there are no members chosen, while in others as many as several hundred have been selected to replace those killed or forcibly retired for one reason or another.

Most members of the Watch serve until they are killed. A small number, however, are retired each year by the Church – these members are quietly poisoned and their bodies burnt. Unfortunately, there seems to be no rhyme or reason to these executions, as the names to be slain are selected during the same ceremony in which their replacements are chosen. The priestesses publicly proclaim this is simply the will of the Dark Mother, but more than a few are wondering if certain priestesses might not be somehow skewing the Watch to support their faction over others.

The Eight-Eyed Masks

The members of this secretive organization are selected by the nobility and are meant to directly balance the power of the Faceless Watch. Where the Watch is concerned with patrolling the streets to stop crimes from occurring, the Masks were formed to track down the perpetrators of unsolved crimes and to root out heretical or rebellious sects before they can present a problem to the city at large. Where the Watch is controlled entirely by the divine spellcasters of the church, the Eight-Eyed Masks are arcane spellcasters, one and all, in the employ of the nobility.

This division has created some friction. The

Masks are supposedly not directly involved with any enforcement operations, they are only investigators who report all details of their findings to the Watch. The guards of the Watch are always quite suspicious about the reports they do receive from the Masks, who may or may not be reporting all they know.

For their part, the Masks understand that they have two jobs. The first, and most important job, is to keep their employers happy. The connection the Masks have to the nobility enables them to pursue lines of research and gain funding which would otherwise not be available. A side perk, of course, is that the investigators do not have to report their own infractions, or those of their allies, which is how so many heresies continue amongst the arcane spellcasters. Their second job, however, is to convince the Watch (and by proxy their divine spellcasting masters) that they are ruthlessly investigating everything within their mandate.

Where these two missions conflict is where most of the efforts of the Masks are focused. Actual investigation is relatively easy – there are many dedicated diviners in the Masks, each equipped with a *crystal ball* and intensive training in its use. These drow do virtually all of the investigation, using their skills to root out the crimes and heresies within their mandate. The rest of the Masks spend their time covering up the crimes they do not want exposed and convincing the Watch that they are fully cooperating with that organization. It is a difficult line to tread, and one which the Masks do so with great caution. Betraying their employers or the clergy could lead to their destruction, or at least severe punishment, so the masks have become experts at dissimulating to keep everyone as happy as possible.

Of course, the Masks are also used, covertly, by the nobles to keep tabs on the clergy. The result is a war of subterfuge and intelligence, in which the arcane spellcasters try to spy on the priestesses, who do their utmost to thwart such efforts. Given the difficulty of their assignments and their position in the crossfire between nobility and clergy, the Masks are all paid exceedingly well to ensure their loyalty and service.

On the other hand, all the Masks are arcane



spellcasters, and the Screaming War is still fresh in their minds, despite the passage of years. The Masks are dedicated to the nobles, and the city at large, only insofar as there is some benefit to themselves. If they feel as if they are being slighted or are endangered, they will cover themselves and let the rest of the city burn down around their ears, if need be. Like all drow, the members of the Masks are secure in their position and loyal to their alliances, right up until it is convenient to break their word and turn on their benefactors.

Despite this, the Masks *are* dependable. It would take a sizeable bribe or threat to convince them to turn against the nobles, who are a useful shield and weapon to wield against the machinations of the Church of the Dark Mother. To forsake such an ally would be foolish, as long as the original threat to the Masks and other arcane spellcasters exists. Furthermore, some of the heresies they uncover (particularly the Incabulos) are a real danger to the city that everyone agrees must be stopped. Given their authority and responsibility, the Masks are more trustworthy than one might expect.

The Masks take their name not from any ritual uniform, like the Faceless Watch, but from their methods of surveillance. Scattered throughout Sheoloth are thousands of masks of all shapes and sizes. Most are decorative depictions of the spider gods and their servants, but many are also ensorcelled to provide scrying foci for the investigators. Because it is illegal to deface any of the ridiculous number of religious icons placed throughout the city by the various churches (which are probably using the masks they place for similar purposes), the Masks manage to keep most of the city under surveillance at all times.

While the Masks are supposedly a strictly investigative branch of Sheoloth's law enforcement, they do take an active part in the destruction and apprehension of some of those they discover. Cultists, in particular, are rooted out violently by the Masks who do not trust the Faceless Watch to deal with them in a professional and final manner. Given that the majority of the Watch are, in fact, simple fighters and professional soldiers, this may not be too much of an insult. While warriors are perfectly

capable of handling the common criminals, they would have a much more difficult time dealing with wizards and priestesses loyal to the heresies.

THE ECONOMY OF SHEOLOTH

Like any other large community, Sheoloth is not self-contained. It provides for the majority of its own necessities, but luxury items and goods that cannot be produced in Sheoloth are imported from other communities. Despite their hatred of the surface world, the drow are well aware they need some items from there that they have difficulty producing themselves – foods that cannot be grown or raised underground are common imports.

In general, the drow export magical items, silk, and goods produced by their craftsmen in exchange for the items they need from outside. This tends to lower the cost of weapons, armour, and magical items, while increasing the cost for food (other than the ubiquitous mushrooms), cloth (other than silk), and wood. This is more fully described in the Buying and Selling section of the different wards, but it can be assumed that any food will cost double the list prices in *Core Rulebook I*, as will any cloth other than silk. Wood costs five times what is listed in *Core Rulebook I*, which has led the drow to create some substitutes of their own from fungus – treated fungal stalks can be used to replicate any item created with wood, with the same strength and other general properties. Wood is generally reserved as a status symbol and is rarely seen outside of temples or the homes of the very wealthy.

Arms and armour are cheaper inside Sheoloth, and cost 10% less than normal, across the board. This amount is further modified by the variables for each Ward (as shown in the individual sections). Magical items are also in greater demand, with all magical items costing 5% less than the prices listed in the *Core Rulebook II* (again modified for individual wards).

THE SHEOLOTH MILITARY AND DEFENCES

The military might of a city filled with drow is nothing to scoff at, and a metropolis the size of Sheoloth is a virtually impregnable bastion of evil. On the other hand, the races of the Underdeep are not known for their reasonable behaviour and periodically launch assaults against the massive city of the Dark Mother's minions. In response, the city has a standing army and the perimeter tunnels surrounding it can be turned into death traps in seconds.

In addition to the 3,000 officers of the Faceless Watch, the personal guard of the noble families, and the powerful clerical warriors of the churches, there are an additional 2,000 soldiers stationed throughout Sheoloth at all times. These drow are normally housed in the barracks in each of the wards near the various gates and are deployed as needed to face threats. A few hundred of these guards are positioned beyond the city to man traps and keep an eye on the tunnels leading to the three gates. These guards are rotated out on a weekly basis for some rest

and relaxation, as it is imperative they stay sharp and alert while manning the tunnels beyond the city.

Magical traps lie in wait for the unwary who wish to invade the city, the most potent of which are the drowning pits. Vast cisterns of water are suspended in hidden alcoves over the tunnels leading to the perimeter of Sheoloth. Guards who stand by the cisterns can easily empty them (a simple pull of a lever) and send thousands of gallons of water crushing down on the invaders. Positioned as they are near areas where the tunnels slope away from the city, these traps are brutally effective and have been used to quash more than one invasion before it could even get started.

Wizards assigned to work with the guards beyond the city also prepare the spells *wall of iron* and *wall of force* to cut off invading forces, or to trap them in the drowning pools when the trap is activated. The city itself uses *walls of force* as its primary method for cutting off access between the wards, and the *symbol spell* provides a handy way to drive back the weaker forces of intruders.

The priestesses have also prepared a number of



banners, upon which permanent *symbol* spells have been cast. The fear and discord *symbols* are favourites, though hopelessness and sleep are used often, as well. These banners are treated with the *permanency* spell and are stored within the barracks near the gate wards. When invaders attempt to breach the gates, the symbols are hung from special slots in the ceiling, which is normally enough to break the invading force.

If an army actually does breach the gate wards, the military springs into defensive mode and waits for the church and the wizards to respond in force. The goal is to restrict the movement of the enemy to a single ward or to trap them in the tunnels between wards. If it is deemed feasible, the military will withdraw to the Falling Stair and allow the enemy to rush out into this very hazardous area. Here, a very small number of military units can hold off a much larger army until support can arrive. Even worse for the invaders, sections of the Falling Stair are rigged to collapse when a command word is uttered, giving the defenders a simple method to split them up and trap them in a precarious location.

Only the most magically sophisticated of invaders has a chance to breach the city of Sheoloth. Given its extremely potent spellcasters and the ability of its citizens to use magic of their own to confuse and alarm invaders, successfully conquering Sheoloth would require a truly epic effort.

A guerrilla war would be more effective than a frontal assault, but the presence of many *symbols* throughout Sheoloth makes this a difficult chore. These symbols are all designed to activate when seen by a non-drow not wearing a slave collar. It would require significant skill to avoid these *symbols* for any length of time, but clever invaders who do so could strike at the nobility and clergy and wreak terrific destruction.

War Beyond the City

Sheoloth does not engage in wars of conquest, any longer. Instead, it attacks to punish those who offend it, or to drive back those who attempt to lair too near the city. In general, these attacks are lightning swift, involve powerful spellcasters, and are designed to inflict

the maximum possible damage in the minimum time. Wizards and sorcerers scout locations using *scry*, then teleport in magical and mundane troops to punish their enemies. They then evacuate as quickly as possible to avoid retaliatory attacks. The terror and confusion that result from such horrific assaults is often enough to pacify areas and convince others to avoid offending the drow wherever possible.

HOLIDAYS AND CUSTOMS

The drow often rely heavily on custom and ritual to cement their society together. By adhering to ancient rites and ceremonies, the drow are able to hold onto their history and use it to keep their future from splintering off into small groups of competing, self-serving, noble houses. Though many of these holidays and festivals are religious in nature, a few are purely secular and originated amongst the various drow noble houses to celebrate their accomplishments.

Because Sheoloth is designed for insertion into any campaign setting, no calendar for the city is provided. Instead, you will find a general description of when the festival or ceremony occurs in its description, enabling you to place it wherever it best fits your campaign world.

Rites of Birthing

Time of Year: New Year

Duration: One day

The ovarisites contribute their efforts to births throughout the year, but the Rites of Birthing are the only time of the year during which outsiders are allowed to see the birthing process. The Rites occur at the beginning of each new year, during which the ovarisites allow the viewing of seven ritual births. These births occur in the Birthing Galleries of the Web of the Dark Mother and the witnesses are chosen by random lottery the month prior to the deliveries. Three of the children spawned in this gory spectacle are turned over to the Church of the Dark Mother, two are given over to the Church of the Filth-eater, and the remaining two are taken by the ovarisites as part of their payment for services rendered.

Those who view the birthing are often changed in unpredictable ways. Some gain newfound

reverence for their deities, while others become introspective and haunted by what they have seen. The complete destruction of the broodmare by the ovarisite is a disturbing and ghoulish act, even by drow standards and few are unmoved by the births they witness. Knowing that all drow have such grisly origins is sometimes enough to give even these hardened creatures pause.

Feast of the Fallen

Time of Year: End of Year

Duration: One week

The drow are very fearful of death. Given the hateful nature of their deities and their naturally long lives, the dark elves have no desire to visit the grave and the realms beyond. This year-end festival is intended not as a celebration of life, but as a way to spit in the eye of death.

For the last week of the year, the drow haul old bodies from tombs, rip corpses from their crypts, and even murder slaves in an orgy of violence and despair that is rivalled nowhere else. These bodies are dismembered and dragged through the streets, while the priestesses of the Filth-eater tear off scraps and prepare them for the participants to eat.

This festival is violent and dangerous to the point where older drow often do not emerge from their homes for its duration. Those who are seen as weak or vulnerable by the rampaging crowds are often killed outright and their bodies devoured by the participants.

The overall frenzy of the Feast brings the slum dwellers into upper class areas in droves. Unrestrained by the already overtaxed Watch, the poor and destitute take out their aggressions on anyone they view as better off than themselves, leading to a nasty bit of class warfare that most often ends with a lot of blood in the gutters.

The Red Parade

Time of Year: Mid-Year

Duration: Three days

Started shortly after the defeat of the surface elves, the Red Parade is a celebration and display of drow martial prowess. Each year, one thousand warriors are chosen to lead the Parade;

during most years, fewer than one hundred of these warriors will finish the parade alive.

The Parade begins in the Glory Crypt, where the warriors are mustered by the Faceless Watch. These men and women know their lives are about to change dramatically and their reactions are often hysterical – they scream and rage and weep, but all prepare themselves for the coming battle.

The Parade then winds its way down the Column of Scars. Along its path, numerous other fighters array themselves, issuing challenges to the leaders of the parade. The warrior at the head of the parade must answer the first challenge he encounters in a duel to the death. Whichever of the duellists win is awarded a scarlet ribbon (which is worn about the upper arm) and takes his place at the rear of the parade, and the new leader must answer challenges as well.

The pace is gruelling and the fights occur so quickly and with such frequency that it is not unlikely for any member of the parade to endure numerous duels during the journey down the Column. The ten warriors who end the parade with the most ribbons are hired as professional gladiators by the Church of the Dark Mother and lead a life of riches and fame – until they eventually falter and are destroyed in the games.

The Trade Circus

Time of Year: End of First Quarter

Duration: One week

Sheoloth depends on outside trade to supplement what its craftsmen produce inside the city and to keep the flow of slaves coming into the city at an acceptable pace. The Trade Circus takes place in the Foreign Ward and is the only time of the year when traders who are not yet approved for trade with Sheoloth are able to secure a permanent position in the Foreign Ward.

During the Trade Circus, the population of the Foreign Ward doubles, and the new merchants often live in rough, temporary tents they pitch in the tunnel leading into the Ward itself. Though the Trade Circus is open all day, the Church of the Dark Mother and members of the Nobles' Council only appear for a few hours, unannounced, each day. During this time, they make their way through the Foreign Ward with



a grand procession in tow, periodically stopping to test the wares of a shop before moving on to the next. Those they deem worthy to provide goods or services to the drow are immediately granted a license to trade in the Foreign Ward, though they are not allowed to set up shop until the Circus ends.

Because the Foreign Ward is so crowded, and the drow allow so little construction in the area to expand the trade district, it is often the case that merchants with a spot in the Ward are evicted to make way for newcomers after the Circus. This has led to a great deal of animosity between the established traders and those who come to Sheoloth seeking a coveted position within its economy. The foreigners are not protected by any of Sheoloth's laws until they are given official position within the city, leaving them open to attack by assassins and thugs hired by the locals. Wise merchants hire professional bodyguards and take great precautions when coming to Sheoloth.

The drow love the Trade Circus, because it gives them the chance to see the foreigners caper and dance for the masters they hope to serve. Because the nobles sometimes come to the Foreign Ward in common garb, without their entourages, the merchants spend their time during the Circus kowtowing to any drow they see. Free food, favours from prostitutes, and all manner of other giveaways are common during the Circus, leading the drow to mob the place to get their share.

The Circus gets its name from the performers who come to the city in the hopes of catching the eyes of the nobility. These dancers, jongleurs, bards, and other entertainers hope to secure a highly paid position in one of the depraved courts of the drow, though few ever get what they seek. Instead, most of the performers amuse the drow for a few days before they are chased off the stage amidst a chorus of jeers and tossed offal. Those few who gain an audience with the nobility fare worse – if they fail to please, they are torn apart by the necromatons and their vital organs stewed to feed the fleshcrafted slaves.

The Games

Time of Year: Late third quarter

Duration: 5 days

Gladiatorial games are a favourite entertainment amongst the drow, and the Games are the ultimate combat event. Tickets for the Games are very difficult to come by considering they are held in the prestigious, but small, Crystal Bowl in the Glory Crypt. During this festival of blood, the drow see the finest gladiators duke it out, fighting one another and creatures from outside the city for their very lives. All fights during the Games are to the death and all gladiators who work within the city must take part in the Games, regardless of their status. Even more gruelling is the fact that none of those who die in the Games may be resurrected; dead is dead and there is no return from the grave for even the most popular gladiator. This is one of the biggest draws of the game – the bloodshed is always real, but the threat of sudden death for the professionals is enough to get the blood up for even the coldest drow.

Dark Devotional

Time of Year: Midyear

Duration: 3 days

The Dark Mother demands fealty of her subjects and the Dark Devotional is the ultimate display of this fealty. During this period, the drow spend their days either in a church of the Dark Mother or in the streets surrounding these temples. They pray incessantly during this time, until their voices are cracked and raw; though they may drink water with a bit of blood in it, no other food or drink is allowed during the rest of the day.

The only drow exempt from this mandated prayer time are those in the Faceless Watch and the military. They spend their time patrolling the outskirts of the city, watching for threats from those outsiders who know of the prayer times and seek to exploit them.

The Devotional is a very powerful time of the year, during which immense energies are gathered and released. Priestesses of the Dark Mother receive 2 bonus spells of every spell level they can cast and are able to use their highest-level spells three times each.

As with most things in drow religion, the Devotional separates the strong from the weak.

The old and the young often die during this powerful prayer time, their bodies destroyed without the food and water to hold them through the exhausting ritual prayers. Those who die during this time are accursed, and their bodies are thrown into the seething cauldron of the Boiling Pits.

The Night of Hate

Time of Year: Three times per year, during the second, fourth, and sixth months.

Duration: One night

The Night of Hate is venerated in each of the temples of the Filth-eater and is dreaded by the priestesses and priests of that disgusting god. Because drow children can only be conceived in hate and violence, breeding is a vastly unpleasant task for at least one partner in any union. The Night of Hate is meant to facilitate this breeding process by offering up the bodies of the Filth-eater's clergy.

Drow of all social status are allowed to come to the temple and mate with any of the priests or priestesses who take their fancy. For their part, the clergy feel rightly degraded and hateful about the whole episode, which assists in successful conception. As a result, there are dozens of children conceived in this way during each Night of Hate.

Daily Prayers

Time of Year: Every day

Duration: One hour

All drow are expected to go to a temple or shrine and pray, at least once per day. Though no one counts the number of times a drow prays, those who are often absent from the neighbourhood temple will need a good excuse to help them avoid the probing questions of the local priests.

The Killing Hour

Time of Year: Once per year, randomly selected by the priestesses of the Dark Mother

Duration: One hour

The Killing Hour is the price

Sheoloth paid for the assistance of the Mortificators during the war against the surface elves. Once per year, for a single hour, the Mortificators are allowed to rampage through the city and will not be stopped by the city guard. In fact, anyone who raises a hand against the Mortificators is deemed a heretic and may be killed outright by the Watch.

The Mortificators, true to form, do nothing in this hour but kill and maim anyone who crosses their path. Their great swords and scythes reap a bloody harvest of flesh and bone during this hour, the trophies are stuffed into sacks stained by years of blood and rot. When their hour is spent, the Mortificators return to their hidden lairs and must once more hide to avoid the angry blades of the Watch.



POWERS OF SHEOLOTH

The city of Sheoloth is a massive nest of power and intrigue as sprawling as the city's namesake, filled with individuals and alliances, all of whom want to be in charge. As a result, there are several power centres vying for control of the city, each willing to do almost anything to secure their position in the city's hierarchy.

In this chapter, each of these power centres is discussed in detail, providing DMs with the information they need to use them in their campaigns. A diagram showing the various alliances and enmities of the city, along with the relative power of each, can be found at the end of this chapter.

RELIGION

The primary power centres of Sheoloth are the churches of the Dark Mother, the Filth-eater, and the Killer. These religions are daily influences on the life of the people of Sheoloth, and the military and guards of the city are directly under the control of the Dark Mother's minions. Despite their cynical nature, the drow of Sheoloth understand and fear the power of religion.

The Church of the Dark Mother

The churches of the Dark Mother are the most visible in the city, with over 700 of the spider-festooned buildings scattered across Sheoloth and the Faceless Watch stomping about its passages and webs.

Though few of the temples are of an impressive size, they are a presence in the city which cannot be denied or ignored. Where there is a temple, the priestesses can be found, along with their guards and crypt wardens. Though they lack the unseen presence of the Eight-Eyed Masks, the priestesses of the Dark Mother make up for it with the sheer number of temples they administer.

Numbers

With more than 700 churches under their control (the number varies by a few temples from day to day), the church needs a large number of clergy to oversee their operation. At any given time, there are roughly 5,000 priestesses who follow the Dark Mother, broken down as shown below:

Total Priestesses:	5,000
1 st -3 rd Level:	3,000
4 th -7 th Level:	1,000
8 th - 12 th Level:	600
13 th - 17 th Level:	300
18 th level +:	100

As can be seen, the church has a very large number of priestesses in its charge, though the majority are mere acolytes with little real power. Only those of at least 4th-level ever administer a church, usually under the supervision of a priestess from 8th to 12th level. In order to keep those who attend their churches from viewing the priestesses as anything other than the messenger of the goddess, clergy are frequently moved from church to church. This prevents them from forming any attachments or alliances beyond the church itself and keeps them wary of where they will be stationed next.

This also has the unintended side effect of subtly reducing conflicts within the church – after all, you must have a little more caution if you never know where you will end up serving, or who your master may be from day to day.

Leaders

The Church of the Dark Mother is led by a council of eight priestesses, each of which is responsible for exactly one-eighth of the Church. See pg 218: The Web of the Dark Mother for more information about these leaders.

Areas of Interest

The church has no interest outside the governance of Sheoloth and making sure it maintains its faith in the Dark Mother. They are, however, extremely vigilant in their pursuit of crimes against the church's beliefs and are zealous prosecutors of those who stray from the path of the Dark Mother and her allies. The Church and its leaders will do anything to maintain their control over the city, including

destroying those who would oppose them.

Given the vast power provided by their goddess in the form of spells and other special abilities, it is doubtful they will ever have any real opposition to their rule. Still, their control over every aspect of the city, from the laws to the ascension of noble houses, makes them a thorn in the side of other groups that would like a little power themselves.

In general, the Church of the Dark Mother should be seen as the ultimate power in Sheoloth, the intrusive government that does whatever it can to ensure it maintains its control over the rest of the city and its inhabitants. Though the nobles and wizards of the Witch Daggers could prove troublesome to the church, if push ever came to shove, the last time this happened was hundreds of years ago and resulted in the carnage of the Charred Gate and the death of dozens of powerful wizards. Since that time, the Church has reigned supreme.

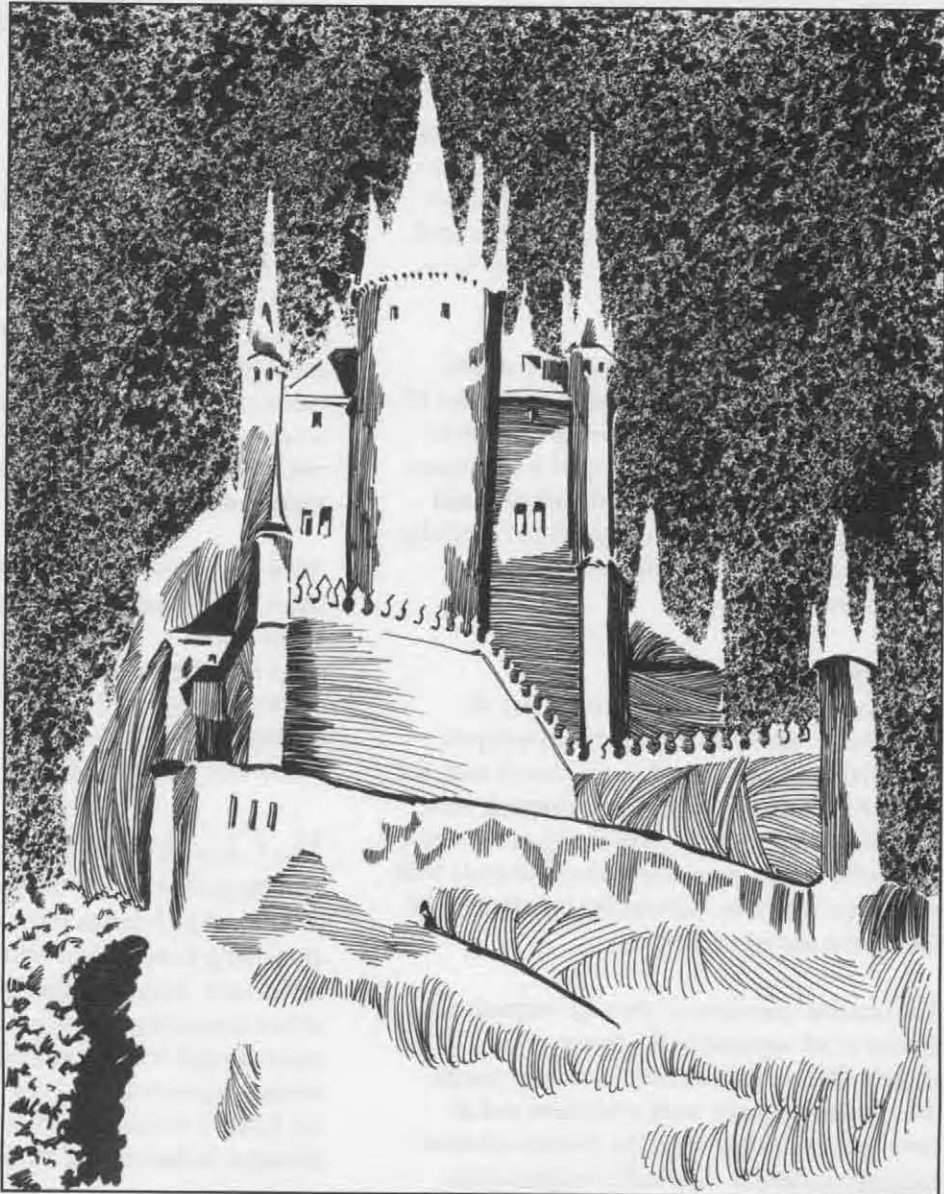
Campaign Hooks

The Church has great need of priestesses and others who will serve the needs of the Dark Mother, especially those willing to undertake missions of a less conventional nature. While the vast majority of the priestesses spend their time governing the

city, the church requires many of its priestesses to venture outside the city on exploratory and recovery missions.

Of special note are the Codices of the Web, ancient tomes in which a fabled dark elf seer recorded riddles to the location of dozens of magical items. Some are of little power, but many are of significant strength, and a handful may even be artefacts. The church regularly sends its faithful out on missions to recover these items, though they are rarely successful. A few of the riddles have been cracked, but most remain complete enigmas.

Those who do serve the church in this capacity



are rewarded very well when they succeed, and a few have even been rewarded for their failure, as they disproved the accepted wisdom about the meaning of a riddle. Adventurers are often enticed into the service of the church through such quests and may find themselves working full time in the employ of one or more of the church leaders.

Characters skilled in stealth or diplomacy are sometimes hired by the church to investigate other power centres in the city, as well. Though very dangerous, these spying missions are very, very lucrative for those who provide the church with intelligence they need. Of course, infiltrating a criminal organization and living to tell about it are two different things, and the list of dead informants for the church is quite long.

The biggest danger of working for the church is, of course, the fact that they cannot be trusted. Those who recover powerful magical items best be prepared to turn them over to the church, or face summary execution or worse. Even those who do turn items over are sometimes executed, to prevent them from revealing what they have discovered.

Informants have an even shorter lifespan and have been killed for discovering the existence of a heresy, to prevent it from gaining strength or potential followers from hearing of its existence. Working with the church is both lucrative and deadly, facts which must be considered carefully before agreeing to serve the Dark Mother in such an intimate capacity.

Enemies

The Church has a lot of enemies; primarily the nobility who feels its power was usurped thousands of years ago when the church took the reins of the city and refused to relinquish them. It is also at odds with the merchants of the city, who believe they should be allowed to trade with whomever they like, without the interference of the church and its trade laws.

The criminal elements of the city, surprisingly, are not at all opposed to the power of the church. Rather than attempt to change things, the criminals simply work with them and do their best to stay out from the church's shadow. Largely successful, criminal syndicates play

a difficult game of cat and mouse with the priestesses of the Dark Mother, using their own resources, influence, and hiding places to avoid the Faceless Watch and their allies.

The rising heresy of the Incabulos is driving the leadership of the church to distraction. These spellcasters pervert divine magic by combining it with arcane magic, twisting both into a travesty. The Dark Mother has instructed her people to hunt down and destroy those responsible for this heretical practice.

The Deceiver's faithful are the gravest concern of the church, though they would never admit it. The Deceiver's minions have had very little success infiltrating the church, but all that seems to be changing. See pg 218: Web of the Dark Mother and the section below for more information.

Allies

Backed by the support of the Killer's temples and the midwives of the Filth-eater, the Dark Mother's priestesses need no other allies. While the Curizowri and Gulrais noble families do show their allegiance to the church, the Dark Mother's minions have no false assumptions about how these relationships will go if there are every real difficulties. As a result, the church is ready to use these allies as often as they can, then dispose of them if they become too troublesome.

What the priestesses of the Dark Mother do not know is the quietly traitorous designs of the Killer's priests. These males enjoy their power and would like to see it expanded. They are quietly working with a few noble families in an attempt to create a more militaristic Sheoloth in which they will have greater power.

The Church of the Killer

This masculine god of the drow is served by priests and priestesses who venerate war and are willing to engage in combat at any time, for any reason. These priests want to see the drow at war constantly, striving to subjugate the lesser races through warfare and terror. While they are second in power to the Dark Mother's temples, the Killer's worshipers are a vocal, visible presence in the city. With their control over the

military of the city, the Killer is also a potent centre of power, one which the Dark Mother's minions view as allies, though they watch them closely.

Numbers

There are roughly 400 temples to the Killer found throughout the city, each of which is manned by a handful of priests and the occasional priestess. In addition to their presence in the temples, the Killer's priests are also found in the barracks of the city military.

The priesthood of the Killer is composed as follows:

Total Priests/Priestesses:	2,000
1 st -3 rd Level:	700
4 th -7 th Level:	500
8 th - 12 th Level:	300
13 th - 17 th Level:	250
18 th level +:	50

Unlike the Dark Mother, the Killer puts his people in harms way as often as possible to strengthen them. All-priest commando units are often seen waging a deadly war against the enemies of the drow, devoting themselves to the destruction of all who cross their paths. This does lower the average level of the priests of the Killer, however, as they are constantly whittled down by the misadventures they encounter.

Though there is no shortage of applicants to the priesthood of the Killer, it is difficult for the church to get them trained and into the temples fast enough. This means there is often a backlog of applicants waiting for training and indoctrination, which is a vulnerability to the church. The Deceiver's agents are attempting to turn these applicants, offering them 'secret' training in the ways of the Killer. This plan has had some success, though not as much as the Deceiver would like – those who would join the Killer's ranks are ill-suited to the ways of the Deceiver and do not make effective double agents for the trickster goddess.

Leaders

The Church of the Killer is led by a trio of the highest-level clerics in the organization. This position is not hereditary or honorific, those who want the position of leadership are encouraged

and expected to fight those already in that position, leading to some spectacularly bloody confrontations before a promotion.

More information about the leaders of the Killer's church can be found from pg 218: Web of the Dark Mother.

Areas of Interest

The Killer wants to kill all who oppose the drow, bringing them to their knees through violence and horror. The priests who follow this god believe the same and are notorious for their deadly zeal. Alone amongst the drow, the Killer's followers do not believe in slavery and will kill any non-drow rather than accept their surrender. This has done nothing to endear the nobility to the Killer's church, as the priests have been known to engage in periodic purges of the slave population of the city. Though these are always called short by the intercession of the Dark Mother, they are still problems which must be dealt with on an annual basis (most purges coincide, roughly, with the Red Parade).

The main goal of the Killer's priests, however, is to bring death to those who oppose Sheoloth. They have a proud military history dating back millennia, and they are obsessed with the security and strength of the city.

Campaign Hooks

The Killer's church loves adventurers, especially those of the drow variety. They are always willing to hire wanderers and mercenaries to help them in their crusades, though they almost never place them in any position of authority. Those who wish to ally themselves with the Killer are most often employed as shock troops or forward units meant to soften up the enemy for the church's troops.

A few, however, who prove their worth are given more prestigious assignments within the ranks of the Killer and become prized assassins and military troops. These adventurers are prized much more highly than adventurers who serve the Dark Mother and are even equipped and paid by the Killer's priests. Known as the Shuzlazir, these trusted servants of the Killer are often deployed to search for artefacts, magical items, or to root out the enemies of the Killer within Sheoloth. Though their lives are hazardous

and their assignments difficult, those who serve the Killer rarely want for anything and are pampered when they are not in the field.

This can make it an attractive option for adventurers, though they should be aware of the pitfalls of this occupation – the Killer’s churches are currently attempting to work out a way to get to some of the items being sought by the Church of the Dark Mother, which could lead to an ugly, brutal conflict in the future.

Enemies

The Killer’s church has no enemies in the city, at present. It is engaged in brutal wars throughout the area beyond the city, however, as it attempts to exterminate those who oppose the dark elves or who dare to intrude upon their domain. This may change, however, as the Killer’s minions are currently engaged in an aggressive

campaign to gain items of magical or religious significance. They have learned of the Codices of the Web and are attempting to get access to the riddles it contains in the hopes they can beat the church of the Dark Mother to the concealed treasures. If the Dark Mother ever learns of this transgression, her church will certainly do its best to lean on the Killer’s minions and bring them to heel. This could lead to a very ugly battle within Sheoloth, something the Killer’s priests are not eager to cause.

Allies

The Killer is loosely allied with the Church of the Dark Mother, despite their potential difficulties at some point in the future. Whether or not those difficulties ever materialize remains to be seen, but it is a distinct possibility that the two churches will not always be as cosy as they are, at this time.



Despite their alliances with the Gulrais family in the past, the Killer’s priests are starting to realize something is wrong with that clan of nobles. If they choose to pursue their investigation of this former ally (rather than simply ignoring it, as is the plan for the moment), they could find themselves forced to destroy the noble house.

The Pifwasil family is also a strong ally to the church of the Killer, and the two organizations are often allied in various schemes and plans. While the Pifwasil are cautious with their alliances, they have found the Killer’s minions to be both more trustworthy and easier to deal with than the priestesses of the Dark Mother.

The Gravemother
This religion holds little real power in the city,

but is a staunch defender of the Dark Mother's religion. They also have some small influence because they are the sole midwives of the city and are responsible for dealing with the ovarisites and satisfying their alien needs.

There are approximately 1,000 priests of the Gravemother scattered throughout the city, each of whom oversees a number of female acolytes. See pg 218: The Web of the Dark Mother for more information about this enigmatic church.

THE NOBILITY

The nobles of Sheoloth are in a bad spot. Though quite powerful and responsible for helping maintain the law and order of the city, they are purely secondary to the Dark Mother's church. This has led to conflicts in the past, including the ill-fated Screaming War that ended with the death of so many arcane spellcasters and the formation of the Witch Daggers centuries ago. Covetous of the power they do have and jealous of those more powerful than themselves, the nobles struggle to come to terms with their position in the city and constantly plot for ways to improve their own fate.

More information about the noble clans and their alliances and enemies can be found in The Noble Labyrinth Chapter (pg 164), along with information about the areas of each family's influence and their chosen methods of operation.

CRIMINALS

Despite its best attempts, the Church of the Dark Mother has been unsuccessful in rooting out the criminal organizations of the city. Fuelled by the draconian trade policies of the church, smugglers and other shady dealers are able to bring in huge amounts of money, simply by circumventing the tariffs and trade restrictions imposed upon the city.

Those who do not engage in smuggling may find work as killers for hire and kidnapers for fun and profit. Violent crime is common in Sheoloth and those who are able to do it for a living are amongst the happiest drow in the city.

The following are the two most influential criminal organizations in the city, each of which involves itself primarily in one of the

aforementioned types of crime.

The Network

Specializing in smuggling, the Network is a pervasive criminal group that has thus far evaded any sort of real punishment. Because most of its members are otherwise-upstanding citizens and merchants of Sheoloth, the Faceless Watch and Eight-Eyed Masks are having a difficult time finding proof of their wrongdoing. While the church and nobility continue to poke at the shadows and stir up the cobwebs in search of those who flout their laws, the Network operates almost in the open, under the guise of legitimate business.

Numbers

More than 300 merchants are part of the Network. Though a tiny percentage of the city's mercantile base, these 300 are amongst the wealthiest and most influential. Their power extends into the trade and craft guilds (see below), giving them a powerful edge when dealing with the nobility or the faithful.

In addition to the merchants who sell the Network's goods, there are roughly 500 thugs and agents who handle mundane tasks such as protecting goods and arranging buys. The true power behind the Network does its best to make sure it is never found out, using proxies for virtually all its illegal transactions or interaction with outsiders.

Leaders

The Network is led by five very important individuals, each of which is fantastically wealthy and quite influential within the city.

First amongst these leaders is Xushail Barisol, a merchant who owns several businesses in the Blood Tithe and a Silver Street mansion that borders on being a noble keep. Xushail is an expert trader and diplomat and uses both skills to his advantage within the city. Though he is widely regarded as a bloodthirsty maniac for his habits of killing slaves during parties, no drow can deny his success.

Xushail Barisol

Male elf (drow) Exp20: CR 20; Size M (5 ft., 1 in. tall); HD 20d6; hp 75; Init +4 (+4 Dex);



Spd 30 ft.; AC 14 (+4 Dex); Attack +18/+13/+8 melee, or +19/+14/+9 ranged; SV Fort +6, Ref +10, Will +14; AL CE; Str 16, Dex 19, Con 10, Int 16, Wis 14, Cha 16.

Languages Spoken: Common, Elven, Goblin, Orc, Undercommon.

Skills and feats: Diplomacy +26, Hide +24, Innuendo +26, Intimidate +26, Knowledge (nature) +23, Knowledge (religion) +5, Listen +29, Move silently +4, Profession (trader) +22, Search +25, Spot +20; Alertness, Blind-fight, Dodge, Point blank shot, Skill focus (hide), Skill focus (innuendo), Skill focus (listen).

The second leader, Imwi Lusakras, inherited a great deal of her wealth from her father, whom she poisoned after he refused her advances and denied her the child she so desperately craved. Imwi later seduced her brother and murdered him when their child was born. She discovered her keen instincts for art early on, however, and has used her talents to operate some of the most highly-regarded art shops in Sheoloth. Though not as wealthy or famous as Xushail, Imwi is a highly sought after mate and legends of her sexual excesses and depraved tastes are beginning to filter throughout the city. Spread by her agents, these rumours are nothing but bait to lure in those whom Imwi hopes to find as suitable mates, which will be killed once they manage to impregnate her. Given her hate of men since her father's rejection, Imwi is a fertile drow and the Gravemother's midwives predict she will have quite a brood before she finally perishes or is killed.

Imwi Lusakras

Female elf (drow) Exp15: CR 15; Size M (5 ft., 1 in. tall); HD 15d6; hp 50; Init +9 (+5 Dex, +4 Improved initiative); Spd 30 ft.; AC 15 (+5 Dex); Attack +11/+6/+1 melee, or +16/+11/+6 ranged; SV Fort +5, Ref +10, Will +10; AL CE; Str 11, Dex 20, Con 10, Int 17, Wis 13, Cha 15.

Languages Spoken: Common, Draconic, Elven, Gnome, Goblin, Undercommon.

Skills and feats: Balance +10.5, Bluff +20, Climb +16, Decipher script +21, Diplomacy +17, Disable device +4, Disguise +20, Hide +5, Intimidate +3, Listen +5, Move silently +5, Perform +11, Ride +23, Search +25, Spot +5,

Use rope +12, Wilderness lore +17; Alertness, Improved initiative, Point blank shot, Skill focus (search), Skill focus (use rope), Skill focus (perform).

Cuzil Yrtil is the third-in-command for the Network, a position she does not relish. She stumbled into the organization after discovering a small illegal shipment in her warehouse. When she confronted Imwi with what she had found, Cuzil was given the simple choice – join the network and use her warehouses to help hide the organization's loot, or suffer the consequences. Cuzil took the offer but is now looking for ways to bring the whole operation down without endangering herself. She hates not only the position she finds herself in, but also the misuse of her warehouses, which she purchased and grew into profitable businesses over the course of the last two centuries.

Cuzil Yrtil

Female elf (drow) Ftr6/Exp10: CR 16; Size M (5 ft., 2 in. tall); HD 6d10-6 + 10d6-10; hp 66; Init +7 (+3 Dex, +4 Improved initiative); Spd 30 ft.; AC 13 (+3 Dex); Attack +13/+8/+3 melee, or +16/+11/+6 ranged; SV Fort +7, Ref +8, Will +8; AL CE; Str 10, Dex 16, Con 8, Int 11, Wis 9, Cha 11.

Languages Spoken: Common, Elven, Undercommon.

Skills and feats: Climb +15, Diplomacy +1.5, Forgery +10, Hide +3, Jump +9, Listen +1, Move silently +16, Pick pocket +13, Search +9, Spot +1, Swim +3, Wilderness lore +11; Blind-fight, Combat reflexes, Endurance, Improved initiative, Improved unarmed strike, Leadership, Skill focus (jump), Skill focus (climb), Track.

Unlike Cuzil, Garis Friloshallika wants nothing more than to stay in the Network and expand his position within the organization. His lucrative meat importing business has boomed since he was recruited into the Network, and he wants to keep his position and help the Network grow at the same time. He has sensed Cuzil's reluctance to help the organization, however, and is now trying to come up with some creative methods for removing her from the equation and bump himself up the ladder a bit.

Garis Friloshallika

Male elf (drow) Exp12: CR 12; Size M (5 ft., 4 in. tall); HD 12d6; hp 48; Init +9 (+5 Dex,

+4 Improved initiative); Spd 30 ft.; AC 15 (+5 Dex); Attack +9/+4 melee, or +14/+9 ranged; SV Fort +4, Ref +11, Will +12; AL CE; Str 10, Dex 21, Con 11, Int 17, Wis 15, Cha 11.

Languages Spoken: Common, Elven, Gnoll, Gnome, Sylvan, Undercommon.

Skills and feats: Craft (Alchemy) +15, Appraise +9.5, Concentration +6, Disable device +3.5, Heal +6, Hide +5, Intimidate +14, Knowledge (religion) +16, Listen +5.5, Move silently +5.5, Ride +7, Search +5, Sense motive +17, Spot +4, Swim +13, Use magic device +6, Use rope +12, Wilderness lore +17; Improved initiative, Iron will, Lightning reflexes, Skill focus (heal), Track.

The last member of the Network is also the most unusual. Kchak is an ovarisite, one of the elite Clutch of Elders who oversees the ovarisite's activities within Sheoloth. He has traded the valuable intelligence of the ovarisites for a steady supply of slaves his people can use for broodmares. While none of these are drow, they are hardy specimens which allow the ovarisites to reproduce and have children of their own. Kchak knows what he does is illegal and does not care – his people are dissatisfied with the way in which they have been treated in Sheoloth and are now pursuing their own agenda, separate from the churches. If anyone threatens Kchak with exposure, he will have them killed, no matter the cost. His connections with the Church of the Dark Mother and the Gravemother give him a great deal of leeway in handling such issues, and his people are more than willing to assist him in destroying any threats to his position.

Areas of Interest

The Network is only interested in trade and in expanding their own wealth. Because the city is gripped by laws which prevent free trade outside the city, there is an enormous market for proscribed goods and services, which the Network is all too happy to fill.

The smuggled goods are normally brought in the shipments of meat for Garis Filoshallika. The shipments themselves are perfectly legal and a result of Garis' good fortune and hard haggling with some dwarven merchants several years ago. While the imported cow and pig meat are both

very lucrative, Garis makes even more money from his cut of the goods which are sewn into the bellies of the beasts. Garis' most trusted employees slaughter the livestock and retrieve the goods, which are then passed on to Cuzil Yrtil for storage in her warehouse.

Xushail then divvies up the loot as determined by who made the deals in the first place. A member of the Network who comes up with a good plan that nets a lot of cash is well-rewarded by the Network, and is given the opportunity to select their cut from amongst the goods before they are divvied up.

The illicit materials are then sold as quickly as possible through the shops that are part of the Network. Because each shop receives a small portion of the total shipment, there is little risk to any of them, yet their profits remain quite solid. Of course, all this trickles up to the five in charge of the whole thing, who make out like bandits.

Campaign Hooks

Smugglers need protection and they need it from people who are not used to asking questions, or who at least have loose morals and no particular loyalty to the city. This often means adventurers will be hired to escort shipments or to attend negotiations with new clients. More trusted hirelings will find themselves guarding warehouses or overseeing large transactions to make sure everything goes down as it's supposed to.

Characters who prove themselves intelligent and dependable will gain even greater responsibilities and will be tasked with finding new trading opportunities. This involves travelling to the Foreign Ward and beyond, seeking out trade goods that the drow cannot currently attain for themselves. Such prospecting missions can be dangerous – a drow outside his city has few friends and these missions require secrecy, so no large bodyguard contingents are available.

Still, there are those races (particularly the derro and deep gnomes) who will deal with the drow as trading partners and who provide them with goods they cannot or do not produce themselves. Making contact with communities of willing traders can be quite rewarding for all involved



and those who bring the Network a new source of income will find themselves rising through the ranks quickly.

Becoming a member of the Network is quite difficult, however, because of its size. The principle members all bring something important to the mix – either the sheer number of stores owned by Xulshaiz, the specialized knowledge and ruthless drive of Imwi, or the more functional assistance (warehouses and import permits, for example) the others bring to the organization. Getting into the Network will require something special, such as a new skill (the Network currently lacks any real magical item experts, for example) or something equally valuable.

Enemies

The Faceless Watch is the primary enemy of the Network, as it enforces the laws imposed by the Church of the Dark Mother. The law enforcement agents are constantly searching for those who try to bypass or avoid the edicts of the Dark Mother and are quite zealous in their enforcement of those laws. Given their ability to seize goods, close stores, or otherwise inhibit trade, the Watch is a constant problem for the Network. To avoid a conflict with the Watch, which the Network could not hope to win, the Networks agents do their best to implicate others in crimes. Several even act as informants for the Watch, providing them with information about the wrongdoings of the Network's rivals and legitimate businesses.

The Transfer Guild is a rival of the Network, but not a true enemy. Though the two do work at cross-purposes, with the Import Guild doing its best to make sure the laws are upheld to maintain its monopoly over certain goods and services, they are both composed of businessmen who understand that conflict can be bad for profits.

The Luzkar noble family, however, are more difficult to deal with. While they are also merchants, they are far more ruthless than their merchant allies and are quite willing to go to war with those who threaten their profits. Because of this, the Network does its best to keep its head down and away from the attention of nobles who might be tempted to cut

it off. Despite the attempts to stay below the awareness of the nobles, however, the Luzkar and Network forces do clash often, small skirmishes fought when a Network shipment or agent is discovered. Though neither side is able to inflict a telling blow, the Network must stay busy diverting attention from these battles, lest the Network be revealed for the large operation it is. For the moment, the Luzkar are aware of the Network, but not of its size or scope – they believe they are dealing with a small, disorganized group of smugglers.

More a pest, than a true enemy, are the score of small-time smugglers who operate within Sheoloth. While these operations are insignificant compared to the huge amount of smuggling carried about by the Network, they do sometimes upset the economy by carelessly dumping a large quantity of drugs or other easily portable, quickly selling items on the market. Whenever the Network comes across any of these smugglers, they do their best to simply kill them, preventing them from causing any further trouble.

Allies

The Artrabi noble family are the staunchest allies of the Network. Just as secretive as the smugglers they support, the Artrabi need the criminals to help them gain the wealth they need to hire mercenaries to protect them from the predations of other noble families. In return for their complicity, the Artrabi are richly rewarded with a cut of the profits from the Network. To protect the profits they get from the Network, the Artrabi actively work to keep the trade restrictions as tight and draconian as possible – this ingratiates them somewhat to the Luzkar, while ensuring the profits they gain from smuggling. After all, as soon as the smuggled goods become readily available, the profits from smuggling them into the city will disappear.

The Network also has some loose affiliation with the Shadowhands, though the two do compete in some areas. These thieves and rogues sometimes target Network shops or homes for their burglary, but they also provide the Artrabi, and hence the Network, with vital intelligence. Where possible the two groups avoid each other, but the Shadowhands are not as discriminating in their thievery as they could

be. For the Network, this is regarded as a cost of doing business, despite the aggravation it causes.

The Shadowhands

The Artrabi have done their best to create a network of thieves and spies to keep an eye on the city. Though not as large as it could be, it is decentralized and quite efficient at keeping an eye on important areas of the city, including the actions of other nobles, the churches, and the Faceless Watch. In addition, the Shadowhands is an organized and effective group of thieves who use their intelligence-gathering and noble connections to carry out elaborate thefts.

Numbers

There are roughly 300 members of the Shadowhands at any time, though no single member is aware of the identities of more than five or six others. This cell structure is overseen by the Artrabi noble family, who founded and still oversees the operations of the Shadowhands. If a rogue is caught in the act, then, he is unable to sell out more than a small number of Shadowhands and may not even be aware that he is part of a larger organization.

The membership of the Shadowhands is broken down, approximately, as follows:

Total Rogues:	250
5 th -7 th Level:	100
8 th -10 th Level:	75
11 th -12 th Level:	50
13 th -15 th Level:	25
Total Bards:	50
9 th -11 th Level:	20
12 th -14 th Level:	20
15 th -17 th Level:	10

Generally speaking, the highest level bards report directly to the Artrabi family and are responsible for keeping their organization running on a day-to-day basis. These leaders are the crucial linchpins which hold the whole thing together and they take great pains to stay out of trouble and away from law enforcement. Most are famous as entertainers and are even sought out for performances by other noble houses and the churches.

Leaders

The Shadowhands are led by five bards, known amongst themselves as the Pentarch. Though this group meets only rarely, they pass messages to one another in complex codes on a daily basis, keeping one another advised of the progress of their cells and their activities in general. These codes are created using various musical notations combined with ancient languages and symbolism known to very few outside bardic circles. This has safeguarded their communications quite well and allows them to deliver what appear to be songs through messengers without fear of discovery.

Vusirl Lufryl is the highest-ranking amongst the Pentarch, though not the highest level. Her organizational skills keep her at the top of the organization and her quiet affairs with several



members of the Artrabi estate haven't hurt, either. Vusirl is renowned for her performances throughout the city and she is widely sought for her risqué and often obscene dances for parties of all types. She manages the Shadowhands to enrich herself, but also as a lark. She finds the whole organization highly amusing and never passes up an opportunity to use it to her advantage.

Vusirl Lufryl

Female elf (drow) Brd16: CR 17; Size M (5 ft., 1 in. tall); HD 16d6; hp 64; Init +3 (+3 Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 13 (+3 Dex); Attack +16/+11/+6 melee, or +15/+10/+5 ranged; SV Fort +5, Ref +13, Will +8; AL CE; Str 18, Dex 17, Con 11, Int 14, Wis 6, Cha 21.

Languages Spoken: Common, Elven, Gnome, Undercommon.

Skills and feats: Craft +20, Disguise +17, Hide +3, Knowledge (arcana) +21, Knowledge (nature) +4, Knowledge (religion) +21, Listen +2, Move silently +3, Perform +24, Search +4, Spellcraft +18, Spot +2; Alertness, Ambidexterity, Brew potion, Combat casting, Craft staff, Scribe scroll.

Bard Spells Known (4/6/5/4/4/3): 0 - Dancing Lights, Daze, Detect Magic, Mage Hand, Mending, Open/Close. 1st - Cure Light Wounds, Identify, Silent Image, Sleep, Summon Monster I. 2nd - Blur, Cure Moderate Wounds, Detect Thoughts, Hold Person. 3rd - Clairaudience/Clairvoyance, Gaseous Form, Invisibility Sphere, Magic Circle against Good. 4th - Hold Monster, Legend Lore, Locate Creature, Summon Monster IV. 5th - Dream, Greater Dispelling, Healing Circle, Mirage Arcana.

Not nearly as famous as Vusirl, Glisthak Ruziwis is the most powerful bard in the organization and one of the most powerful in the city. He performs only rarely, anymore, preferring instead to use his skills in research and recovering of artefacts and other items of importance. He keeps himself hidden as much as possible, preferring not to let others know he even exists, much less that he is one of the most accomplished adventurers in the city. What Glisthak provides to the Pentarch is his willingness to lead cells on difficult missions and his vast knowledge.

Glisthak Ruziwis

Male elf (drow) Brd17: CR 18; Size M (4 ft., 8 in. tall); HD 17d6-34; hp 44; Init +4 (+4 Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 14 (+4 Dex); Attack +11/+6/+1 melee, or +16/+11/+6 ranged; SV Fort +3, Ref +14, Will +11; AL CE; Str 8, Dex 18, Con 7, Int 20, Wis 12, Cha 15.

Languages Spoken: Common, Draconic, Elven, Gnoll, Goblin, Orc, Undercommon.

Skills and feats: Diplomacy +22, Hide +4, Knowledge +25, Knowledge (nature) +22, Listen +16, Move silently +4, Perform +22, Scry +24, Search +7, Spellcraft +25, Spot +3, Swim +15, Tumble +23; Brew potion, Leadership, Skill focus (tumble), Spell focus (necromancy), Spell focus (evocation), Two-weapon fighting.

Bard Spells Known (4/5/5/4/3/3): 0 - Daze, Detect Magic, Flare, Light, Mage Hand, Open/Close. 1st - Charm Person, Cure Light Wounds, Identify, Magic Weapon, Ventriloquism. 2nd - Blur, Cure Moderate Wounds, Invisibility, Mirror Image, Pyrotechnics. 3rd - Charm Monster, Dispel Magic, Displacement, Gust of Wind. 4th - Cure Critical Wounds, Hold Monster, Secure Shelter, Summon Monster IV. 5th - Contact Other Plane, Control Water, Mind Fog, Mirage Arcana.

Notoriously cruel, Valin Wifari is a torturer with a flair for the dramatic and the ability to turn the moans and shrieks of his victims into music drow enjoy. While he has many imitators, none are able to produce the same glorious sounds of agony melded into such artistic melodies as Valin. As a result, he is often found performing in Haedistika, where he is paid well for his efforts. Valin also puts his skills to good use in torturing those who oppose the Shadowhands. His greatest asset, however, is his connection to Haedistika, where he can extract information from nobles intoxicated on pain and the suffering of others.

Valin Wifari

Male elf (drow) Brd15: CR 16; Size M (4 ft., 10 in. tall); HD 15d6+15; hp 62; Init +4 (+4 Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 14 (+4 Dex); Attack +13/+8/+3 melee, or +15/+10/+5 ranged; SV Fort +6, Ref +13, Will +11; AL CE; Str 15, Dex 19, Con 13, Int 19, Wis 14, Cha 15.

Languages Spoken: Common, Elven, Gnoll, Gnome, Goblin, Orc, Undercommon.

Skills and feats: Concentration +10, Craft +17, Escape artist +20, Hide +21, Knowledge +20, Knowledge (anatomy) +17, Knowledge (nature) +19, Listen +4, Move silently +4, Perform +17, Profession (torturer) +18, Search +6, Spellcraft +19, Spot +4; Brew potion, Combat casting, Craft magic arms and armor, Craft wondrous item, Dodge, Scribe scroll.

Bard Spells Known (4/5/4/3/3/2): 0 - Dancing Lights, Detect Magic, Ghost Sound, Mage Hand, Prestidigitation, Read Magic. 1st - Cure Light Wounds, Identify, Sleep, Ventriloquism. 2nd - Cure Moderate Wounds, Invisibility, Silence, Summon Monster II. 3rd - Cure Serious Wounds, Dispel Magic, Invisibility Sphere, Sculpt Sound. 4th - Dimension Door, Hold Monster, Legend Lore, Neutralize Poison. 5th - Dream, Persistent Image, Summon Monster V.

Palis is another very public face of the Shadowhands, renowned for her playing of dozens of instruments and for the clever lyrics of her compositions. Though she does not have the demand for her services that Valin or Vusirl enjoy, Palis performs for lower-class crowds each and every night. She also has a devoted base of fans who provide her with all manner of interesting information, giving the Pentarch an ear on the street that is worth a great deal for their operations. Mingling with servants as she does, Palis is often able to uncover bits of information she can piece together to provide a highly accurate view of the noble houses and their activities. Palis does not use her last name, which leads many to hypothesize that she is some sort of outcast from another noble house. The truth is almost as exotic, as her parents were exiled from Sheoloth a century ago for heresy. Palis sneaked away and lived on the streets for years before she was taken in as an apprentice by an abusive bard master, whom she later killed and assumed his home and collection of instruments.

Palis

Female elf (drow) Brd14: CR 15; Size M (5 ft., 5 in. tall); HD 14d6+14; hp 73; Init +4 (+4 Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 14 (+4 Dex); Attack +10/+5

melee, or +14/+9 ranged; SV Fort +5, Ref +13, Will +9; AL CE; Str 10, Dex 19, Con 12, Int 15, Wis 10, Cha 16.

Languages Spoken: Common, Draconic, Elven, Goblin, Undercommon.

Skills and feats: Craft (Alchemy) +5, Diplomacy +11, Gather information +20, Hide +4, Jump +13, Knowledge (Local) +12, Knowledge (arcana) +17, Knowledge (religion) +4, Listen +2, Move silently +4, Perform +20, Search +4, Spellcraft +17, Spot +2; Brew potion, Combat casting, Combat reflexes, Craft rod, Heighten spell.

Possessions: 45,000 gp in gear.

Bard Spells Known (4/4/4/4/3/1): 0 - Daze, Detect Magic, Flare, Mage Hand, Read Magic, Resistance. 1st - Charm Person, Sleep, Summon Monster I, Ventriloquism. 2nd - Invisibility, Mirror Image, Misdirection, Undetectable Alignment. 3rd - Charm Monster, Emotion, Fear, Summon Monster III. 4th - Dimension Door, Hold Monster, Improved Invisibility, Locate Creature. 5th - Contact Other Plane, Dream, Nightmare.

The youngest member of the Pentarch at a mere 50 years, Covili Qworn is still an accomplished bard and skilful speaker. She spends most of her time working with new cells, helping them get up and running while instructing them in the proper methods of operation within the Shadowhands. Though her work is often tedious and unrewarding, Covili is ambitious and sticks with it in hopes of moving up the chain of command within the Shadowhands. Though she has only been in the Pentarch for a few years, she has already eyeing the top spot and will probably attempt to usurp Vusirl within the next five to ten years. Poisoned food and drink are her favoured tools for getting ahead, something she keeps hidden from her allies in the hopes they will let their guard down and she will be able to do away with them at her leisure.

Covili Qworn

Female elf (drow) Brd15: CR 16; Size M (4 ft., 9 in. tall); HD 15d6+30; hp 85; Init +1 (+1 Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 11 (+1 Dex); Attack +10/+5/+0

melee, or +12/+7/+2 ranged; SV Fort +9, Ref +10, Will +7; AL CE; Str 8, Dex 12, Con 14, Int 15, Wis 9, Cha 21.

Languages Spoken: Common, Elven, Gnoll, Sylvan, Undercommon.

Skills and feats: Gather information +23, Hide +1, Intuit direction +14, Listen +17, Move silently +1, Perform +13, Pick pocket +18, Profession +16, Search +4, Spot +1, Use magic device +20; Combat casting, Craft wondrous item, Great fortitude, Toughness, Track, Weapon finesse (sword, short).

Bard Spells Known (4/6/4/4/4/3): 0 - Dancing Lights, Detect Magic, Ghost Sound, Mending, Read Magic, Resistance. 1st - Cure Light Wounds, Identify, Sleep, Summon Monster I. 2nd - Cure Moderate Wounds, Hold Person, Invisibility, Silence. 3rd - Blink, Clairaudience/Clairvoyance, Fear, Sculpt Sound. 4th - Dimension Door, Hold Monster, Shout, Summon Monster IV. 5th - Healing Circle, Mirage Arcana, Nightmare.

Areas of Interest

The Shadowhands have no interests outside thievery and information brokering. They work for the Artrabi, though the majority of the membership is unaware of this fact, and do their best to provide their noble patrons with the information and goods they need. As long as the Artrabi are happy with their performance, the Shadowhands are free to do as they will.

Campaign Hooks

Any truly effective thief who operates in Sheoloth for long is bound to run afoul of the Shadowhands. Though they are protective of their racket, they are not an exclusive club and will give most thieves a chance to join their ranks. Those who accept the offer will be placed in a cell and given orders from time to time, usually once or twice per month, but are otherwise left to their own devices.

Those who refuse, however, are targeted for harassment for a few weeks to help them come around. If they refuse the second offer to join the Shadowhands, however, the organization will waste no time having them killed.



The Shadowhands may also serve as the target of an attack by characters employed by the Church of the Dark Mother or another noble house. After all, this criminal organization steals from everyone. Though no one outside the Artrabi really understand the scope of the Shadowhands, others do suspect the existence of a large, organized group of thieves and spies within Sheoloth. Finding and destroying such an organization could easily be the source of an entire campaign.

Enemies

The Eight Eyed Masks are a real problem for the Shadowhands. The magical divinations available to the masks give them the tools they need to uncover the perpetrator of most crimes, leading the Shadowhands to be extremely careful of the jobs they take. It is important, for example, that as much time as possible pass between the time a crime is committed and the time it is discovered, giving the

Shadowhands time to cover their tracks. The very best crime, from the perspective of the Shadowhands, is one which is never discovered.

The Faceless Watch is an enemy of the Shadowhands, as well, but it is not nearly as much of a concern as the Masks. While the Watch concerns itself with overt crimes and the apprehension of those who break the laws, the Shadowhands are able to avoid them with relative ease. They are small, very mobile, and clued into the activities of the Watch through their informants and spies.

Allies

The greatest ally of the Shadowhands is the Artrabi noble house, which supports and endorses their activities. When in need, the Shadowhands can often appeal to their noble patrons for assistance, though it is a privilege they exercise only rarely. It is crucial this alliance never be discovered, for it would place the Artrabi in a dangerous position – supporting activities so directly detrimental to the city as a whole would certainly bring the Artrabi into conflict with virtually all the other power centres of Sheoloth.

ARCANISTS

The deadly battle known as the Shrieking War created a schism between arcane and divine spellcasters that has not yet healed itself within Sheoloth. Though the root causes of the conflict were quite complex, the church has distilled them down to the essence they choose to believe – that the wizards attempted to use their powers to overthrow the divine mandates of the Dark Mother and seize control of Sheoloth. This occurred some 300 years ago and the wounds still have not healed. As a result, the arcanists of Sheoloth are semi-outcast, mistrusted and legislated against by the churches.

The Witch Daggers

Following the concession of the Shrieking War by the arcanists of Sheoloth, they were banished to an area of the city known as the Witch

Daggers. This massive cavern was named for the number of enormous stalactites descending from its ceiling. The wizards quickly set up their homes within these stalactites, covering the floor with magical defences and connecting their inverted towers with catwalks of silk and stone. Since their banishment, the wizards and sorcerers living in the Witch Daggers have done their best to ingratiate themselves with the only allies they still have – the noble families of Sheoloth.

Though there are other arcane spellcasters within Sheoloth, they are forbidden to practice their magic within the city upon pain of death. This includes such practices as the use of spells to identify items or the creation of magical items, including scrolls. This has forced most arcane spellcasters to either relocate to the Witch Daggers or at least rent laboratory space within the Daggers for their own studies and experiments.



Numbers

There are approximately 100 wizards and sorcerers living in the Witch Daggers, along with their servants and slaves. Several hundred additional arcane spellcasters pass through the area on a regular basis, renting space in the laboratories for the creation of magical items or the scribing of scrolls. While the permanent residents have no problem allowing others to use these spaces, they charge high fees (generally 100gp per hour) and will boot out anyone who offends them in any way.

The residents of the Witch Daggers are broken down as follow:

Total Wizards:	75
12 th – 14 th Levels:	25
15 th – 17 th Levels:	20
18 th Level:	15
19 th Level:	10
20 th Level:	5
Total Sorcerers:	25
12 th – 14 th Levels:	10
15 th – 17 th Levels:	10
18 th Level:	3
19 th Level:	2

Areas of Interest

The Witch Daggers is in an interesting position. It is the only place in the city where magic can be freely practiced, but the leaders of the area have tightly regulated the types of magic which can be performed. Those who live within the Witch Daggers are free to do as they will in their own workshops and laboratories, but outsiders must pay 100 gold per hour for the privilege of working in a public laboratory, in which they may only construct rods, wands, and rings and scribe scrolls.

More importantly, the Witch Daggers has created a monopoly on the identification of magical items. They have special laboratories in which nothing else is done and many of those who live here are dedicated specially to identifying new items that enter the city. Though very thorough, these examinations also take some time and there is a backlog of items waiting to be identified. Anyone who brings an item here for identification, then, must first pay

the up front cost of 100gp and will have a four day wait ahead of them. At times this wait can fluctuate from two to six days and those who offend the wizards and sorcerers here may be delayed for weeks.

Items identified for resale cost an additional 200gp and are sealed in a box with the abilities of the item burned into the outside of the box. The seal on the box is magical – if broken, it scars the box with a burst of vermillion that cannot be removed without destroying the box entirely. Forgeries of these boxes are attempted constantly, though none have yet succeeded. Even worse, those attempting to pass off forged identification boxes are hunted down and killed by the Witch Daggers or their agents at the earliest opportunity.

This identification business has given the Witch Daggers a virtual monopoly on the magical items sold in Sheoloth. Outsiders who wish to have items identified must pay 300gp for the proof of their identification, which raises the cost of such items beyond profitability in many cases. The Witch Daggers have opened stores themselves to provide lower-cost items, effectively giving them control over a large portion of the market in magical items.

Wise traders are better off selling items to the Witch Daggers, which they will resell later, rather than attempt to get them identified and pay the exorbitant charges.

Campaign Hooks

Wizards have arcane needs and those able to supply them with rare spell components (such as those which can only be harvested from the bodies of monsters) can make a great profit working for the mages of the Witch Daggers.

The clerics also have a great need to keep an eye on the Witch Daggers and are often hiring adventurers to spy on the area. Though risky, this can be very rewarding and a large number of rogues and bards are now posing as servants and assistants to the wizards and sorcerers of the Witch Daggers.

Attempting to gain a home in the Witch Daggers is an adventure in itself. Those who apply will be forced to perform some sort of powerful

service to the current residents, often involving epic adventures and dangerous expeditions into hostile lands. The rewards, however, are very great – residence in the Witch Daggers alone is a fine thing in Sheoloth, but there is the added incentive of a cut on every magical item sold in the city for those who live here.

Enemies

The Witch Daggers are not loved at all by the churches of Sheoloth. The rift between arcanists and divine spellcasters is so great there is little chance either side will ever want to reconcile with the other, creating a stew of turmoil whenever members of either side meet. While it is highly unlikely any open conflict will ever occur in Sheoloth again, there are occasional assassination attempts and other localized disturbances between the two sides.

The Incabulos are another hated enemy of the Witch Daggers, because they pervert both arcane and divine magic. The Witch Daggers want these impostors destroyed as soon as possible to avoid goading the churches into an attempt to exterminate the problem with a witch hunt. Cooperating with the church out of the desire for self preservation is distasteful to the people of the Witch Daggers, but the alternative is far worse.

Thieves from the Shadowhands periodically sneak into the workshops of the Witch Daggers to make off with prized items, so this is another group the arcanists do not care for. When caught, these thieves are destroyed, but are first interrogated. The cell structure of the Shadowhands is making this an exercise in futility, however, and unless the Witch Daggers get lucky, they will probably never discover the true story of the Shadowhands by interrogating its agents.

Allies

The Witch Daggers provide crucial support to the noble families of Sheoloth, from the creation of magical items to the identification

of spoils of war. They are also the training ground for the Eight Eyed Masks and the equipment used by that investigative arm of the Noble families. Despite this, the noble families tend to keep the Witch Daggers at arms length. Only the Pifwasil family is seen as a true ally of the Witch Daggers, because Kronol Pifwasil still maintains a residence in this area.

The Transfer Guild is also an ally of the Witch Daggers, arranging for the sale of their magical items beyond Sheoloth. This highly profitable arrangement has enriched both parties, as the Transfer Guild would not otherwise be able to make much profit selling magical goods beyond the city.

Many adventurers also consider individuals within the Witch Daggers as allies. The exchange of found magical items for the services of the wizards and sorcerers here has worked out to the benefit of all involved, ensuring it will continue for some time.



The Incabulos

This organization is so secretive few even believe it is real. Combining a heretical belief system with a powerful incentive for joining, the Incabulos are gaining numbers all the time, however, and may soon present an undeniable threat to the power structures of Sheoloth.

In a nutshell, the Incabulos believe that the power of the divine can be harnessed through certain rituals and sacrifices, without the need to obey the dictates of a deity. This allows arcane spellcasters to make use of divine magic without sacrificing their other magical abilities. Presenting a grave threat to the power of the Dark Mother's church, the Incabulos risk death and destruction with every ceremony they perform and if they are ever discovered and their members revealed, a new Shrieking War will certainly erupt.

Numbers

The Incabulos is a small, dedicated group of 50 or so members. They meet in secret and wear masks to conceal their identities at each ceremonial meeting, to protect themselves from

The Incabulos membership is broken down as follows:

Total Members (approximate):	50
Former Priests:	15
10 th -12 th Levels:	5
13 th - 14 th Levels:	7
15 th -18 th Levels:	3
Former Wizards and Sorcerers:	35
10 th - 12 th Levels:	10
13 th - 14 th Levels:	10
15 th -16 th Levels:	10
17 th -18 th Levels:	3
19 th - 20 th Levels:	2

discovery. Though they are expanding only slowly, each member is constantly on the look out for those they can recruit to their cause. They consider turning a divine spellcaster to their cause to be the greatest victories and are having some success in converting the Gravemother's priests to their cause, if only because this branch of the clergy is feeling somewhat slighted by the Dark Mother's minions.



On the whole, however, those who join the Incabulos are former wizards who want to expand their own powers in an effort to one day take another stab at unseating the hold the priestesses have over the city. Desperate and hungry for power, these vengeful wizards and sorcerers are willing to take heretical risks to achieve their goals of ultimately dominating all of Sheoloth.

Leaders

A single individual, a mysterious entity who refers to himself only as the Seeker, leads the Incabulos. When he appeared 50 years ago, the Seeker first sought out the most zealous arcanists he could find, revealing his powers to them and recruiting them to his cause. Within a decade, he had nearly a dozen others following the way of the Incabulos with more being recruited. The group grows slowly, but steadily, and the Seeker oversees the entire operation from beginning to end.

What few know is that the Seeker was once one of the staunchest defenders of the divine spellcasters in the city. During his former life, Alshatha Gulthash was a priest of the Killer, and a fanatical follower of the edicts of his faith. During the Shrieking War, Alshatha was thought to have died as a result of a *finger of death* spell, though his body was never discovered after it tumbled down the Falling Stair, presumably to be devoured by the lake of lava below.

In fact, Alshatha survived the spell (he was actually rendered unconscious by a lucky shot from a poisoned arrow – the *finger of death* spell never touched him) and his fall thanks to the plethora of magical items on his person. He did, however, spend years of his life devoid of much of his memory. He lived as a beggar for years before he slowly began to recover his powers. His confused memory, however, led him down some strange avenues of thought and he began performing some of the rituals of his faith in a perverse, incomplete fashion.

As a result of his depravity, Alshatha was discovered by a mortificant who possessed the secrets of the Incabulos rituals. Due to a lack of training, the mortificant was unable to properly perform the rituals, but he did teach them to Alshatha. As a result, Alshatha was able to begin making use of the rituals and reclaimed

much of his former power. Still deranged and lacking memory of his former life, Alshatha, now known as the Seeker, wants nothing but to merge the divine and the arcane into a powerful new magical form that can be used to rule all of Sheoloth.

Areas of Interest

The Incabulos are not bent on accumulating a specific type of holding or in controlling any areas of the city. They want nothing less than to combine the arcane and divine forces and use the new power to overthrow the churches and replace one form of tyranny with another. They firmly believe that doing so is the will of the Dark Mother and the other gods of the drow pantheon, for surely it represents the ultimate form of the survival of the fittest.

As of now, the Incabulos spend their time looking for new recruits and attempting to assassinate powerful clergy or those who oppose them. Their need to work in absolute secrecy slows their ability to expand, as does their wildly heretical beliefs. The Incabulos were nearly destroyed by the Church of the Dark Mother once before, few doubt the church would like to do the same to this new incarnation.

Campaign Hooks

The Incabulos are the most dangerous of all the heretical sects of Sheoloth. Their ability to tap into the divine power of the gods without paying them the appropriate fealty endangers the divine mandate to rule currently held by the priests and priestesses of Sheoloth, something the clergy simply cannot allow. Generations ago, the churches believed they had destroyed the last of the mortificants who knew the Incabulos rituals, but recent activity proves them wrong. While they are not yet at the panic stage that led to the purges prior to the Shrieking War, the clergy of Sheoloth are deeply concerned.

Characters could be hired on either side of this conflict, either as agents of the church sent to find and destroy the Incabulos, or as Incabulos assassins working to destroy the agents of the church. As members of the church, the characters are provided with intelligence and the equipment they need, but they are constantly at the whims of their superiors. More dangerous, if the characters do uncover evidence of the



cult, but are unable to destroy it, they may find themselves killed by the church to keep the new incarnation of the Incabulos a secret.

As members of the Incabulos, the characters must constantly watch for betrayal from within their ranks and from the agents of the church without. Those who fail to watch their every step and maintain absolute secrecy risk discovery from the law of Sheoloth, and those organizations are much better equipped and more numerous than the Incabulos.

Any campaign involving the Incabulos is one of intrigue, paranoia, and deception. Inquisitors are fearful of the heresy's power and the fact that it violates every tenet of their religion. The Incabulos struggle to survive in the face of the persecution of the church, all while fomenting a quiet revolution of their own. Set against the rituals of sacrifice and the battle of drow against drow, this type of campaign has the potential to be very horrific, as well, as both sides do whatever is necessary to survive, no matter the cost.

Enemies

Clearly, the Incabulos are hated by the churches of Sheoloth and the devout of all religions. They defy the need to worship a god to take its power, which is antithetical to the stance of all organized religion, leaving the Incabulos at odds with all priests they encounter or who learn of their practices.

But the Incabulos are also hated by many arcane spellcasters, especially those who have no desire to see a repeat of the Shrieking War. Not all of the arcanists in Sheoloth want to rule the city, many are happy going about their business while the church oversees the running of the city. To these wizards, the Incabulos are a dire threat, because they may incite the churches to begin the purges of arcane spellcasters which once led to the Shrieking War.

The Incabulos, then, must choose those they approach very carefully, for some they believe should be sympathetic to their cause are anything but.

Allies

Strangely, the Incabulos have some allies amongst the nobility of Sheoloth. The nobles see this heresy as a way to weaken the church while strengthening their own position. Any alliance between the nobles and the Incabulos, however, is not one that will last. The Nobility would like the Incabulos to take their shot at the priesthood, but they do not want the heretics to win. Instead, the nobility would prefer to see both sides of the conflict gravely weakened and their command structures disrupted by the war. This would allow the nobles to swoop in and seize control of the city, bringing it back under noble rule.

MERCHANTS

Sheoloth has a bustling trade-based economy and the merchants are the backbone of the city's wealth production. This gives these traders some power, though nothing to rival the power of the church or the nobility. The life of a merchant can be a frustrating one – they are more powerful than commoners, but clearly not as powerful as those above their position. Without the ability to directly change anything in the city, the merchants must rely on carefully constructed noble alliances or ties to the churches of the city. For all their wealth, the merchants are still at the mercy of any petty politician with the ability to pass a law.

The Transfer Guild

By far the largest of the merchant organizations, the Transfer Guild does nothing but oversee the movement of goods into and out of Sheoloth. This includes maintaining and organizing trade agreements with those in the Foreign Ward, as well as dispensing the goods from these agreements to the merchants in Sheoloth. Ostensibly, the Guild is supposed to give equal amounts of goods to all merchants who are members, but this is clearly not the case. Instead, membership in the guild enriches the most influential while simply safeguarding the rest from harassment by the Faceless Watch. The lower ranks of merchants who rely on imports view their membership as little more than protection money, but it is money they gladly pay to avoid run-ins with the Watch or other agents of the church.

Numbers

With more than half the merchants in the city dependent on imports or exports of one kind or another, the Transfer Guild has a vast membership. At any time, roughly 50% of all businesses are paying dues to the Import Guild, giving the Guild a vast amount of cash at any time.

Leaders

The Leadership of the Import Guild is currently in a state of flux. The death of the original leaders in suspicious circumstances has the rest of the guild in turmoil as they struggle to regain their footing and return to business as usual. The Luzkar family is trying to help the situation to the best of their ability, as the Import Guild is one of their staunchest allies in the city. On the other hand, the nobles want to put their own people as the new leaders of the guild, which is not making the other members too happy. This drive to get nobles on the Import Guild's board is also distressing to the churches, who see the nobility attempting to grab another chunk of power in the city.

The front runners for the new leadership positions in the guild are as follows.

Benlili Luzkar is the person the Luzkar family wants to see in the head seat of the guild. Though she is not well-known in Sheoloth, she has proved herself a valuable member of the noble house and this is how they would like to reward her. *Of course, having Benlili as the leader of the Import Guild would also give the mercantile operations owned and controlled by her house preferential treatment, which is why the other members of the guild are so distraught.* For her part, Benlili would love to be in such a position of power, if only because it would give her the chance she has been waiting for to break away from her house and strike out on her own. Feeling slighted after a few centuries of faithful service, Benlili now wants to grab whatever she can for herself, at the expense of her noble house.

Benlili Luzkar

Female elf (drow) Nob13: CR 13; Size M (5 ft., 2 in. tall); HD 13d8; hp 73; Init +4 (+4 Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 14 (+4 Dex); Attack +7/+2 melee,

or +13/+8 ranged; SV Fort +4, Ref +8, Will +9; AL CE; Str 7, Dex 19, Con 10, Int 13, Wis 12, Cha 20.

Languages Spoken: Common, Elven, Sylvan, Undercommon.

Skills and feats: Appraise +17, Hide +4, Knowledge (religion) +17, Listen +3, Move silently +4, Perform +17, Profession (trader) +15, Read lips +15, Search +3, Sense motive +10, Spot +3; Dodge, Expertise, Improved critical (longsword), Leadership, Skill focus (Profession).

Flistha Durayl is Benlili's primary opponent. She has been a member of the Import Guild for decades; her varied and numerous shops and employed craftsmen have made her fabulously wealthy and she has a very good nose for what will and will not sell. She was intimately involved in negotiating some of the agreements currently held with several dwarf clans and believes she should be next in line to lead the import guild because of this. Though Flistha organized the 'accidents' of the former leaders of the Import Guild, she did not anticipate the reaction of the Luzkar estate and is now desperately attempting to thwart their attempts to capitalize on her ambitious, evil deeds.

Flistha Durayl

Female elf (drow) Exp15: CR 15; Size M (4 ft., 8 in. tall); HD 15d6; hp 45; Init +7 (+3 Dex, +4 Improved initiative); Spd 30 ft.; AC 13 (+3 Dex); Attack +10/+5/+0 melee, or +14/+9/+4 ranged; SV Fort +5, Ref +8, Will +9; AL CE; Str 9, Dex 16, Con 10, Int 16, Wis 11, Cha 13.

Languages Spoken: Abyssal, Aquan, Auran, Common, Draconic, Dwarven, Elven, Giant, Gnoll, Gnome, Goblin, Ignan, Infernal, Orc, Sylvan, Terran, Undercommon.

Skills and feats: Appraise +19, Concentration +1, Forgery +6, Hide +3, Knowledge (religion) +18, Listen +18, Move silently +21, Open lock +21, Perform +2, Profession +19, Search +7.5, Speak language +10, Spellcraft +5, Spot +2, Swim +17, Use magic device +4; Ambidexterity, Improved initiative, Leadership, Point blank shot, Skill focus (profession), Weapon finesse (dagger).

It was with pale knuckles and trembling hands that Blade watched the woman leave his shop, her attendants looking around them as they left with the same disdain that she had showed during her entire 'visit'. Blade fought the urge, and it was a close call, to slip out from behind the counter and stalk the whole lot of them through the streets of Sun Gate until he was bathed in their warm blood. His violent reverie was interrupted by a click at the top of the nearby stairs.

He whirled around and pivoted low, putting the countertop between the stair landing and his body. One hand came up, a poisoned dagger held aloft, as his careful eye discerned the shape in the shadows up there. It was the girl-child, hiding mostly around the edge of the stairwell, peering down into the shop. 'You do not like her much, do you?' she said in a quiet voice, probably as much to identify herself as to ask the obvious question.

He lowered the blade, though part of him felt like dropping the nosy little beast for her presumption and because it would make him feel better about letting the true source of his fury leave unscathed. 'No,' he hissed. 'I do not. That was Benlili of House Luzkar.'

The shape at the top of the stairs nodded. 'The one in line for the... guild position?'

He felt irritation building in him at her words, but she was not the cause of his disgust. He sheathed the dagger, crossed the room to lock the door, and draw the main window's shutters closed. With a sharp gesture, he brought the child down and just as swiftly, she obeyed. She was looking healthier, though she was still a spindly little thing that looked a lot more like a little boy than a female. She had no idea how much that helped her survival where he was concerned. 'Correct. You have been paying attention, I see. And which guild would that be?'

The girl bit her lip in concentration and replied, 'Import guild? The one that runs all the businesses in Sheoloth?' She looked around, watching Blade as he crossed to every weapons rack, looking for anything that the woman might have left behind as a 'surprise' for him. He found it in the form of a blade jade spider stuck to the underside of a shelf. A deft stroke shattered the magical spy. There would be none of the usual Luzkar scrying in his shop. 'Correct,' he said off-handedly.

He belted on a brace of daggers under his shadow black vest and cloak. 'Now you stay here and do not open this door for anyone. I have to go talk to Borosog about improving his odds of election... whether he wants me to or not.'

The least likely contender to take over from the now-deceased guild leaders is Borosog Kuthrakee, a ne'er do well who actually managed to go legitimate several years ago following the destruction of his adventuring company at the hands of an angry lich. Though only a member of the guild for a short time, Borosog has managed to parlay his relatively modest adventuring stash into a slew of successful businesses, all of which he manages personally. Though Borosog is not all that interested in becoming the guild leader, personally, there are many members of the guild who would like to see him in that position for precisely that reason. Though he has the business acumen to manage the guild, he seems to have no ambitions, which the other guild members believe makes him a perfect candidate.

Borosog Kuthrakee

Male elf (drow) Rog13: CR 14; Size M (5 ft., 0 in. tall); HD 13d6; hp 49; Init +5 (+5 Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 15 (+5 Dex); Attack +11/+6 melee, or +14/+9 ranged; SV Fort +4, Ref +15, Will +4; AL CE; Str 14, Dex 21, Con 11, Int 13, Wis 11, Cha 6.

Languages Spoken: Common, Drow, Orc, Undercommon.

Skills and feats: Appraise +15, Climb +14, Escape artist +17, Hide +5, Intimidate +8, Knowledge (nature) +3, Listen +4, Move silently +5, Perform +14, Profession (trader) +15, Read lips +16, Search +3, Spot +4, Tumble +20, Use magic device +14, Use rope +21; Alertness, Combat reflexes, Lightning reflexes,

Quick draw, Run.

Originally, the guild had a three person board of directors who oversaw the operations of the guild, but their recent death has put the entire guild into panic mode. This allowed the Luzkar family to push through a resolution to change the guild leadership to a single position, with two successors named and held in secret in the case of another such disaster.

Areas of Interest

The Transfer Guild oversees the negotiation and fulfilment of all contracts involving imports or exports to and from Sheoloth. Only members are legally entitled to work within any of the contracts the guild sets up, though there are numerous grandfather clauses and under-the-table deals which have provided non-members with some import and export rights. As it stands now, however, most who are not members of the guild are inspected regularly by the Faceless Watch to make sure they are not selling goods obtained illegally.

Contracts negotiated by the Transfer Guild are charged a surtax on every item imported or exported under that contract. Half of the surtax goes to the city of Sheoloth (into a fund administered by the Church of the Dark Mother) while the other half goes to the Guild. The guild typically uses the money it gains from such contracts as bribes, as money to pay for new construction of guild houses, rewards for those who help a new contract get signed (though this is often much the same as a bribe), or as payment to guild officers. The money taken in by the guild is very secondary to the profits generated by the merchants who receive contracts to import and export, however, so the typical graft and malfeasance that accompanies the guild bank is very rarely noticed.

Members of the transfer guild are given the exclusive rights to legally import and export goods, as defined by their contracts. This is a huge boon, as it gives the members the right to sell items which would not otherwise be available in the city, giving them a market they can monopolize.

Campaign Hooks

The battle over the leadership of the guild could last for years, given the hunger for power

exhibited by at least two of those vying for the position. Even worse, any of the current front-runners could be assassinated or fall prey to some horrible accident before they are able to assume the position of leadership, which opens a whole new power struggle. The drow desire to get ahead is going to turn the whole succession to the leadership of the Transfer Guild into a bloody, protracted affair. When it is all said and done, there is no telling who will be in charge.

With such chaos and savagery present, there is plenty of work for the adventurous. Whether as bodyguards to protect one of the candidates or assassins sent to knock them off, characters should have plenty to do if they want to get involved.

Enemies

Clearly, the Transfer Guild is opposed to the actions of the Network and does whatever it can to bring them grief. The two groups tangle frequently and there is often confusion about where the guild ends and the criminal syndicate begins. Because members sometimes belong to both organizations, the confusion is only intensified and makes the job of the Faceless Watch all the more difficult. The intertwining of these two organizations is surely going to lead to all manner of conflict and confusion in the future, especially if the Network decides to involve itself in determining who takes over the leadership of the Transfer Guild.

Merchants who are not affiliated with the Guild are also opposed to it and are doing their best to find ways around the guild's stranglehold on import and export contracts. Every few months a new alliance of merchants rises up and tries to get a law passed giving them special dispensation to avoid the Transfer Guild's contract scheme, but they have always been shut down by the Church of the Dark Mother. Because the Church receives a cut of all the import and export contracts, it is doubtful they will ever grant exemptions – unless they are convinced it will be even more profitable for them.

Allies

The Luzkar family is a staunch supporter of the Transfer Guild and one of its most loyal noble allies. The house and the guild benefit greatly



from their relationship and the Luzkar family will do even better out of the arrangement if their chosen candidate becomes the leader of the guild.

The Church of the Dark Mother also supports the Transfer Guild wholeheartedly, but only because it is the most profitable method of doing business at this time. If someone can come up with a better, more profitable way to make money from moving goods in and out of the city, the church will certainly hear their plan out.

The Allied Craftsman Guild

This guild is actually composed of dozens of smaller guilds, each of which represents one type of craftsman within Sheoloth. While it is not mandatory that a craftsman belong to a guild, not doing so can lead to some interesting and difficult problems. As with the Transfer Guild, the Allied Craftsman Guild works to consolidate certain aspects of the trades (in this case, warehouse space and raw materials) in order to increase profitability for its members.

Unlike the Transfer Guild, this organization actually does work to better its membership by setting prices that provide the raw materials suppliers with enough cash to keep them in business while still allowing the craftsmen who create finished goods to remain profitable, as well. Given the much smaller profit margins of its membership, this overseeing body helps to stabilize their economy and prevents them from suffering dire repercussions from sudden fluctuations in the market.

Of course, this does mean that those who are not part of the guild must pay exorbitant fees to get the goods they need. Though loose coalitions of craftsmen do exist outside the ACG, they are not nearly as profitable as guilded craftsmen and suffer great harm during times of market upheaval.

Numbers

Approximately 75% of all craftsmen in the city belong to this guild or one of its dozens of subguilds. This makes it, by far, the largest guild in Sheoloth, giving it a great deal of influence in city politics. Though it is made up of and run by commoners, the ACG is a powerful guild within the city and one to which nobles, and church alike, pay special attention.

Leaders

The Allied Craftsman Guild is run by four former craftsmen, all of whom gave up their workshops to oversee the running of the guild. They are paid a decent stipend from the money collected from guild dues and the profits brought in by the guild warehouses, but do not live much more extravagantly than the common members of their guild.

Losthyzol Favish is the most prominent member of the guild's leading council and does most of the talking for the guild. He is naturally charismatic and intelligent and uses his skills of persuasion to their utmost when dealing with nobles and church alike. Though he is well-known for his womanizing and cruel behaviour, few can deny he is also an excellent spokesman and business partner. He is respected and feared by those below him, which is all any drow can really hope for.

Losthyzol Favish

Male elf (drow) Exp15: CR 15; Size M (4 ft., 11 in. tall); HD 15d6-15; hp 32; Init +3 (+3 Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 13 (+3 Dex); Attack +11/+6/+1 melee, or +14/+9/+4 ranged; SV Fort +4, Ref +8, Will +9; AL CE; Str 11, Dex 17, Con 9, Int 19, Wis 10, Cha 16.

Languages Spoken: Common, Draconic, Elven, Gnoll, Gnome, Orc, Undercommon.

Skills and feats: Craft (Alchemy) +7, Balance +21, Craft +7, Diplomacy +20, Gather information +18, Handle animal +13, Hide +3.5, Jump +18, Knowledge (nature) +18, Knowledge (religion) +21, Listen +16, Move silently +4, Perform +8, Profession +20, Read lips +22, Search +6, Spot +2, Use Rope +8, Point blank shot, Skill focus (profession), Skill focus (perform), Skill focus (knowledge (religion)), Skill focus (craft), Track.

Serving as Losthyzol's yes-woman and sometime assistant, Geristh Lorcasta reached her position by submitting to Losthyzol's wishes and bearing him an illicit child. During her pregnancy Geristh lived with the ovarisites and carried the child to term under their tutelage. At the time of her delivery, the child was taken away by the spiders and she has neither seen nor

heard any news of it since. Though she does not know the full story, Geristh correctly suspects that Losthlyzol used her to pay off a debt he owed to the ovarisites. Since that time, she is never far from Losthlyzol, whose cruelty she is unable to resist and whose bruises she wears proudly.

Geristh Lorcasta

Female elf (drow) Exp10: CR 10; Size M (4 ft., 11 in. tall); HD 10d6-10; hp 29; Init +8 (+4 Dex, +4 Improved initiative); Spd 30 ft.; AC 14 (+4 Dex); Attack +6/+1 melee, or +11/+6 ranged; SV Fort +2, Ref +7, Will +8; AL CE; Str 9, Dex 19, Con 9, Int 20, Wis 12, Cha 11.

Languages Spoken: Aquan, Common, Draconic, Elven, Gnoll, Gnome, Goblin, Orc, Sylvan, Undercommon.

Skills and feats: Balance +17, Bluff +11, Craft +16, Disguise +13, Escape artist +5, Hide +4, Innuendo +5, Intimidate +13, Knowledge +17, Knowledge (arcana) +11, Knowledge (religion) +12.5, Listen +3, Move silently +4, Pick pocket +16, Search +7, Sense motive +2.5, Speak language +3, Spot +5, Use rope +9; Combat reflexes, Improved initiative, Point blank shot, Skill focus (knowledge (religion)).

The voice of pessimism and despair in the guild, Prevas Buliris mostly supports Losthlyzol, though he loathes the man and his assistant. Given a choice, Prevas would rather see his confidant Arlitha at the lead of the guild, but this is not fated to be. Prevas' main skill and function in the guild is his handling of the warehouses. He has managed to turn them into profitable side-business for the guild which enriches all of its membership. Though his embezzling is hardly noticed, Prevas has used it to make a nice, hidden home for himself in the winding ways of Silver Street. He wants to retire there at some point, but is too afraid to take up residence for fear his embezzling will be discovered.

Prevas Buliris

Male elf (drow) Exp14: CR 14; Size M (5 ft., 2 in. tall); HD 14d6-14; hp 32; Init +4 (+4 Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 14 (+4 Dex); Attack +9/+4 melee, or +14/+9 ranged; SV Fort +3, Ref +8, Will +11; AL CE; Str 8, Dex 19, Con 8, Int 14, Wis 15, Cha 9.

Languages Spoken: Common, Draconic, Elven, Orc, Undercommon.

Skills and feats: Animal empathy +6, Balance +21, Bluff +18, Disguise +5, Escape artist +20, Forgery +19, Hide +12, Jump -0.5, Knowledge (nature) +3, Listen +6, Move silently +4, Pick pocket +21, Search +4, Spot +6, Swim +5.5, Use magic device +2; Alertness, Ambidexterity, Exotic weapon proficiency (crossbow, hand), Quick draw, Skill focus (bluff).

Arlitha Chozrs is the most skilled craftsman in the guild, and potentially in the city. Her candles and wax sculptures are renowned for their beauty and evocative natures, and the fact that she makes them only from the rendered fat from the bodies of halflings and surface elves only increases their appeal. Arlitha would like to oversee the guild, but she is simply too harsh and difficult to deal with. Though she is close to Prevas, she has little tolerance for others and abuses them at the slightest provocation. Though this behaviour is not terribly unusual for a dark elf, it is certainly not a trait desirable in a public face for the guild, so Arlitha must be content to try and manipulate things from behind the scenes.

Arlitha Chozrs

Female elf (drow) Exp20: CR 20; Size M (5 ft., 0 in. tall); HD 20d6+60; hp 137; Init +4 (+4 Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 14 (+4 Dex); Attack +16/+11/+6 melee, or +19/+14/+9 ranged; SV Fort +11, Ref +12, Will +10; AL CE; Str 12, Dex 18, Con 16, Int 15, Wis 6, Cha 11.

Languages Spoken: Common, Elven, Gnoll, Orc, Undercommon.

Skills and feats: Craft (Alchemy) +25, Appraise +25, Craft (candlemaking) +23, Disguise +1, Hide +4, Intuit direction -1, Jump +15, Listen +23, Move silently +11, Open lock +23, Scry +27, Search +4, Spot +24; Alertness, Ambidexterity, Lightning reflexes, Martial weapon proficiency (dagger), Skill focus (scry), Skill focus (craft).

Areas of Interest

The Allied Craftsman Guild has three primary fields of concern. First, its members are responsible for crafting and selling the majority

of the goods for sale in Sheoloth. They own their own workshops and are generally specialized, selling items such as shoes, candles, or other goods they make themselves from raw materials. Secondly, its members are involved in the creation or sale of raw materials. This includes silk, wood, bone, or other materials used by craftsmen to produce finished goods. Lastly, the guild has purchased virtually all of the warehouse space in Sheoloth and uses it to store goods for the guild. It charges a nominal fee (1gp per month per 10 ft. cube of storage space) for craftsmen who are members of the guild, but a fairly steep charge (50gp per month per 10 ft. cube of storage space) for all others. The profits from their warehouses are considerable and give the guild a great deal of economic muscle in the city.

Campaign Hooks

The easiest way for characters to become involved with the guild is as guards or enforcers. The guild has a lot of offices and its members

have thousands of workshops in the city, all of which must be protected from gangs and other criminals. The Network, for example, sometimes tries to shake down the local craftspeople, hoping to leech a little of their profits away for its own uses. Guards can expect relatively high pay (based on the campaign world, this should be roughly 10% above the average pay for a mercenary guard) and the benefits of a 10% discount on all goods created and sold by the guild's members.

On the other hand, Arlitha is always looking for ways to expand the grasp of the guild and has lately been working on a protection racket that will effectively make even non-members pay their dues. She will gladly hire adventurers to break a few legs or kill a craftsman or two to get non-guilded craftsmen to pay protection money. Characters could be hired by this cruel drow to help her with her plans, or they could be hired by a coalition of free craftsmen who want to be protected from Arlitha's thugs.

Enemies

The greatest enemy faced by the guild is the number of crooks and thugs on the streets of Sheoloth. Small gangs number in their dozens and they prey on any who they feel are weaker than themselves. This means workshop owners are often shaken down for cash or goods and must either pay the extortion or suffer injury or possible death.

Allies

The nobility and clergy of Sheoloth see the ACG as a useful tool to keep the economy of the city on an even keel. Though it does add a bit to the price of all the goods sold in the city, it protects craftsmen and the populace from sudden market crashes. Though it receives no direct support from those who rule the city, the ACG does have their ear and the guild does influence the law of the land.



MAGIC OF THE DROW

The drow are adept at both arcane and divine magic. Though the females regard the use of divine magic as a gift of the Dark Mother not to be treated lightly, the males see arcane magic as a tool to be used and abused in whatever manner they see fit. Their powerful intellect coupled with their long lifespans and perverse natures have provided the males of drow society with the impetus to create their own twists on arcane magic.

In this chapter, you will find all the information you need to add Necromantic Domination, Fleshbuilding, and Virurgy to your campaigns. Whether using the power of the undead to bind living slaves to the will of a drow master, constructing buildings from the bodies of slaves, or setting loose a magical plague to carry your will into the world, you will have the tools at your disposal to make use of these unique drow magical processes.

NECROMANTIC DOMINATION

Though the undead are easy for a talented spellcaster to control, the living can be more problematic and difficult to subvert. As a result, drow nobles have long experimented with ways to use the undead as a tool to control the living. Though inefficient, the resultant practice of necromantic domination is often the only way for a drow to control a truly powerful being.

In short, the process ties the life force of a living creature to the negative energy generated by the undead. While skeletons and zombies can be used for this process, it is sometimes difficult to generate enough energy with such simple creatures. Wraiths, wights, and vampires are all very popular for this type of magic, as their more sophisticated, powerful energies can better control larger or more powerful life forces.

Using this type of magic, a drow is able to control even the strongest living creature, provided he has enough undead to draw

upon. Dragons, celestials, even other drow have all been controlled through necromantic domination.

It is the raw power of this type of magic that makes it most feared and mistrusted by the drow and their clergy. Though a priestess can certainly respect the right of a noble wizard to harness a dragon as a palace guard, she is certainly not going to be happy about having such powerful creatures enslaved by mere males. In Sheoloth, much as in other drow cities, the use of necromantic domination is allowed, but tightly controlled. Controlling a creature with more than 10 HD requires the permission of the Church of the Dark Mother, which can take anywhere from a month to a year to obtain. This means there are normally dozens of illegally controlled creatures lurking on the grounds of noble estates or in hidden laboratories. Should the Church ever find out about such creatures, they would surely demand their destruction, and will probably levy stiff penalties and fines against the offender. See "Legalities" below, for more information.

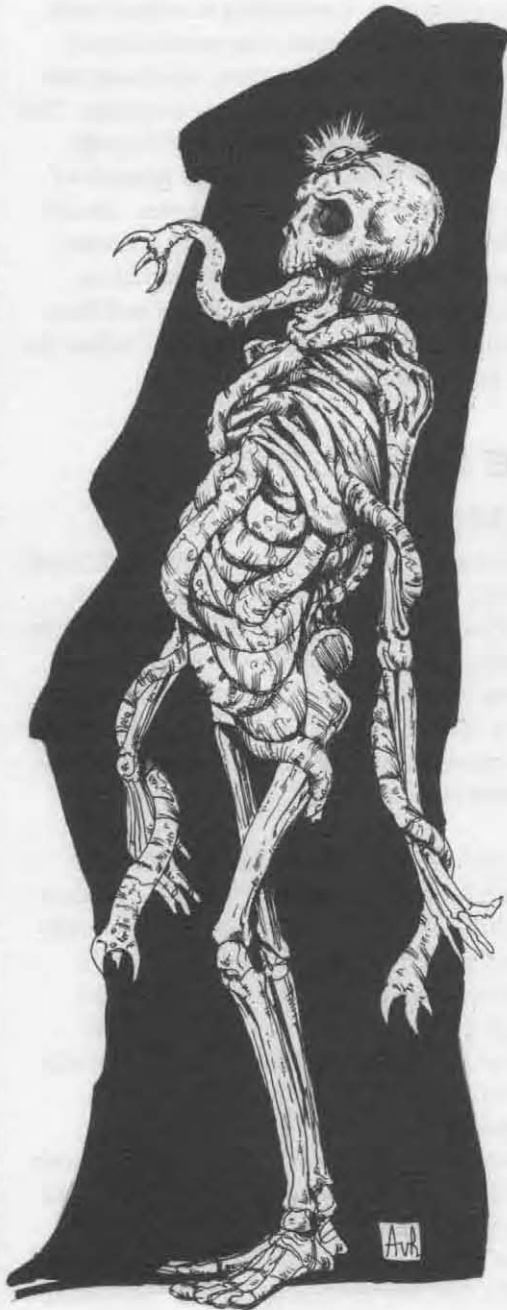
THE SECRET OF DOMINATION

The domination of a living creature is a difficult practice, especially when that creature is powerful and alien to the caster. A drow able to cast fifth-level arcane spells can easily control another drow through the use of the *dominate person* spell, but doing the same to a dragon or other powerful creature is not possible without the most powerful magic.

This problem has been pored over by drow wizards for millennia. Never happy to do their own dirty work, most drow would vastly prefer to have powerful agents slaved to their will, creatures they could control *and* which had enough power to actually carry through the plans of their dark elf masters. Until relatively recently, however, the only solution was to dominate a humanoid creature or gain the ultimate in arcane power to dominate a monster. Even then, the control over the creature was far from perfect and the dominated beings would balk at particularly dangerous commands. Clearly, this was not acceptable.



Even less acceptable was the chance of the domination being resisted entirely. To the drow, the concept of any creature resisting their magical wiles was unthinkable and wizards and sorcerers struggled to overcome this last obstacle. They researched the spells of their ancient ancestors and studied the alien magic of the creatures they captured and summoned from distant planes. Demons and devils were tortured and killed for the arcane knowledge held within their horned skulls, until at last; the pieces began to fall into place.



By studying the spells used to control their demonic servitors, the arcane spellcasters began to understand how they were able to exert such domination over obviously powerful creatures. They extrapolated the information thus gained and pushed it forward, coupling it with the necromantic rites of the gravebond. The result, of course, was necromantic domination.

The secret was the tying of the living soul to the dead corpse and negative energy of zombies, skeletons, and other undead creatures. Though difficult and time consuming, this method of control completely subjugates the will of the dominated creature by holding its spirit between life and death. Though a creature may attempt to resist such powerful influences, ultimately it finds itself unable to fight the will of the wizard who has so deftly bound its spirit.

On the other hand, the entire procedure requires a great deal of time and effort, not to mention a particularly large (or powerful) collection of undead. This can be very difficult to conceal from those who wish to stop you, so extreme care must be taken if you do not wish to run afoul of the local clergy or other authorities.

THE PROCESS OF DOMINATION

While controlling others is an admirable goal, it is not easy to make best use of necromantic domination. Wizards have spent a year or more in preparation, slowly amassing a large enough group of undead to serve their needs and learning enough about their target to control it. The following steps explain how to undertake the process of necromantic domination.

Select a Target

Domination is not a random process. In order to use the power of necromantic domination, you must carefully choose your target and make all preparations for that target. Though your target may be of any level or have any number of hit dice, more powerful creatures require more extensive preparations and pose a much greater danger to the would-be-dominator. The Games Master does not have to inform you of the total levels or HD of the creature you select,

either, which can make this stage a little trickier. Underestimate your target, and you may find yourself with far too few undead to control the target you selected.

A successful Gather Information check (DC 20) can be used to determine the approximate level of any creature living in a town, with a margin of error of 1d4. The Games Master should determine whether the estimate is high or low, but should not tell the player of the character conducting the necromantic domination.

Determining the HD of another type of creature, such as a dragon or other monster, is a bit more hit and miss. An appropriate (as determined by the Games Master) Knowledge check (DC 20) can be attempted to deduce the approximate (within 1d4) HD of the creature in question. As with Gather Information, above, the Games Master should determine this variance, whether positive or negative, but should not tell the character performing the Necromantic Domination.

Determine Necessary Undead

You must have a serious number of undead on hand if you attempt to dominate a powerful creature. For every level and/or HD of the creature you wish to dominate, you must have 3 HD worth of undead on hand. You may choose to have more undead to use in the process, as doing so will offer you a safety net and can help overcome the natural resistance of the creature you target. While this is not always necessary, few wizards will take the risk of not having a few extra undead on hand in the event the target proves more dangerous than originally intended.

Note that these undead do not have to be under your control, but they do have to be in the room – exactly how you wish to constrain undead you do not control is up to you.

Prepare Ritual Chamber

The ritual chamber must be large enough to contain the target of your domination and the undead needed to dominate the creature (see below). You must inscribe upon the floor a circle of binding that must fully surround the creature to be dominated. This ‘circle’ does not have to be a truly circular shape, but must be

large enough to allow the creature to fit inside. The circle is 5-foot thick, which must be taken into account when it is inscribed. The materials used to inscribe the circle are not expensive, requiring only 10gp per 5-foot square the circle fills.

Inscribing the circle is time consuming, requiring one day per 5-foot square. You must also succeed at a Spellcraft skill check (DC 15 + 1 per 5-foot square filled by the circle). The Games Master should make this check for you, as you will not know if you succeeded or failed until the time the spell is cast. While one failed skill check does not doom the circle, if you fail at three or more skill checks, the circle will not have the power to constrain the creature you intend to dominate, which will have disastrous results when the spell is cast.

Prepare Undead

The undead used in the process do not have to be of any particular type, but the more undead you have to use, the more expensive the preparations. Each undead must have a 50gp piece of obsidian set into their forehead. If you control the undead, this probably is not a difficult task, though it can be expensive. If the undead are not under your control, obviously this could be more of a challenge. These undead do not have to be restrained or otherwise held in place, but they must remain within the ritual chamber from the time they are prepared until the ritual is performed. It is permissible to construct a corral or room within a room to hold the undead in place, but they must all remain within the ritual chamber at all times once they are prepared.

Immaterial undead may be used for this process, using crushed obsidian scattered through their bodies rather than set into their foreheads, but you will need to find some way to constrain them if you do not control them.

Perform Ritual

Unlike many types of arcane magic, Necromantic Domination does not require the casting of any spell or the use of any magical item. The ritual in question is very powerful, however, and those without the Spellcraft and Knowledge (arcana) skill may find themselves



over their head once the ritual begins. It is permissible, however, for a wizard or other arcane character to perform the ritual on behalf of another person, though that person must have prepared the room (though not necessarily the undead) himself. Again, for those without ranks in the Spellcraft skill, this can be a suicidal undertaking.

The ritual requires ten minutes per HD of the target creature to perform. At the end of every minute, the character performing the ritual must make a successful Spellcraft or Knowledge (arcana) skill check (DC 20 + 1 per HD of the target creature). While a single failure does not end the ritual, and even two failures can be recovered from, three or more failures on these skill checks results in the sudden and explosive end to the ritual.

When a ritual is failed, the ritual circle becomes overcharged with negative energy released from the undead. This destroys all the undead in the ritual chamber, permanently and irrevocably, and also causes 1d6 hit points of damage per hit die or level of the target creature to all others in the room. This damage cannot be avoided or reduced in any way – it is a direct assault on the life force of those performing or observing the ritual, who have already had their souls laid bare by their involvement in the ritual in the first place.

It is possible to greatly improve the chances of succeeding at the skill checks required during the ritual by taking the proper precautions and enlisting the assistance of others skilled in the arcane arts. The various methods available to improve the chances of success are detailed below. Unless otherwise noted, all of the assistants must be at least half of your relevant caster level to be of any aid at all.

Overkill

Using additional undead, beyond those necessary for the domination itself, can improve the chances of success. For each additional 5 HD worth of undead, beyond those required for the domination, in the ritual chamber, the performer of the ritual gains a +1 circumstance bonus to your Spellcraft or Knowledge (arcana) checks to perform the ritual. This bonus cannot increase beyond +10.

Sacrifice

While negative energy is perfect for the binding and can help give you the edge you need to bring down particularly powerful creatures, spilled blood can have just as beneficial an effect. For every 2 HD or levels of living, intelligent creatures you sacrifice, you gain a +1 circumstance bonus to your Spellcraft or Knowledge (arcana) checks made while performing the ritual. This bonus cannot increase beyond +10. This sacrifice can occur at any point during the ritual and is no more elaborate than simply killing the creature (or creatures) in question.

Expensive Materials

By multiplying the cost of the materials used when inscribing the ritual circle by 10, you gain a +3 circumstance bonus to your Knowledge (arcana) or Spellcraft checks while performing the ritual. More expensive materials allow you more control over the circle's composition and more precision in its design and layout, which translates to greater ease in conducting the ritual. Using more expensive materials also grants a +5 circumstance bonus to all checks made while creating the circle.

Assistants

Having assistants work with you during the ritual can be a significant boost to your own skill. Each assistant must make a successful Knowledge (arcana) check (DC 10). If they succeed, you gain a +1 circumstance bonus to your own skill checks while performing this ritual. Working with assistants can be taxing, however, as you must coordinate their actions and incantations with your own. This limits the number of assistants you may have working with you to a number equal to your Wisdom bonus. Assistants must either be one half your caster level or have a school focus in necromancy. Any necromancer can aid you, regardless of level.

If you succeed at conducting the ritual (that is, you fail fewer than three of your required skill checks while performing the ritual, you have succeeded and your subject is now necromantically dominated. Because of the strain involved in this effort for your assistants, they must all make a Fortitude saving throw against a DC equal to the character level or hit

dice of the dominated creature. Failure brings unconsciousness for 1d4 hours. If the effort to dominate the creature failed, the DC of this save is increased by +5. It is a long standing tradition in Sheoloth that the assistant who stays unconscious longest 'volunteers' to become an undead in the ritual master's service.

Domination

At the instant you complete the ritual successfully, your target is transported to your ritual chamber (provided the target was on the same plane as you are at the time the ritual was completed) and is bound inside the ritual circle. If the target was not on the same plane, it feels a momentary tug, but the ritual is momentarily held at bay. As soon as the target enters the proper plane, however, the pull of the ritual will be completed and bring the target to the ritual circle. At least one dragon lives in exile on the astral plane, plotting how to destroy his dominators before he can return to the prime material.

The target is considered incapacitated for 1d10 rounds after its arrival, as the effects of the ritual set in and the domination is completed. During this time, the target is helpless and may take no actions, whatsoever.

Once the initial shock wears off, the target discovers the truth of the situation. No longer his own master, the enslaved creature must now obey the whims of another.

A dominated creature is still able to think for itself and knows full well that it is a slave. It is deprived of its ability to act on its own, however, and must obey the commands of its new master. Unlike the *dominate monster* spell, there is no chance for the target to resist these commands, even if they involve suicidal risks or blatant disregard for self preservation. Commanded to destroy itself, a necromantically dominated target will do what it is asked without a second thought. Though the creature may curse its master as it dies, it is powerless to stop itself from obeying the commands it is given.

In effect, the dominated creature becomes a puppet for its new master. Whatever it is told to do, it does to the best of its ability, working on the intent of its masters words rather than the

letter of his command. What the master wills, the slave will attempt to bring to fruition, no matter the cost to himself. The domination is also permanent, and may not be broken by most magical means (see below).

Limits of the Necromantic Domination Ritual

Despite appearances, there are limits to the magic of the domination ritual. First, the domination can only persist as long as the undead remain in the ritual chamber in sufficient numbers. If, at any time, fewer undead remain in the ritual chamber than are needed to control the target, the domination ends immediately and the slave is free to act as it wills – often to the detriment of its former master. As part of their domination, creatures are prevented from ever attacking or otherwise harming (through action or inaction) the undead used to bind them. Likewise, the undead are unable to harm the creature to which they are bound by the power of the ritual and the intimate bond forged between the living and the dead.

Actions that directly threaten the life of the dominated creature also strain the domination and the link used to maintain it. The creature is allowed a Will save (DC 20). If this save is successful, the link forged by the domination ritual is damaged and erodes, causing the destruction of 1 HD of undead used in the binding. If there are no 1 HD creatures remaining in the ritual chamber, the backlash of resistance destroys the one with the fewest HD. There is no saving throw allowed for the undead to avoid this fate, nor can the master of the domination ritual prevent the loss of his prized undead. This type of retaliation by the dominated creature is good reason to keep many, many extra undead holed up in the ritual chamber at all times.

Time can erode the bond, as well. Every week, 1d4 HD of undead in the ritual chamber are converted to negative energy and absorbed by the ritual's link to the target creature. As with the loss of undead, above, only entire creatures are destroyed – if 2 HD worth of undead are destroyed and you only have a group of 4HD undead remaining, one of those undead will be destroyed. This cannot be stopped but must be prepared for – cutting it too close to the bone





is a sure way for a necromantic master to lose control over one of his slaves and risk them running free.

The circle used in the original binding is key to maintaining the power of the ritual, as well. If this circle is ever defaced, the power of the ritual flares out of control and begins burning away the undead in the ritual area at a drastic rate. When the circle is damaged (see boxed text) 1d4 HD worth of undead are destroyed per hour. This requires the destruction of a full undead creature, as in the above examples, which can quickly deplete the reserves of animated corpses or other undead.

While these limitations are hardly enough to dissuade the power hungry from using the necromantic domination rituals, they are enough to provide a very element of risk to those who choose to enslave others using dark magic. Push the slave too hard, or fail to provide sufficient undead to maintain the link, and the creature will surely slip free of the ritual's control, with disastrous results.

The Broken Circle

Defacing a ritual circle used in a necromantic domination is not difficult, but it does take time. Defacing a 5-foot square of the ritual circle requires 10 full minutes. While this is not nearly as long as it takes to create the circle in the first place, it does give the circle's creator the chance to stop those who would deface the circle and repair any damage done by meddling fools.

If the defacement of the circle is stopped before a full 10 minutes has passed on any single 5-foot square, the circle can be repaired in a half hour with a successful Spellcraft check (DC 15). If a 5-foot square is fully defaced, however, it must be redrawn, which requires a full day and a Spellcraft check (DC 20).

A circle cannot be inadvertently defaced. The inks and other materials used in its creation are indelible and difficult to rub out or otherwise mar. A few undead wandering back and forth over the circle will not destroy it, but a determined adventurer with a hatchet and a few minutes time just might.

While a circle is defaced, the undead are destroyed at a prodigious rate, as detailed above. Would be necromantic slavers should be prepared for this eventuality and keep a good store of undead on hand if they want to avoid the sudden loss of one of their prized slaves.

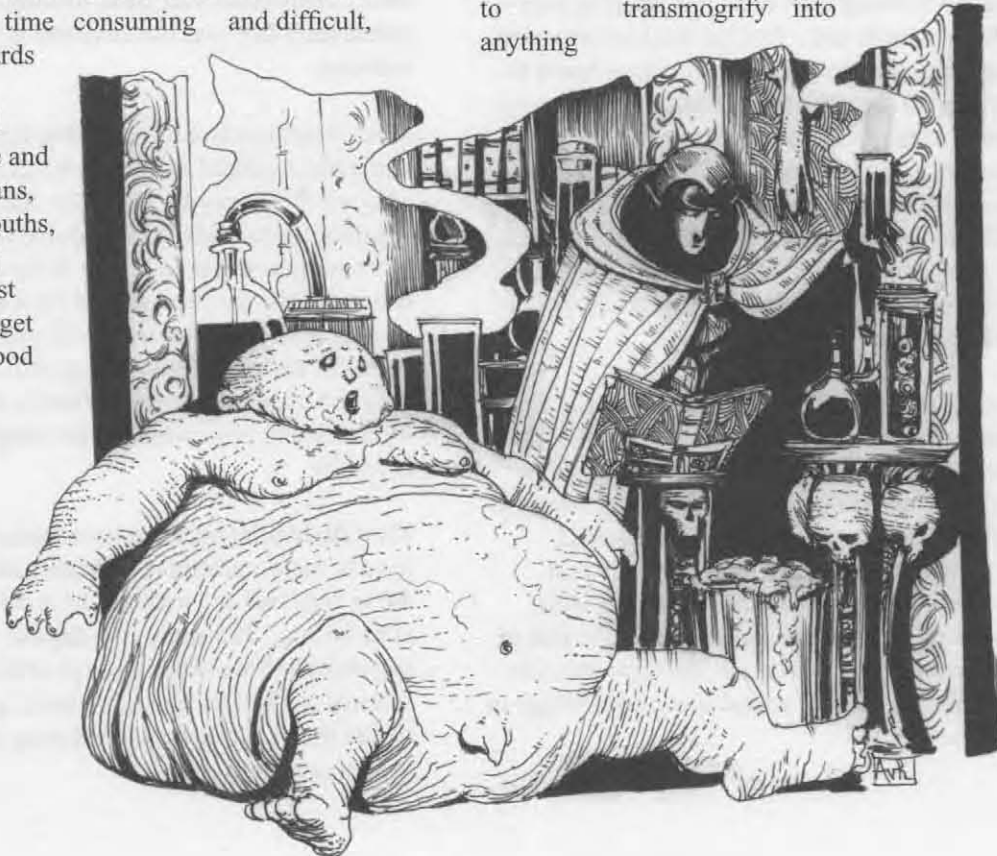
Freed Slaves

If a dominated creature is ever freed, as detailed above, it is free to do whatever it wants. This is why most powerful slaves are kept chained and caged while the necromantic domination is in place. If they do break free, then, they are much less likely to cause a serious catastrophe than they would if they were free to rampage about.

The response of most freed slaves is to immediately do everything in their power to destroy their former masters. Not surprisingly the undead involved in the ritual have similar feelings and are no longer controlled by their former master. This can create a very uncomfortable situation and is the reason most ritual chambers are located far below ground in areas from which escape is quite difficult.

FLESHBUILDING

Though fleshcrafting is a popular drow profession and fleshcrafted slaves can draw a very pretty copper from wealthy customers, the fleshcrafting guild has lately begun looking into other, more extreme uses for the flesh of slaves. The result is fleshbuilding, the process of creating entire rooms, buildings, and even fortifications from the bodies of slaves. This process is time consuming and difficult, but the rewards are living rooms filled with strange and pulsing organs, drooling mouths, and wailing mouths – just the thing to get the drow blood pumping.



Body Building

Fleshcrafters strive to make every room from a single organism to preserve the seamless appearance and allow each room to have a character all its own. This requires very large subjects, or subjects which have been grotesquely bloated through the use of alchemical concoctions and diets rich in fats and protein. The flesh of mushrooms and waste scraps of meat are commonly ground into a thick sludge to feed the subjects. The table below shows the construction capacity of creatures of various sizes.

Creature Size Category	Number of Flesh Tiles
Small	½
Medium	5
Large	40
Huge	320
Colossal	2,500

Creatures of size Tiny or smaller are useless for fleshbuilding. Their frail bodies and tiny biomasses make them too difficult to transmogrify into anything

other than screaming doilies, though the drow do love their screaming doilies.

A flesh tile is equivalent to a 10-foot x 10-foot tile measuring 6 inches thick. This is the standard size used in construction, though it can be broken down into 5-foot tiles to accommodate smaller rooms or narrow passages.

Preparing the Material

Subjects brought in for fleshbuilding are never ready to go right out of the gate. Instead, the fleshcrafters must prepare them through the use of alchemical potions and the aforementioned fatty, protein-rich diet. This increases the elasticity of their body and bones, while also allowing the fleshcrafters to stretch the tissues and provoke skin and bone to grow at a greatly accelerated rate. Only living, breathing animals are suitable for fleshbuilding. The creature must have a circulatory structure, a skeletal system, and identifiable internal organs to qualify as fleshbuilding material.

A creature requires one day of preparation for every flesh tile it will eventually be used to create. During this time, the fleshcrafters pump it full to bursting with food, flay open its skin to force growth and allow the internal organs to bloat and use Craft (Alchemy) to turn bones to cartilage so it can be shaped and distorted to the wishes of the fleshcrafter. This requires 100gp worth of materials, food, and other supplies each day, but the work can be performed without any skill check by any drow (or other creature) with the Fleshcrafting feat (see *The Quintessential Drow* for more information about other types of fleshcrafting).

In cases where very large creatures cannot be found, the fleshcrafters are able to increase the size and mass of any creature of size Small or larger by one category. This, however, requires eight times as long to prepare the material as normal and also doubles the weekly cost of materials, food, and other supplies. Thus, increasing the size of a Large creature to that of a Huge creature will require 320 days and cost 200 gp per week (for a total cost of 64,000gp) to prepare.

Building With Skin

Once the creature is fully prepared and transported to the construction site, it can be transmogrified into the living room. Each day, a single fleshcrafter can extrude and place 2 tiles worth of fleshbuilding with a successful Fleshcrafting check (DC 15). All fleshcrafted tiles must be touching at the end of every day, though they may be laid end to end if the fleshcrafter so desires.

Multiple fleshcrafters may work on a single room, though each requires 10-square feet of space to do his work.

Buying Fleshrooms

The fleshcrafter guild will normally charge 500gp per tile placed, allowing them to make a tidy profit for their efforts.

Properties of the Flesh

Walls built from flesh are treated as if they were wood for hardness and damage-absorbing purposes. They are, however, immune to most forms of non-magical fire simply because the flesh is wet and does not readily burn. As an added bonus, walls of flesh will regrow and repair themselves over time, healing 2d6 hit points each day until the structure is completely restored.

Flesh structures live off digesting the waste materials produced by those who live within a house. For every 10 flesh tiles, the structure requires one pound of table scraps, offal, or other organic waste each day. If the structure does not have the needed food for a day, every 10-foot x 10-foot section of wall suffers 1d4 hit points of damage. This damage will not heal until the required amount of food is available for the house, after which point it begins to heal normally.

Most fleshbuilt structures have feeding orifices in each room, making it a simple task to dump food into the wall and let it absorb it at its leisure. The walls also dispose of their surprisingly little waste through orifices in the external walls, which exude a thick, pungent sludge that is normally sluiced away into the sewers each day.

VIRURGY

The use of disease as a vector for magical effects is gaining popularity amongst the followers of the Filth-eater. Though unpredictable and quite difficult to control once set into motion, virurgical spells are quite capable of drastically enhancing the power of those spellcasters not slain by their own ill-planned plagues.

The Seeds of Disease

Illness is feared by the drow, who see it as a sign of weakness. Jumping from body to body, diseases taint those they infect and drain their vital essences. It is this behaviour some perverse drow have decided to tap for their own benefit. By tying portions of their magic to a natural disease, then releasing the disease into the wild, the drow can draw upon the drained essences of others to power their magic. This can be very useful, but it can have dire repercussions should the drow become ill himself.

Using Virurgy requires the Virurgist to belong to the Cult of the Filth-eater (Web of the Dark Mother, pg 218, for information about this heretical offshoot).

Acquiring Diseases

Disease is never in short supply in a drow city. The dank environs of the underdark, the horrible conditions of the slaves and the poor, and the often poor waste management solutions, makes these subterranean metropolises natural breeding grounds for all kinds of disease. If a virurgist does not wish to purchase disease samples, he may attempt to find them himself. This requires a visit to the Hordes or other slum-like areas, and a successful Knowledge (Diseases) check with a DC equal to the save DC of the disease being sought. The Games Master is the final arbiter of which diseases can be found, but at most times, there is at least one creature beset by any of the ingested, inhaled, or contact diseases found in the *Core Rulebook II*.

Diseased tissues, fluids, or other samples may then be stored in glass or metal containers for later use. Note that a disease must be used within its incubation period or it loses its ability to infect others.

Mummy Rot and Magical Diseases

No magical disease may be used for virurgical purposes. The magic inherent in the disease prevents the virurgist from implanting his own magic into the disease organism. Those who attempt to tamper with such diseases are always considered to have failed their Spellcraft check to prepare the disease (see below) and must run the risk of infection themselves.

Preparing Diseases

Once a disease is found and a sample taken, the virurgist must spend a full eight hours working with the sample to infuse it with his magical essence. At the end of this time, the Virurgist makes a Spellcraft skill check (DC equal to the save DC of the disease). If successful, the Virurgist may infuse the disease with a number of levels of spells equal to his Intelligence modifier. These spell levels take the form of spell slots, which may not be used again until the disease takes root and begins to spread. An entire spell slot must be used for each level – you may use four spell levels in the form of one fourth-level slot, but you may not put three spell levels into a fourth-level slot.

If the Spellcraft check fails, the virurgist may have infected himself with the disease and must immediately make a Fortitude save (DC equal to the disease's save DC + 2). If the save succeeds, the virurgist is safe, but otherwise he suffers the effects of the disease as normal.

Releasing the Disease

When the disease is prepared, the virurgist simply walks through a crowded area (such as the Hordes, the Glory Crypt, or other areas



where many drow or slaves congregate). He scatters the disease sample about, sprinkling it on the clothes or skin of unlucky passersby or slipping it into the food of nearby diners. The release takes no more than an hour.

Incubation

The disease will always take its maximum incubation period from the time it is released. This is a simple bookkeeping mechanism, which makes it easier to track the effectiveness of the virurgical operation. At the end of this incubation period, the virurgist may begin reaping the rewards of his efforts.

The Spread

At the end of its first incubation period, the

disease may infect 1d10 random individuals, as determined by the Games Master. The Games Master should make the saving throw for each of these drow and determine how many are actually infected by the disease.

At the end of another incubation period, one half of the original victims will have recovered from their disease, either naturally or as a result of magical healing. However, 2d10 individuals are now potentially infected during the second phase of the disease. Each incubation period thereafter, the number of individuals infected doubles (so 4d10 during the third incubation period, 8d10 during the fourth incubation period, and so on). One half of all previously infected individuals die or are cured at the end of each incubation period.



This continues until such time as the Games Master rolls more ones on his roll to determine the number of infected individuals than he rolls any other number. At this point, the spread of the disease halts and the number of infected drow decreases by half during each incubation period until there are no more infected creatures.

The Benefits

During each day in which any creatures are infected, the virurgist gains a number of spell levels equal to the total number of currently infected creatures. These spell levels may be used to prepare additional spells (or simply cast them, if the virurgist is a sorcerer or other spellcaster able to dynamically cast spells), though the level of additional spells may not be higher than

the virurgist's Intelligence modifier. Spells prepared or cast in this way may be affected by metamagic feats as normal, but the virurgist may never mix-and-match his own levels with the bonus levels provided by the virurgical preparations.

The Drawback

During each incubation cycle, there is a cumulative 10% chance of the virurgist becoming infected by his own magically enhanced disease. If this occurs, things go downhill quickly for the virurgist. He suffers a -10 penalty to all Saving Throws to resist the disease, and the disease always causes an additional point of ability damage during each day of the disease's progression. Even worse, the disease can only be magically cured. Furthermore, any cleric who cures the disease will be immediately aware of its strange nature, which can lead to some very unpleasant questions for the virurgist.

Even after he is healed, the virurgist retains the scars of the disease, and one point of the damage suffered becomes permanent.

Virurgy and the Law

The Church of the Dark Mother despises virurgy as a waste of drow lives for the power of a very few others. The nobles are fearful of this practice, as well, because it eats away at the safety of the city and may intrude upon their lives in very unpleasant ways. After all, even a noble is not immune to all diseases and his lowly servants may bring the spoor of death into his house on their hands or clothes.

Because of this, the practice is outlawed in Sheoloth. Anyone found engaging in Virurgy within the boundaries of the city will be summarily executed and their body burnt, the ashes tossed down the nearest well. The drow are nothing if not dedicated to self-preservation and they will act against those who threaten them from within with extreme prejudice.

This means very few practice virurgy, but those who do take great pains to cover their tracks and keep their secrets deeply hidden.

It was her first time leaving the store and Blade was watching her closely. Two months had passed and while her reflexes were coming along admirably, this was still very risky. He had her cowed and covered in a black sepia, an ink that would make her appear drow, but it was not the reaction of others he was worried about. If she was ever going to bolt, this would be the time. It was a loyalty test of sorts, one he had to admit he hoped she would pass. He told himself it was because of all the work he had put into her and the wasted hours that having to kill her would mean. Yes, that was it.

On their short trip around the Sun Gate, he kept her at arms length around the more crowded areas, but when they got to the commons, he let her move out a bit. She was always in line of sight, but he gave her the illusion of free rein to see what she would do with it. The dagger in his hand was there for her if she ran, but it proved to be unnecessary.

In fact, getting her to move more than ten feet from him was the real difficulty. Rather than running, the girl hovered as close as he would let her get. It became obvious that she would rather be within range of his weapons than anywhere the drow that plied their trades and spun their webs of conspiracy and treachery in the streets of the Sun Gate. Just the sight of a virurgist scraping a dead flayer's body with a hand trowel, bursting sores along its pallid flesh and filling small vials with the ichor, had her behind him in a flash. He could not help but appreciate the survival reaction. To be honest, he could not stand the disease mages either.

Steering clear of the wizard and the pack of Filtheater cultists serving him as lookouts, Blade brought her back to the shop and made her a hot cup of blackmold tea. He made it double sweet for her, not as the treat she took it for, but to hide the taste of the antidote he slipped into it while it brewed. That was for the poison in her black skin ink, the one that would have killed her in another six hours. He was glad to know he could trust her to stay now, but Blade was never one to take chances.

DARKNESS AND HERESY

The drow are evil, there is no disputing the fact. They embrace their dark natures and revel in acts of evil that cause other races to shudder with disgust and dread. But there are aspects of drow culture that even they choose to ignore, preferring to avoid them rather than deal with the truth of their evil. Only the darkest amongst the drow dare to trifle in these areas, where nightmares become real and death awaits even the powerful.

THE INCABULOS HERESY

The most infamous of all the drow heresies, the Incabulos is the fusion of the arcane and divine. Its followers use drow sacrifices to attract the attention of the mighty Dark Mother and her cohorts, then siphon off their power using powerful arcane rites. Though difficult and dangerous, this gives the Incabulos access to the powers of both types of magic without reducing their facility with either. A properly prepared Incabulos is able to wield healing magic as readily as throw fireballs, making these heretics a fearsome force within the city.

On the other hand, the Incabulos require significant preparation time in order to make the most of their abilities – without the stolen power of the divine, they cannot make use of clerical magic of any sort. This weakness is all that prevents them revealing themselves to the wizards of the Witch Daggers to form a powerful alliance and drive the priestesses from the city. As they struggle daily to find a way around the ritual preparations required to harness divine energy, the followers of the Incabulos must remain hidden lest their enemies root them out and destroy them.

The Dark Mother's View of the Heresy

The church of the Dark Mother has had very few encounters with those who follow the Incabulos, but they were enough to fill the priestesses with dire foreboding should the heresy every bloom

into a religion of its own. The root of this fear is the fact that the church relies on being the only conduit to the power of the drow gods and goddesses. If it became known that there were other methods to reach out to the divine, it is very likely that the churches of Sheoloth would be in dire straits, indeed.

The church is currently unaware of the rituals the Incabulos heretics must use to fuel their divine spellcasting. The church has thus far avoided open conflict with the Incabulos to prevent the display of divine powers at the hands of their enemies, but if they ever discover the ritual requirements, the priestesses will certainly waste no time in attacking the Incabulos wherever they can find them.

The worst fear of the church is the loss of control the Incabulos heretics represent; after all, if anyone can tap into the powers of the divine, what purpose do the priestesses really serve?

Discovery of the Incabulos Rituals

These ancient rituals were discovered by a mortificant during a war with the deep gnomes. In an effort to draw down the power of the divine, the mortificant sacrificed a dozen drow who served with him, consuming their flesh and drinking their blood in an orgy of violence that lasted for days. When he emerged from his sanctuary, he was vitalized, charged with divine power and purpose. Years of experimentation gave the mortificant, who was named Incabulos, the insight he needed to codify and perfect his rituals.

These were then handed down to specific members of his servitor cult, to preserve and use for the benefit of Incabulos and other mortificants. When Incabulos died, however, his servitor cult did not attach itself to another mortificant and instead chose to break out on their own. The sorcerers in their number began to alter the rituals, which led to the current form used today.

Performing the Ritual

To perform the Incabulos ritual, a sorcerer (and only a pure sorcerer, with no other arcane spellcasting levels) must first possess the Incabulos feat. This feat indicates the sorcerer

has been trained in the sacred rites and is able to make use of them. Those who do not possess this feat also do not possess the knowledge necessary to complete the rituals and gain no benefit from aping them, even if they are provided with step-by-step instructions.

The ritual performer must gather a number of drow sacrifices and ritually prepare them. The incabulite must have total hit dice, or levels, of drow gathered equal to the total spell levels of divine spells he wishes to capture with his ritual. The ritual performer may not gather any divine spells of a level higher than the highest level of arcane spells he can cast, nor may he capture more per level than he can cast of arcane spells. The spells the incabulite wishes to capture must be declared prior to the ritual performance and may not be changed thereafter. Preparation requires two hours per hit die or level of the

gathered sacrificial victims. The incabulite must prepare the victims as quickly as possible, though he may take 4 hour breaks each day to rest, he must spend the rest of his time preparing the victims for their deaths. If he stops for more than 4 hours in a day, the incabulite must start the entire process anew the following day.

Ritual preparations consist of torture and abuse of all types. The victims are often left barely conscious with serious wounds and hideous mutilations inflicted upon their flesh. The ritual calls for extreme pain and terror, in order to excite the passions of the Dark Mother and her minions, and the incabulites follow their teachings to the letter.

Immediately following the preparation of the final victim, the sacrifice begins. The Incabulite completes the next portion of the ritual in a mere

She crouched in the case box underneath one of the weapons rack, quiet and still just as Blade had taught her. The box had been built for her, a concealed door let her in and out from a hollow crawlspace in the wall, and the view through its slats let her watch the main room of the shop from full concealment. During the hours in which Blade's Blades was open, she was either here watching for anyone stupid enough to rob the store or upstairs training.

Today, a strangely garbed customer in clothing made of what looked like living flesh dyed red and stretched into a cloaked robe had caught her attention. He came in, looked around the store with a look of disinterest until all the other shoppers had left, and then approached the counter where Blade stood, watching him intently. The drow was not apparently armed, but Blade looked wary of him nonetheless.

The man took a black pouch from one of the robe's twitching pockets and laid it on the counter. With gloved hands, Blade opened it and examined its contents. From her vantage point, the girl could not see what he was looking at, but the glimmers around the edge of the bag suggested jewels instead of coins. The value of the pouch must have been satisfactory, because Blade closed it and slipped into his own pocket. He left the counter and reappeared shortly with a foot long box of imported surface wood.

She tilted her head to see what was inside when the flesh-garbed man opened it. She could only glimpse the edge of a wavy bladed knife of red metal decorated in black jewels. He examined it closely without lifting it out of its box. With an accepting nod, he closed the case and turned to go. From Blade's face, she could tell he was glad to see the man go.

A few minutes later, she was at the spot against the counter wall where he could hear her voice but she was still hidden. 'Who was that, lord, and what kind of dagger did you sell him?'

Blade was used to her incessant questions by now, so much so that he did not even bother to make empty threats about knifing her when she asked them. 'A member of an order secret enough not to tell you their name and open enough that you'll eventually hear of them anyway. The dagger's a sacrificial piece, one that captures a great deal more of a victim's power in their blood than any other blade can.'

Then, also quietly, he added, 'And before you ask, I sold it to him because if I hadn't, seven more like him would have come in here tonight, taken it, and killed us both. Now get back to your post.'

hour by ritually slashing through the femoral arteries of his victims. A few squirts of blood are collected from each of the victims, along with scraps of flesh. The blood and flesh are boiled together in a lead cup and the contents consumed by the incubite. After a full night's rest, the incubite emerges, ready to cast divine spells.

Benefits of the Ritual

The incubite may now cast the spells he captured as if were a cleric of the same level as his current sorcerer levels. However, for every divine spell he casts, the incubite must either sacrifice two arcane spells of the same level as the divine spell or one spell two levels higher than the divine spell. In addition, any spell modified by the Wisdom of a cleric is now modified by the Charisma of the sorcerer when he casts the spell.

Limits of the Incubulos Ritual

As long as the incubite is satisfied with the spells he captured, he does not need to perform the ritual again and may continue to use those divine spells (as outlined above) each day, as long as he has the spell slots available to power them. However, if the incubite wishes to add more spells to those he has captured, or wishes to change the spells he has captured, he must perform the entire ritual over again. This effectively wipes away any spells he had previously captured, so the entire process, including new sacrifices must be completed from the start.

THE WOVEN MOTHERS

Not all heretical beliefs come from outside the church of the Dark Mother. The Woven Mothers is a small, heretical sect dedicated to preserving the wisdom and power of the priestesses far beyond their natural life span. In a direct violation of the decree disallowing drow to create intelligent undead, the church of the Dark Mother has secretly engaged in just such a process for centuries. Though there heresy is totally unknown beyond a very small circle of priestesses, it is a powerful secret that could bring great trouble to the church if it is ever revealed. Should a member of the Witch Daggers ever learn of this heretical

behaviour, for example, it could certainly be used by them to extort reduced restrictions on their experiments or permission to create intelligent undead of their own (such as lichens). The priestesses thus protect this information viciously and will stop at nothing to silence those who learn of the Woven Mothers.

Creating a Woven Mother

Though drow are incredibly long-lived, even the dark elves eventually grow old, wither, and die as the weight of years crushes them beneath its relentless burden. Though most priestesses are allowed to succumb to the inevitable, the highest ranking members of the Church of the Dark Mother are granted eternal unlife, as a result of the Rite of the Woven Mother.

The rite itself can only be performed by a cleric capable of casting 9th-level spells, but must be performed in a location sacred to the Dark Mother (such as the Sanctuary of the Woven in Sheoloth). No more than six priestesses ever know this ritual at any given time, and they pass their knowledge to others only after ascending to undeath.

It requires a full nine days to prepare a drow for her conversion to a Woven Mother. During each of the first three days, the priestess is bathed in fragrant oils and the blood of three drow infants, symbolically returning to the days of her youth. During each of the second three days, the priestess mates with and then murders three male drow, symbolizing the dominant days of her maturity. Finally, during each of the final three days, the priestess must drink three poisons, symbolizing her descent into the grave. At this point, the ritual begins, with the priestess paralyzed and near death from the poisons coursing through her veins.

The entire ritual takes a mere nine hours, with each hour mimicking the activities of one of the days of the ritual preparation. During the first three hours, starving drow infants are nestled against the dying body of the priestess and allowed to suckle at wounds opened by tiny knives wielded by the presiding priestesses. Male slaves are fed bits of the ritual target's flesh during the next three hours, and are then either slain or allowed to die from the poison

lingering in the flesh. And, during each of the final hours, one acolyte of the Dark Mother is slain and laid next to the priestess to fuel her transformation into the unlife.

Ovarisites then descend and cover the priestess and her slain acolytes in layer after layer of thick webbing, encasing them all in a sticky burial shroud. In three days, the priestesses peel back the cocoon to reveal whether or not the ritual succeeded.

At this point, the potential woven mother must succeed at a Will saving throw (DC 25). If she is successful, she has been transformed into a woven mother and may begin her unlife. The bodies of the acolytes, in this case, have been reduced to dust as their vital essences infused the priestess to fuel her transition to a new state of being. The Woven Mother template is applied to the priestess and her new life begins.

If the priestess fails her saving throw, however, the cocoon reveals only the rotting corpses of the acolytes and the priestess, their bodies clotted with the stinking webbing. Such failures are burned immediately and forgotten.

The Role of the Woven Mothers

Woven mothers are a link to the past, a living record of all that has transpired in Sheoloth. They guide the priestesses of the Dark Mother, offering advice and historical perspective to help the church survive the turbulence of drow society.

The heretical nature of the Woven Mothers ensures they will never be seen outside the Sanctuary of the Woven. This hidden chamber, deep within the black body of the Church of the Dark Mother, is expertly concealed and layered in magical defences designed to thwart all attempts to detect it or its occupants. The woven mothers, for their part, are able to exist comfortably here, and communicate regularly with the high priestesses who visit them.

The Woven Mother Template

Hit Dice: Increase to d12

Speed: Same as character

AC: The woven mother has +10 natural armor.

Damage: The woven mother gains a touch attack that inflicts a deadly poison that leeches the life from those affected by it. This touch attack causes 1d8 hit points of damage (all of which is negative energy damage). Those who suffer damage from this touch attack must also make a successful Will save (DC 10 + ½ the woven mother's levels or hit die + the woven mother's Wisdom modifier) or be poisoned. This poison is known as the Mother's Kiss and has a primary damage of 1d4 points of permanent Constitution damage and a secondary damage of 1d8 points of permanent Constitution damage.

Special Attacks: The woven mother retains all the character's special attacks and also gains those listed below. The save DC against these special attacks is always 10 + ½ the woven mother's levels or hit die + the woven mother's Wisdom modifier.

Hate's Halo (Su): The woven mother becomes surrounded by a blue-black glow that prevents all who are not priestesses of the woven mother from approaching within 20-feet of her current location; attempting to come nearer to the woven mother require a successful Will save during each round, or the subject immediately attempts to move beyond the range of the halo.

Condemnation (Su): Once per round, the woven mother may condemn any target she can see. If this target fails its Will save, it suffers an immediate -2 morale penalty to Strength, Dexterity, and Constitution, and may not take the full attack action. This penalty persists for 1d10 hours, but each target may only be the target of condemnation once per round.

Hellish Allure (Su): The woven mother is horribly attractive, despite her undead state. If she concentrates her attention on a single character and performs no other actions for the round, the woven mother may infatuate that target. The character must succeed at a Will save or be unable to take any hostile action against the woven mother for 1d6 rounds.

Spells: The woven mother retains all spellcasting ability she enjoyed during her life.



In addition, she is treated as if her Wisdom were 2 points higher than it actually is for purposes of determining the number of spells she may cast each day and the DC for resisting the effects of those spells.

Special Qualities: The woven mother retains all special qualities enjoyed by the character during life, as well as those detailed below. In addition, she also gains the undead type.

Turn Resistance (Ex): While inside a temple of the Dark Mother, the woven mother cannot be turned.

Damage Reduction (Su): The woven mother enjoys damage reduction 5/magic.

Immunities (Ex): The woven mother is immune to cold, electricity, polymorph, and all mind-affecting attacks.

Saves: Same as the character.

Abilities: The woven mother gains +4 Strength and +6 Charisma, but as an undead has no Constitution score.

Skills: Same as the character.

Feats: Same as the character.

Climate/Terrain: Never found outside of a drow temple to the Dark Mother

Organization: Normally found with 1d4 other woven mothers.



Challenge Rating: Same as the character +4.

Treasure: None.

Alignment: Always neutral evil.

Advancement: By character class.

When encountered, the woven mother appears as a young drow female, entirely naked save for a thin coating of translucent webs. Her beauty is astounding, but her eyes are filled with hatred and blaze with an infernal purple light. Though there is little doubt of her evil, there are many who cannot resist the charms of a woven mother and spend their final moments blissfully staring into her eyes as she rips out their throat.

WARD DESCRIPTIONS KEY AND BUILDING TYPES

In the following sections, each of the wards of Sheoloth is discussed in detail. To make finding information about a ward easy to find within its specific section, each section contains the same information, in the same order. This key details the structure of these sections to facilitate their use. Below, each section of the ward descriptions is described, with information on how it can be used in your game.

TITLE

Simply put, the title is the official name of the ward, along with the names the populace commonly use to refer to the ward.

AT A GLANCE

This section provides a thumbnail description of the ward, including likely first impressions and the overall feel of the ward. Use this to provide atmosphere for your players, and as a quick way to differentiate one ward from another. Crystal Spine, for example, is crowded but clean, while the Hordes are crowded and stink of filth left to rot in the gutter. Small details in this section can paint a vivid picture for those who visit the ward for the first time.

HISTORY

The history of the ward is provided here, as well as, detailing its origins and important events which occurred in the ward during the history of Sheoloth.

ALLEGIANCES

The allegiances tie into the power centres of

the city (see pg 56: Powers of Sheoloth). Each ward of the city has one or more allegiances to one of these power groups. These allegiances are listed in order of importance in the ward and should be used as a guideline to determine the reactions of Non Player Characters towards each other and to Player Characters as they are encountered. In general, an allegiance is used to determine who the people of the ward are responsible to, or who they work for. Though most wards have more than one allegiance, the highest allegiances always override the lower allegiances in determining the actions of Non Player Characters.

For example: The Crystalline Spine has allegiances to the Church of the Dark Mother, The Church of the Gravemother, and the Luzkar Estate, in that order of importance. If the characters want a local merchant to cut them a deal on some goods, the Non Player Character will only do so if it does not violate his allegiance to the Luzkar Estate. On the other hand, if a priestess from the Church of the Dark Mother shows up and makes a demand that the shop's profits be turned over for the day, the merchant is likely to just obey the order and do what he is told, because the Church is a greater allegiance than the Luzkar Estate.

The allegiances are meant to add some flavour and detail to the city. While they are good guidelines to use, there are cases where the allegiances may be bent or broken on an individual basis, depending on the circumstances at hand. These are drow, after all, so there is no telling the kind of mischief they will get up to when left to their own devices, allegiances or no. Allegiance information can even be completely discounted and changed as the needs of the campaign or the actions of the Player Characters demand. Emotions and the ties of loyalty are very mutable in Sheoloth and as they change, so to do the power structures in the Sprawling City.

IMPORTANT PERSONAGES

Within each ward are a handful of drow who are influential or important to the ward as a whole. These are briefly described here, along with information on how they can be used in your campaign. As mentioned previously, the

Non Player Characters are left vague, with only a few reactions, a basic statistic line, and any notable place they might fill in a campaign listed in each description. This keeps them flexible enough to be tailored to the exact needs of a given campaign while still giving a feel for the character and his, her, or its appropriate power level.

BUYING/SELLING

In this section, a broad overview of the items that can be bought and sold in the ward is provided, along with any pricing modifiers (in the form of a positive or negative percentage) that apply to those types of items. The prices in the *Core Rulebook I* are used as a base, remember that characters can normally only get half the 'market value' of an item when they sell it to a merchant.

This section also contains information about specific shops in the region, though not all of the stores and craftsmen in an area can be discussed in detail. Complete lists of all shops in a ward can be found in Appendix A.

BUILDING TYPES OF SHEOLOTH

There are several different types of building in Sheoloth, each with its own purpose. This chapter provides descriptions for each type of building, as well as descriptions of each of the primary business types found within the city. Additional information about specific shops and structures in Sheoloth can be found in the following chapters, which detail the various wards of the city.

Building Types

The following are types of building found in Sheoloth.

Administration

The city of Sheoloth is run through a vast bureaucracy that begins in the Temple of the Dark Mother and spreads outward like an all-encompassing web. The administration buildings are where the ruling of the city takes place. They are tax-collection centres, stations for the Faceless Watch, and the offices of the

countless bureaucrats whose job it is to keep the city running according to the plans of its priestesses. These buildings are normally plain and woven from coarse construction fibre, but are also decorated with one or two of the spider sigils of the Dark Mother's temples.

The administrators who work within are rarely pleasant, as they are forced to keep tedious records and pass up copies of their books on a daily basis to those above them. The whole process is an industry all its own, which leaves all who take part in it in sour spirits.

Asylum

The society of the drow does not lend itself to nurturing families and pleasant home lives. On the contrary, blood and pain are part and parcel of every drow's life from the time they are torn from the broodmare's ruptured womb until they are tossed into the lake of fire. Most drow are strong enough to survive the daily abuses of their lives, exorcising their personal demons by inflicting horrors on those around them. A few, however, snap under the daily strain of being a drow, their minds becoming personal hells.

These unfortunate few often disappear into the wilds of the Shrieking Hive, where they consort with others who are as badly damaged as themselves. There are others, however, who do not withdraw but instead become a danger to themselves and others. These are confined to asylums, which are little better than prisons. Their small rooms are constructed from stone and have no light within them. Food is provided to them through slits in the door and water is poured through holes in the ceiling to collect in divots in the floor.

The drow used to kill those of their kind who were mentally unstable, but were ordered to stop by prophets of the Deceiver. The mad are now left to the tender mercies of that goddess, who watches over them and brews insane plans for their futures.

Barracks

The guards of the city are on duty for two weeks, then off for four days. During their tour

of duty, they are either in barracks where they rest, out on patrol, or training. All barracks are constructed from stone and are hewn from the cavern itself. They are not only places for soldiers to live, but are also used as barricades and cover in times of war.

Bathhouses

Coming in all shapes, sizes, and qualities, bathhouses are an important part of Sheoloth's culture. They are the meeting places of the common man, where all drow are able to bathe and speak freely. Most of the bathhouses also have private areas which can be rented for a few silver pieces and it is not unusual to see all manner of pairings and groupings head off for some privacy. Though sexual relations in the bathhouse are rare (given the drow propensity for violent couplings and torturous mating rituals), it is not at all uncommon to find quiet meetings in which such trysts are arranged.

Not at all shy, the drow most often bathe together in communal pools, though smaller houses often have simple heated tubs of copper or brass for their guests. Most baths are hot, heated from below by burning coal, but a few specialize in cold baths which use magic to keep the temperatures just above freezing. These so-called 'ice pools' are favourites of young drow who submerge themselves up to the neck and see who can stay below the longest.

Crypts

The drow despise proof of their own mortality and dispose of their dead as quickly as possible. In most cases, this involves throwing the corpse into

the nearest pool of lava (often simply dumping the corpse down the falling stair shaft). A few, however, are perverse in their enjoyment of the dead and their desire to explore the meaning and feelings of death. For these drow, the crypts were created. Bodies of the poor and those who have no family are often interred in the crypts, where any drow who wishes (and who pays the entry fee of 20gp) may enter and spend their time amongst the dead. Bodies may not be removed from crypts and no corpses can be animated within, but those who enter the crypts are otherwise unrestricted in their activities.

Most of these buildings are stone, lined with layers of perfumed webbing to contain the stench. The interiors are cramped, with bodies thrown up on narrow shelves or left lying in haphazard piles on the floor. Sometimes,



furniture is available, though it is always stained with all manner of bodily fluids and putrefied remains.

Fight Club

The drow love their violence anyway they can get it. Because the city understands the need for violence to erupt from time to time, they have provided the Fight Clubs. These are Watch-operated businesses that serve no food, offer no drinks or lodging, and provide nothing save a bare stone ring surrounded by bleachers or seats for spectators.

Those who wish to fight in the ring can do so, but must first register with the manager of the Fight Club, who is most often protected by several gladiators and bodyguards. Drow may choose to fight against other amateurs, slaves, or professional gladiators. The height of most nights include the gladiatorial matches, in which famed fighters square off for brutal battles. Most professionals do not fight to the death, though a few have begun doing so with the blessings of the Killer's church. Those so blessed are resurrected by the church if they die, as are their opponents.

The spectacle of the Fight Clubs is very up close and personal, with the seats so close to the rings that it is not unusual for a visitor to be sprayed with blood from a severed artery or shattered nose. The drow like it this way – they want to see the carnage, not just hear about it from their seats at the top of the coliseum.

The most popular fight clubs also engage in various sport fights, which include the popular prostitute brawls, greased halfling skewers, and other events based around cruel humour and savage bloodshed. There are even rumours of a 'cannibal club' hidden somewhere in Haedistika, where the participants are only allowed to bite and must consume the heart of their victim when they win.

The churches turn a blind eye to most of what goes on in here and the Watch only becomes involved if something truly disruptive happens. Riots are shut down, brawls between spectators are not.

Food Storage

The city is hungry, all the time. Food is grown in the fungal pits and imported, but there are times when this may not be possible, such as during a siege. To forestall the starvation of the citizenry, the priests and nobles came together to create a network of food storage facilities. These stone buildings are heavily guarded at all times and incorporate a number of preservative spells to keep the food within fresh and edible.

During a food shortage, the Watch will distribute food to the citizens, travelling door to door with lizard-drawn carts. Anyone who attempts to attack these deliveries or steal food from a storage facility is marked for death the instant they make their move.

Guild

The guild houses are used to collect membership fees, hold meetings, and store goods and materials needed by the guild members. The buildings are mostly made from construction webbing, though those which contain flammable supplies or acids are constructed from stone.

Hospital

In a city the size of Sheoloth, medical care is a necessity, especially in a city populated by creatures who enjoy inflicting violence upon one another. The majority of these hospitals are manned by a trained healer (Healing skill of 12 to 15) who charges a rate of 1 silver piece per day per point of skill. Hospitals normally have two to five beds, though some larger hospitals may have a dozen or more. The city does police these hospitals, imposing some basic standards for hygiene and patient mortality rates, but this is sporadic at best in the smaller or poorer neighbourhoods.

Despite the shaky quality of care available in these areas, for most drow there are no alternatives. The healers of the temples do not go out of their way to help the commoners and the costs (see below) can be prohibitively expensive.

Houses

The typical drow house is woven from smooth construction silk mixed with some masonry dust. The commoner will have a one-story

house, which is shared with his immediately family, often including as many as three generations in the same house. Given the relative rarity of drow births, this means most houses hold between five and nine individuals, depending on their size and location.

The wealthy will build their homes from stone, often magically treated to flow in fanciful shapes. Only those of merchant class or higher will ever entertain in their home, however, as the home is a private lair for the common drow. What goes on behind closed doors is a secret for the family and they are loathe to share any detail of their private life with others for fear it will be used against them.

Most drow spend as little time at home as possible (unless it is also their workplace) choosing instead to work or lounge at the bathhouses rather than spend time cooped up in their homes with their families.

Inns

Inns are popular in Sheoloth, if only to give families time away from one another. With the cramped quarters necessitated by living in a warren below the earth, many find it very nice to go to an inn, rent a room, and simply unwind in private.

Most inns are smallish, with an upper floor containing a handful of rooms (some of which the innkeeper and his family occupy) and a lower floor with a large common area, storage room, and kitchen. Inns serve meals at all hours of the day and night and are never closed. Even those with no vacancy keep the common room open to serve a meal or a drink to passers-by, so few of Sheoloth's inns are ever quiet.

By law, inns in Sheoloth may only serve one meal containing meat per day and may not serve any distilled alcohol to their patrons. This law came into being generations ago to quell the fighting between inn and tavern owners.

Merchants

Unlike craftsmen, merchants do not make anything. Instead they sell the goods provided by others or they provide a service. Most merchants are well-off in Sheoloth, with enough

money to maintain a separate business and residence. They buy from craftsmen and then resell their goods at a higher price, often along with the goods of many other craftsmen. This relationship works out for the craftsman, as he spends less time selling goods and more time making them, and for the merchant, who has no skill of his own to sell.

Merchants sell a wide variety of goods and services, often under the same roof. Unlike the craftsman who must specialize, merchants often capitalize on the synergy of having different goods available. An arms merchant, for example, probably also sells scabbards and harnesses, whereas the blacksmith who made the weapon in the first place would not have the other items for sale.

A merchant's building is normally created from construction webbing, though it may have a base of stone if the owner is particularly wealthy. Like all buildings in Sheoloth, a merchant's shop is often crowded and tangled with strands of webbing, making it difficult to navigate without jostling items from the shelves or sending a bit of glassware crashing to the floor.

Offices

Professional drow, such as scribes, doctors, and others who provide services which require a certain degree of training and higher education. Groups of craftspeople often share offices, as well, where they can store their daily take and arrange for their taxes to be paid. These buildings do not sell anything, though they may offer services if the owner is a professional himself.

Offices are all built from construction webbing and are clearly marked with the names of the owner and his profession.

Prisons

The drow do not have much use for prisons, but those they do have are houses of horror. When someone is found guilty of a crime, they are normally executed, sold into slavery for a specified period of time, or forced to pay a fine. Those who commit truly heinous crimes, however, are sentenced to prison terms.



All of Sheoloth's prisons are constructed from stone and surrounded by layers of construction webbing. The interiors are divided into long corridors which are lined with tubes carved into the walls. The tubes are filled with drow prisoners, whose feet are chained to one end and their necks chained at the other. Those convicted of the most severe crimes are positioned the lowest on the walls, where the excrement from above can flow down into their tubes.

With no room to move and little food, most drow atrophy badly in prison, losing weight at an alarming rate and suffering from malnutrition. They are periodically tortured by the introduction of stinging insects into their tubes and most are hopelessly mad within a few months of their incarceration.

Fleshcrafters are often allowed to purchase the most despicable of criminals from the prisons, turning these useless predators and criminals into construction materials for the pleasures of the city.

Religious

Religious buildings come in two types – houses of worship and places of business. Because the drow religion relies heavily on sacrifices and votive gifts to their dark gods, these businesses do a brisk trade selling the needed items. Priests may also purchase holy symbols or spell components at a church-operated business, further increasing the profit of the church. All such businesses are wholly owned and operated by the church, with acolytes handling the day-to-day operations.

The places of worship range from small shrines to larger temples. In all cases, they are manned by a priest or priestess at all times and are open at all hours of the day and night. Most places of worship are wrought from the stone around them and are adorned with dozens of icons and symbols depicting the god or goddess of their adulation, making it plain to all who pass where they may come to worship.

One of the more arcane laws of the city requires that all buildings within 50 ft. of a temple or shrine have a shorter roof than the religious building. This leads to many of the buildings surrounding the temples having strangely flat

roofs, or the temples having long, needle-thin spires to allow other buildings to grow vertically.

Taverns

Similar to inns, taverns have no rooms to rent. They are also allowed to serve all types of alcohol and may have dishes containing meat for sale more than once a day. Specializing in food and drink, taverns also tend to have nicer common rooms with bards on hand to entertain the patrons.

As in most cities, the tavern is a favourite meeting place for the populace and is where many a would-be-hireling finds prospective employer. But drow taverns are also known for their violence and the sudden, spontaneous duels which erupt within.

A few taverns are known for being male-only, giving the men a chance to get away from the domineering drow females and enjoy some time with other men. The Church of the Dark Mother publicly frowns on this practice as it implies that drow females are not ruling by right and should be avoided by men whenever possible. The Killer's priests, on the other hand, quietly promote this behaviour as it gives them areas in which to recruit for their demanding priesthood.

As spacious as possible most taverns try to keep their rooms well lit and open, encouraging visitors to mingle with one another, have a meal, and drink to their heart's content. They are almost all constructed of stone, as drunks, fire, and construction webbing are a poor mix for a business so often packed with customers.

Theatre

The drow are not big on plays or other types of entertainment common to the surface races. They do, however, enjoy many types of performance art including the striptease, self-mutilation, contortionists, freakish displays of any type, and any combination of the above. The theatres of the drow cater to these needs, allowing the drow to come and witness such spectacles up close and personal. Few of the theatres seat more than 100 people and many seat even fewer.

The drow pay quite well (from 10gp a seat and

up) to come view these performances, with more extreme entertainments costing the most. Paying to see a drow cut off his own fingers and toes, for example, probably runs around 20gp per seat. Seeing someone ritually flay themselves alive and then douse themselves in alcohol, on the other hand, will likely run upwards of 200gp per seat, often more.

Many of the artists who perform in theatres have an understanding with the Gravemother's priests, paying a portion of their proceeds for healing and restoration after their acts. The most popular events, however, are those with unwilling participants. Drow sold into slavery as a result of crime often attempt to pay off their debts by allowing themselves to be used in performance art, but few live to collect their reward.

Universities

Most drow receive their education at the local shrines and temples, which gives them a basic education and indoctrinates them into the ways of the drow. Nobles, merchants, and other wealthy families can pay to have their children educated by scribes and sages, however. These buildings are typically built from webbing and contain small classrooms in which five to ten students are trained at a time.

Classes cover reading, writing, and arithmetic, but also drow history, culture, and language. More arcane or divine teachings are handled in the Witch's Daggery or the temples, but only for the worthy. Most classes last six weeks and cost 100gp per student.

Warehouse

Storage is a premium concern amongst business people in Sheoloth. It is difficult to find space to keep one's belongings, much less the extra stock necessary to keep a store running. Warehouses are the current solution to the problem, with the Allied Craftsman Guild managing most of the warehouses in the city. These buildings are rarely fancy and are virtually always built of coarse construction webbing thrown together with just enough care to keep it from falling apart.

Warehouses keep guards on hand at all times,

though they are generally poorly paid and have little incentive to truly stop criminals from gaining access to the goods they are supposedly protecting. Some guards also supplement their income with bribes to look the other way when illicit goods arrive for storage, and even more are known for their willingness to talk about what they have seen stored over a pint of ale and a handful of gold coins.

Despite security concerns, these warehouses remain popular and are used often by all types of business people to store their goods. Without an alternative, they will remain a lucrative business for their owners and a fixture of Sheoloth society.

Water Storage

The wells provide clean, pure water for the people of Sheoloth, but there is always a chance they will stop functioning or be sabotaged in some way. The water storage buildings contain numerous large tanks which are filled with water from the wells on a daily basis. They are checked regularly (using divination spells) for poisons or other contaminants, ensuring a safe supply of water for the city in time of need.

Well

Sheoloth gets all of its drinking water from magical wells guarded by the Faceless Watch and treated as priceless resources by the clergy and nobility. The buildings housing a well are always constructed of stone and have a guard posted at all times. Those who live or operate a business in the area surrounding a well are given a small token which they can present to the guards at the well to gain access to the water within. Those without tokens are liable to be attacked if they go anywhere near the door to the well, as the Faceless Watch is very sensitive about the vulnerabilities the wells present. After all, a single poisoned well could wipe out a large section of a ward and several poisoned wells could spell the end of the city.

Workshop

There are thousands of workshops in Sheoloth, of all different types and sizes. At the most basic level, a workshop is simply where finished items are crafted from raw materials.



In practice, this also includes any places of business which are also homes. Thus, the rug merchant with his house over (or under) his business has a workshop, even though he doesn't create anything. All workshops in Sheoloth have an attached living quarter, either to one side, above, or below the workshop itself.

Workshops are most often created from stone cemented together with construction webbing. Because many workshops require fire for their business, it is rare to see one constructed entirely from webbing, as the danger would simply be too great.

BUSINESS TYPES

There are many different types of business in Sheoloth. The following are descriptions of those businesses and how they may differ from similar businesses in a surface community.

Alchemists

Sheoloth alchemists are also expert poisoners, able to create both cures and venoms for every occasion. While murder is, technically, still illegal in Sheoloth, the number of poisonings in the city tops double digits most days and the Faceless Watch are almost always powerless to stop these murders. While murders within a family are easily discovered, those from outside a circle of acquaintances are hardly ever solved, giving poisoners free reign with their deadly concoctions.

The alchemists, of course, enjoy this a great deal, because it means their sales of antidotes are also quite high. All poison antidotes have their prices tripled in Sheoloth, while all poisons have their costs reduced by one-third. By supplying poisons on the cheap, alchemists are able to drive up the cost of antidotes and turn a very tidy profit. A single poison vial sold to a murderer will not generate much profit, but the dozens of antidotes sold after the murder is discovered are enough to more than offset the costs.

Barbers

The drow have hospitals, so their barbers rarely perform any sort of serious medical operation as they might in other communities. Instead, the barbers cut and style hair and perform ritual

bloodletting for sacrificial purposes. Most of the barber shops in town have a vivid display of coloured glass vials which are used to contain blood spilled for sacrificial purposes. Both the Killer and the Dark Mother demand the blood of their followers on a regular basis and the barbers help them carry this out as painlessly as possible.

Bleachers

Spider silk has a silvery sheen before it is bleached. While some find this a pleasant appearance, it is difficult to dye and is almost never worn as-is. The bleachers have the unfortunate job of treating silk material so that it becomes translucent and ready to take a dye stain. The process takes days and involves a lot of lye and other chemicals, leaving most bleachers with pale spots covering their hands, faces, and arms.

Brothels

While the drow love their prostitutes, their brothels are the areas where the real money changes hands. Here, priests are on hand at all times to repair the damage done by clients and every depraved fantasy can be achieved. Hallucinogens are available for customers who want them, as are various pain killers or sensation enhancing drugs. Overall, brothels are much cleaner and in better repair than the simple cells of the prostitutes, though the activities here are much the same. A prostitute will usually begin their career in a brothel, moving onto their own place once they are too old or too used up to get the high coin required by the brothels.

Chandlers

The candlemakers of Sheoloth are famous for their tallow candles. In the absence of bees, the drow have learned to make exquisite candles from the fatty tissues of animals and other creatures. Sometimes used as simple light sources, most candles are for ritual purposes and are created from the bodies of specific types of creature.

Clock Makers

The clock makers of Sheoloth have gained an impressive name for themselves and their exports fetch enormous profits. Only allowed to sell 10 clocks beyond the borders of the city

each year, the clock makers long ago formed a guild to oversee which of their designs would be allowed into the outside world. The clocks that are exported often contain clever traps and curses which lash out at the unsuspecting buyers at specific times or dates.

Within the city, much simpler clocks adorn the faces of many administrative buildings and the homes of nobles. Few can afford a clock for their home, as it costs a whopping 5,000gp, but those who do are amazed at how accurate the clocks are.

Dairy Shops

The drow enjoy their milk and cheese as much as any surface dweller, but they are forced to enjoy it in much smaller quantities. The most common source of milk in Sheoloth are the diminutive goatspiders, which have been deformed by centuries of breeding to increase their udder size. The hybridized creatures are commonly kept in holding chambers beneath the shops, where they can be milked and the butter churned.

Distillers

Alcohol is enjoyed by many drow and the distillers of the city turn mushrooms, potatoes, and other plants and fungi into the hard alcohol favoured by the lower classes and soldiers of the city. The distillers often have their equipment below the shop itself, as the stench can be overbearing and easily drives customers from the store in search of fresh air.

Most drow alcohol is also mildly poisonous, producing cramping, hallucinations, and other difficulties when taken to excess. The number of drow who poison themselves remains constant year to year, at roughly one-half of one percent of the city's population.

Drapers

Once silk is thrown into threads and cords, drapers purchase it by the yard to create sheets of fabric. This process is not nearly as difficult as throwing the silk in the first place, but a single misstep can ruin an enormous sheet of silk. For this reason, owners of these shops are vigilant over the performance of their workers and do

not hesitate to beat or berate those who fail.

The most skilled drapers produce the so-called 'flesh fabrics' by combining silken sheets with a paste formed from the flesh and blood of living creatures. Halfling remains are said to produce the best material, but the most commonly used flesh and blood come from slaughtered livestock.

Fungal Treaters

Mushrooms play an important role in Sheoloth. The edible fungi are used for food, but their larger cousins are used for many other purposes. The very largest mushrooms, the *lashthurgha* or coffin mushrooms, grow over five feet in height and are often three feet in diameter. They take their name from their original use, as coffins for the royalty of the drow. When the practice of burying the dead was abandoned by the residents of Sheoloth, the mushrooms were instead used for a more practical purpose.

When treated with certain easily available salts and minerals, the flesh of the fungi hardens to the consistency and strength of wood. The fungal treaters of Sheoloth are the men and women who perform this operation. They harvest the great mushrooms from where they grow in the filth of the city, then haul them to their shops for treatment.

The caps are cut from the mushrooms and flattened beneath great stone weights to produce six-foot-diameter disks which are most often used as doorways or hatches between floors. The body of the mushroom is sliced into sections which are also flattened to form rectangles roughly 3 ft. wide by 5 ft. long. These are highly prized by both construction teams and artisans in Sheoloth.

A single plank of the mushroom 'wood' costs between 5 and 10gp, depending on its size and quality, while the disks run to about 25gp because the material of the cap tends to be smoother and easier to work with than the shaft.

Glassmakers

Glass is easy to come by in Sheoloth, as it is created from the sand created during the mining of the city. The black powder is ground fine and heated in great furnaces until it flows together



into a molten orange stream which can then be poured into sheets of glass. Used for windows, lanterns, clock faces, magnifying lenses, and other useful objects, glass still fetches a good price and those skilled in its creation can make a fine bit of coin for themselves.

A recent fad in Sheoloth is the creation of so-called mortuary glass. Slaves are tied into a tray and their faces coated with molten glass. When the glass cools it is removed from the charred remains and used to create delicate masks or wall decorations.

Grocers

Food comes into Sheoloth either from outside or from the growers of mushrooms beneath the city's waste disposal systems. Grocers take both forms of food and sell them together to their customers. When the Transfer Guild is doing well, these stores are filled with the smells of lush fruits and vegetables from the surface, but most times the earthy scent of mushrooms is all that greets customers.

Harness Makers

Spiders and lizards are the favoured mounts within the city, as both are small and agile enough to make their way through the often congested streets and tunnels of Sheoloth. Harness makers create the gear necessary to attach a saddle and bridle to these creatures, most often from silk or leather.

Harness makers also put together some very nice harnesses for slaves. From simple torso-worn labour harnesses to the more elaborate pleasure and pain harnesses which attach to the extremities and other areas, the slave harness is an art form all its own.

Importers

The laws of Sheoloth restrict the goods which can be imported from beyond the city. The Transfer Guild controls the contracts which guarantee these imports and distributes the goods to these stores, which then sell the goods. Because the distribution system is set up as an auction (unless you happen to be one of the more prominent members of the Guild), the type of goods that can be sold at an import store

vary from month to month. At the beginning of each month, when the importers get their stock in, they are mobbed by drow in search of new and exotic goods. The last half of the month is usually quite slow for the importers, who have nothing to do but wait for their next shipment and try to sell some of the less popular stock which did not move in the first part of the month.

Pawnbrokers

Goods change hands frequently in Sheoloth. Thievery is rampant and smugglers often find themselves needing to move hot goods from their possession to the inventory of someone else. This is where the pawnshops come in, with their willingness to accept goods from virtually anyone, selling them as-is with no guarantees and plausible deniability to the provenance of every item in the shop.

The Faceless Watch is not fond of pawnshops, but they also understand that shutting them down would be impossible. Instead, they tax the pawnshops heavily and harass the owners on a regular basis, staging surprise inspections and searches of the store inventory. The pawnbrokers do not seem to care, they just pass the cost on to the customers.

In general, it is most common for a pawnbroker to give roughly 30% of the actual value of any item they pawn. The more reputable shops give those who pawn items a ticket to claim their goods, though they must pay 40% of the item's actual worth to reclaim it. Most, however, simply take the item, mark it up by 25% and throw it back on the shelves for any buyer to pick up.

Prostitutes

In Sheoloth, sex is not the only thing prostitutes sell. They literally sell their bodies and minds, giving their customers the right to do with them as they please. There are prostitutes of all shapes, sizes, ages, and both sexes. Pretty, handsome, ugly, hideous, to those who seek their services it rarely matters. Most of the prostitutes work out of small rooms which bear more resemblance to torture chambers than to bedrooms. Chains, whips, braziers, tongs, pliers, and knives, these are the tools of the

prostitutes trade.

Customers find themselves presented with a simple option when they hire a prostitute – they can do anything they want, though they must pay the cost of repairing the damage, plus 50%. Priests of the Gravemother are often on call to cast spells to get the prostitutes back up on their feet in record time, which is how the cost is calculated.

A very elite group of prostitutes specialize in sex murders, allowing their customers to kill them. Frighteningly, these prostitutes have an extremely high incidence of pregnancy, as the hatred of their customers fuels their procreative systems. The Gravemother's priests charge nothing to bring these unfortunates back to



life, but they also claim the unborn child as their own. Ovarisites spirit the embryo away and implant it in a broodmare for the priests to recover later.

Most prostitutes do not last long in Sheoloth; one who can stick it out for more than a handful of years is considered a lifer, while most commit suicide or destroy themselves in other ways within a few months.

Saddlers and Spurriers

The mounts of Sheoloth cannot have a horse saddle thrown on their back. Instead, specialized saddles and spurs are created for the riders of the city's lizards and spiders. The saddles are most often attached to specialized harnesses created by specialized harness makers, who design each harness to fit the particular beast who will be wearing it.

Unlike horses, spiders and lizards do not take riders well and require extremely comfortable saddles and riding gear. If they are not comfortable or begin to feel constrained, these creatures are likely to bolt or even attempt to dislodge and attack their riders. Because of this, saddlers are paid very well for their efforts, with an average saddle going for more than 200gp.

Skinner

The citizens of Sheoloth understand the necessity of recycling goods, including bodies and body parts. The skinner makes their money removing the hides from creatures of all types, including slaves, husbands, wives, and children. Though most of their business comes from the skinning of the large lizards that live in the wilderness around Sheoloth, they do a good bit of custom skinning intelligent creatures, as well. Most of the skins they take are then sold to tanners, who prepare the hides for their eventual transformation into clothing or other items.

Silk Harvesters

Silk is an important part of the Sheoloth economy. It is used not only for clothes and ropes, but also for building homes and other structures. The construction webbing for

Sheoloth is created by specialized spiders which are kept in large pens below these shops. The spinnerets of these massive spiders jut up through the floors of the shops, where they can be reached by the harvesters. Each day, those who work in these shops stimulate the spiders web glands and extract the delicate filaments. The web strands are wound onto large cones, which are then sold to silk throwers to turn into silk thread.

The largest cost of this operation is feeding the spiders. They require flesh, though they are not particular as to which kind, and must be regularly fed an infusion of expensive alchemical solutions to stimulate web production and increase the strength of the web strands they produce. Most shops have five to seven spiders below their shops, each of which produces a cone of silk per day. The cones sell for 10gp to 15gp each, varying based on the quality and strength of the thread. A spider takes in roughly 8gp worth of chemicals and fluids each day, leaving the silk harvesters with only a small profit margin.

Those who fall on hard times often strike out into the wilds of the slums, such as the Hordes or Shrieking Hive, where they can procure the flesh for themselves. This cuts the cost of operating the business by one half, but exposes the shopkeeper to the dangerous task of killing other drow (or whatever creatures he finds), a considerable risk.

Silk Throwers

The cones produced by the silk harvesters are of no use to anyone until the fine strands of silk are woven into durable threads, cords, or sheets. This process is time consuming and difficult, as only the most skilled workers can produce the threads which are the basis for all other products produced from the silk.

To start, the throwers steam the silk cones, which loosens the natural adhesive of the silk and allows the strands to be prised off the cone and stretched onto the threading mechanism. The complex machine requires great skill to operate, as it twists the very delicate strands into threads by wrapping three separate strands around one another.

This process is repeated again and again, then the threads are wound into cords, which can be used to create sheets or other ropes. Because the production is limited by the number of thread-makers available at any one time, shops fight viciously over those with the best hand and most deft fingers. It is not uncommon, in fact, for kidnapping attempts against the workers to take place and the most skilled thread-weavers are sometimes kept in safe locations to prevent that from occurring.

In the worst cases, vengeful shop owners have been known to cripple the hands of their enemies' thread weavers, ruining their business and destroying the chance of that worker ever earning a living again. Though magic can cure such injuries, it is rare for an employer to want to spend that much money on a crippled worker – the thread weavers are valuable, but they are not irreplaceable.

Soap Makers

The drow prize their soap, not only for its ability to keep them clean but also for the way it makes them feel. Most soaps sold in Sheoloth are treated with mild intoxicants which are released on contact with the skin, turning a bath into a luxurious, sometimes overpowering, experience. Public bathhouses, where soap suds and bathers mingle throughout the day, are thus very popular.

The soaps of Sheoloth are famed throughout the Underdeep for their lathering qualities and the intoxicating scents and sensations they release when used. Soap is made from the fat of animals or intelligent beings, which is rendered by boiling and treated with lye. The process is extremely odiferous and any soap shop can be smelt long before it is actually seen. In Sheoloth, the most prized soaps are those made from the fat of executed criminals or other drow, which those who can afford it claim floods their bodies with the sensations of the person from whom the fat was taken.

Spice Merchants

The drow love their food, but they have a difficult time getting it spiced properly. Though they are able to raise the infernally hot lichen peppers in their lightless environment, they must

import sugar, cinnamon, or any other spices they want. Spice merchants sell their wares dearly because they are so hard to come by and are frequently targeted by thieves who can quickly sell the stolen goods to wealthy patrons.

Spider Merchants

Someone has to raise and sell all the spiders found in the city and the spider merchants are more than happy to fill that role. One can find any number of spiders for sale in one of these merchants, from the furry house pets favoured by many drow to the lumbering cargo and construction spiders used as beasts of burden by the city government and construction crews. As with most other shops, the spider merchants keep their stock below their store, in large stables. Ramps lead up and into the main shop or outside it to allow the spiders to enter and exit their cells.

Tanners

Sheoloth gets enough skins from the lizards and other creatures that live in the wilds around the city to support the local tanners. Lizard skins are by far the most common and their scaly hides are tanned into surprisingly supple, durable leather. Tanners also work with more unusual skins, often taken from the backs of slaves and worked into robes or cloaks for the drow. Wearing the flesh of another race is a mark of some status in the city of Sheoloth and tanners charge accordingly for their services. Dwarf and gnome are fairly common, with human and any type of surface elf hide bringing in the best prices.

Taxidermists

Taxidermists in Sheoloth tend to specialize in particular styles of preservation. The most popular are the shrunken corpses created through a lengthy and expensive process. The result are tiny bodies less than 1/5th their original size, correct in most every detail and retaining their features and proportions. These corpse dolls are sold for a few hundred gold pieces each and are sometimes articulated with wire-skeletons to allow their owners to pose them as they wish.

But taxidermists also specialize in the

preservation of undead servitors, with zombies topping their list. An unpreserved zombie can easily decay into a skeleton in a matter of years, but a preserved zombie (requiring a 100gp initial treatment fee and 10gp per year thereafter) can last almost indefinitely. Zombies preserved in this way smell faintly of cinnamon and alcohol, sparing their owners the further unpleasantness of the stench of decaying meat.

Tinker

The need to repair simple items such as pots and pans is the domain of the tinker, who also makes needles and other small tools. The tinkers used to travel from door to door but were accused of being spies during the Shrieking War and decided it would be best to settle into permanent shops to avoid such difficulties in the future. They have not yet shaken their duplicitous nature, however, and the term "Shifty as a tinker's limp" is a common slur they deal with daily.

Tobacco Merchants

The drow are victims of addictive nature and many have a serious tobacco dependency. This is fuelled by the so-called Blood Halfings, savage tribes who live just below the surface and tend vast gardens of potent, almost narcotic, tobacco. These halfings provide their goods to the Transfer Guild, who in turn forwards them to tobacco shops for sale.

Most of these shops are small and dark, allowing patrons to sample the wares in peace and quiet. Because a single bowl of tobacco can run upwards of 30gp in Sheoloth, customers want to be sure they are getting what they paid for. Smoking parlours are a popular part of these shops, consequently, and lucrative business can be made by those willing to act as bodyguards to ensure that the peace and quiet remains exactly that.



ASHEN BULWARK

This fortified ward was once the sole gate between the city of Sheoloth and the rest of the Underdeep. One of three military wards in the city of Sheoloth, the Ashen Bulwark is also the oldest. The troops hosted here, the Dust Corps, are battle hardened and ready for combat at a moment's notice. Stationed so near the Foreign Ward, the Ashen Bulwark shows more external influences than almost anywhere in Sheoloth. Though there are no foreigners allowed here (they must stop at the Charred Gate), clothing styles and the decorations of the shops often appear more dwarven or gnomish than dark elven.

Crowded with military barracks and administration offices, the ward also holds many houses and a wide variety of shops. The civilians who live in this ward make most of their money offering services to those who live in the Foreign Ward and most of the shop owners here trade extensively with the foreigners to keep their stores supplied.

The hottest spots in the Bulwark are the fight clubs here. All five are well-known for their outlandish fights and bloody special events. The soldiers in the area are not supposed to involve themselves in the fight clubs, but there are several prominent gladiators who are actually soldiers in disguise. While the

commanders of the area probably know all about this, they choose not to punish these gladiators, who are also most likely highly effective soldiers.

HISTORY

The Ashen Bulwark was created to protect the drow from invaders shortly after the Falling Stair intersected a series of tunnels. The Bulwark was placed at a chokepoint for the tunnels and became a hotly contested territory between the drow and the neighbouring derro. While the battle persisted for many years, the drow were eventually victorious. The skulls of derro can still be seen in many areas of the Ward, embedded in the stone walls or hanging over the doors of military barracks.



More recently, the Bulwark was the site of the final battle between the arcane heretics and the priestesses of the Dark Mother during the Shrieking War. The explosions of magical power left this area scarred and pitted, though not as badly as the Charred Gate. Still, the scars from the war can still be seen here, and small plaques dot the walls and floor of the ward to identify the key skirmishes of the battle.

The ward is now responsible for controlling the flow of foreigners into Sheoloth, a duty at which the soldiers here excel. Any foreigner found in the ward without the proper pass keys will be summarily executed, no matter their excuses. The soldiers have been trained to protect the city at all costs and will allow no one to endanger their mission.

ALLEGIANCES

Like all the military wards of the city, the Ashen Bulwark has two allegiances. It's primary allegiance is to the Church of the Dark Mother, which controls all military units in the city. Secondly, it is allied with the Church of the Killer, patron of all warriors who reside within Sheoloth.

The Ashen Bulwark is also allied with the Transfer Guild, which is responsible for regulating trade with the Foreign Ward, an important function for those who live within the ward.

IMPORTANT PERSONAGES

Donarag Shulthorg is the commander of the troops stationed in the Ashen Bulwark. He is a man of action and devotion, who has little time for pleasantries or foolishness. When not drilling his troops in the streets of the ward, he is training his sword skills in private, honing his ability with the dread blade *soulsipper*. Donarag has little time for the traders in the ward and firmly believes the entire area should be cleared of all but the military in order to better protect the city. His skills as a cleric are used primarily to lead his men in prayers and religious devotions at the appropriate times of the day. Donarag's booming voice can often

be heard across the city as he leads his men in prayer, though it is quickly drowned out by their passionate responses. Midnight and noon, the shouted prayers of the military can be heard echoing throughout the ward.

Donarag Shulthorg

Male elf (drow) Ftr15/Clr3: CR 19; Size M (5 ft., 3 in. tall); HD 15d10 + 3d8; hp 72; Init +5 (+1 Dex, +4 Improved initiative); Spd 30 ft.; AC 11 (+1 Dex); Attack +20/+15/+10/+5 melee, or +18/+13/+8/+3 ranged; SV Fort +12, Ref +7, Will +10; AL CE; Str 17, Dex 13, Con 10, Int 12, Wis 15, Cha 18.

Languages Spoken: Common, Draconic, Elven, Undercommon.

Skills and feats: Climb +9, Concentration +2, Craft +17, Hide +1, Jump +19, Knowledge +5, Knowledge (religion) +5.5, Listen +6, Move silently +1, Perform +7, Ride +5, Search +3, Spot +6, Tumble +2; Alertness, Blind-fight, Cleave, Combat casting, Dodge, Great Cleave, Improved critical (scimitar), Improved critical (shortbow), Improved initiative, Leadership, Power Attack, Point blank shot, Sunder, Weapon focus (scimitar), Weapon specialization (scimitar).

Cleric Domains: Destruction, War.

Cleric Spells Per Day: 4/3+1/2+1.

Often butting heads with Donarag, Shalalith Luzkar oversees the operations of the Transfer Guild in the region. A member of the Luzkar noble house, she is opposed to anything which impedes trade, including the frequent and intrusive searches launched against the spider-drawn wagons that pass through this ward. Their shouting matches are legendary and each has quietly attempted to poison or otherwise assassinate the other at least once. So passionate is their hatred for one another, many drow wonder when they will announce Shalalith's pregnancy.

Shalalith Luzkar

Female elf (drow) Exp10: CR 10; Size M (4 ft., 11 in. tall); HD 10d6; hp 29; Init +7 (+3 Dex, +4 Improved initiative); Spd 30 ft.; AC 13 (+3 Dex); Attack +9/+4 melee, or +10/+5 ranged; SV Fort +3, Ref +6, Will +6; AL CE; Str 14,

ASHEN BULWARK

Dex 17, Con 11, Int 17, Wis 9, Cha 15.

Languages Spoken: Common, Draconic, Elven, Gnome, Orc, Undercommon.

Skills and feats: Diplomacy +3, Disable device +16, Forgery +14, Heal +10, Hide +3, Innuendo +10, Intimidate +5, Jump +11, Knowledge (nature) +5, Listen +3, Move silently +3, Perform +15, Profession (trader) +14, Scry +14, Search +17, Spot +3, Tumble +4; Alertness, Improved initiative, Skill focus (profession), Weapon finesse (dagger).

BUYING AND SELLING

Footwear and furniture are the most popular trade items in this area, with drow coming from all over the city to purchase shoes and boots. The furniture is so popular due to the natural occurrence of some very vividly coloured minerals in the area, which are used to dye treated mushrooms to create brilliantly coloured furnishings.

Purchases of either footwear or furniture in this part of the city receive a +10% discount, for standard furniture or footwear, though the specialized furniture sold here actually costs 10% more than is listed in *Core Rulebook I*.

Noted Shops of the Ashen Bulwark

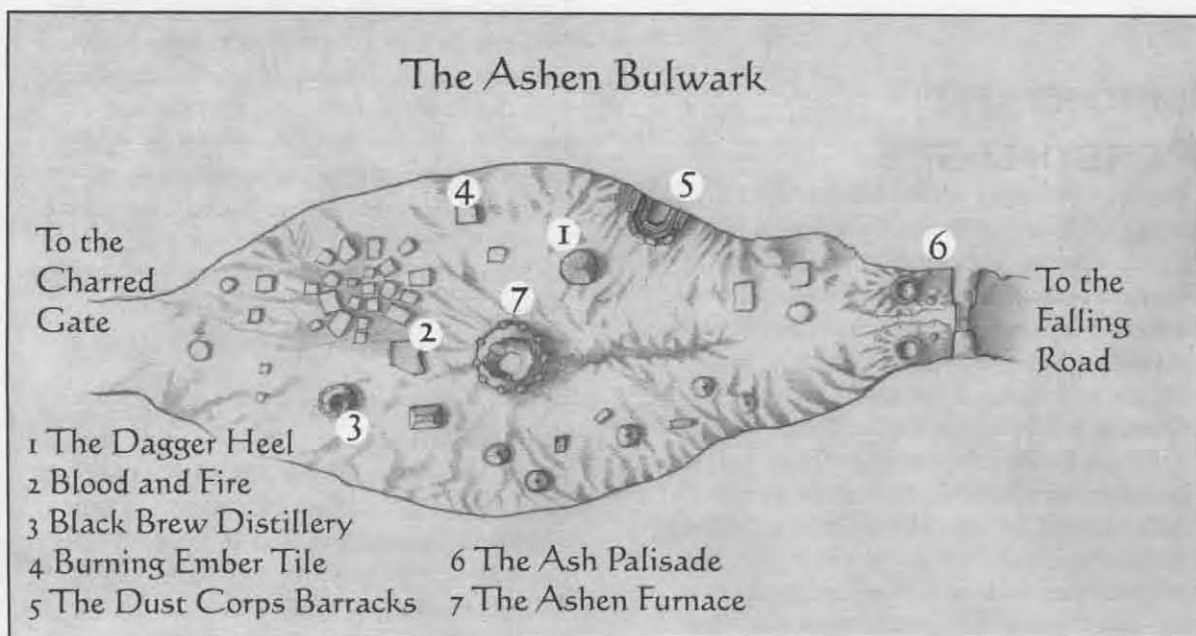
The following is a selection of shops found in the Ashen Bulwark.

1. The Dagger Heel

This popular store sells footwear that is beyond the norm. Any boot sold here contains a hidden compartment somewhere which can hold a single, Tiny item. The shoes are also tricked out with a clever hidden compartment, though in this case it is only capable of holding a small (2 inches x 3 inches) sheet of parchment or vellum.

The name of the store comes from its sign, which is actually a poorly drawn rendition of a knife dropping out of a compartment in a heel. Sadly, whoever painted the sign botched the job and it now looks as if the heel of the boot is a dagger.

Plot Hooks: A low-ranking member of the Artrabi family recently purchased, and then returned, a pair of slippers at the Dagger Heel. What she forgot was a small note hidden in the secret compartment of the shoe which contained a list of her informants' names in the city. If the note is discovered by anyone else, it could put the whole Artrabi information network in danger. The noble woman would use the power of her house to get the slippers back, but she can't – if they discover she wrote down the names of her contacts they will not be pleased. The characters are hired by the noble woman to retrieve the shoes (which were recently purchased by someone else, though she does not know who) before the note is discovered.



2. Blood and Fire

This fight club lives up to its name with gladiatorial spectacles involving gallons of the former and spitting plumes of the latter during each fight. The owner does not allow individual fights, only groups of three or more to a side. Combined with the relatively small fighting ring, the number of fighters on each side leads to all kinds of confusion and some brutal infighting. Whenever anyone steps outside the ring, curtains of flame erupt around the entire arena, causing 1d4 hit points of damage to everyone standing near the edges (Ref save (DC 15) for half).

Plot Hooks: The owner of the store is very curious about a recent group of fighters that are cleaning up in the ring here. Though they are making him a tidy chunk of change with their brutally efficient fighting style, he is worried that they are going to kill off too many of the other competitors and put him out of business. The characters are hired to have a word with the gladiators and convince them to back off for a few weeks. Of course, the characters may learn that the fighters are actually high-ranking members of the local military, which explains their efficient fighting style.

3. Black Brew Distillery

The dark, fungus-based alcohol brewed in this distillery smells strong enough to peel the paint off the walls and powerful enough to knock even hardened drinkers to their knees after a few glasses. The distillery does not intend to appeal to everyone, instead going for the lowest market. It sells its alcohol ridiculously cheaply, selling gallons of the stuff for just above the cost to make it. As a result, drunks from all over the city can be found here at the start of each day, waiting in line to get their jug of booze. Begging sometimes breaks out in front of the store, which ends in plenty of bloodshed as the local military swings by and kills a few beggars to get its point across.

Plot Hooks: The distillery actually has a dirty little secret. The brew itself contains low doses of a magical poison which the ovarisites find delightful to the taste. The owner can afford to sell the stuff so cheap because he receives regular payments from the ovarisites, who encourage him to

continue pumping the booze into the bellies of the local indigents and poor. The ovarisites then feed upon them, quietly and discretely. When a coalition of forces in the Shrieking Hive actually get their act together long enough to hire someone to investigate what they believe are vampire killings, the characters may discover the truth about the Ovarisites (see pg 215: The Shrieking Hive) for more information.

4. Burning Ember Tile

Tile is a popular decoration in the city and mosaics of coloured tile are frequently commissioned by the churches to decorate the stone in and around their temples. Burning Ember tile is a new group of artisans who specialize in creating murals from the cast-off tile shards they find in the rubbish bins of other shops. They have gained several prominent contracts with the Church of the Gravemother and, as a result, are now working around the city to make some very visible murals.

Plot Hooks: The owner of Burning Ember Tile, Suthril Sharas, is currently being taken for a ride by his employees. Though these drow are unimportant in the grand scheme of things, they are working for the Incabulos by scribbling certain symbols and runes on the backs of tile shards before they are put into place. This is part of a plan by the Incabulos to desecrate the religious sites of Sheoloth and, if it is ever discovered, will certainly lead to the death of everyone involved in the Burning Ember Tile's operations. The characters may stumble onto this plan while working on something entirely unrelated, or perhaps it can be used as a red



herring during an investigation of the Incabulos in the city.

Suthril Sharas

Male elf (drow) Exp10/Rog5: CR 15; Size M (5 ft., 0 in. tall); HD 10d6 + 5d6; hp 44; Init +5 (+5 Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 15 (+5 Dex); Attack +11/+6 melee, or +15/+10 ranged; SV Fort +4, Ref +12, Will +9; AL CE; Str 13, Dex 21, Con 11, Int 15, Wis 13, Cha 9.

Languages Spoken: Common, Draconic, Elven, Gnoll, Undercommon.

Skills and feats: Appraise +8, Balance +13, Bluff +11, Craft (mosaics) +16, Decipher script +8.5, Escape artist +18, Forgery +10, Hide +5, Innuendo +14, Intuit direction +15, Jump +9, Knowledge (religion) +7, Knowledge (arcana) +2, Listen +12, Move silently +13, Open lock +7, Profession (merchant) +16, Scry +3, Search +9, Spot +3, Wilderness lore +2; Ambidexterity, Improved unarmed strike, Quick draw, Skill focus (profession), Skill focus (listen), Skill focus (craft).

The girl had to struggle to keep up with Blade when he took her out and about in the city, but that was all part of her training. If she could not manage to both keep up and remain hidden at all times, she would never survive Sheoloth for long. He trusted her now just enough to expect her help if anyone attempted to attack him while he was taking care of business in other wards. He did not seriously expect she would be of any aid in actual combat, but a shouted warning before a hidden foe slipped a sword between his ribs could always be useful.

Today's trip was to an extravagant store in the Ashen Bulwark called the Dagger Heel. Run by an associate and a fellow member of the Shadowhands, this place and he had been in business together for years. It was time to drop off another shipment and collect his typical commission. He was amused to spot the girl out of the corner of his eye as the door closed behind him. She had only barely managed to slip in under the cover of his own shadow, a move he had just finished teaching her this week. It was impressive to see how quickly she picked these things up. With a few more years, she might be actually prove useful to his other 'vocation', but for now, she was still a raw, and sometimes rawly irritating, apprentice.

He met with the clerk on duty and showed him the signet that fetched the man's master. A short time later, Blade was haggling with his old comrade in the shadows over his cut from the latest round of compartment boot knives he had brought with him. These little daggers had a curved blade that hinged on a pivot and fit, when closed, in a compartment in the heel of a special kind of boot the store sold. The daggers only cost him thirty gold a piece to make, but he was not going to settle for anything less than fifty apiece.

The girl watched as the argument became more animated, but before she was forced to do something in support of her master, they came to an agreement and exchanged bags. The man got a new load of knives and Blade walked away from the counter with a bag of gold and a pair of compartment boots.

As they left, he tossed them to her with an amused look in his eyes. 'Here. A gift for your actions in the shop, little mouse.'

She quickly ditched her tattered shoes in preference for the new leather boots. 'But I didn't do anything, lord.' She was certainly not refusing the gift, but she did not understand why it had been made. Her confused look only amused Blade more.

'Exactly. If you had gotten involved, I would have had to kill either him or you, but you wanted to act. That's all that matters.' He did not explain any farther than that. More confused than ever, she followed him silently out of the ward.

THE BLOOD TITHE

Situated beneath the Glory Crypt, the Blood Tithe is a popular mercantile centre of the city. Those who cannot afford to purchase the goods found in the Glory Crypt often venture to the Blood Tithe for a taste of the exotic, but affordable.

AT A GLANCE

The Blood Tithe is situated in a massive, carved cavern. Stone pillars soar up from the floor of the cavern, dwarfing the tiny buildings huddled around the floor. At the tops of three of these pillars, canopies of glittering construction silk blossom to provide more space for shops and offices. From the floor of the cavern, these business glow with the shimmering luminance of their corpselights and the sounds of revelry from the many taverns of the upper floor float down on clouds of narcotic smoke.

The bottom floor, on the other hand, has more warehouses than other types of buildings. These storage facilities provide space and security for merchants from all over the Blood Tithe and the Glory Crypt, but they also provide an enormous opportunity for criminals of all types. The Faceless Watch is quite busy patrolling this area, keeping it clear of those who would like to break into the warehouses and make off with some of the goods stored there.

As a party area, the Blood Tithe is surpassed only by Haedistika for sheer spectacle. The taverns resting on the webs overhead are packed so close together they must constantly strive to set themselves apart, leading to all manner of garish displays meant to entice customers to enter. Strippers dancing in front of taverns are popular, as are fighters sparring, flame-eaters, and tattoo artists.

HISTORY

The Blood Tithe began its life as a storage facility for the Glory Crypt. As residences began to leave the Glory Crypt for caverns further from the surface, the businesses swarmed into the Glory Crypt and set up in the ruins

of the ancient elven fortress. The cavern that would become the Blood Tithe was near the Crypt and immediately became a prime location for warehouses. Business eventually spilled down into the Blood Tithe as they were forced out of the Glory Crypt by cutthroat competition. Within a few generations, the Blood Tithe was a secondary marketplace and entertainment area popular with drow of the middle and upper classes alike.

The ward takes its name from the practice originally conceived by the Church of the Dark Mother to tax warehouses. Owners and workers were required to make weekly donations of sacrificial blood to the Church of the Dark Mother. This practice has since died out and been replaced by the more practical (and profitable) tax system in place throughout Sheoloth today.

ALLEGIANCES

The Transfer Guild has a strong presence in this ward, as does the Allied Craftsmen's Guild. Due to the sheer number of criminal investments in the area, the Network and Shadowhands are also allegiances to consider when engaging in any activity within this ward.

IMPORTANT PERSONAGES

The chief tax collector of this ward, Kromiz Shalaf is the most powerful individual in the ward, despite being little more than a petty clerk within the Church of the Dark Mother. Still, he is responsible for handling all tax collection in the area and has been known to fudge the books one way or the other when dealing with the business owners in the area. His activities have remained secret so far, though those who operate shops or businesses in the ward understand that bribing Kromiz is the surest way to get one's taxes reduced and slighting him will certainly result in a sudden spike in owed taxes.

Kromiz Shalaf

Male elf (drow) Exp10: CR 10; Size M (5 ft., 5 in. tall); HD 10d6-10; hp 22; Init +3 (+3 Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 13 (+3 Dex); Attack +6/+1 melee, or +10/+5 ranged; SV Fort +2, Ref +6, Will +8; AL CE; Str 9, Dex 17, Con 8, Int 17, Wis 13, Cha 9.



Languages Spoken: Common, Elven, Gnome, Orc, Undercommon.

Skills and feats: Appraise +8, Balance +14, Disable device +15, Hide +3, Intimidate +12, Innuendo +15, Knowledge +15, Knowledge (religion) +4, Listen +5, Move silently +18, Profession (Tax Collector) +16, Scry +9, Search +5, Spot +5; Alertness, Ambidexterity, Skill focus (profession), Skill focus (move silently).

Kromiz has become quite rich as a result of his extortion, but he lives in constant fear of being discovered by his superiors. Indeed, the presence of a new young priestess under his command has given him anxiety attacks for nights on end – he believes she is a spy and is having a hard time doing anything when she is around.

BUYING AND SELLING

Taverns are, by far, the most popular type of consumer business in the Blood Tithe. While there are nearly three times as many warehouses as taverns, they do not accept private custom and only store the goods needed by businesses in Sheoloth.

The taverns do provide excellent food, drink, and service, along with entertainment that rivals that found anywhere else in the city. Though most of the individual taverns are rather small, patrons are able to move from one tavern to

the next so easily that the entire upper canopy of the Blood Tithe resembles an open air club. Dancers and musicians glide through the drunken revellers, filling the night air with their beauty and music and the whole area seems like a perpetual festival.

Of course, there are many other types of shop here, as well, each with its own distinctive style and offerings. While the goods are of no better quality, in truth, than those found elsewhere in the city, they do carry a certain status cachet and are prized for that alone. Anyone shopping here, no matter what they are shopping for, can expect to pay 25% more than indicated in *Core Rulebook I*.

Noted Shops of the Blood Tithe

The following is a selection of shops found in the Blood Tithe

1. Funerary Goods

Owned and operated by Fyaril Isthaza this shop sells artefacts of death, from headstones to sarcophagi and everything in between. While most drow of Sheoloth do not speak of their own death or the deaths of others of their kind, they cannot help but revel in the deaths of others and this shop caters to their needs perfectly. Patrons can purchase dwarven bone vials, halfling skulls, and other remains of the dead here, as well as coffin-beds and other such novelties. Sample goods include:

Product	Price	Notes
Sacrificial Knife	25gp – 100gp	Ranging in quality from simple copper blades to ornate jade daggers, these knives are used in the sacrificial murder of creatures.
Funerary Urn	50gp – 200 gp	Most often used to store cremated remains, these urns may also be used to hold organs removed during the embalming process. Capped and sealed with wax, these urns are widely believed to be cursed.
Shroud	5gp – 20gp	Draped over bodies before they are placed in a coffin or tomb, the shroud is often stained by the decomposition of the body it covered, leaving behind a grisly image of the dead.
Death Masks	50gp – 100 gp	Ceramic or clay masks made in the image of the dead are popular items in this shop.
Coffin	100 gp – 1,000 gp	Used to hold the bodies of the dead, coffins are often made from wood and stone, though particularly impressive pieces are fashioned from

Fyaril Isthaza

Male elf (drow) Exp12: CR 12; Size M (4 ft., 10 in. tall); HD 12d6+12; hp 52; Init +4 (+4 Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 14 (+4 Dex); Attack +8/+3 melee, or +13/+8 ranged; SV Fort +5, Ref +8, Will +9; AL CE; Str 8, Dex 19, Con 12, Int 17, Wis 12, Cha 9.

Languages Spoken: Common, Elven, Gnoll, Goblin, Orc, Undercommon.

Skills and feats: Appraise +12, Balance +8, Craft +7, Decipher script +17, Gather Information +10, Hide +6, Innuendo +15, Intuit direction +2, Knowledge +4, Knowledge (arcana) +8, Listen +5, Move silently +4, Perform +12, Scry +16, Search +5.5, Spot +5, Swim +12, Tumble +21; Alertness, Improved critical (scythe), Martial weapon proficiency (scythe), Skill focus (tumble).

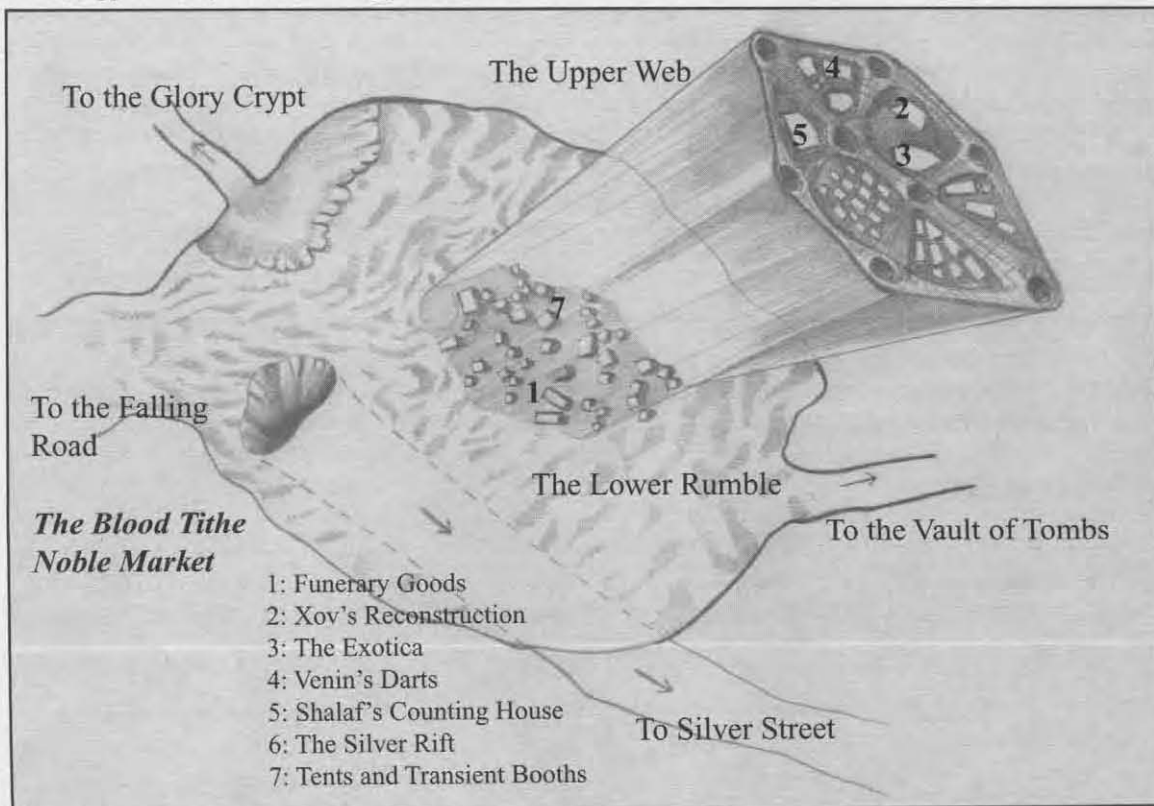
Plot Hooks: Fyaril is one of the Incabulos and she uses her shop to lure unsuspecting drow to their doom. She takes quiet interest in all of those who enter her shop and questions them about their beliefs in the afterlife and other seemingly innocuous questions. Those she finds intriguing (and who appear to have no immediate family or others who would notice their disappearance) are often drugged with

poisoned wine and smuggled out of the shop in a coffin delivered to an Incabulos sacrificial site.

2. Xov's Reconstruction

This fleshcrafting operation provides a wide variety of services, from simple changes to eye color all the way up to full-body transmutations. Operated by the exclusive Fleshcrafter's Guild, this business is constantly busy beautifying drow and turning their slaves into hideous monstrosities. Entering this shop is like entering one of the pits of hell, as patrons are simply strapped to tables in the main area for their operations. A recently added observation deck allows the curious to watch these operations, from the first incision to the last resculpted muscle. More information about Fleshcrafting can be found in *The Quintessential Drow*.

Plot Hooks: The Fleshcrafter's Guild is a small, but very rich, guild in Sheoloth. Not a true power centre, it still maintains absolute control over the art of fleshcrafting and does its utmost to prevent anyone else from practicing their profession. The characters could be hired by an agent from Reconstruction to investigate the appearance of a rogue fleshcrafter and convince him to join the guild. Alternatively, the



investigation could be to find out who trained the outsider in the secret arts of modifying the body and put an end to their transgressions against the Guild.

3. The Exotica

A fancy name for one of Sheoloth's many drug outlets, the Exotica has the distinction of catering to some of the city's wealthiest and most influential nobles. The Exotica's layout inside its specious building is one of silk curtains and small chambers with floors covered in pillows and paraphernalia. Customers come here to indulge in their vices with the assurance of perfect safety and high quality, for a high fee of course. The Game of Bones is not suspended here, so patrons with something to lose (which is most of them) usually arrive in disguise and take private rooms under assumed names using neutral, untraceable currency. This has made the Exotica a very lucrative side business in coin-laundering and has also given rise to its most visually notable tradition; everyone now arrives in masks, each more elaborate than the last.

Plot Hooks: The Exotica is always one knife's edge from going out of business. If a single noble gets assassinated in their establishment,

the owners of the emporium, a pair of commoner drow named Bazanis and Kothryn, would be punished severely and their market space turned over to new owners. The Exotica is in a fine position for any business that might wish to expand, meaning that Bazanis and Kothryn must constantly be on the lookout for those who would 'kill two bats with one dagger', so to speak.

4. Venin's Darts

A testament to the business acumen of some drow and the levels of cruelty to which the drow will stoop for some surcease from the tedium and terror of the Game of Bones, Venin's Darts is an unusual store. It sells a unique kind of magical weapon, a heavy dart with a single use of *ghost sound*. The darts, which are too heavy (3 pounds) and unbalanced to throw, let out a piercing scream the first time they draw blood. The shop, which rests right on the edge of the upper web, sells its darts for a very high price (500gp each) and only one at a time. The rest of the store's business comes from the game that has arisen from their product. Customers can also rent a pair of *eyes of the eagle* from Venin and then hang over the edge in a special harness to wait for someone to walk underneath them.

They were high over the cavern floor, suspended on a walkway of enchanted spider webbing. The construction made it impossible for her to hide, given the utter lack of protrusions for concealment, so Blade had the girl walking beside him. Her position and posture marked her as an apprentice, which was a bit more of a statement in public than he felt comfortable making, but it was only a matter of time before others found out about her, so now was as good a day as any.

They entered the shop ahead of them not through the front door, but underneath, using a hidden divot in the webs. The back of the store was a stock room lit only by a single candle of green flame. The room was devoid of people, but it did not stay that way for long. Moments after Blade and the girl entered, a door opened and three figures stepped into the chamber.

Everyone involved tensed for combat, but they relaxed slightly as Blade and the man in the lead recognized each other. The man made a quick gesture in the air that the girl missed, one that was answered swiftly by her master. Then a heavy bag was tossed to Blade by one of the drow beside the door. He opened it and examined one of the fine adamantine darts inside it. The point flickered with what appeared to be a tiny captive bolt of lightning. Once he was satisfied with its quality, he tossed back a single jewel of red hue and prodigious size.

The man who caught the gem performed the same level of examination and then handed it to the one in the lead. He pocketed it and communicated with Blade in that silent hand language for another moment before closing the door and leaving him alone with the girl once more. That appeared to be their signal to leave, which they did.

Once out in the webs again, she asked him quietly, 'Darts, lord? I thought you preferred daggers.'

He chuckled softly and handed her the bag. 'Who said they were for me? Besides, I wasn't just there to shop. I'll be out late tonight. Keep the shop locked and don't let anyone in. *Anyone.*'

The harnesses hook to the construction silk and can be moved, so nowhere in the lower gallery is safe.

Venin

Male elf (drow) Wiz9: CR 10; Size M (4 ft., 8 in. tall); HD 9d4-18; hp 14; Init +2 (+2 Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 12 (+2 Dex); Attack +5 melee, or +6 ranged; SV Fort +1, Ref +5, Will +9; AL CE; Str 12, Dex 14, Con 6, Int 18, Wis 17, Cha 9.

Languages Spoken: Common, Elven, Gnoll, Goblin, Orc, Undercommon.

Skills and feats: Escape artist +7.5, Forgery +8.5, Heal +9, Hide +2, Intimidate +4, Knowledge +15, Listen +5, Move silently +2, Search +6, Spellcraft +15, Spot +5, Use rope +6; Brew potion, Maximize spell, Quicken spell, [Scribe scroll], Spell mastery (Magic Missile, Sleep, Identify), Toughness.

Wizard Spells Known (4/5/5/4/3/1): 0 - Arcane Mark, Dancing Lights, Daze, Detect Magic, Detect Poison, Disrupt Undead, Flare, Ghost Sound, Light, Mage Hand, Mending, Open/Close, Prestidigitation, Ray of Frost, Read Magic, Resistance. 1st - Feather Fall, Identify,

Mage Armor, Magic Missile, Undetectable Aura, Obscuring Mist, Shield, Silent Image, Sleep, Summon Monster I. 2nd - Blur, Hypnotic Pattern, Invisibility, Knock, Acid Arrow, Mirror Image, See Invisibility. 3rd - Clairaudience/Clairvoyance, Fireball, Flame Arrow, Hold Person, Lightning Bolt, Slow, Wind Wall. 4th - Black Tentacles, Lesser Geas, Resilient Sphere, Polymorph Other, Polymorph Self, Summon Monster IV. 5th - Transmute Rock to Mud, Wall of Force.

Plot Hooks: Venin makes a great deal of money from this operation, but the game is only part of his business. He makes a number of specialty darts in his spare time and sells them secretly to members of the various shadowy guilds that thrive in Sheoloth. He also arranges for some of his agents to use spells, guile, and drugs to manoeuvre designated targets under a customer in a harness as a form of assassination. After all, if a drow gets killed because some random customer dropped a dart on him, that is their fault for not watching where they were going, right?

Falling Objects and Damage

A falling character takes a maximum of 20d6 damage from a fall of 200 feet or more, but there are other ways for falling to cause damage. An object, for instance, should cause far more damage than its usual die code if, instead of being thrown, it falls from a great height. By the same token, a falling object rarely moves at the same velocity as some missile weapons; a bow propels an arrow at much faster than terminal velocity and it does far less than 20d6 per shot.

As a variant rule, objects weighing less than a pound that fall do 1d2 damage with a type that depends on their shape and construction (rocks do bludgeoning, caltrops are piercing, plate glass is slashing, etc.). Objects that weigh between 1 and 5 pounds do 1d3. Objects with a weight of 5 to 25 pounds do 1d4 and anything between 25 and 100 pounds does 1d6. Heavier objects inflict 1d8 damage. All falling objects have a critical multiplier based on how far they fall. The chart below collates the different damages and critical multipliers. Critical hits should be determined by first rolling a touch attack with an assumed Attack Bonus of +1 (or the bonus of the character responsible for the object if the falling was intentional). If the hit succeeds, roll for a critical threat as usual.

Object Weight	Damage	Object Falling Distance and Critical Multiplier			
		10 to 50 feet	51 to 100 feet	101 to 150 feet	151 feet+
Less than 1 lb.	1d2				
1 lb. to 5 lbs.	1d3	x2	x3	x4	x5
5 lbs. to 25 lbs.	1d4				
25 lbs. to 100 lbs.	1d6				
100 lbs+	1d8				

BURNING PIT

This ward is a giant, inverted cone with the point hovering over a massive, roiling pit of lava. Despite the tremendous heat which radiates up and out from the lava, it remains a popular site for many businesses and residences, due to the highly exhilarating fumes which sometimes waft up from the cauldron. What causes these brief burst of euphoric gases is unknown, despite the best studies of local drug salesmen to discover and distil them.

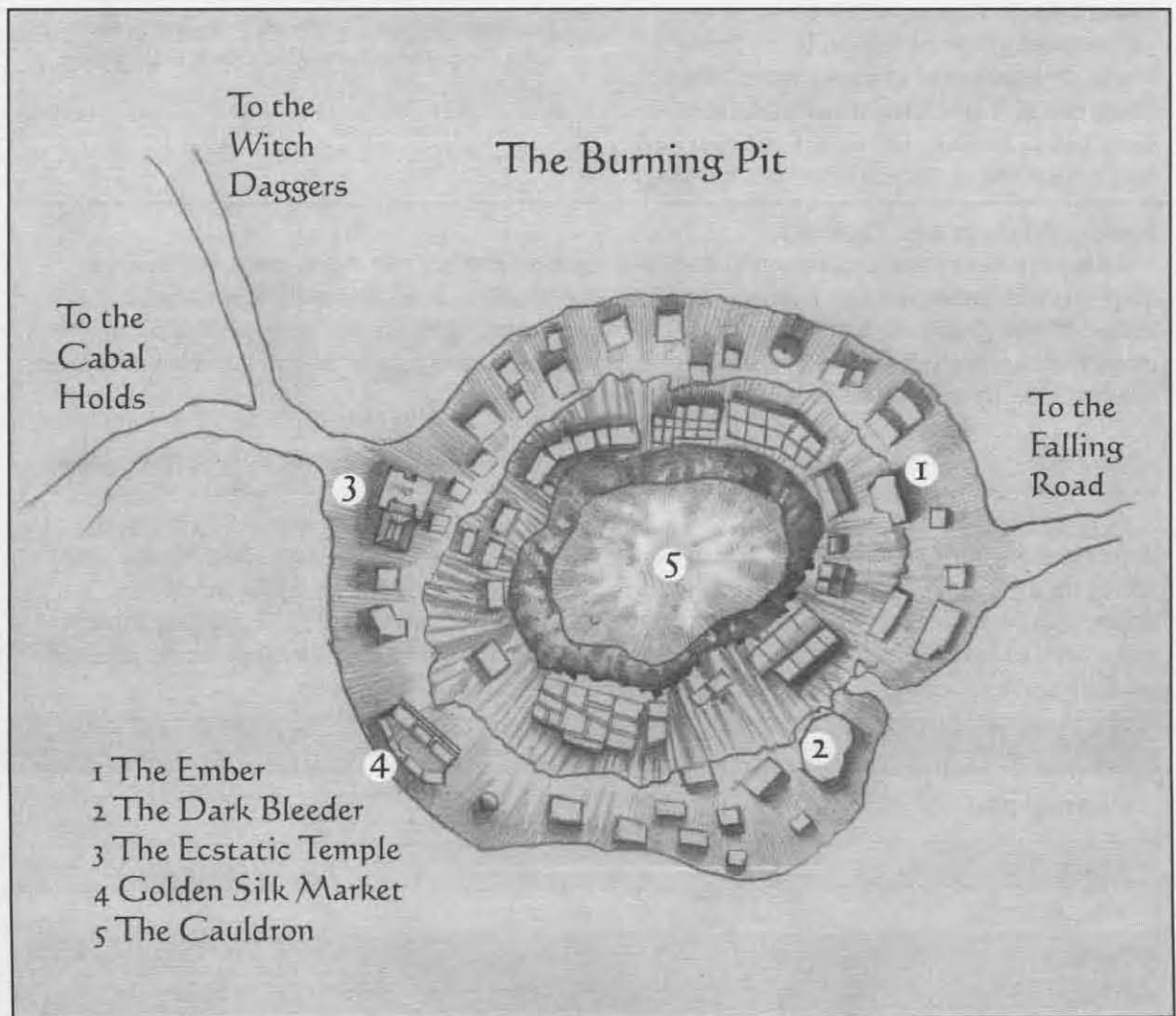
AT A GLANCE

Looking down into the Burning Pit from its highest levels is a vertiginous experience. The walls plunge steeply downward with buildings perched on narrow ledges. At the bottom of the cone, one can easily see the harsh red glow of

the lava, which surges up from the same flows of magma that heat the fungal gardens and cause the mushrooms to grow with such speed and robustness.

The heat is an omnipresent fact of life here, which most blame for the incredibly high rates of violent crime in the area. Despite a strong presence by the Faceless Watch, the Burning Pit is a constant source of danger. Murders occur very frequently, with at least two per month being the norm. Muggings and random assaults are at such a high point that virtually no one leaves their home or business without a weapon at their side and bloody fights are common in the streets.

Slaves take the worst of the violence in this region and often find themselves suddenly tossed from a ledge to fall to their deaths in the



city below. Though the Church of the Dark Mother does its best to control the violence here, it is an impossible task.

HISTORY

The Burning Pit was originally founded to be a blacksmith's and metallurgist's dream. The ancient drow noble house of Rathlis discovered the passage through the lava flows from the Fungal Gardens to the natural funnel cave a thousand years ago and decided to colonize it for themselves. They constructed numerous workshops and homes set back a ways from the boiling magma and for several years seemed to prosper. They produced some of the finest metalwork ever crafted by drow hands, but their efforts came to nothing within five years of the Burning Pit's founding. A sudden rage swept through the original settlement and violence erupted. Within a week, the entire town was laid to waste by its own residents, many of whom were thrown into the lava to die while others escaped into the wilderness surrounding Sheoloth. There are legends claiming that the children of the survivors can still be seen here, infrequently, stalking the streets with wickedly curved daggers and mouths filled with fangs.

A few generations after the fall of the original Burning Pit colony, the Church of the Dark Mother sanctioned another attempt to claim the funnel cavern and met with some success. The mystics of Sheoloth claim the blood sacrifices of the original colony satiated the spirits of war and hate that dwell within the lava – but they also claim that this period of quiet is about to end. They believe that the euphoric fumes are the first hints that the old spirits are awakening and warn that the Burning Pit will soon be filled with screams and blood once more.

The residents, however, do not believe this is true. Instead, they claim the gases are the gifts of the Grave Mother, as this is the only area of the city where drow children can be conceived outside of a hateful union. When the gases rise from the cauldron of lava, they seem to make drow females able to conceive during any sort of coupling, giving rise to a swelling population in this part of Sheoloth.

ALLEGIANCES

This area of the city has no strong allegiances to any power centre. Though many have tried, none have been able to gain a foothold here, where the people seem content to go about their business enjoying the periods of elation that sweep through the Burning Pit on a regular basis.

IMPORTANT PERSONAGES

Conosa Byaliris is a priestess of the Gravemother, itself a rarity. But her position here is rare still – Conosa oversees a massive clutch of ovarisites which lair within her temple. These creatures are much more docile than the ovarisites found in other parts of the city and do make some attempt to communicate with the drow who live in the area. While Conosa is hated within her church for her sex, her results cannot be disputed. The sheer number of successful deliveries in the Burning Pit increases every year, granting this female priest all the justification she needs to maintain her post.

Conosa is also very popular with the people of the Burning Pit. She organizes massive services to the Gravemother to coincide with the release of the gases from the lava. These ecstatic services result in greater numbers of drow pregnancies than any other events within the city, leading the church of the Gravemother to encourage all their patrons to visit it from time to time.

Conosa Byaliris

Female elf (drow) Clr13: CR 14; Size M (5 ft., 0 in. tall); HD 13d8; hp 49; Init +2 (+2 Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 12 (+2 Dex); Attack +11/+6 melee, or +11/+6 ranged; SV Fort +8, Ref +6, Will +12; AL CE; Str 15, Dex 14, Con 10, Int 14, Wis 19, Cha 15.

Languages Spoken: Common, Elven, Orc, Sylvan, Undercommon.

Skills and feats: Concentration +15, Hide +2, Listen +8, Move silently +2, Profession +19, Scry +18, Search +4, Spellcraft +17, Spot +8, Wilderness lore +7; Alertness, Combat casting, Leadership, Silent spell, Toughness.

Cleric Domains: Healing, Knowledge.

Cleric Spells Per Day: 6/6+1/6+1/5+1/5+1/3+1/2+1/1+1.

BUYING AND SELLING

The silk sold in this area has a unique shine to it, a burnished golden appearance that is attributed to the vapours released in the lava. Similarly, the milk taken from the goatspiders who live in the Burning Pit is very sweet and powerful in taste.

Adventurers will find the pawnbrokers in this section of town exceedingly generous. They offer 60% of the market value of any item they purchase, before any adjustments as a result of their allegiances. The tradition of paying more has done well for these pawnbrokers, as they receive the finest goods brought into the city by adventuring parties.

Noted Shops of the Burning Pit

The following is a selection of shops found in the Burning Pit.

1. The Ember

This little shop sells tobacco, but Deroga Waliin also makes and sells potent poisons. Any poison found in *Core Rulebook II* is available for sale here, though Deroga charges 20% more than the prices listed in that rule book. She is not a member of the Network or the Shadowhands, which places her in the dangerous position of being an independent in the criminal underworld. Though she will sell to anyone who meets her price, she prefers to work with those who, like herself, are not affiliated with other organizations.

Deroga Waliin (drow/F/Rog12/Asn5)

Deroga Waliin - female elf (drow) Rog12/Asn5: CR 13; Size M (5 ft., 3 in. tall); HD 12d6; hp 54;

Init +3 (+3 Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 13 (+3 Dex); Attack +14/+10/+4 melee, or +15/+10/+5 ranged; SV Fort +1, Ref +15, Will +6; AL CE; Str 15, Dex 17, Con 10, Int 18, Wis 12, Cha 18.

Languages Spoken: Common, Draconic, Elven, Gnoll, Orc, Undercommon.

Skills and feats: Appraise +18, Bluff +17, Climb +14, Diplomacy +18, Disguise +19, Escape artist +18, Hide +20, Innuendo +13, Intuit direction +14, Listen +13, Move silently +18, Profession +10, Search +16, Spot +13, Swim +15, Tumble +13, Use magic device +13; Expertise, Improved critical (shortbow, composite), Poison Use, Run, Shield proficiency, Skill focus (hide).

Plot Hooks: Deroga doesn't perform assassinations anymore, at least not for profit. She does hunt for sport, however, and is always recruiting likely candidates to accompany her on trips to kill within Sheoloth. What she hunts, however, is a very dangerous



prey – the mortificants of the Shrieking Hive and their allies. Adventurers who accompany Deroga on one of these outings will be lectured on the danger of the mortificants to the rest of Sheoloth. Deroga believes that they are multiplying in number for the first time in the history of the city and fears they are going to attempt to slaughter the entire city one day.

2. The Dark Bleeder

While most healers in Sheoloth receive their license and training through the temple of the Dark Mother, a few choose to go it alone and learn their arts on the job, so to speak. These unlicensed healers often have unorthodox, foreign techniques which are sometimes more effective than those practiced by native healers, but are just as often ineffective or even dangerous.

The Dark Bleeder is owned and operated by one Arivel Trawis, a young female who learned the healing arts from a group of deep gnomes in the foreign quarter several years ago. Her specialty

is bleeding, the art of removing vile humours from a patient by draining his blood. Though the process leaves patients weak and weary for a day or so, it can often provide phenomenal results for resisting disease and restoring vitality.

Arivel receives a +4 insight bonus to all Heal checks when using bleeding to treat patients. In addition to this bonus, she is also able to use Heal (DC 18) to provide a +2 circumstance bonus to all Fortitude saves the patient makes during the next 48 hours. However, any patient treated by Arivel suffers the loss of 2d4 hit points, which cannot be restored for at least 48 hours and which will not reduce the patient's hit points below 1. This is a result of the blood draining process and can be healed magically. Arivel will use her curative magic to restore these lost hit points, but charges standard rates to cast these spells.

Arivel Trawis (drow/f/ad10)

Female elf (drow) Adp10: CR 10; Size M (4 ft., 11 in. tall); HD 10d6-20; hp 18; Init +0; Spd 30

It was the first time she had been apart from him by more than a few paces since he had started taking her out with him during his business in the city. She was, however, doing what she was told and not leaving the alley Blade had put her in while he walked out into the street beyond. The greater the distance between them, the more nervous she got, but the 'mouse' was *not* going to disobey him, no matter what.

Blade approached the skull-topped street light and leaned against it for several minutes. Just as the waiting became unbearable for the girl in the shadows, he was approached by another drow in a swirling cloak of dark grey and silver studded hunting leathers. A casually slung long sword at the man's hip suggested someone with long years of experience using it. That kind of person, unidentified and potentially working for Blade's enemies, made her even more nervous, but her lord did not look worried.

The immense heat in this chamber did not help her nerves at all, nor did the deep red glow that cast a bloody glow to everything. The Burning Pits had a huge open crater leading to a heart of magma at its heart, the kind of edifice that made this cavern swelteringly warm. She began to regret the grey spidersilk cloak she was wearing, but Blade has given it to her to 'make up for her sadly deficient hiding skills', so there was no way she would take it off.

The two drow males spoke for a while and money changed hands while they both kept watch in opposite directions. The newcomer was slightly taller than Blade, yet he acted with some deference to her master. Of course, so did she, but it was good to see that he commanded that kind of respect from others as well. In return for his gold, Blade had been handled a vial of dark glass. Then, he came back to here and they left the chamber for the cool relief of a side passage leading back towards home.

She got a closer look at it later, and the vial was actually not dark. It was clear crystal, but the contents were nearly black. It was, she realized as she watched him add drops of it to one of his lethal concoctions in the lab, blood. Why he would add blood to a poison was beyond her, but his ways were only hers to understand if he chose to teach her... or if she could poke around in them when he was not

ft.; AC 10; Attack +5 melee, or +5 ranged; SV Fort +1, Ref +3, Will +8; AL CE; Str 10, Dex 11, Con 6, Int 19, Wis 12, Cha 14.

Languages Spoken: Common, Elven, Gnoll, Gnome, Goblin, Sylvan, Undercommon.

Skills and feats: Craft (Alchemy) +17, Diplomacy +4.5, Heal +14, Hide +0, Intuit direction +4, Knowledge +17, Listen +3, Move silently +2, Search +6, Spellcraft +17, Spot +3, Wilderness lore +14; Brew potion, Improved unarmed strike, Silent spell, Spell focus (illusion).

Plot Hooks: Arivel doesn't throw away the blood she drains, instead keeping it in labelled vials in a small chamber below her shop. For the right price, she will sell anyone a vial of the



blood. Drow who wish to poison their enemies and know of Arivel can use this blood to tailor a poison (See *The Quintessential Drow*) to a specific target. Because of this, Arivel is well-liked by the Shadowhands, who use her services often.

3. The Ecstatic Temple

Devoted to the Gravemother, this temple is renowned throughout Sheoloth for the miraculous fertility rates amongst its regular worshipers. The breeding ceremonies held here always coincide with the release of the euphoric fumes from the volcanic caldera and are well-attended both by residents of the Burning Pit and those from the rest of Sheoloth. Large enough to hold no more than fifty people on a good night, the church is often surrounded by the writhing bodies of worshipers, who gather in the streets in hopes of receiving the blessing of the Gravemother.

Conosa personally oversees these ceremonies, though she does not participate herself. She also tends to the hive of ovarisites which grows atop and around the temple and regards the spider creatures as her only true friends. The other members of the Gravemother's faith are not sure what to make of Conosa, but they have been ordered not to interfere with her work here by the Dark Mother's clerics. The priestesses know that the city needs new blood to replace the old and they see Conosa's temple as a prime source of newborns.

Plot Hooks: Conosa is so close to the ovarisites they have taken her into their confidence. The fertility attributed to the temple is brought on by the gases, as everyone suspects, but it is only effective in the presence of certain incenses which the ovarisites provide. In return for their part in the rituals, the ovarisites demand a higher-than-normal percentage of the young born here, taking one out of three children for their own. Characters may become involved with this temple when upset parents want the fates of their newborn children discovered – how the characters react to a few hundred young drow living in secret chambers below the temple (under the tutelage of the ovarisites) could determine the fate of Conosa and her allies.

CABAL HOLD

This ward is tucked away on the outskirts of Sheoloth and is regarded by most as a nearly lawless area filled with criminals and the poor. In truth, it is a hive of rebellion and the meeting place of dozens of small factions within the city. Trade guilds meet in the taverns here to discuss price fixing, while members of the Network conspire to smuggle in larger and larger illegal shipments of goods from the outside world. The name of the ward is the open admission of the plotting and alliances going on in the area and the tavern-keepers make it well-known that the secrets in their private rooms will remain in those rooms.

AT A GLANCE

The hold is a lawless place – the Faceless Watch rarely patrols here and when it does it performs only the most cursory of examinations before moving on. While the Watch knows that there are criminal activities going on here, its members have been ordered not to interfere unless they witness a crime occurring. This is because the Church of the Dark Mother has meetings of its own here and does not want itself painted with the brush of scandal.

The streets of the ward are quiet and mostly deserted. Those who come here from other wards have business here, which they wish to perform as quickly as possible so they can return to more comfortable surroundings. The residents of the area are so poor they leave the house only to scrounge for food or to head to other wards where they hope to find day labour or other simple tasks to earn a few coins. The solitude and seeming desertion of the ward lend it a private, conspiratorial air which dovetails perfectly with the wishes of its visitors.

HISTORY

The Cabal Hold was originally a small shanty where escaped slaves could disappear. Because secrecy was so important to these slaves, it became traditional for those who lived in the area to avoid inquiring about the affairs of their neighbours and to feign ignorance if questioned about them. This unspoken code of silence has persisted to this day, making this the natural

meeting place for those who want to remain beyond the eyes of the law.

While still very poor, the ward has increased in prosperity as it became known as a haven for privacy. Its taverns now do booming business and each is equipped with small meeting rooms in which conspirators can meet to discuss their business. Small workshops have begun to spring up as well, offering a variety of services and goods to those who live in the area as well as the visitors who bring their money in to the ward.

ALLEGIANCES

The Cabal Hold is a frequent meeting and gathering place for The Network and owes its allegiance to this group. The Network provides craftsmen here with imported raw materials they would otherwise not have access to.

Frequent work with wizards of the Witch Daggers has given this ward an allegiance to that power centre as well, for without the goodwill and assistance of the wizards, the taverns would not be able to provide the solitude and privacy their patrons desire.

IMPORTANT PERSONAGES

This ward survives on anonymity and secrecy and has no famous or important residents in its own right. The Cabal Hold seems to have an unconscious ruling hand which guides the tavern owners to work together and continue providing the same service for which they have been known for years. As a result, any one of the tavern owners or other business people in this ward could be replaced with another, who would change nothing and provide the same services as his predecessor.

BUYING AND SELLING

This ward sells privacy and exotic goods which are harder to come by or more expensive in other wards. The workmanship of such items may not be as high quality as is found in the Glory Crypt or Blood Tithe, but the range of available items and the low price is quite attractive to shoppers on a budget. Despite this, only those with other business in the Cabal Holds (such as a meeting



‘Do you know what we are doing?’

The girl looked at Blade, hidden as she was under his cloak. ‘Hiding on a rooftop, watching people loading crates into a building?’ It was a simple question, simply answered, but she had a feeling there was more to this than was evident.

‘Yes. This is called casing. We will watch this warehouse until the people here all leave, then observe it to make sure we know what kind of security they have patrolling the site.’

She nodded. ‘So we can rob it, right?’

Blade shook his head. ‘No, girl, so we can get in there and find out what is in those crates.’ He sounded vaguely disappointed in her question, but tolerant enough to explain this once.

‘I have a name.’

He blinked at her. ‘You what?’

‘I have a name, lord. You... you keep calling me child or girl, but I have a name.’ Then, her nerve broke and she cringed, realizing that she was probably pushing him with the boldness. ‘That is, if you let me keep it.’

Blade sighed and gestured to the warehouse. ‘The Network has been selling these crates to every merchant in the Holds. A score this size could shift their power and make them a real threat to my... associates. I have to find out what they are selling so I can discover where they got it and shut down the supplier. I do not have time for you to suddenly grow a spine, mouse.’

She curled into the cloak tighter. ‘Apologies, lord. I...’

He reached down and lifted her chin to look her in the eyes. ‘If you live through this break-in, you can tell me your name tonight. Now be silent so I can concentrate.’

with a business partner) come to this ward – its reputation is dark and the common drow sees it as a good place to get knifed in the back or turned into the subject of some horrible arcane experiment.

Meeting rooms come in three varieties: private, secure, and magically secured. Private rooms offer a locking door, a table, and a meal for four, and cost roughly 5gp per hour. Secure rooms provide the same amenities as private rooms, along with a quartet of deaf and mute guards who keep eavesdroppers away from the meeting. Secure rooms cost 20gp per hour, as well as a 50gp surcharge if any of the guards are killed or so badly wounded they cannot work for more than a day. Magically secured rooms offer all the above, but are also protected against scrying and other forms of magical eavesdropping thanks to the spells laid upon the room by a wizard of the Witch Daggers. These rooms cost an impressive 100gp per hour, but are the only

acceptable choice for those who require true privacy.

Noted Shops of Cabal Hold

The following is a selection of shops found in Cabal Hold.

1. The Philtre

This shop specializes in the sale of arcane and divine potions. The owner, Chunarl Viss, receives her potions illegally from priestesses of the Gravemother and wizards from beyond the city as a result of her connections to the Network. She sells all of these potions at a 5% discount from the prices listed in *Core Rulebook I* and still turns a tidy profit.

Chunarl Viss

Female elf (drow) Adp10: CR 10; Size M (4 ft., 11 in. tall); HD 10d6-10; hp 25; Init +1 (+1 Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 11 (+1 Dex); Attack +5 melee, or +6 ranged; SV Fort +2, Ref +4, Will

+9; AL CE; Str 10, Dex 12, Con 8, Int 13, Wis 15, Cha 13.

Languages Spoken: Common, Elven, Goblin, Undercommon.

Skills and feats: Craft (Alchemy) +11, Heal +10, Hide +1, Listen +4, Move silently +1, Profession +11, Search +3, Spellcraft +13, Spot +4; Brew potion, Combat casting, Craft rod, Extend spell.

Adept Spells Per Day: 3/4/3/1.

Plot Hooks: Chunarl isn't sure she wants to remain a part of the Network, but she is loathe to give up her supply of potions. She would like to negotiate a severance package, of sorts, from the Network which allows her to go freelance while still maintaining her supply of magical elixirs. To do this, Chunarl needs some good blackmail material on one or more of the leaders of the Network and is willing to hire adventurers to get what she needs.

2. The Silken Hand

This tailor does nothing but create gloves that are the best fit for his customers. All gloves are created from either drow or halfling skin and are treated with a variety of chemicals to retain the soft, lustrous feel of living skin. More

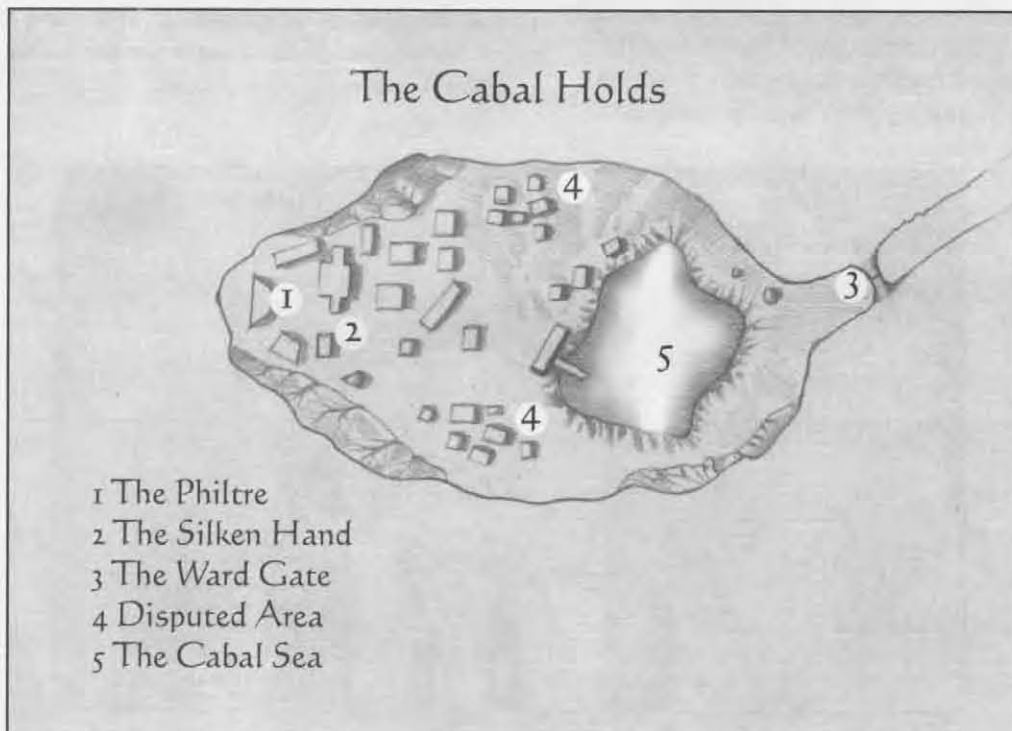
importantly, Tulchis Rawisin is able to create gloves which incorporate a set of thieves' tools into the fingers without hampering the wearer in any way. These gloves cost 750gp per pair, but are well worth the price to thieves who are loathe to be without their tools but who do not wish to be discovered with their lockpicks. It takes a successful Search check (DC 25) to spot the tiny toolset set into the gloves.

Tulchis Rawisin

Male elf (drow) Exp13: CR 13; Size M (5 ft., 0 in. tall); HD 13d6; hp 45; Init +4 (+4 Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 14 (+4 Dex); Attack +9/+4 melee, or +13/+8 ranged; SV Fort +4, Ref +8, Will +10; AL CE; Str 11, Dex 18, Con 11, Int 14, Wis 14, Cha 9.

Languages Spoken: Common, Draconic, Elven, Gnome, Undercommon.

Skills and feats: Craft (Alchemy) +17, Appraise +9, Craft +18, Decipher script +8, Hide +4, Intimidate +15, Knowledge (arcana) +20, Listen +6, Move silently +22, Open Lock +9, Pick pocket +9, Search +19, Spot +6; Alertness, Leadership, Skill focus (knowledge (arcana)), Skill focus (move silently), Skill focus (open lock)).



CHARRED GATE

Situated between the Ashen Bulwark and the Foreign Ward, the Charred Gate is at once filled with foreign influences and brimming with racial pride. The drow who live and work here know they are dependent on outsiders for much of their living, but they do their best to denigrate foreigners at every turn, ensuring the watchful eyes of the Dark Mother's clerics see that they are still good and loyal drow.

AT A GLANCE

The walls of the Charred Gate are composed of stone which was melted and allowed to flow like wax several times during the shrieking war. The floor, walls, and ceiling all flow together with rounded corners and strange ripples where the stone was fused together by magical assaults. A small ward, the Charred Gate has few houses, but many taverns and workshops.

HISTORY

The Charred Gate was once the furthest edge of Sheoloth. It was here that the rebellion of arcane spellcasters reached its height and nearly resulted in the destruction of Sheoloth. After being banned from the city by the priestesses, the wizards and sorcerers took up residence

in what was a shanty town at the time. After a few years of exile, they grew belligerent and angry in their isolation. Led by a charismatic group of sorcerers, the alliance of arcanists assaulted Sheoloth in a desperate bid to oust the priesthoods and seize control of the city.

This ward was where the battle took place. Battle priests of the Killer launched themselves against the summoned minions of the arcanists, while the priests of the Gravemother raised a legion of undead to throw against the invading forces.

The battle raged for weeks, but in the end the arcanists simply could not sustain the fighting. Spies and assassins crept into their ranks and stole spell books and other items of importance. Eventually, after a desperate surge of aggression that left the majority of the rebelling arcanists dead, the battle was over and Sheoloth was secured once more. A pair of barracks were erected here and the gates were reinforced, but the area was otherwise left to develop as it would.

It remained small and unpopulated for several generations, until the nobles convinced the church to expand the city and add a Foreign Ward to improve access to trade goods from beyond the city. At that point, the cavern adjacent to the Charred Gate was nominated as the position for the Foreign Ward, and the Charred Gate became more popular before stabilizing at its current size.



ALLEGIANCES

The Charred Gate is loyal to the Transfer Guild and the Allied Craftsmen's Guild. The presence of the Churches of the Killer (whose priests roam the streets in search of infidels and foreigners) assures an allegiance to that church as well.

IMPORTANT PERSONAGES

Parfalos Yuthshu is the highest-ranking priest of the Killer residing within the ward and the local representative of the government here. Charged by both his church and the church of the Dark Mother to keep this area free of foreigners, Parfalos has instituted a rigid watch schedule in which priests and members of the Faceless Watch patrol the streets constantly. Moving through this area undetected is very difficult, as every group patrolling has one member equipped with *goggles of true seeing* to thwart invisible or otherwise concealed invaders. Those who attempt to hide while moving through the city need to make successful Hide and Move Silently checks (DC 15) every round to avoid being spotted. Those caught sneaking through the city are clearly up to no good and

the guards have been ordered to slaughter them on sight.

Parfalos Yuthshu

Male elf (drow) Clr15: CR 16; Size M (5 ft., 5 in. tall); HD 15d8-15; hp 55; Init +1 (+1 Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 11 (+1 Dex); Attack +12/+7/+2 melee, or +12/+7/+2 ranged; SV Fort +8, Ref +6, Will +15; AL CE; Str 12, Dex 12, Con 8, Int 11, Wis 19, Cha 9.

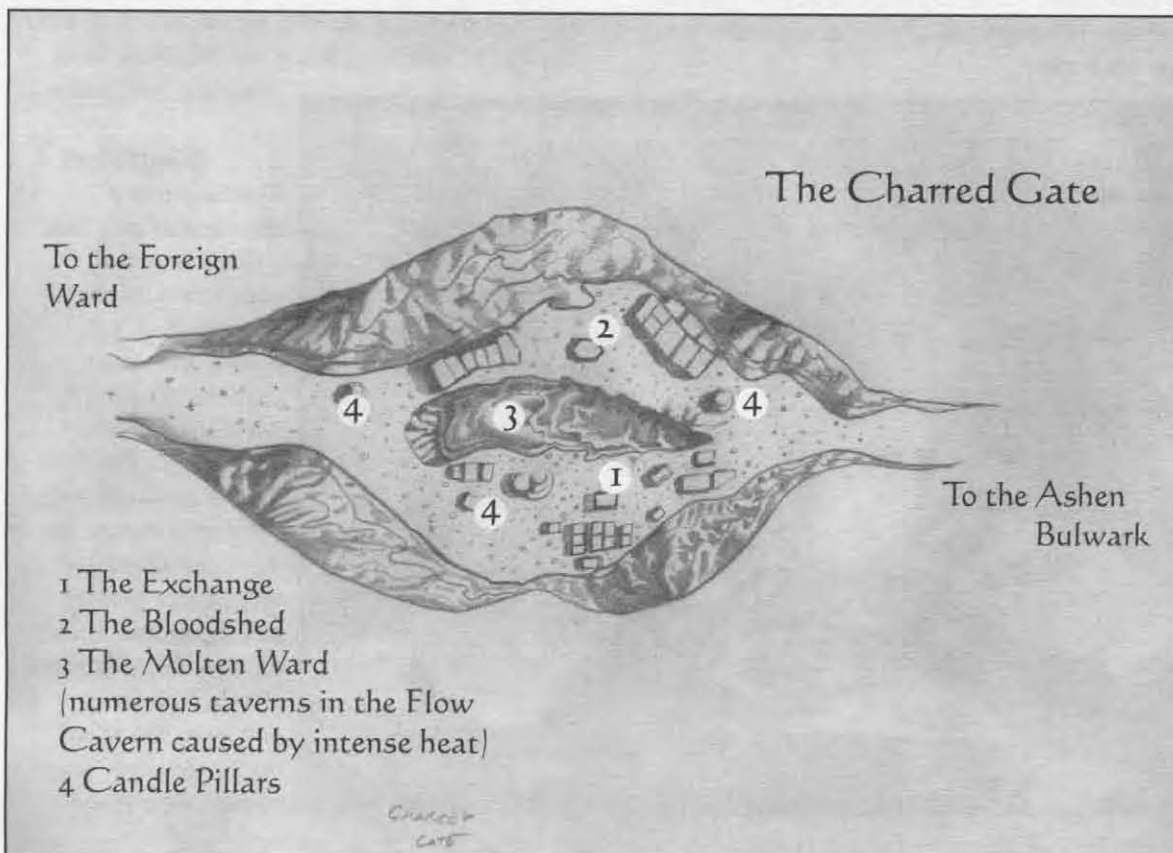
Languages Spoken: Common, Elven, Undercommon.

Skills and feats: Concentration +14, Craft +10, Disable device +2, Hide +1, Listen +6, Move silently +1, Profession (guard) +13, Search +2, Spot +6; Combat reflexes, Craft wondrous item, Empower spell, Iron will, Scribe scroll, Still spell.

Cleric Domains: Destruction, Death

Cleric Spells Per Day: 6/6+1/6+1/6+1/5+1/4+1/3+1/2+1/1+1

Despite the strict prohibition against foreigners in the ward, there are those who attempt to sneak through. Several times a week, the guards catch an outsider and leave his body to rot on the



streets near the gates, a reminder to others that such foolishness is not tolerated here.

BUYING AND SELLING

This ward is well-known for the access it provides to goods from outside the city. Those who seek anything not produced in Sheoloth need look no further than this ward, which often has small stalls set up in the streets in addition to the traditional shops and businesses. Anyone shopping for imported goods can get a 5% discount shopping here.

Noted Shops of the Charred Gate

The following is a selection of shops found in the Charred Gate.

1. The Exchange

Merchants who deal with foreigners are sometimes stuck with coins of foreign vintage, which are of no use in the city. The Exchange converts foreign currency to local Sheoloth coins for a 15% surcharge. The owner of the Exchange, one Thosolth Esiliw (drow/m/Exp10) is one of the richest men in Sheoloth, but spends little of his money. He lives in a small house not far from his business and retains no servants or other staff. He is so paranoid that he will not hire any assistants and refuses to allow anyone into his home.

Plot Hooks: Thosolth is more than paranoid, he's fearful for his life. He was approached several years ago for membership in the Transfer Guild and pretended he would consider the offer. When he was given the rights to perform monetary exchanges by the rulers of Sheoloth, he immediately renounced his membership in the guild and set himself up on his own. The Transfer Guild would like to see him dead, but first they need to find someone they can have do the deed and who can then later be disavowed by the Guild. Perhaps a small group of adventurers would be willing to undertake the assignment.

Thosolth Esiliw

Male elf (drow) Exp10: CR 10; Size M (4 ft., 8 in. tall); HD 10d6; hp 38; Init +3 (+3 Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 13 (+3 Dex); Attack +7/+2 melee, or +10/+5 ranged; SV Fort +0, Ref +6, Will +9; AL NE; Str 11, Dex 17, Con 10, Int 14, Wis 14, Cha 8.

Languages Spoken: Common, Elven, Gnoll, Orc, Undercommon.

Skills and feats: Appraise +3, Balance +16, Climb +2, Disguise +5, Forgery +16, Heal +9, Hide +3, Intuit direction +2, Knowledge +14, Listen +4, Move silently +3, Profession (merchant) +15, Ride +16, Search +5, Spot +15, Swim +4; Run, Skill focus (swim), Skill focus (forgery), Toughness.

2 Bloodshed

This tavern is designed to look like a slaughterhouse, complete with chains hanging from the ceiling and grates covering the floor to allow the blood to drain away. The food here is mediocre and the drinks watery, but the entertainment is what keeps packing in the patrons. Each night, a dozen or more slaves, both foreign and drow, are killed on the elevated 'stage' in the centre of the



tavern. The killings are done with flair and ritual elements, entrancing the drow who come to the shows with the violence and degradation involved. For a fee (25gp), audience members are even allowed to participate in the killings, though they are never allowed to make the killing blow themselves.

Plot hooks: This tavern is actually a front for

the Incabulos, who use the sacrifices in their rituals. Those investigating this shadowy cult may eventually stumble upon this location. Unless precautions are taken, anyone directly confronting the management of Bloodshed will be killed outright, as the Incabulos find the tavern far too powerful to lose to a group of meddling adventurers.

Six months had passed and Blade decided the girl was finally ready. He stopped and corrected himself. Dorianne, as she had given her name to him several weeks ago, was finally ready. She would have to see the brutality and darkness in the Sprawling City for herself. Depending on her reaction, she would either flourish here, go mad, or have to be put down. He would do it himself, if it came to that. No one else had the right. But what would serve as a proper lesson, an accurate image of the blood fever that burned in his people's hearts?

He knew the answer before asking the question and that night, he took Dorianne to visit the Bloodshed in Charred Gate. From the moment they had arrived, her tiny eyes were open wide. All around, burning lamps of red-stained brass shed a flickering glow to the swinging corpses of last night's victims. They were against the wall decorations and foreshadowing of the night's entertainment to come.

Blade took the girl to a corner booth, paying a small fortune for the 'privilege' of a seat so close to the action. At first, things were calm enough and aside from the macabre décor, they shared a typical dinner of roasted mushrooms and strips of lizard meat baked in blood. Even the wine was fairly common, but then people did not come to the Bloodshed for a gourmet experience. At least, not a culinary one. The Bloodshed was a luxury among the drow, but the repast was one of pain and death.

When the six slaves were brought out, each chained with barbed wire to rolling posts, the establishment went as quiet as the grave. Blade split his attention between the hapless victims and his protégé. She was watching, very quiet, one hand on her boot dagger. He could not read her expression, but since he had taught her to hide her feelings, that was to be expected.

What followed was an hour of screams and evisceration. Drow dressed in flowing gowns of blood red and black steel chains wielded scalpel daggers and surgical tools with consummate perfection. Flesh came away in strips, as did bone, all the while the shrieking figures of their assault living through the pain to the very end. It was torture at its finest, with no goal to the task save the elation of the audience and the torment of the victim. When swift strokes to the heart finally ended the agonized wailing, it was merely the final chorus in a symphony of crimson.

When it was over, he took the still unreadable child home, made her another cup of tea, and sat with her in total silence. When she finally blinked and looked to him to say something, he asked, 'What did you think of that? Tell me true.' He placed one hand on his most lethal dagger, obviously ready to end her life if the answer she gave was not to his satisfaction.

Dorianne looked at the dagger, then up into his eyes. 'It... was a waste of life. I h-hated it.'

Blade's hand rested on the blade a few moments longer. Then he nodded and her off to bed.

CRYSTALSPINE

Though not as affluent as the residents of Silver Street, the drow who live in Crystalspine are well-off in comparison to most other commoners. With its numerous workshops and businesses, Crystalspine is almost a small city itself.

AT A GLANCE

Crystalspine is a striking ward due to the presence of its namesake. The ceiling of the ward is lined with long, serpentine veins of phosphorescent crystal that glow brightly and look like nothing so much as exposed spinal columns. The light from the crystals is normally bright enough to see clearly by and permeates the entire ward. Because of this, most shops and homes do not have windows, allowing the owners a refuge from the light if they wish to rest.

The ward is bustling at all hours of the day and night, with business owners keeping their shops open to catch the late night business. In typical cutthroat drow fashion, businesses which close early often find themselves victims of vandalism at the hands of competing shopkeepers.

Those who live here, too, are as brutal as the businessmen and are always ready and willing to sell out a neighbour in order to advance themselves. The local offices of the Eight Eyed Masks are constantly swarmed with informants in this ward, as a result, leaving them with dozens of tales of heresy and treachery to track down and confirm or deny each day. The sheer number of such reports makes it difficult for any single case to receive much attention, allowing heretical cultists to hide in plain sight if they are careful.

They walked down Coiled Row in the heart of Crystalspine and for the first time since he had completed her training in maintaining her emotions, Dorianne's eyes were wide with amazement. 'This place is incredible. I never imagined such beauty could be found down here.'

Though he would never express such a sentiment, Blade could certainly agree with the statement. The cavern ceiling was studded with so many forms of crystal and gemstones, it looked like the night sky up on the surface. He had only had occasion to see the surface world twice, and both times it had been at night to avoid the blinding light of the sun - the 'eye of Correlon', as his people called it. Here, the imbedded crystals were enchanted with a flicker-flame that made the chamber even more brilliant.

'Silence, child. We are here to do something, remember?'

Dorianne fell quiet and she tried to control her awe, but he could still see it in her eyes. When the patrol of Faceless Guard passed by them, he moved to block her from their sight. If they had seen her raw emotion, they might have taken it as a sign of weakness and performed one of their 'cullings' for the good of the race. He had no desire to go up against them right now. Not here in public.

Once the guards had passed, Blade gestured to a building with a façade of green crystal and eight black windows. 'That's the place. You cannot come in with me, but you had better not be seen by anyone on the street either. Use your ring.'

The girl nodded and, as Blade mounted the steps up to the informant's office of the Eight Eyed Masks, she twisted a band around her finger and shimmered out of sight. An earring he was wearing tingled for a moment and then she became a transparent image, hiding among the rough crystal pillars outside the building. He had been generous with his gifts to her of late, but he was always careful to make sure none of them could be used against him.

HISTORY

Crystalspine was the second ward created specifically for the purpose of opening up housing for the common drow. Its proximity to the Web of the Dark Mother, however, made it unpopular with drow who did not wish to curry favour with that church. As Silver Street filled up, wealthier families began moving to Crystalspine, where they could advance their businesses and their prestige by carefully cultivating relationships with the church. As a result, this is one of the most devout (or apparently devout) wards in the entire city.

ALLEGIANCES

Crystalspine is closely aligned with the Church of the Dark Mother, which is no surprise, given their close proximity to the Web of the Dark Mother. The sheer number of workshops in the ward also gives it ties to the Allied Craftsmen Guilds.

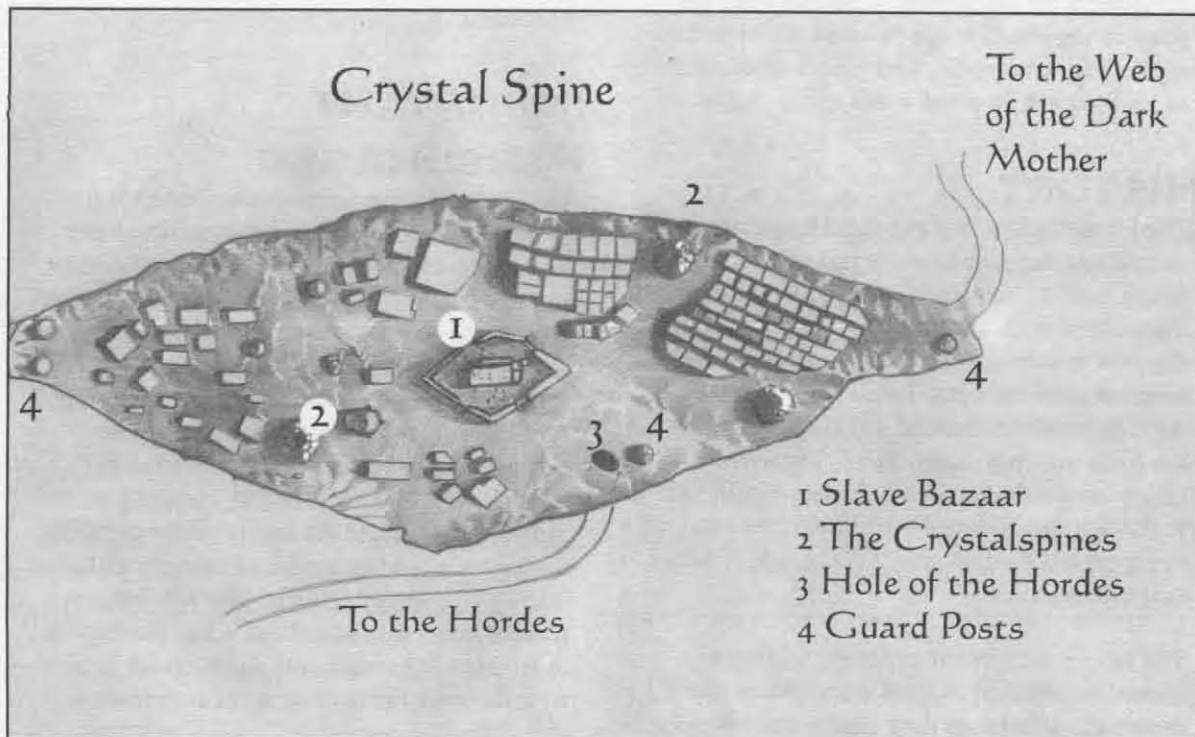
IMPORTANT

PERSONAGES

As a housing district, there are few individuals of any import within the ward. There are not even important members of the Dark mother's clergy in this ward, because it is so close to the Web of the Dark Mother. While the residents of Crystalspine often think they are important, in truth they are simply mere cogs in the seething machine that is Sheoloth.

BUYING AND SELLING

The residents of Crystalspine own and operate hundreds of stores in this ward, giving it a varied marketplace with a wide selection of goods and services. Most importantly, Crystalspine contains one of the larger slave markets in the city, with more than a half-dozen slave traders in one spot. The competition between these flesh merchants makes it cheaper to pick up a slave here than anywhere else in the city; shoppers receive a 15% discount when purchasing slaves here. Other than the slave market, the other businesses in the area are quite average.



EBON DOCK

Situated on the only natural water supply available to Sheoloth, the Ebon Dock is a surprisingly active shipping and receiving area for drow traders who travel abroad. Nearly one hundred warehouses crowd the ward, providing storage for the goods brought home by travelling drow merchants.

AT A GLANCE

A strong smell of mildew clings to everything in the area, a result of the dampness of the environment. Silk is not used in the construction of buildings here, only stone and sheets of cured fungus, as the moisture in the air quickly soaks into the silk and collapses it under the weight. The warehouses are the primary business in this area and dock workers are constantly streaming between the drow river ships and the storage facilities.

Despite their xenophobic and hateful natures, the drow have managed to cultivate trade agreements with other underdark races and some settlements on the surface. Meat and steel are primary imports through the ebon docks and the sight of drow labourers hauling off bloody slabs of beef to pack in salt or ice is not uncommon.

HISTORY

The Ebon Dock area was originally a cavern completely isolated from the rest of Sheoloth which was the home of a small tribe of kuo-toa. These amphibious creatures swam up and down the river in search of prey and lived quite well on giant cave crabs and ferocious albino pike. As their numbers grew, so too did their need for space and they began slowly expanding the cavern in which they lived. As fate would have it, the digging of the kuo-toa broke into a tunnel being carved by drow miners in search of new space themselves.

The two races collided violently, leading to massive bloodshed on both sides. When the drow were able to get their magic users in place, however, the kuo-toa were quickly overwhelmed and their tribe slaughtered utterly. To this day, the ghosts of the kuo-toa make infrequent appearances, rampaging through the area they

once called home in an attempt to wreak their eternal vengeance on their hated enemies.

The drow quickly seized upon the new riverfront cavern and began using it for travel. Explorers and traders made their way up and down the river, tracing it all the way back to its source, a giant surface waterfall. The nether extreme of the river has never been discovered, though the drow have discovered enormous tribes of kuo-toa further down the river, along with many other strange and hostile creatures.

ALLEGIANCES

The Transfer Guild has a very strong presence here as a result of the warehouses they control, though it is not as powerful as it is in the Foreign Ward and Charred Gate. The Church of the Killer is also allied with this area, because they use it to stage assaults on enemies who live along the river and as a training area for aquatic fighting. The Gulrais family is popular here for the same reason, though their recent absence has begun to strain this allegiance a bit. Though the Luzkar family has attempted to make a greater presence for itself here, they have been largely unsuccessful.

IMPORTANT PERSONAGES

By far the most powerful person in this ward is Josowa Thulwyn, the representative of the Transfer Guild and manager of the warehouses in this district. She has made a name for herself with her tireless devotion to her job and her ability to keep things running efficiently. Like all drow, however, Josowa sees herself destined for bigger things and is currently working to expand her zone of influence beyond the Transfer Guild. She is, in fact, planning on jumping to the Network and is busily preparing to disappear, taking her list of contacts and other intelligence along with her. She will leave in place a series of contacts and allies she can use to help her in her new role and keep her in tune with the work being done in the warehouses.

Josowa Thulwyn

Female elf (drow) Ftr5/Exp10: CR 15; Size M (5 ft., 2 in. tall); HD 5d10-5 + 10d6-10; hp 49; Init +8 (+4 Dex, +4 Improved initiative); Spd 30

ft.; AC 14 (+4 Dex); Attack +16/+11/+6 melee, or +16/+11/+6 ranged; SV Fort +6, Ref +8, Will +10; AL NE; Str 19, Dex 18, Con 8, Int 16, Wis 14, Cha 16.

Languages Spoken: Common, Elven, Gnoll, Goblin, Undercommon.

Skills and feats: Climb +3, Craft +6, Escape artist +17, Handle animal +6, Hide +4, Innuendo +6, Jump +10, Knowledge (nature) +15, Listen +4, Move silently +4, Open lock +17, Profession +15, Search +5, Sense motive +16, Spellcraft +13, Spot +4, Swim +7, Use magic device +16, Use rope +7; Ambidexterity, Blind-fight, Endurance, Improved initiative, Point blank shot, Power attack, Skill focus (swim), Skill focus (climb), Weapon focus (dart).

Rasnael Luzkar is a representative of her noble house in this ward, responsible for coordinating the arrival and departure of the various trading companies the house fields to the surface. This is more challenging than it first appears, as Rasnael must constantly ensure a fresh supply of sailors and soldiers to replace those killed by hostile forces during the traders' forays to the surface. For all her hard work, however, Rasnael does not feel as if she is well appreciated by her

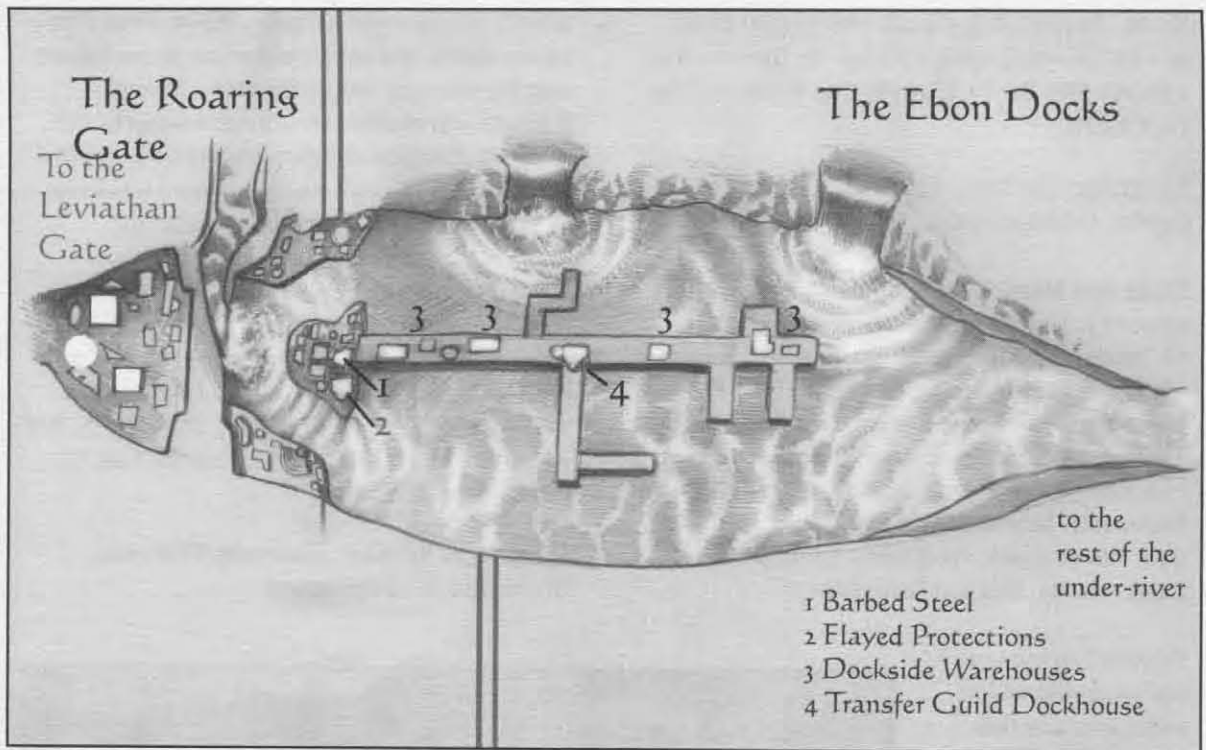
house. She has met with Josowa on more than one occasion and suspects that her acquaintance may be planning something rash. Though Rasnael is probably not willing to jump to the Network from her comfortable position inside a noble house, she will surely use her knowledge to her advantage if given the opportunity.

Rasnael Luzkar

Female elf (drow) Rog5/Exp8: CR 13; Size M (4 ft., 8 in. tall); HD 5d6 + 8d6; hp 47; Init +5 (+5 Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 15 (+5 Dex); Attack +9/+4 melee, or +14/+9 ranged; SV Fort +3, Ref +11, Will +9; AL NE; Str 11, Dex 20, Con 11, Int 15, Wis 14, Cha 16.

Languages Spoken: Common, Draconic, Elven, Orc, Undercommon.





Skills and feats: Appraise +14, Bluff +13, Climb +7, Craft +9, Decipher script +13, Disable device +9, Hide +13, Innuendo +14, Jump +8, Listen +6, Move silently +5, Open lock +12, Pick pocket +7, Profession +13, Ride +16, Search +4, Spot +17, Swim +5, Tumble +6, Use magic device +13, Use rope +16; Alertness, Blind-fight, Endurance, Point blank shot, Skill focus (swim).

BUYING AND SELLING

A varied assortment of business owners have taken up residence in the Ebon Dock, including the offices of various professional organizations who purchased buildings here in the hopes the city would expand further in this direction. Thus, outside the warehouses here, there is no unifying theme or feel to any of the businesses in this ward, leaving it economically weak aside from the storage and security services it provides to the trader captains in this area.

Noted Shops of the Ebon Dock

The following is a selection of shops found in the Ebon Dock

1. Barbed Steel

Luis Gawal sells weapons only, though he makes weapons of all sizes and shapes. The identifying feature of all these weapons are the incredibly jagged barbs and spines worked into their cutting surfaces. Though not always visible upon first glance, looking closely at the cutting or impaling surfaces of the blades reveals the intricate layers of jagged metal, eager to rip through flesh.

Luis Gawal

Male elf (drow) Exp15; CR 15; Size M (5 ft., 5 in. tall); HD 15d6; hp 51; Init +4 (+4 Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 14 (+4 Dex); Attack +11/+6/+1 melee, or +15/+10/+5 ranged; SV Fort +5, Ref +9, Will +12; AL NE; Str 10, Dex 19, Con 10, Int 17, Wis 17, Cha 11.

Languages Spoken: Common, Draconic, Elven, Gnome, Sylvan, Undercommon.

Skills and feats: Appraise +21, Bluff +18, Craft (weaponsmith) +19, Concentration +5, Diplomacy +3.5, Heal +5.5, Hide +4, Jump +2, Knowledge +7.5, Listen +17.5, Move silently +4, Pick pocket +22, Read lips +20, Scry +11.5, Search +5, Spot +7, Use magic device +7, Wilderness lore +8.5; Alertness, Ambidexterity,

Dodge, Skill focus (listen), Skill focus (climb), Two-weapon fighting.

Luys' weapons cost 500gp more than standard weapons of their type. In exchange, they cause an additional 1 hit point of damage when they successfully injure a target and are otherwise treated as masterwork weapons. These weapons can be enchanted as a masterwork weapon, and retain their additional damage if they are magically enhanced.

There is a 70% chance that Luys has any simple or martial weapon in stock, and a 50% chance of any exotic weapon being in stock. If a weapon is not in stock, Luys will have one ready in a week.

Plot Hook: Luys has a sweetheart deal with the wizards and sorcerers of the Witch's Daggers. He supplies them with weapons at his cost and they enchant weapons for him at a much reduced rate (the cost of materials only). Luys does not sell these weapons, however – he is a mortificant cultist who provides his masters with

the enchanted blade to lead their assaults on the drow and others who cross their paths.

2. Flayed Protection

This shop sells only flayed armour, which the owner Raris Ezriek creates with his own hands. This magical armour requires significant investments of time to complete, but Raris so enjoys his work that he rarely takes a day off. When speaking, Raris coughs constantly and his lips are often flecked with droplets of blood – though he has had his condition for years, it does not seem to be adversely affecting his health (though it does keep others at arm's length lest they get sprayed with bloody spittle).

Flayed armour is created from the skin of intelligent creatures and passes some of the creatures' natural abilities on to the wearer. See *The Quintessential Drow* for more information about this type of armour and its creation.

Dorianne watched as Blade flipped his new dagger end over end in his hand. They were moving from pier to pier along a massive webbing dock, the murky flow of a dark river below them. This was the Ebon Docks, Sheoloth's tie to a huge network of underground rivers and one of their primary points of trade. He had brought her here to shadow him while he dropped off a package. In return for it, he had picked up this new blade, one he was examining more closely than any other she had seen him wield.

'Something special about that knife?' she asked him in the silent hand language he was teaching her.

He nodded and held it up the light of a dockside skull-pyre. She looked at it closely, staying just out of striking range. He saw the reflex and smiled inwardly. She was not very strong, but she was swift and bright. He did not figure it would take long for her to notice the special quality of this dagger.

'The edge looks like a feather.' Since the quiet gesture-tongue had no word for feather, she had to speak that one aloud but she did in a whisper.

Blade nodded. 'Correct. The edge tears through soft things with unequalled ease. We are heading to another ward to get it enchanted for you. Hurry up or I'll leave you here for the sailors to play with.'

Dorianne closed the distance between them and they made their way past the Transfer Guild hall. It was a big place, large enough to hold all the crates and cargo that came in to the water port in an entire week. It had to, according to Blade, because it took that long for the Guild to determine how much of a percentage they would be claiming from each shipment as their tithe. With all the taxes and fees the drow charged on anything coming in or out of Sheoloth, it amazed her that anyone would do business here at all.

Then again, it occurred to her that the price of *not* doing business with the drow was probably a lot higher...

Raris Ezriek

Male elf (drow) Wiz12: CR 13; Size M (4 ft., 11 in. tall); HD 12d4+36; hp 68; Init +3 (+3 Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 13 (+3 Dex); Attack +6/+1 melee, or +9/+4 ranged; SV Fort +7, Ref +7, Will +10; AL NE; Str 10, Dex 16, Con 17, Int 17, Wis 14, Cha 10.

Languages Spoken: Common, Elven, Goblin, Orc, Sylvan, Undercommon.

Skills and feats: Craft (Alchemy) +17, Craft (Armorsmithing) +17, Hide +3, Knowledge (religion) +4, Knowledge (arcana) +18, Listen +4, Move silently +3, Search +7, Sense motive +5, Spellcraft +17, Spot +4; Craft staff, Craft Magical Arms and Armor, Maximize spell, Quicken spell, [Scribe scroll], Still spell, Weapon focus (dagger).

Wizard Spells Known (4/5/5/5/3/3/2): 0

- Arcane Mark, Dancing Lights, Daze, Detect Magic, Detect Poison, Disrupt Undead, Flare, Ghost Sound, Light, Mage Hand, Mending, Open/Close, Prestidigitation, Ray of Frost, Read Magic, Resistance. 1st - Change Self, Charm Person, Chill Touch, Identify, Mage Armor,

Magic Missile, Ray of Enfeeblement, Shield, Silent Image, Sleep. 2nd - Alter Self, Ghoul Touch, Invisibility, Acid Arrow, See Invisibility, Shatter, Spectral Hand, Web. 3rd - Dispel Magic, Displacement, Fly, Gaseous Form, Haste, Lightning Bolt, Phantom Steed, Sepia Snake Sigil, Slow, Summon Monster III, Water Breathing. 4th - Charm Monster, Improved Invisibility, Polymorph Other, Wall of Ice. 5th - Cone of Cold, False Vision, Teleport, Wall of Iron, Wall of Stone. 6th - Chain Lightning, Summon Monster VI, Transformation, True Seeing.

Plot Hooks: Raris had the misfortune to take up residence in the only natively-constructed building left after the fall of the kuo-toa at the hands of the drow. He has since been cursed with the coughing sickness which, while it is not killing him, does make it difficult for him to sleep. More worrisome are the spate of deaths surrounding those who wear his armour – he will pay any adventurers quite well if they can discover the reason why his patrons are dropping dead (they are being attacked by the ghosts of the kuo-toa).



THE FOREIGN WARD

The drow are paranoid about the effects of other cultures on their own, their instinctive hatred of all non-drow prevents them from truly appreciating what is offered by those around them. As a result, they have sequestered all non-drow who wish to trade with them in this ward. Foreigners are not allowed to enter the main city, but must stay in the Foreign Ward for the duration of their trade contracts with the Transfer Guild. Any who wander outside this area (save those with verified residences in the Outland Thieves ward) are subject to immediate execution.

AT A GLANCE

There are two levels of this ward, one stacked atop the other. They are connected by lifts which are operated by slaves who turn great wheels to raise or lower the enormous platforms between the levels. The foreigners here are not innately evil, for the most part, but their exposure to drow culture has hardened them and causes owners to treat their slaves with the same disregard as would any drow.

This area is also culturally diverse, with dozens of different races represented here. Lizardfolk trappers make their way here to sell the skins and scales they take from their prey, while dwarven smiths and gnomish tinkers

produce mechanical goods of the highest quality. There is a constant sense of tension in the ward, as everyone is in competition for the next trade contract at all times. A trader who secures a lengthy contract with Sheoloth will be fabulously wealthy in just a few short years, while those who do not often leave the city broken and impoverished within a few weeks.

HISTORY

The Foreign Ward is a relatively recent addition to this ancient city. Originally, Sheoloth handled all of its trade with outsiders in a small cavern located further out into the subterranean wilderness. This became problematic, however, because the cost of guards to protect the drow traders made the cost of imported goods too high to be profitable.



As a result, the Church of the Dark Mother was convinced to loosen the restrictions within the city and create the Foreign Ward. To combat the unimpeded influence of foreign races in the drow city, the Transfer Guild was formed to moderate and approve all trade contracts and foreigners were restricted in their access to the inner city. Since that time, the Foreign Ward has expanded to a second level and the Outland Thieves section of the city was created to house foreign merchants and their staff.

With the recent creation of passes into the city for privileged foreigners, there is a growing concern amongst the more traditional drow that their city is going to be tainted by such exposure to foreigners. If the profits keep rolling in, however, it is doubtful the church will put a stop to the foreign influence on the city.

ALLEGIANCES

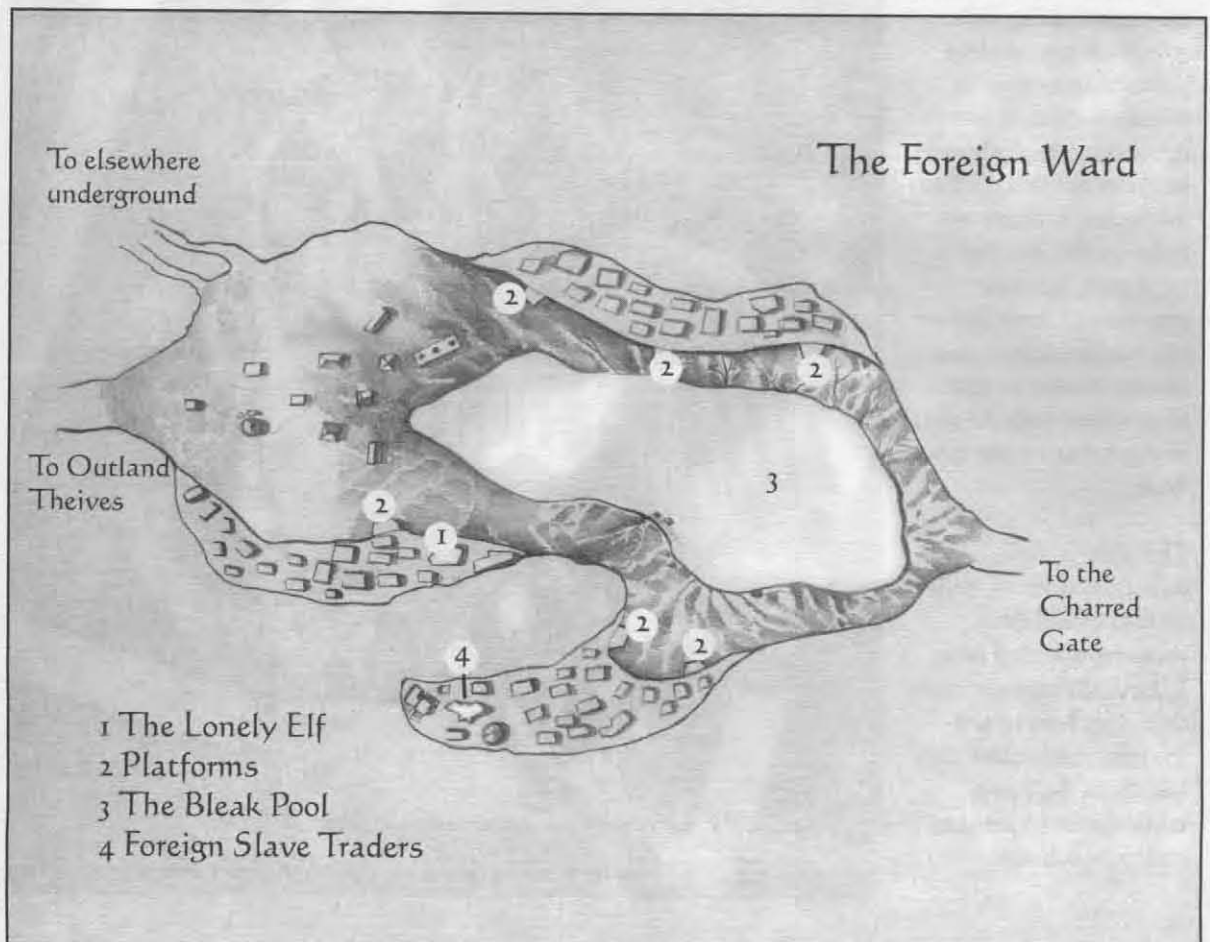
The Transfer Guild and the Network are the two most important influences in this ward. With one providing legitimate access to the marketplaces of the city and the other enabling

illicit (but still profitable) access to the same markets, the foreigners cannot wait to line up to bribe, cajole, and seduce the drow agents of either of these allegiance factions.

This has led to some serious conflict between the foreign factions in this ward. Those who side with the Transfer Guild paid exorbitant up-front fees to purchase their trade contracts, which are cheapened by the Network agents who will help anyone get their goods into the city. The two sides are clashing more frequently as time passes and it is believed that the final war between the two guilds may actually be fought in the Foreign Ward, where their largest investments are and where the Faceless Watch is less likely to intercede.

IMPORTANT PERSONAGES

The Foreign Ward is a mass of conflicting interests which have coalesced around two essential factions: those who support the Network and those who choose to side with the Transfer Guild. Those who sided with the



Transfer Guild tend to be wealthier than the others, but the number disparity is great – the Transfer Guild only accepts a half-dozen or so new trade contracts each year, limiting the membership in this faction. The Network, on the other hand, is busily filling orders from within Sheoloth from any traders in the Foreign Ward willing to supply them with the goods.

The leader of the wealthier faction of traders is Krazt Thunderforge, a dwarf who operates the largest foreign armour shop in the ward. His armour was so favoured by the church of the Killer that it was worn exclusively by its elite units for several years. Since the fracas with the Network agents, Krazt has been steadily losing business from the church, which does not wish to tie itself to the fate of a foreign merchant who may be killed or financially destroyed in the near future. Krazt is a powerful speaker and is doing his best to get other merchants on his side and interested in doing whatever it takes to put an end to the Network.

Krazt Thunderforge

Male dwarf (hill) Ftr6/Exp8: CR 13; Size M (4 ft., 2 in. tall); HD 6d10+18 + 8d6+24; hp 115; Init +9 (+5 Dex, +4 Improved initiative); Spd 20 ft.; AC 15 (+5 Dex); Attack +15/+10/+5 melee, or +17/+12/+7 ranged; SV Fort +10, Ref +9, Will +10; AL N; Str 16, Dex 21, Con 17, Int 12, Wis 14, Cha 13.

Languages Spoken: Common, Dwarven, Elven, Undercommon.

Skills and feats: Appraise +12, Climb +14, Craft +15, Diplomacy +12, Hide +5, Innuendo +13, Listen +2, Move silently +5, Profession +14, Scry +11, Speak language +1, Spellcraft +12, Spot +2; Blind-fight, Dodge, Improved initiative, Leadership, Mobility, Point blank shot, Skill focus (innuendo), Two-weapon fighting.

On the other side of the fence, Huftol

‘We are here to see a dwarf.’

Dorianne looked at him, trying to see if Blade was making a joke. With his deadly serious eyes and controlled expression, it was always hard to tell. Still, there was nothing in the set of his features to indicate that he was doing so. ‘We are?’

Blade nodded and pointed to a large forge in the distance. This ward was different from the others she had been to. The buildings were packed together and she had seen more people who were *not* drow here than she had in the entire time she had been in Sheoloth. She had been meaning to ask Blade why his people tolerated so many outsiders, but there really had been no chance of doing so during their walk through the area. With all the people here, there was no good way to have a private conversation, hand sign or vocal.

When they reached the forge, Blade was welcomed by a stout dwarf with massive arms. He had called him Krazt and the two were talking now like long-time acquaintances. Looking around the shop, Dorianne could see why this particular foreigner was tolerated. His armour was exquisite and while it all appeared far too heavy for her to use, some of the styling resembled the cuirasses she had seen on the Faceless Watch.

After a long conversation about someone named Greenberry and the possibly of an unfortunate accident, Blade and Krazt retired upstairs for a pipe and some more planning. She was left down in the shop while they closed it. The dwarf had not even warned her to keep her hands to herself, but since she had come in with Blade, he probably did not figure he needed to.

She sat in the corner with the deepest shadows and waited. Staying well hidden and concealed by a suit of full plate, its entire length covered in upwardly jagged blades, she noticed the tell-tale marks all around the shop that its proprietor was allied with the Transfer Guild just like Blade was. That probably meant this Greenberry person was with the Network.

‘Ouch,’ she cringed, thinking about the nightmarish things she had seen Blade do to Network members before. ‘Sad for them.’

Greenberry, is a tailor with an axe to grind. She was cheated out of a trade contract by Krazt himself several years ago and has not let the memory die. Nearly destroyed by the loss of that contract, she rallied by working closely with the agents of the Network and helping them build a steady base of suppliers in the Foreign Ward. A former noble amongst her people, Huftol was banished for her greed and hunger for power, traits she has used well in the Underdeep.

Huftol Greenberry

Female halfling (lightfoot) Nob5/Exp10: CR 13; Size S (3 ft., 0 in. tall); HD 5d8 + 10d6; hp 54; Init +3 (+3 Dex); Spd 20 ft.; AC 14 (+3 Dex, +1 Size); Attack +11/+6 melee, or +14/+9 ranged; SV Fort +5, Ref +8, Will +16; AL NE; Str 11, Dex 16, Con 11, Int 12, Wis 19, Cha 15.

Languages Spoken: Common, Dwarven, Gnome, Goblin, Halfling, Orc.

Skills and feats: Climb +13, Craft (tailoring) +14, Disguise +8, Gather information +13, Handle animal +6.5, Hide +7, Innuendo +16,

Jump +2, Knowledge +8, Listen +8, Move silently +5, Pick pocket +14, Read lips +16, Ride +8, Speak language +3, Spot +12.5, Use rope +16, Wilderness lore +4; Alertness, Skill focus (read lips), Skill focus (wilderness lore), Skill focus (craft), Skill focus (pick pocket).

BUYING AND SELLING

Food and livestock are the biggest sellers in the Foreign Ward, though its taverns and inns do a thriving business amongst the thrillseeking younger drow who come here to blow off steam. By importing animals not available in the Underdeep, such as pygmy cows and chickens, the merchants are able to make a very good profit for themselves. The dangers, of course, in dealing with live animals outside their native environment is the high rate of death, but the risk seems worth the reward in this case.

This is the only place in the city where live food animals can be purchased and slaughtered on the spot, as the drow banned the importation of living creatures into the city after a plague crossed from some bulls into the local prostitute population of Sheoloth. The resulting epidemic weakened the city dramatically, despite the best efforts of the clerics.

Livestock can be purchased here roughly 75% of the time at 200% of the cost of the items as shown in *Core Rulebook I*. Other surface foods are available all the time, but the cost is a mere 150% of the price shown in *Core Rulebook I*.

Noted Shops of the Foreign Ward

The following is a selection of shops found in the Foreign Ward.

1. The Lonely Elf

This combination tavern and brothel is the most popular dining and drinking establishment in the ward. It is frequented by both drow and foreigners, with all races mixing in an uncomfortable but exciting atmosphere. Dancers perform on large platforms raised above the level of the room, while prostitutes peddle their flesh to diners. In the evenings, this place becomes a madhouse, with drunken drow lashing out at the foreigners and other patrons doing their best to enjoy the show and stay out of the way. Despite the danger to foreigners who dine here, business owners find it is much easier to deal with drow who are being fed and entertained in a manner they find pleasing.



THE FUNGUS PITS

A deep, wet cavern with walls and floor covered in dozens of different types of fungus, this place is one third, farm, one third garden, and one third marketplace all in the same cyst of moisture-slicked stone. The stench here ranges from hideous to outright deadly, depending on which patch one is near, but there is no denying that its lack of glamour and amenities is more than made up for by its importance to the survival of everyone in Sheoloth.

AT A GLANCE

The most notable sight in the Fungus Pits would have to be the panoply of colours that stretch out over the entirety of the cavern, dimly lit by the many swinging chains illuminated through the use of hundreds of permanent *faerie fire* spells. Patches of red, blue, greens brighter than any emerald, and violet hues never found in nature completely dominate this chamber, all the result of the many fungal harvests that abound here. The constant movement of undercattle, farmers, and slaves make this one of the busiest caves in Sheoloth, and the webbing tents pitched in each 'field' of moss lend a market atmosphere in the midst of the continual stench.

HISTORY

For almost as long as there has been a Sheoloth, that has been a pungal pit. The original was much smaller than the Fungus Pits as the cavern is known today. The actual Fungus Pits are several depressions worked into the solid rock to bring certain batches of mold and fungus closer

to the heat of the magma just a few hundred feet below the level of this cave. These have been made over the centuries by noble families paying for spells to be cast as they compete with each other to create the perfect subspecies of fungus for their own use and for trade.

The value of the Fungus Pits is known to everyone who lives in Sheoloth and as a result, the entire cavern is under one of the strongest truces the drow are capable of obeying. Every house, noble and commoner, knows that without this chamber and the bounty it represents, everyone would starve in a matter of weeks. Even with their divine magic fully tasked to spells like *create food and drink*, the priests and priestesses of Sheoloth could never maintain enough for everyone in the Sprawling City. Since no one wants to be the group that gets left out to starve, no one endangers the Fungus Pit.

Over the many years that harvests have been taken from this fetid cave, hundreds of species of fungus have been created and abandoned in its farming pits. Most are discarded as being imperfect from some subtle reason, but the occasional strain becomes dangerous or poisonous and has to be destroyed before it risks cross-infection with the other farms. Twice in Sheoloth's history, the Fungus Pits have been sealed off and subjected to magical fire because of some contamination of the harvest. These are dark, lean times with virtually every drow in the city pitching in to stockpile food and aid in the recovery of the farms.

ALLEGIANCES

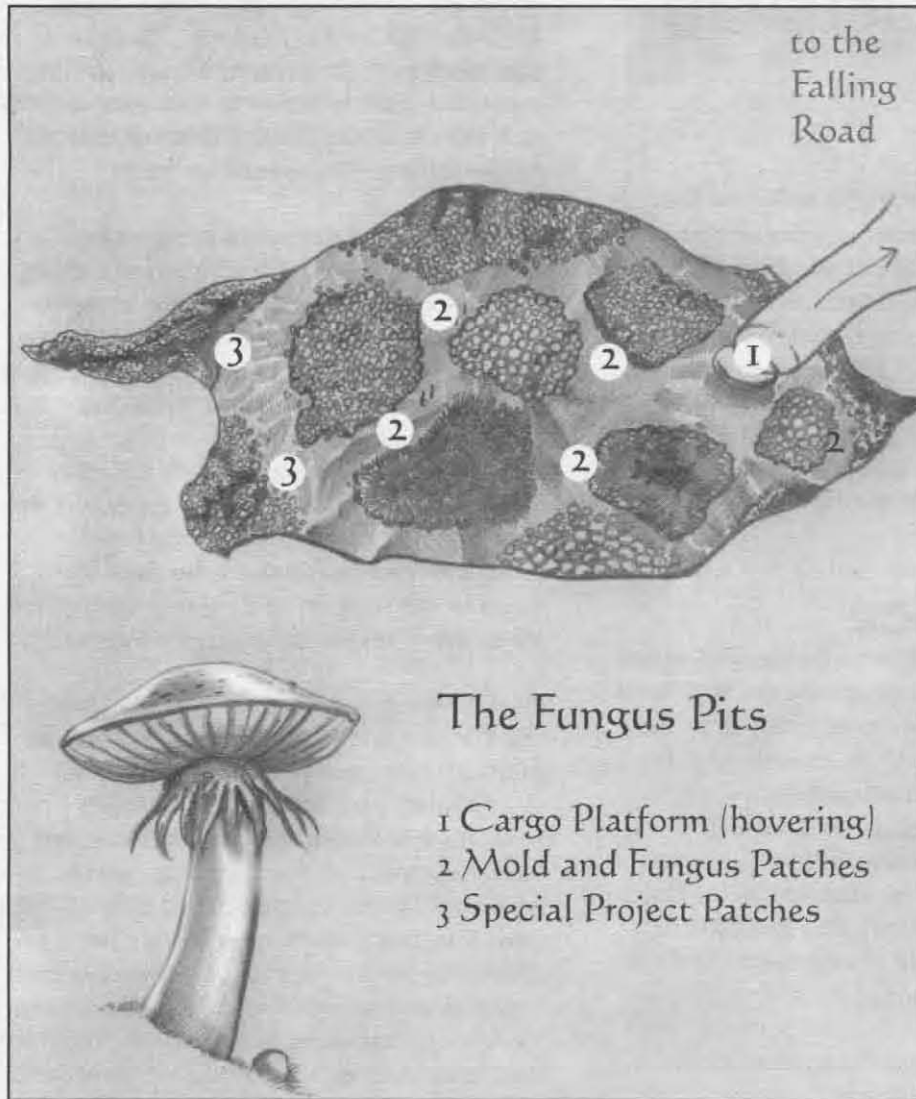
Rather than fostering the kinds of internecine alliances and conspiracies that are profligate in other areas of Sheoloth, the Fungus Pits are stridently patrolled by the Church of the Dark Mother to ensure that none develop. There are

The Stench of the Fungus Pits

The smell present in this cavern is such that any character without some form of protection from scent based attacks will be at a -2 circumstance penalty to all skill checks and attack rolls while here. This penalty lasts for an hour, at which time the character becomes inured enough to the smell to reduce the penalty to -1. This lasts indefinitely and is not reduced by further exposure.

Creatures with the Scent special quality have it much worse. They suffer a -4 penalty to all skill checks and saving throws and loses the ability to use their Scent ability until they leave the area. This penalty also reduces in half after an hour (to -2), but the Scent quality is still gone until they leave the Fungal Pits. Long term exposure to this stench tends to burn that quality out of creatures (see the Muted Sense: Smell feat below for more details).





The Fungus Pits

- 1 Cargo Platform (hovering)
- 2 Mold and Fungus Patches
- 3 Special Project Patches

House projects that, because they are magical experiments and not edible or useful as construction material, are not protected by the same laws.

The alliances that get formed here are as tangled as they are fleeting, with merchant houses buying each other out on speculations about the powers of a new harvest and House traders pooling their resources to split an new batch of potion-fungi rather than see a mutual rival get their black hands on the entirety of the crop. These instant allegiances tend to last as long as the growing cycles here and when a harvest comes in, agreements (and in

many cases conspirators) expire.

violently enforced laws against trade alliances forming with any single House or merchant faction; these laws are taken very seriously by both the representatives of the Church who keep the peace here and the farmers who operate the fields for their noble patrons. No one gets any special deals, not because the benefits would not be worth the risks, but because the fate that lies in store for anyone caught doing so is too hideous for anyone to consider attempting it.

The drow of Sheoloth keep their dealings almost entirely honest in the Fungus Pits. The basic needs of food and clothing that get met through this cavern's products are too important to flout the laws, no matter how tempting doing is to their natures. This is only possible because of the one way that drow can ply their treacherous natures in the Fungal Pits- the Special Farms. This arm of the cavern is the host of several

IMPORTANT PERSONAGES

While every fieldhand who works in the Fungus Pits is important to the survival of the Sprawling City, they are mostly the same kind of person with very few extraordinary traits among them. Even the authoritative farmers who guide their efforts are little more than experienced laborers with positions above the slaves and indentured servants of the noble houses.

The drow who maintain the cattle keep their live stock in circular pens in the center of the fungus patches. Except for the different shift of their skills, they are also very similar to the farmers

and their help. Even the merchants who staff the tent markets in the Fungal Pits are mostly cut from the same cloth, with very few of their number standing out above the others. Life in the Fungal Pits is both a vital duty and a very dull existence.

This is not to say that special individuals do not exist in this stinking place. The Fungus Pits are watched over by a pair of drow who, while they are technically married under the auspices of the Church, maintain separate abodes and are hardly exclusive in their dalliances. This couple, Vanderlythe and Fenaela Sezztyl have the distinction in the Pits of possessing the only homes with permanent areas enchanted to haold out the stench that pervades the rest of the caves. It is considered the height of shopping luxury to be pay the gate fee and buy from their private markets.

Vanderlythe Sezztyl

Male elf (drow) Exp7: CR 7; Size M (4 ft., 10 in. tall); HD 7d6-7; hp 21; Init +3 (+3 Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 13 (+3 Dex); Attack +5 melee, or +8 ranged; SV Fort +1, Ref +7, Will +5; AL NE; Str 10, Dex 17, Con 9, Int 15, Wis 11, Cha 15.

Languages Spoken: Common, Elven, Gnoll, Sylvan, Undercommon.

Skills and feats: Bluff +6, Concentration +8, Craft +4, Diplomacy +4, Gather information +3, Hide +3, Innuendo +7, Listen +2, Move silently +3, Open lock +5, Perform (dancing) +4, Read lips +10, Scry +11, Search +4, Sense motive +11, Spot +2, Swim +2.5, Wilderness lore +1.5; Lightning Reflexes, Skill focus (innuendo), Skill focus (sense motive).

Fenaela Sezztyl

Female elf (drow) Sor4: CR 5; Size M (5 ft., 1 in. tall); HD 4d4+8; hp 18; Init +2 (+2 Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 12 (+2 Dex); Attack +3 melee, or +4 ranged; SV Fort +3, Ref +3, Will +4; AL CE; Str 12, Dex 15, Con 14, Int 18, Wis 11, Cha 17.

Languages Spoken: Common, Draconic, Elven, Gnoll, Gnome, Undercommon.

Skills and feats: Concentration +9, Craft (fungus weaving)+10, Diplomacy +4, Hide +2, Knowledge (arcana) +11, Listen +2, Move

silently +2, Profession (merchant/farmer) +7, Scry +6, Search +6, Spellcraft +9, Spot +2; Brew potion, Point blank shot.

Sorcerer Spells Known (6/7/4): 0 - Detect Magic, Detect Poison, Ghost Sound, Light, Prestidigitation, Read Magic. 1st - Feather Fall, Magic Missile, Shield. 2nd - Flame Arrow.

The other person of note in the Fungal Pits is Banaerath. One of the most powerful divine spellcasters in all of Sheoloth, he hides his abilities well under the shroud of ignorance that most drow have about druidical magic. His incredible potency comes from nearly six centuries of constant experience with the living things of the Underdeep and when he is not tending to the crops and the special project patches of the Fungus Pits, he is studying as much lore about nature and the lifecycles of subterranean creatures as he can get.

Banaerath

Male elf (drow) Drd19: CR 20; Size M (5 ft., 1 in. tall); HD 19d8+57; hp 148; Init +4 (+4 Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 14 (+4 Dex); Attack +15/+10/+5 melee, or +18/+13/+8 ranged; SV Fort +16, Ref +10, Will +16; AL NE; Str 13, Dex 18, Con 16, Int 14, Wis 20, Cha 10.

Languages Spoken: Common, Druidic, Elven, Gnome, Sylvan, Undercommon.

Skills and feats: Heal +20, Hide +4, Knowledge (horticulture) +10, Knowledge (nature) +24, Listen +12, Move silently +4, Profession (farmer) +15, Scry +10, Search +4, Sense motive +6, Spellcraft +20, Spot +9, Swim +5, Tumble +5; Brew potion, Craft wand, Great fortitude, Muted Sense- Smell, Silent spell, Skill Focus (Profession (farmer), Still Spell.

Druid Spells Per Day: 6/7/6/6/6/4/4/3/3.

‘Dru-osht, Gethodd, and Kolgnash’ Three Dire Boar Animal Companions [50, 55, and 60 hit points] All three have lost their Scent special ability from being down here most of their lives, but they do not suffer any penalties from the stench of the Fungus Pits.

BUYING AND SELLING

Only two economies exist in the Fungus Pits—fungi and perfumes. Both can be found, the latter less common but just as highly valued, in dozens of small tent booths in the growing fields themselves with elevated bridges allowing customers to walk between them without harming the crops. The fact that clients must purchase their fungus above the mounds of fecal matter that it grows over is what makes the secondary market of perfume so lucrative.

While the denizens of this cave usually develop a tolerance to the stench, other drow never do and magical perfumes that mask unpleasant smells can go for a premium in the worse areas of stench. Wizards specializing the creation of such perfumes (see the New Magic Item

section for more details) live near the special projects farm and use extracts from that patch to formulate their goods.

Those who shop here usually pay the 150 gold it takes to rent a hovering platform to carry their goods. Even strong backed slaves can rarely compete with these solid webbing baskets and their half ton carrying capacity. Many stalls renting these useful devices are found near the floating ramp that allows entrance to the Fungus Pits. These wily businessmen protect their merchandise by keying the magic of the platforms to only operate near massive amounts of fungus. As such, the carts become useless to steal as they fail to operate in any other part of the Sprawling City.

New Magic Item – Oil of Scentmasking

This oil comes in hundreds of different colours and odors, but every variation does effectively the same thing; they make their scent the only thing the user can smell. By inhaling this lightly tinted oil, the user fills his nose with its smell and loses the ability to detect other smells for 1d4 hours. While it can be very helpful for masking foul odors, other uses for *oil of scentmasking* have been discovered. For example, if a target is struck with a vial of this *oil* (ranged touch attack) or somehow fooled into inhaling its vapours, it must make a Fortitude saving throw against a DC of 17 or lose any Scent related special quality for 1d4 hours or until its effect is *dispelled*.

Because of the weak effect of this oil compared to the power of the spell used to make it, one creation attempt makes 20 doses. The price listed below is for a twenty dose lot, with individual vials of oil priced at whatever the market will bear.

Caster Level: 11th; *Prerequisites:* Brew Potion; *permanent image;* *Market Price:* 2000 gp

New Feat: The Benefit of Life in the Fungal Pits

It should be noted that 90% of the drow living and working in the Fungal Pits have developed this feat. It counts towards their usual total of applicable feats, but most have it gain it at some point during their lives. The stench of the Pits is just too strong to stand for long otherwise.

Muted Sense: Smell

You are not affected by foul or strong odours of any kind, though magical ones can still get past your defenses from time to time.

Benefit: You are immune to the effect of any scent-based attack that is not magical in nature. This includes any Extraordinary ability that affects its victims through scent (skunk must, troglodyte stench, etc.). Magical spells that create a foul or overpowering smell are not stopped by this immunity, but you still receive a +2 circumstance bonus to any saving throw required to overcome them.

As a drawback, you lose the Scent extraordinary ability (if you possess it) when you take this feat. If you later gain the Scent feature, you must choose which one (this feat or Scent) to discard immediately. Losing this feat for that reason does not entitle you to gain another feat in its place; it becomes a defunct feat slot unless otherwise determined by the Games Master.

THE GLORY CRYPT

The drow took this section of the Underdeep only after a brutal battle with the elves who controlled a fortress here. Sent to exterminate the drow, the elves were woefully unprepared for the horrors that awaited them. After utterly destroying their elven attackers, the drow took over the fortress, tore it down and used fragments of the building to decorate their own, twisted marketplace.

The Glory Crypt has, ever since, been a vast marketplace in which traders sell anything and everything and shoppers can purchase their heart's desire, provided they have the gold. Amidst the ruins and reminders of the surface elves from which they were separated so long ago, the dark elves search for elusive treasures and strange artefacts to purchase.

AT A GLANCE

The Glory Crypt is actually three levels, two of which wind their way through the stone of the Underdeep while the third is a gigantic web strung between enormous stone pillars. Travel between the levels is accomplished by the use of elemental-powered elevators which rise and lower at the command of their operators.

The entire area is alive all day and all night, the sounds of shop owners barking out specials to entice customers competing with the shouts of delight or disdain from the shoppers. Music spills out from taverns and inns, while the perfumed sweat of prostitutes mingles seductively with the aroma of grilled meat and spilled

wine.

The Glory Crypt is a place of excess in all its forms, from the extravagant goods on display to the behaviours of the shoppers and merchants here. The nobility love this ward, for here they can truly revel in their dark elven nature, striking out at those around them and launching their guards at one another for the sheer sport of it all. Visitors are encouraged to keep their wits about them, as this is easily one of the most dangerous wards in the city if you are not of noble blood.

HISTORY

This is the only section of Sheoloth which bears obvious signs of elven influence. The ancient statues and frescoes created by the elves during their short tenure here have been defaced and repurposed, turning what was once a bastion of elven might into a mockery of the principles of the drow's surface cousins. After it was captured from the elves who sought to exterminate them, the drow turned the Glory Crypt into a reminder of the fate of those who oppose them. The bones of surface elves still cling to most of the surfaces in this area, their cracked skulls and splintered legs nailed to stone pillars as mute warnings to any who would go against the drow.



ALLEGIANCES

The Luzkar and Darzheel families have strong allegiances here, both for the shops they own and support and the huge sums of money they spend in the area. The Faceless Watch is also greatly appreciated here and has a strong presence in the area to protect the investments of noble families and their allies.

IMPORTANT PERSONAGES

The Glory Crypt is a very competitive environment, filled with merchants struggling for dominance over their competition. As a result, the ability to gather information is crucial to stay competitive. Few shopkeepers, however, have the skills or contacts necessary to maintain an information network, which created a need in the Glory Crypt. This need was met

by Ylinia Resilas, an enterprising young rogue with a penchant for seduction and an eye for information. Ylinia has created a vast network of informants, from waitresses at taverns to prostitutes to clerks in stores. This gives her a birds' eye view of the ward – if there is anything happening in the Glory Crypt, Ylinia knows about it.

Ylinia Resilas

Female elf (drow) Rog12: CR 13; Size M (4 ft., 8 in. tall); HD 12d6-24; hp 31; Init +3 (+3 Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 13 (+3 Dex); Attack +8/+3 melee, or +12/+7 ranged; SV Fort +2, Ref +11, Will +5; AL CE; Str 8, Dex 17, Con 7, Int 17, Wis 12, Cha 15.

Languages Spoken: Common, Draconic, Elven, Orc, Sylvan, Undercommon.

Skills and feats: Balance +14, Bluff +15, Climb +13, Decipher script +14, Forgery

She had never seen Blade so unwilling to meet with someone before. She was certain this trip had to be important, because she had never seen Blade do anything he did not want to unless he had no other choice. Still, if he had to take in an unpleasant meeting, this was certainly a breathtaking place to do it in.

They were standing in the ruins of an ancient fortress, elven by Blade's explanation. The place had fallen long ago to the drow and, in a perverse sense of irony, been turned into a fortified guard post for the rest of Sheoloth. She could see members of the Watch standing atop the remains of parapets, their drow armour and weapons ready to repel any enemy that might try an invasion against the Sprawling City. She could almost image the indignant screams of elven spirits around the cavern, raging against the defilement of their faerie citadel.

Her daydreaming was interrupted by the appearance of a slender figure in the shadows ahead. Dorianne reached for a dagger and felt Blade's hand stop her. 'That's our contact. Leave this to me.' The distaste in his voice was plainly evident. She obeyed instantly, the bare inch of her dagger sheathing back into its dark leather. As he approached the shadow, she caught cover and readied herself for any sudden betrayal.

The shadow emerged, revealing itself as a drow female clad in thin, nearly transparent silk with a set of stilettos bound into her long, luxuriant white hair. Blade talked with her at length, enduring every moment of it around her obvious flirtations. He cringed and nearly backed away as the woman ran her fingernails down his chest all the way to his weapon belt. The interview did not last long after that.

Blade came back, fuming, and the shadow woman departed with a content giggle of satisfaction. Dorianne considered putting a dagger in the bitch anyway, but she moved to her lord's side as he cleared the ruins. 'Master, did you get the information you needed?'

Blade's hand finally came away from the broad knife it had been clutching during the entire ordeal. 'Ylinia is still alive, isn't she?'

+17, Gather Information +19, Hide +3, Intuit direction +14, Listen +20, Move silently +3, Perform +11, Pick pocket +12, Search +5, Sense motive +13, Spot +5, Tumble +15, Use magic device +7; Alertness, Point blank shot, Skill focus (gather information), Skill focus (listen), Weapon focus (shortbow, composite).

BUYING AND SELLING

Virtually anything is available in the Glory Crypt, it has not one, but two, magic shops, which provide a wide selection of magical items for virtually every price range. The cost here, however, is outrageous, with all goods purchased in this area costing 75% more than the prices listed in *Core Rulebook I* and *Core Rulebook II*. The nobles who shop here can afford the expense, but others may find their options limited while shopping in the Glory Crypt.

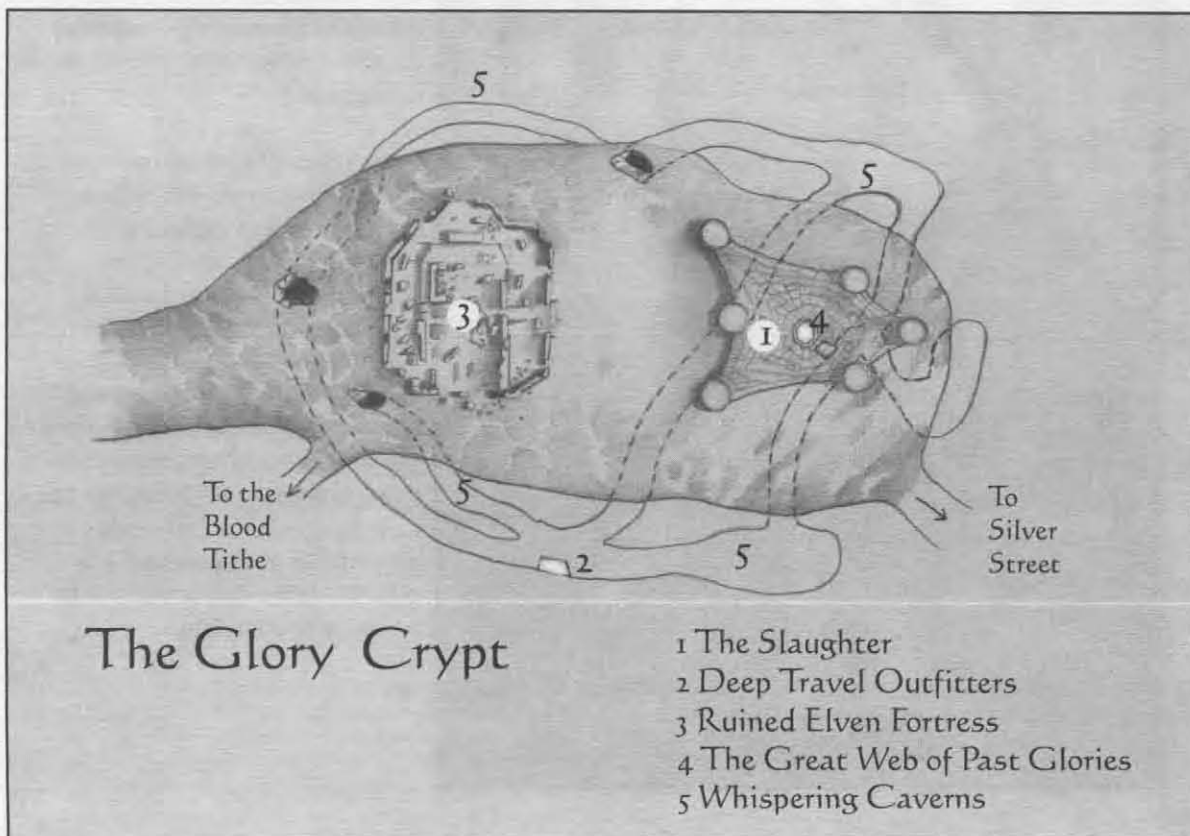
Noted Shops of the Glory Crypt

The following is a selection of shops found in the Glory Crypt.

1. The Slaughter

Livestock are not commonly found in Sheoloth, mostly due to the frequency of plagues and other diseases brought on by living in close proximity to such creatures. The drow of the Glory Crypt have come up with a way around this, however, and now breed so-called 'tube creatures' to provide meat for their patrons. The Slaughter invented this process and is still the leading source of tube creatures in Sheoloth. Essentially, magically altered hybrids are grown in thick, nutrient soups inside copper canisters. As the creature reaches maturity its body extrudes from the ends of the tube, and the meat is carved from these exposed ends. The nutrient soup speeds regeneration for these creatures, so they continually grow out of the tubes for the slaughter.

This tavern features an enormous array of tube creatures, including a very rare tube drow which was sentenced to this form of punishment after being convicted of cannibalism years ago. The creature was fleshcrafted and poured into a tube, where it has been slowly eaten for the past decade. All meals in the Slaughter start at 50gp



and go up, with the most expensive meal (the drow) going for 500gp per plate, with only two plates available each day.

2. Deep Travel Outfitters

Born with one withered leg, Reisha Blisaris still managed a successful career as an adventurer and explorer. Following the utter destruction of her companions, at the hands of an enraged fiendish djinn, Reisha took her loot and started her own business. Though she is quite confident and will speak at length on the subject of adventuring, she secretly believes all adventurers are fools working inevitably toward their own deaths.

Reisha Blisaris

Female elf (drow) Rog13: CR 14; Size M (5 ft., 3 in. tall); HD 13d6-26; hp 28; Init +4 (+4 Dex);

Spd 30 ft.; AC 14 (+4 Dex); Attack +11/+6 melee, or +13/+8 ranged; SV Fort +2, Ref +12, Will +5; AL CE; Str 14, Dex 19, Con 6, Int 16, Wis 13, Cha 12.

Languages Spoken: Common, Draconic, Elven, Gnoll, Orc, Undercommon.

Skills and feats: Climb +14, Disable device +17, Disguise +12, Forgery +15, Heal +8, Hide +19, Listen +3, Move silently +4, Open lock +15, Pick pocket +18, Read lips +18, Search +20, Sense motive +17, Spot +19, Tumble +20; Ambidexterity, Dodge, Quick draw, Track, Weapon finesse (dagger).

Inside the building proper, one sees very few ornamentations and a lot of gear stacked on shelves, hanging from racks on the walls, or descending from the grid of iron rails on the ceiling.

Reisha rolls herself along on a small cart, using her one good leg to propel herself down the aisle at a rapid clip. She speaks quickly and quietly to customers, offers advice to those who ask, and does her best to help adventurers hook up. At any time, Reisha has a comprehensive list of the adventuring companies operating in the town, as well as their needs.

Deep Travel Outfitters makes its money from ropes, iron spikes, torches, flasks of oil, and all the other implements needed for a dungeon delve. Reisha does not stock extravagant or flashy items – everything in the store is designed to be functional and reliable. She offers a money-back guarantee on any item that breaks through normal use, but rarely has to make good on it – if a piece of adventuring gear goes bad, it is quite likely the owner will not be returning to complain.



GRANITE CIRCLE

The largest housing area in Sheoloth, Granite Circle is named for the ring shape of its cavern and the sloping rows of houses climbing up in neat arcs on the eastern side of the ward. These arcs of homes were originally meant to be the only homes in the area, but this idea was quickly discarded as the ward had to expand to accommodate the flood of drow to this area.

AT A GLANCE

The Granite Circle is crowded and haphazardly constructed, a result of its sudden explosive growth from a planned housing area to a warren of new homes and businesses. Houses and combined workshops and houses make up the bulk of the buildings here, accounting for more than 2,000 of the structures found in this ward. Visitors here often have a difficult time finding their way from one shop to the next and the locals are not terribly ready to lend a helping hand.

Poorer than Crystal Spine but wealthier than Rusted Veins, Granite Circle knows it is middle of the road and does not care. Its residents are content to live their lives within the confines of the Circle, scheming and plotting against their neighbours without worrying about the city at large.

HISTORY

The Granite Circle was created to release the pressure caused by the sudden burgeoning population of the dark elves following the arrival of the ovarisites. The drow intended to create a simple, elegant housing area for the middle-classes of Sheoloth, but soon found their carefully planned development swarmed with more families than it could possibly support. The result was an explosive sprawl as the area expanded to hold the families who came to dwell there. Over the past several hundred years it has grown to encompass three large levels, with hundreds of homes and businesses crammed into the available space.

When the Rusted Veins housing development opened, the poorer drow from Granite Circle were forcibly relocated to make room for the downwardly mobile drow who needed somewhere to go when they could no longer afford to live in Crystal Spine.

ALLEGIANCES

The people of this area are simple folk with an allegiance to the Dark Mother and little else. They obey the word of the priests who live in this area, but are largely unaffected by other changes in the city as a whole. The residents are friendly toward the Curizowri noble family, however, as those masons were primarily responsible for carving out the new tunnels surrounding the original Granite Circle.

IMPORTANT PERSONAGES

There are 200 temples and shrines in the Granite Circle, all of which are the responsibility of Alizir Belosak, an ardent follower of the Dark Mother. She spends all of her waking time tending to the business of the church, which includes conducting services and personally scouring the streets of the Granite Circle for blasphemers and unbelievers. In her voluminous grey cloak, Alizir stalks the streets with her personal guards trailing behind. She has been known to suddenly destroy anyone she finds offensive and her outbursts against 'heretics' are well-known. She was placed here by the leaders of her church to ensure the faithfulness of the Granite Circle, which she has done through a combination of fear and awe.

Alizir Belosak

Female elf (drow) Clr13: CR 14; Size M (5 ft., 0 in. tall); HD 13d8+13; hp 94; Init +2 (+2 Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 12 (+2 Dex); Attack +11/+6 melee, or +11/+6 ranged; SV Fort +9, Ref +6, Will +11; AL CE; Str 15, Dex 14, Con 12, Int 13, Wis 17, Cha 17.

Languages Spoken: Common, Elven, Undercommon.

Skills and feats: Concentration +9, Heal +16, Hide +2, Knowledge (arcana) +10, Listen +5, Move silently +2, Profession +6, Scry +17,



GRANITE CIRCLE

Search +3, Spot +5; Brew potion, Combat casting, Craft rod, Extra turning, Leadership.

Cleric Domains: Darkness, Fear.

Cleric Spells Per Day: 6/6+1/6+1/5+1/4+1/3+1/2+1/1+1.

BUYING AND SELLING

Alizir and her minions have so instilled the fear of heresy in the people of the Granite Circle that they are even more xenophobic than other drow. As a result, shopping here can be difficult, unless one has at least +30 allegiance with the Church of the Dark Mother or the Curizowri noble family. For those without such allegiance, the cost of all goods and services are increased by 50%. For those with the appropriate allegiance, however, the cost is lowered by an additional 10%, above and beyond any adjustments for the allegiance.

Noted Shops of Granite Circle

The following is a selection of shops found in the Granite Circle.

1. Glazerine's Pouch

A former wizard who lost her ability to perform arcane magic following a severe head trauma, Glazerine Truloshath (Glazerine retains the skills she gained as a wizard but has no ability to cast spells or use magical items at this time) has been selling top quality magical components for years. She is not, however, willing to deal with just anyone and goes to great lengths to ensure her customers are worthy of the time she spends on them. Those who do not meet her approval are chased out of the shop and asked never to return. Those who continue pestering Glazerine are often dissuaded from their actions by a visit from the Faceless Watch.

Glazerine Truloshath

Female elf (drow) Wiz7: CR 8; Size M (4 ft., 11 in. tall); HD 7d4+7; hp 25; Init +0; Spd 30 ft.; AC 10; Attack +3 melee, or +3 ranged; SV Fort +3, Ref +2, Will +4; AL NE; Str 12, Dex 11, Con 12, Int 18, Wis 9, Cha 13.

Languages Spoken: Common, Elven, Gnoll, Gnome, Sylvan, Undercommon.

To the Noble Labyrinth



- 1 Glazerine's Pouch
- 2 The Mourning Lily
- 3 Belosak's Private Shrine
- 4 High Temple to the Dark Mother
- 5 Guard Posts

Skills and feats: Craft (Alchemy) +14, Appraise +6, Bluff +1, Concentration +10, Craft +14, Hide +0, Innuendo +0, Knowledge +11, Listen +1, Move silently +1, Search +6, Spellcraft +12, Spot +1; Maximize spell, [Scribe scroll], Spell mastery (Magic Missile, Identify, Mirror Image), Still spell, Toughness.

Glazerine's tests normally require adventurers to recover some sort of object of reputed healing power – waters from the blessed fountains of the nature gods or the blood of certain celestials are favourites. The reward, however, is well worth it. Glazerine's spell components cost 15% less than normal thanks to her numerous connections in the adventuring community.

Plot Hook: Glazerine has heard of an item or ritual she believes could restore her magical ability. She has offered an unlimited supply of magical item components (though no single component may cost more than 25gp) to anyone who can bring her the cure. Various spellcasting groups will certainly vie for the prize she is offering, with the expected backbiting and treachery one would expect from such a no-holds-barred competition.

2 The Mourning Lily

This shop seems oddly out of place in Granite Circle, with its businesses and workshops catering to the middle class. The place used to be a simple slave shop, selling burly slaves who specialized in manual labour. The proprietor, one Darlvais Shetarka, earned a favour from the Fleshcrafting guild a few years back and his stock changed overnight. No longer content to sell simple labour slaves, Darlvais now sells custom-tailored slaves ready to meet the needs of even the most depraved master. Hybridized animal creatures, multilimbed monstrosities, and creatures with all manner of hideous disfigurement are all on display within the Mourning Lily and customers can order a slave of their own for a flat rate – 25,000gp.

Darlvais Shetarka

Male elf (drow) Nob5: CR 5; Size M (5 ft., 0 in. tall); HD 5d8; hp 26; Init +1 (+1 Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 11 (+1 Dex); Attack +3 melee, or +4 ranged;

SV Fort +1, Ref +2, Will +6; AL CE; Str 10, Dex 13, Con 10, Int 13, Wis 15, Cha 14.

Languages Spoken: Common, Draconic, Elven, Undercommon.

Skills and feats: Bluff +8, Diplomacy +10, Forgery +7, Hide +1, Knowledge (religion) +9, Listen +4, Move silently +1, Search +3, Spot +10, Wilderness lore +8; Point blank shot, Quick draw.

Plot Hook: Drow have been disappearing in the neighbourhood of the mourning lily, leading many to speculate that Darlvais is perhaps cutting some corners with his stock. Darlvais proclaims his innocence, however, and hires the characters to prove he is not turning innocent (relatively speaking) drow into fleshcrafted horrors. In truth, the disappearances are the result of a group of were-rats who have taken up residence in the city. Finding and destroying the nest of the creatures in Granite Circle will certainly earn the characters points with the Church of the Dark Mother.



THE HORDES

Overrun with the poor and disenfranchised, the Hordes are controlled by competing criminal gangs, each of which wars for dominance of the entire ward. Fuelled by weapons and supplies, provided by the Gulrais clan, these gangs are in a constant state of conflict. The most ferocious and cunning warriors are often hired by the Gulrais or other noble houses to serve as soldiers in noble military forces. Those caught in the conflicts between rival gangs gain nothing, their deaths unmourned and unmarked by those around them.

AT A GLANCE

The Hordes are squalid, their buildings old and decrepit with gaping holes torn in the construction webbing and deep cracks running through the stones. Loose rocks tumble from the uncertain ceiling of the ward and the sounds of battle and screams of pain echo from the walls at all hours of the day and night. Nearly a thousand homes are clustered together here, their sagging frames clinging to one another desperately.

Periodically, the nobles sweep through the area, meeting with the gangs and recruiting from their number to flesh out the diminished ranks of their own troops. The Gulrais used to provide food and other supplies to the gangs in this area, but this practice stopped when the Gulrais clan was infiltrated by the doppelgangers. Now, starving and desperate, the gangs of the Hordes are beginning to send their scouts into the rest of Sheoloth, searching for areas ripe to plunder.

HISTORY

The Hordes are the result of overcrowding in Sheoloth a few generations ago. The church demanded a substantial donation from the masons guild before they would allow the construction of a new area of the city. Unable to pay the crippling fee demanded by the church, the masons let the construction proposal die. Shortly thereafter, citizens of the city began creating their own ward. Though the church originally intended to stop the construction, they eventually let it slide, believing it would solve the overcrowding without requiring any support from the city as a whole.

Unplanned and poorly constructed, the ward was plagued with tunnel collapses, rock slides, and the occasional venting of poisonous gas into the air. The overcrowded citizens who lived in the Hordes struggled for survival, attacking one another viciously in their desperation. The church of the Dark Mother allowed the abhorrent conditions to continue for years, before they finally decided to put an end to the squandering of drow lives. They placed the Gulrais family in charge of the relief effort, instructing them to provide food and supplies to the Hordes as necessary. In return, the family was given permission to recruit amongst the Hordes for their own needs.

The result, of course, was exactly what the church expected. Rather than rescuing the area, the Gulrais family turned the Hordes into a powerful gauntlet through which the young drow would have to struggle for survival. The fittest would be elevated from the squalor and given to the Gulrais to train in the ways of war, while the weak and pathetic would be crushed into bloody paste.

What the church did not anticipate was the sudden abandonment of the ward by the Gulrais family. Now, armed and hungry gangs are beginning to look for a way out of their current dilemma, which may turn into a problem for the wards near the Hordes.

ALLEGIANCES

The Hordes are closely allied with the Gulrais family (or were, before the nobles abandoned the people here to their fate) and have their own factions within the ward. There are six gangs here:

The Blood Fangs operate out of the northern section of the ward, controlling the smallest territory of all six gangs. Their leader is Prastang Luwirs, a mediocre warrior with dreams of grandeur.

Prastang Luwirs

Male elf (drow) Ftr6: CR 7; Size M (5 ft., 3 in. tall); HD 6d10+6; hp 36; Init +5 (+1 Dex, +4 Improved initiative); Spd 30 ft.; AC 11 (+1 Dex); Attack +10/+5 melee, or +7/+2 ranged; SV Fort +6, Ref +3, Will +1; AL NE; Str 18, Dex 13, Con 12, Int 16, Wis 9, Cha 9.

Languages Spoken: Common, Elven, Gnoll, Gnome, Sylvan, Undercommon.

Skills and feats: Climb +11, Escape artist +3, Handle animal +6, Hide +1, Jump +1, Listen +4, Move silently +3, Ride +8, Search +9, Spot +6, Swim +6, Tumble +5; Alertness, Blind-fight, Combat reflexes, Dodge, Improved initiative, Mounted combat, Weapon focus (longsword).

Controlling the entire western side of the ward, Gerils Wasanael oversees the operation of the Clawed Shadows. Specializing in stealthy hit and run missions against their enemies, the Shadows have the largest territory of all the gangs.

Gerils Wasanael

Female elf (drow) Rog10: CR 11; Size M (5 ft., 0 in. tall); HD 10d6+30; hp 66; Init +4 (+4 Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 14 (+4 Dex); Attack +9/+4 melee, or +11/+6 ranged; SV Fort +6, Ref +11, Will +6; AL CE; Str 14, Dex 19, Con 16, Int 15, Wis 17, Cha 15.

Languages Spoken: Common, Draconic, Elven, Gnoll, Undercommon.

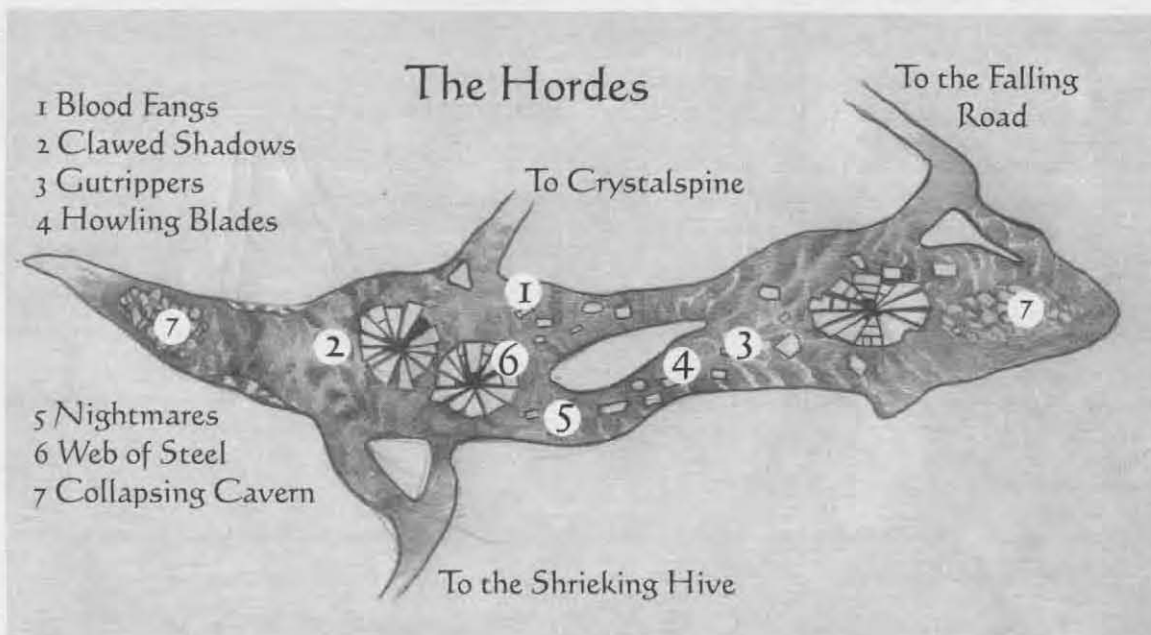
Skills and feats: Appraise +15, Disguise +14, Forgery +17, Gather information +10, Hide +4, Intuit direction +16, Listen +21, Move silently +13, Search +4, Sense motive +16, Spot +10, Swim +14, Use magic device +14, Use rope +15; Alertness, Ambidexterity, Skill focus (forgery), Skill focus (listen).

The southern section of the ward is completely torn apart by the machinations of three gangs: the Guttrippers, the Howling Blades, and the Nightmares. These three gangs switch leaders at an alarming rate and lose more members to their brute force tactics against one another than they can possibly gain. Yet it is these three guilds, desperate to escape the bonds of the hordes, who pose the greatest danger to the rest of the city.

Web of Steel is the final guild. Controlling the second-largest territory in the ward, they have set up camp in the very centre of the ward. From here, they launch testing attacks against other gangs and use their superior tactics to set up ambushes and lead other gangs to their doom. The leader of this guild is Hrolsh Yazili, a barbaric warrior who was transformed into a vampire several months ago. Though his new condition is a secret even to his own gang, it will not remain so for long. The tales of his suddenly superhuman strength and savage bloodlust are beginning to filter out of the ward and to the ears of those who wonder just what new strength he has found.

Hrolsh Yazili

Male elf (drow (vampire)) Bbn11: CR 14; Size M (5 ft., 2 in. tall); HD 11d12; hp 82; Init +4 (+4 Dex); Spd 40 ft.; AC 20 (+4 Dex, +6 Natural armor); Attack +16/+11/+6 melee, or +15/+10/+5 ranged.; SA slam 1d6+8, Domination, Energy Drain, Blood Drain, Children of the Night, Create Spawn; SQ DR 15/+1, Turn Resistance +4, Resistance, Gaseous Form,



Spider Climb, Alternate Form, Fast Healing; SV Fort +7, Ref +7, Will +6; AL CE; Str 26, Dex 22, Con -, Int 15, Wis 15, Cha 15.

Languages Spoken: Common, Draconic, Elven, Undercommon.

Skills and feats: Appraise +2, Bluff +10, Craft +9, Hide +13, Intuit direction +12, Jump +19, Knowledge (religion) +3, Listen +26, Move silently +13, Search +12, Sense Motive +10, Spellcraft +5, Spot +12, Swim +17; Alertness, Ambidexterity, Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Improved critical (dagger), Improved critical (javelin), Improved Initiative, Iron will, Lightning Reflexes.

IMPORTANT PERSONAGES

The gang leaders are the most important people in the ward. They determine who lives and dies and even the weakest of their number is like a lord to the common people here. The Gulrais used to have an agent who lived in this ward and

kept an eye on things, but he has not been seen for months. Without his influence, the gangs are heating up their wars, taking no prisoners and killing one another at the drop of a hat.

BUYING AND SELLING

Unless one is looking for bloodthirsty, unreliable hirelings, there is little here to buy. The people of the ward will buy weapons, food, and other basic necessities however. They are incredibly poor, however, with few of them able to scrape together more than a few copper at a time. Nothing can be sold here for more than 75% of its actual value, as listed in *Core Rulebook I* or *Core Rulebook II*.

The businesses here all operate on a slender profit margin, scarcely able to keep their shops in order, much less make a real profit. The owners would be considered a failure in other parts of the city, which explains how they ended up here. Only the prostitutes and sellers of alcohol and food do well and even they struggle to make ends meet from month to month.

There was no way out, none that Dorianne could see. The drow had them pinned in all sides, even up. With no basement windows in sight and avenues of escape blocked, she and Blade had only one choice. There were at least twenty of them, but she drew her daggers and moved to put her back to his.

Blade launched a volley of tiny knives, his hand moving so fast she could only see a blur of black skin and grey steel. At his end of the alley, three of the toughs staggered back, two dropping from the poison on the tiny weapons. By the time his hands stopped flickering, they were holding fighting blades brought up in the defensive stance he had been teaching her for months. She noticed how far she was out of line with it and moved to compensate.

Not a moment too soon, it seemed, as her blades stopped a sword thrust from the lead drow on her side. She parried it aside and ducked its riposte. The boy was fast, but she was faster. From the look in his eyes and those of his pack, these people meant to kill her and Blade. Their leather vests, each one emblazoned with an image of a fanged sword, echoed that same bloodlust.

Behind her, Blade was mowing down anyone foolish enough to attack him. They had yet to even cut him, but for every one he dropped, two more appeared in the alley around them. His skill and her dancing would not be able to hold back this black tide forever.

Then, with a shriek, several dozen more drow appeared from the shadows. Dorianne's heart sank to see the gang's reinforcements arrive, but it skipped a beat when she watched them slicing the first group apart from behind. Quickly the battle for her and Blade became a holding action of defense, warding off the occasional attack while the two gangs of drow fought each other in a bloody confrontation.

When it was over, nearly fifty leather vests lay rent and ruined on the stone ground, their wearers bleeding their last into the streets of the Sprawling City. The newcomers, about half of which had survived the battle, kept their blades and spears at the ready as their leader, a tall drow male with red-dyed hair, walked up to Blade cautiously. They exchanged a long, vicious look before the gang leader threw a heavy sack to Dorianne. She caught it as gracefully as she could, which involved dropping her daggers and nearly falling over from its weight. All around her, the gang shared a cruel laugh at her expense.

Later, when they were out of that blood-soaked alley, she asked her load, "Those were the Nightmares, weren't they? The ones that saved us? I. I thought we were dead."

Blade laughed his usual cold laugh and continued counting the gold coins in the bag. "No. We were bait."

THE LEVIATHAN SHIELD

This maze-like warren of barracks and shops is the last line of defence between the city of Sheoloth and the traffic and creatures making their way up and down the river. The troops stationed here have continued the honourable tradition of their forebears by training in aquatic manoeuvres should they ever be forced to engage in battles against kuo-toa or other creatures and are considered the toughest, ablest military units in the entire city. These rough and ready troops have given the merchants and craftsmen the courage to move into the area in force, creating a bustling business community in addition to the frighteningly powerful military force here.

AT A GLANCE

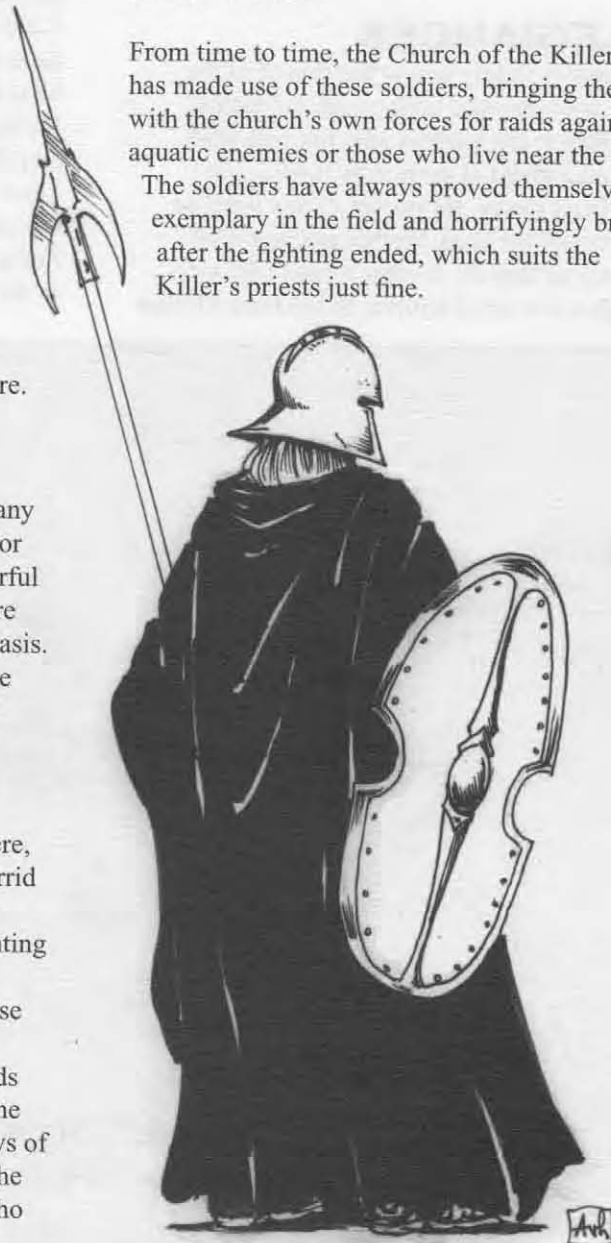
Nearly a thousand military men are here at any time, either resting between shifts, on duty, or frequenting the ward's many taverns. Powerful and highly-skilled, these men and women are known to abuse their position on a regular basis. While they will never harm or inconvenience the owners of a business, they have no such compunctions about the local residents and workers.

A group of prison buildings can be found here, the convicted living out their last days in horrid conditions. The guards frequently release a prisoner, pretending to let them go, then hunting them down and beating them to death with weighted ropes. Known as the flog races, these brutal contests are encouraged by the local military leaders who believe it not only builds team spirit amongst the soldiers but shows the common folk what comes of defying the laws of Sheoloth. The winner of these races is not the soldier who kills the prisoner, but the one who inflicts the most wounds.

HISTORY

The Leviathan shield was created before the Ebon Dock. After the invasion of the kuo-toa was repelled, the military of Sheoloth created the Leviathan Shield as a way to prevent future attacks from the river. The soldiers who were involved in repelling the first invasion were given positions of power in the new ward and allowed to recruit from the citizenry of Sheoloth to build up their forces. Since that time, the soldiers of the Leviathan Shield have been a strong, unified force which trains together for another invasion.

From time to time, the Church of the Killer has made use of these soldiers, bringing them with the church's own forces for raids against aquatic enemies or those who live near the river. The soldiers have always proved themselves exemplary in the field and horrifyingly brutal after the fighting ended, which suits the Killer's priests just fine.



As traffic from the river has increased and the amount of goods flowing in through the port increased along with it, craftsmen and merchants began making their way into the ward and setting up shop. There is a thriving business community here, all of which rests on the influx of goods from the river. The soldiers who are stationed here continually warn the shopkeepers that they are in danger of losing everything if there is ever a serious invasion from the river, but the businessmen seem content to gamble their future against current profits.

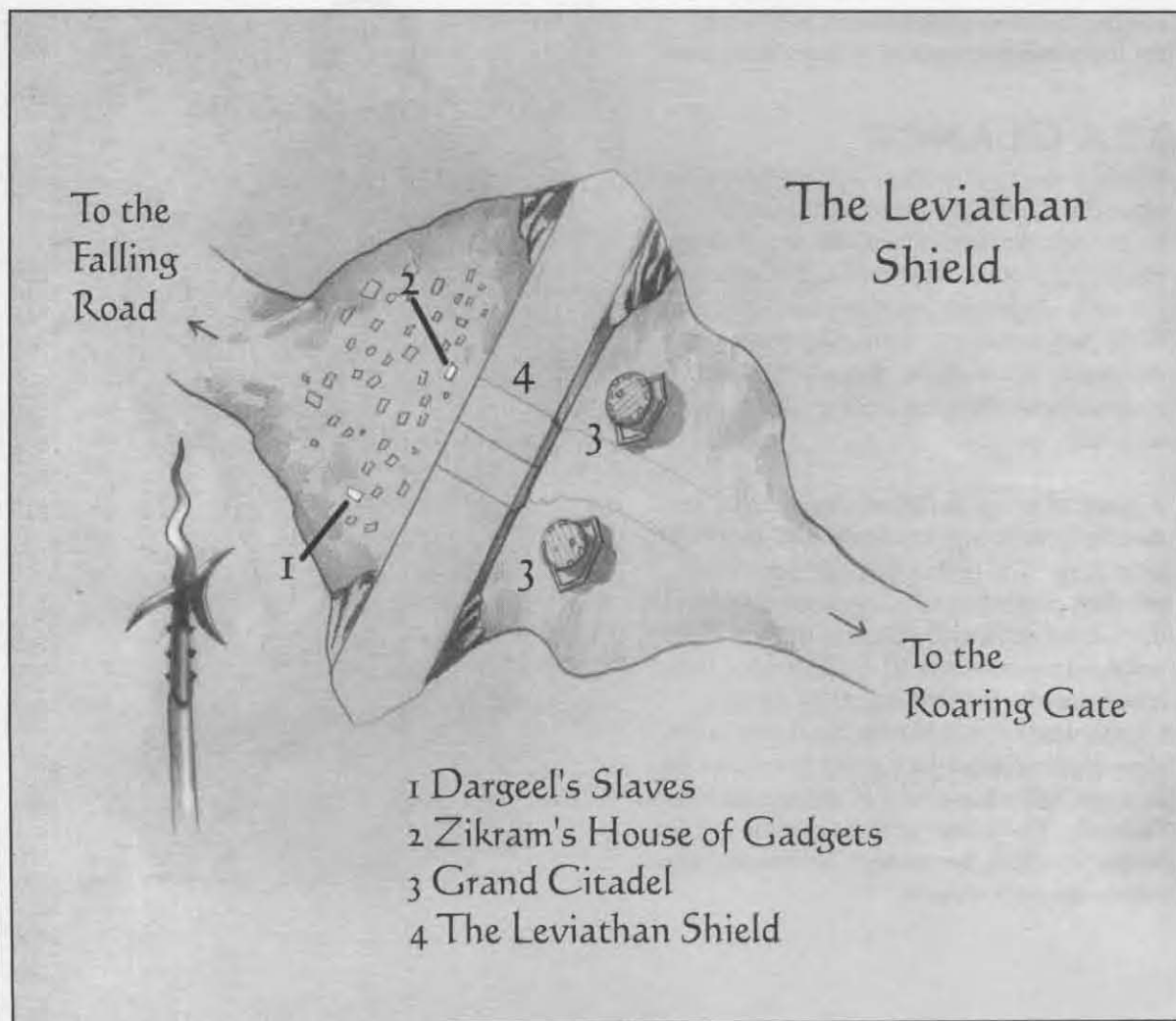
ALLEGIANCES

This ward is tightly tied to the church of the Killer, who provides both moral and tactical leadership to the soldiers who live and work here. As a result of these very tight ties to the Killer's clergy, the people of this ward do not venerate the Dark Mother as often or as fervently as they do in other areas of the city. Though a few small temples to the Dark Mother

and Gravemother exist here, they receive little more than token use during times of important festivals. Were this not such an important part of the city's overall defences, it is doubtful the Dark Mother's priestesses would tolerate such insolence.

IMPORTANT PERSONAGES

Tharkolsh Vimdus leads the troops here and serves as a spiritual leader to his men. Though he is not nearly as high ranking a member of the Killer's clergy as the priests who live in the area, he is so respected and feared in this ward that he is allowed to perform services in the barracks for his men. Though this would normally be an offence worthy of death, the Killer's priests know they cannot risk alienating the soldiers of the ward by punishing their commanding officer. For now, Tharkolsh is the ultimate authority in the ward, though that may change if he ever



falters or is no longer needed in his current position.

Tharkolsh Vimdus

Male elf (drow) Ftr10/Clr5: CR 16; Size M (5 ft., 0 in. tall); HD 10d10+10 + 5d8+5; hp 106; Init +6 (+2 Dex, +4 Improved initiative); Spd 30 ft.; AC 12 (+2 Dex); Attack +17/+12/+7 melee, or +15/+10/+5 ranged; SV Fort +12, Ref +6, Will +10; AL NE; Str 19, Dex 15, Con 12, Int 11, Wis 16, Cha 13.

Languages Spoken: Common, Elven, Undercommon.

Skills and feats: Climb +13, Hide +2, Jump +15, Knowledge (arcana) +3, Knowledge (religion) +8, Listen +5, Move silently +7, Scry +2, Search +3, Spot +5; Blind-fight, Cleave, Combat casting, Combat reflexes, Dodge, Endurance, Great cleave, Improved critical (longsword), Improved initiative, Leadership, Point blank shot, Power attack.

Possessions: 59,000 gp in gear.

Cleric Domains: War, Death.

Cleric Spells Per Day: 5/4+1/3+1/2+1.

Though technically Tharkolsh's superior, Vadiris Waliwisk, knows he is not truly in control of this ward. The church of the Killer is more popular here than anywhere else in the city, which is bitter to Vadiris who should, by all rights, be commanding the ward and its military. For now, he bides his time and waits for Tharkolsh to slip up, even a tiny bit, so he can swoop in and take control of this ward, as he believes he is entitled.

Vadiris Waliwisk

Male elf (drow) Clr13: CR 14; Size M (5 ft., 0 in. tall); HD 13d8-39; hp 30; Init +3 (+3 Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 13 (+3 Dex); Attack +12/+7 melee, or +12/+7 ranged; SV Fort +5, Ref +7, Will +12; AL CE; Str 17, Dex 17, Con 5, Int 17, Wis 18, Cha 11.

Languages Spoken: Common, Draconic, Elven, Goblin, Orc, Undercommon.

Skills and feats: Climb +7, Craft +16, Diplomacy +16, Heal +20, Hide +3, Listen +6, Move silently +3, Perform +3, Search +6, Spellcraft +19, Spot +6, Wilderness lore +8.5;

Craft magic arms and armor, Craft rod, Craft wondrous item, Enlarge spell, Extra turning.

Cleric Domains: Destruction, death.

Cleric Spells Per Day: 6/6+1/6+1/5+1/5+1/3+1/2+1/1+1.

BUYING AND SELLING

The shops here benefit from the flow of goods from the outside world into the Ebon Dock. While the Roaring Gate is technically the marketplace of this region of the city, the Leviathan Shield has plenty of stores and workshops of its own.

Noted Shops of the Leviathan Shield

The following is a selection of shops found in the Leviathan Shield

1. Dargeel's Slaves

This small shop holds very few slaves at a given time, but all of these slaves are exotic and taken from far off places. Special orders are taken, though it can take months to get a slave of a particular race. Most who shop here stop by every few days to see what new stock is in and are often delighted to find a rare fey creature or member of an exotic subterranean race such as the kuo-toa. Most of these slaves are not terribly useful as labourers, but they provide a certain amount of prestige and amusement to their owners.

Plot Hook: Dargeel's traffick goes both ways. He and Vadiris have a longstanding agreement, by which troublemakers and enemies of the Killer's church are temporarily housed here until transport to some far-off slave port can be arranged. The characters could be hired to investigate a disappearance of a heretic or, if more intrigue is desired, a ranking member of the Church of the Dark Mother.

2. Zikzum's House of Gadgets

Owned and operated by, of all people, a forest gnome, this little shop is a frequent target for youthful vandals or bored soldiers who like to push around those weaker than themselves. Zikzum and his staff are rarely directly harmed by such assaults, because he has a special dispensation to be in the city. He wears the brilliantly coloured tile around his neck at all

times to avoid any misunderstandings and it has protected him well for more than ten years. He sells all kinds of mechanical objects here, from compasses to telescopes to more elaborate devices.

Plot Hook: There are those who want to know what it was that Zikzum did to earn his pass into the city. The characters can be hired by outsiders to find out what service the greasy little gnome performed for the priestesses of the

Dark Mother or they can be given the task of protecting that information. In truth, Zikzum designed a small machine that was able to guide the hands of a surgeon during a particularly difficult caesarean birth within the temple of the dark Mother. The priestess whose life he saved was a high-ranking member of the clergy and Zikzum was rewarded appropriately.

She just kept looking up until she finally saw the top of the massive stone vault doors. ‘That is the Leviathan Shield?’ She shook her head. ‘You all built that to stop some fish people from invading you? Drow never do anything small, do they?’

Blade looked up from the advert board he was reading in front of the Black Feast tavern. Perhaps he was being a little too lenient with letting the girl speak her mind, but her opinions often amused him. She had such an outsider’s viewpoint; it was useful to see his world through someone else’s eyes without having to cut them out the skull first.

‘The kuo-toa are far deadlier than just ‘fish people’, young one, and if you continue to think otherwise, we’ll go back to the Ebon Docks and I’ll dangle you in until you change your mind.’

She fell quiet again, knowing that he was certainly right. The drow never did anything small, but they did not bother erecting defenses where none were needed. The gargantuan walls of dark stone were certainly imposing, but if that was what it took to keep out the amphibian hordes, the kuo-toa must have been deadly foes indeed. ‘What happened to them all, and if this place is so dangerous, why build a town here?’

He brought her inside, paid for a meal, and made sure no one was in earshot before he answered her. ‘We built here because we need the space. We do not just ignore a place to live because it is dangerous.’ He fixed her with a serious stare. ‘We are drow, and if you are going to survive here, you need to understand what that means.’

The first course, slivers of meat in a deep maroon sauce on bone skewers, arrived within moments. He ate a few pieces, watched Dorianne stomach as much of it as she could, and continued. ‘Drow live on a razor’s edge every moment of their lives. Nothing scares us because we only fear each other and we do that from the day of our birth.’

As he finished off the appetizer, he looked around the room at the other drow, all deeply involved in their petty lives and their vicious plots. ‘Besides, we did not build the Leviathan Shield to keep the kuo-toa out.’ He sighed at the sight of his fellow drow so involved in finding ways to kill each other more effectively. ‘We built it to keep ourselves in.’

Dorianne looked bewildered. ‘I... I don’t understand, lord.’

Blade watched the tavern’s help dodge an idle swing of a bored nobleman’s sword, knowing full well that if the boy had not done so, the blade would certainly have killed him for no reason at all. ‘Neither do I, child. Neither do I.’

NIGHT SEAL

The uppermost military ward of the city, the Night Seal is charged with protecting the passage between Sheoloth and the surface. Unfortunately, the once powerful and disciplined military units stationed here have grown soft and lax in their duties. Few dare to attack the drow from the surface, where the legend of the dark elves is still strong and rich with horrific imagery. The leaders of the soldiers here know this and fear little – if an attack were ever to come through this section of the city, it could be disastrous for Sheoloth.

AT A GLANCE

The military units here are constantly seen in the passages of this ward, but are rarely engaged in patrols or other military activity. Though they wear their uniforms they are often seen staggering drunkenly down the winding thoroughfares, their weapons sheathed and their words slurred. These men could fight, if pressed, but would do so poorly given their lack of discipline and horrible habit of drinking themselves into a stupor before going out whoring in the town's brothels.

HISTORY

The Night Seal was formed as a protective buffer between Sheoloth and the surface. In ages past, it was not uncommon for elves to attempt to launch an attack against the city of woven shade; though they were continually rebuffed, they strove to avenge their ancestors and bring the dark elves to ruin. In the past few hundred years, however, the surface elves and their allies have given up the cause and now simply avoid the area entirely.

The once powerful and battle-hardened troops have given way here to a group of casual, lazy bullies. The brothels and taverns in this ward are renowned for their hospitality to soldiers and those stationed here regard the position as a reward for their service elsewhere. In truth, most who are placed here are in their current position because they were too incompetent to be of any real use.

ALLEGIANCES

The Allied Craftsmen's Guild and the Network are the two most prominent factions in this ward, with both contributing to the upkeep of the military and the local populace in extravagant ways. In a rare show of cooperation between the two, normally rival, groups, the local members of each organization have agreed to work together without the knowledge of their governing organizations.

As a result, the military looks the other way while smugglers operate with virtual impunity, moving goods back and forth through the checkpoints here without a second's pause.

IMPORTANT PERSONAGES

Daligar Wurin is the representative of the Network in this ward. She takes her position very seriously, but only in that it provides her with a comfortable lifestyle and the privileges she needs to satisfy her addictions. Hopelessly hooked on *hoshal*, a drug made by combining narcotic mushrooms with a rare variety of wood elven wine, Daligar will do anything to protect her supply. This includes making a backroom deal with the local representatives of the Craftsmen's Guild and using the proceeds to bribe the local military leaders.

Daligar Wurin

Female elf (drow) Exp12: CR 12; Size M (4 ft., 11 in. tall); HD 12d6-36; hp 22; Init +2 (+2 Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 12 (+2 Dex); Attack +13/+8 melee, or +11/+6 ranged; SV Fort +4, Ref +6, Will +10; AL CE; Str 18, Dex 15, Con 10, Int 12, Wis 14, Cha 12.

Languages Spoken: Common, Elven, Gnoll, Undercommon.

Skills and feats: Animal empathy +12, Bluff +16, Gather information +14, Hide +2, Intimidate +15, Intuit direction +15, Knowledge +18, Knowledge (nature) +16, Listen +4, Move silently +2, Search +18, Spot +4; Point blank shot, Skill focus (knowledge (nature)), Skill focus (knowledge), Skill focus (search), Skill focus (intuit direction).

Unshel Yariu is Daligar's partner in crime. Supposedly representing the interests of the

NIGHT SEAL

Allied Craftsmen's Guild, Unshel actually works closely with the Network to move goods into and out of the city illegally. Though this hurts the guild as a whole, it helps the merchants and craftsmen of this ward, who benefit by avoiding the heavy taxes imposed on exports by the Transfer Guild. As a result, this branch of the ACG is actually operating outside of their guild's control and in a very criminal manner. If Unshel is ever caught, her guild will likely have her killed out of hand, but until then she is busy lining her pockets with illicit coin and planning her escape from Sheoloth should things go poorly.

Unshel Yariu

Male elf (drow) Exp11: CR 11; Size M (4 ft., 11 in. tall); HD 11d6; hp 44; Init +4 (+4 Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 14 (+4 Dex); Attack +8/+3 melee, or +12/+7 ranged; SV Fort +5, Ref +7, Will +9; AL CE; Str 10, Dex 18, Con 11, Int 16, Wis 14, Cha 15.

Languages Spoken: Common, Elven, Gnoll, Orc, Sylvan, Undercommon.

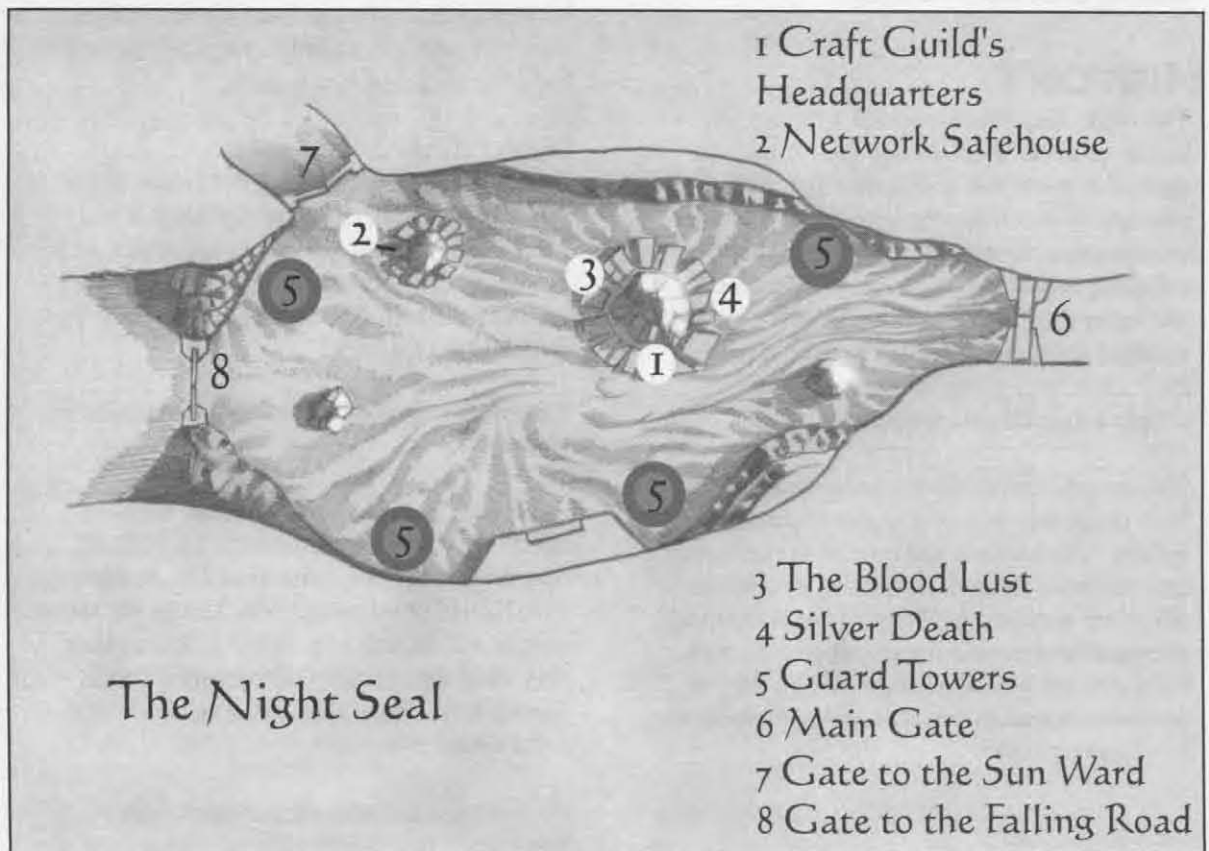
Skills and feats: Craft (Alchemy) +7, Climb +12, Disguise +10, Escape artist +17, Handle

animal +16, Hide +12, Innuendo +15, Jump +4, Knowledge (arcana) +12, Knowledge (religion) +3.5, Listen +4, Move silently +18, Perform +4, Pick pocket +14, Ride +11, Search +5, Spellcraft +5, Spot +4; Endurance, Great fortitude, Point blank shot, Skill focus (jump).

The leader of the local military is Barl Malithant, a priest of the Killer. He was once a powerful warrior and spokesman for the church, but was crippled during a battle against bugbear commandos outside the city. His wound, despite magical treatment, never healed properly and Barl walks with a limp to this day. He was put here to get him out of the way and the plan has worked wonderfully, thus far. Barl does little but give cursory inspections of his men and take the bribes offered to him by Daligar and the Network.

Barl Malithant

Male elf (drow) Clr14: CR 15; Size M (4 ft., 9 in. tall); HD 14d8+14; hp 87; Init +5 (+1 Dex, +4 Improved initiative); Spd 30 ft.; AC 11 (+1 Dex); Attack +14/+9 melee, or +11/+6 ranged; SV Fort +10, Ref +5, Will +13; AL CE; Str 18, Dex 12, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 19, Cha 11.



Languages Spoken: Common, Elven, Undercommon.

Skills and feats: Concentration +12, Craft +10, Handle animal +2, Heal +14, Hide +1, Listen +6, Move silently +1, Search +2, Spot +6; Improved initiative, Improved unarmed strike, Silent spell, Two-weapon fighting, Weapon focus (club).

Cleric Domains: Death, War.

Cleric Spells Per Day: 6/6+1/6+1/5+1/5+1/3+1/3+1/2+1.

BUYING AND SELLING

There are many goods sold in the Night Seal, including some which are normally only available on the surface, thanks to the smuggling operations of the Network. The ward is renowned for the skill of its prostitutes, as well, who make most of their money servicing the soldiers of the area (and are paid very well from the coffers of the Network for their efforts).

Noted Shops of the Night Gate

The following are a selection of shops found in the Night Gate area.

1. The Blood Lust

This brothel is famed for the fierceness and permissiveness of its prostitutes and for their particular specialties. For the price of 500gp, the prostitutes here will allow themselves to be maimed, tortured, and even murdered, all the while spitting their hate into the eyes of their customers. Their hatred is an aphrodisiac to many dark elves, who can think of nothing more exciting than killing another drow during an intimate moment.

Plot Hook: The brothel is a confessional of sorts, as many drow pour out their hearts while they murder their paid lovers. Enslaved gnome scribes are crammed into narrow spaces between the rooms, where they hear and record every detail of the conversations which go on in these rooms. The information is passed on to the Network, who owns this brothel. The blackmail material is used to control the local priests of the Gravemother (forcing them to resurrect slain prostitutes, for example) and to get a handle on military operations in and around the ward.

Anyone who discovers the true purpose of this brothel could do very well for himself by getting a hold of the notes taken here and most of a campaign could revolve around an attempt to recover such stolen notes before they could cause damage to the city.

2. Silver Death

Quawis Furiolir runs this shop, which produces nothing but silvered weapons. Exquisitely crafted and incised with intricately designed poems, these weapons were designed out of hatred and fear. Quawis lost her husband to an assault of were-rats a hundred years ago and her heart has been filled with rage ever since. She sells the weapons for a great deal of money (more than 10 times the cost of those listed in *Core Rulebook I*) as art pieces, but she has a second source of income which gives her much more satisfaction. Quawis uses her money to research the location of any lycanthropes in the vicinity of Sheoloth. For 100gp and the purchase of at least four of her weapons, Quawis will tell the potential hunter of werewolves where to find a clutch of shapeshifters.

Quawis Furiolir

Female elf (drow) Exp10: CR 10; Size M (4 ft., 8 in. tall); HD 10d6; hp 35; Init +3 (+3 Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 13 (+3 Dex); Attack +7/+2 melee, or +10/+5 ranged; SV Fort +3, Ref +6, Will +8; AL NE; Str 10, Dex 17, Con 10, Int 14, Wis 13, Cha 12.

Languages Spoken: Common, Elven, Gnoll, Undercommon.

Skills and feats: Craft (weaponsmithing) +14, Concentration +13, Handle animal +14, Hide +3, Innuendo +4, Intuit direction +7, Knowledge (arcana) +14, Listen +3, Move silently +18, Profession +13, Search +4, Spot +3, Swim +13, Wilderness lore +1.5; Skill focus (craft), Skill focus (intuit direction), Skill focus (handle animal), Skill focus (move silently).

Plot Hook: Quawis has uncovered a collection of were-bats within the city, but is horrified that they are actually high-ranking priests of the Killer in her own ward. She will do her best to bring this to the attention of any adventurers who pass through her shop, though she can offer no advice on how to get to these officials without bringing down the wrath of the church.

THE NOBLE LABYRINTH

To protect themselves from assassins and the danger of an uprising amongst the common drow, the nobility of Sheoloth created this isolated section of the city. Heavily enchanted with wards and dotted with devastating traps, the Labyrinth is a maze in which the drow nobles have constructed their estates. When time and money permit, the nobles expand the labyrinth at their leisure, creating more complex and dangerous additions to the maze to deter intruders. Though there are currently eight estates (only seven of which are active) found within the labyrinth, the law of Sheoloth does not limit this number in anyway. Any drow with the proper expertise or arcane strength can penetrate the layers of the labyrinth and construct their own estate here, provided they can afford to do so. After all, the cost of constructing in such a dangerous area is quite high (roughly five times the normal cost of construction in any other area of the city) and doing so will definitely anger the other nobles, who may attempt to destroy any upstarts who attempt to stake a claim here.

However, no one who constructs an estate in the Labyrinth is entitled to legal protection until the Church of the Dark Mother recognizes them as a noble house.

LIMITS OF THE ESTATE

The Church of the Dark mother has no qualms about imposing its will upon the nobles and has done so in the Labyrinth in a particularly petty and vindictive fashion. Regardless of the power of the family which constructs an estate, it may consist of no more than a single building, which must be square in shape, have no detached walls, and be no larger than 75-foot per side. Though each family is free to decorate their homes or add any other ornamentation to it they desire, they must

all abide by this restriction. The only family to defy the Church of the Dark Mother has since been destroyed, and the shattered husk of its estate still lies within the labyrinth for all to see. The ghosts and howling spirits which are chained in torment to their prideful estate are easy to spot, as well, because they waste no time in attacking those who approach their destroyed home.

To circumvent the restrictions placed on their homes by the Church of the Dark Mother, the nobles have taken to excavating elaborate, convoluted tunnels and chambers beneath the main buildings of their estates. These catacombs are their true homes, with the upper buildings normally used for servants, troops, and guests.

The estates are surrounded by businesses and homes of all types, populated by those who exist



to serve the nobles in all their glory. Though not as pricy or chic as what is found in the Glory Crypt, these shops boast extensive selections and excellent merchandise. Though they are legally obliged to sell only to the nobility, most of these shopkeepers can be convinced to trade with anyone who can make it worth their while.

THE MEANING OF FAMILY

The noble families of Sheoloth were originally those families who served in the city's founding. During the many wars the city faced in its first years, however, enemies and internecine plotting dangerously reduced the population of these families. As a result, the Dark Mother instructed her nobles to replace their fallen with suitable prospects not of their blood. Though the war passed, the tradition did not, and it is still a common practice for noble families to expand the family by recruiting outsiders.

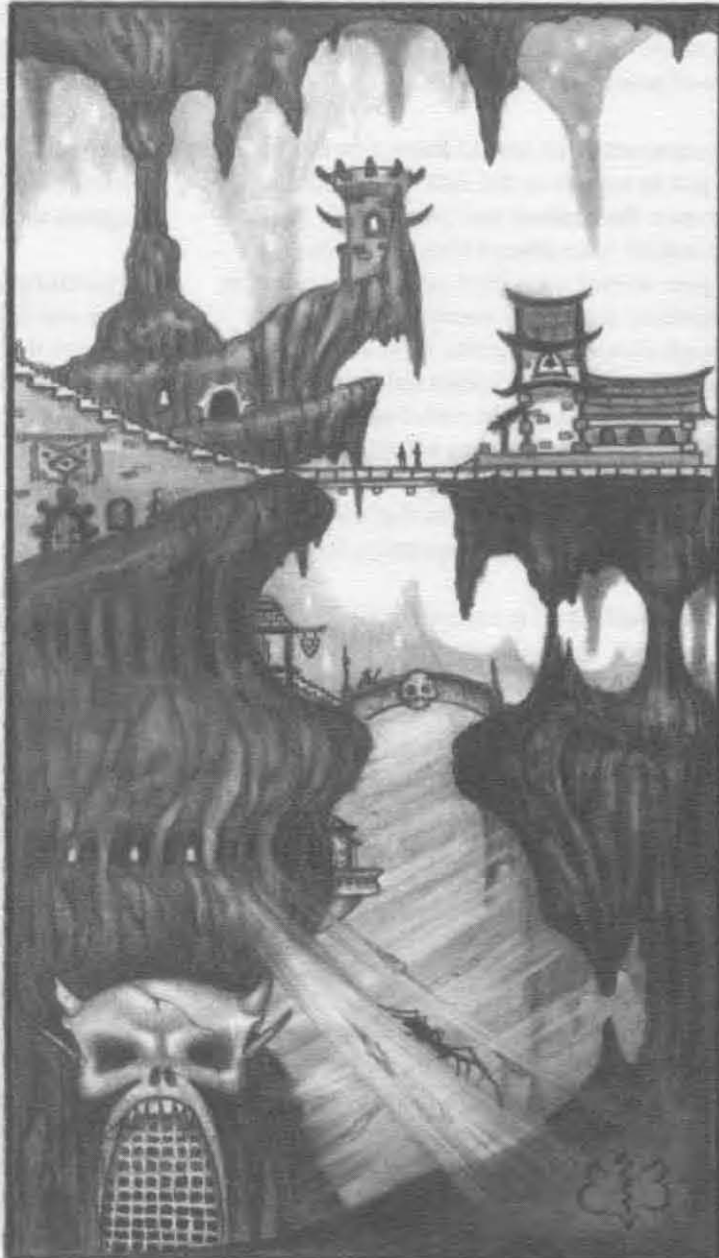
While the Church of the Dark Mother must, technically, approve all those who ascend to the status of noble, it is largely a formality. A small group of priestesses gives a half-hearted review to any new application for nobility submitted by a family, almost none of which are ever rejected. If the church does reject an applicant, it is to spite the family (in most cases) and has little to do with the qualifications of the would-be nobleman.

The lower classes of Sheoloth have adopted the same style of familial ties. Entire blocks of the city often consider themselves to be of the same family, despite their lack of blood relations, while those who are related by blood but live in different parts of the city have little contact or interest in one another. Family is a survival mechanism in Sheoloth, as those

with the largest number of allies near at hand are liable to survive the frequent clashes and crimes of the city.

THE ARTRABI ESTATE

The drow of the Artrabi family earned their spot amongst the nobility through a covert war involving undead shock troops and deadly demonic assassins. Though it took them most of a century to obliterate the weak house they sought to replace, the results were most satisfactory. The Church of the Dark Mother recognized them as a legitimate claimant to a



noble estate and the other noble families chose to ignore them rather than risk a run-in with some infernal killer in the dead of night. A side effect of this shadowy war, however, was the isolation of the Artrabi, who are virtual pariahs amongst the nobility of Sheoloth.

To further their interests in such a political vacuum, the Artrabi are forced to work with the criminal elements of the drow city. Rather than attempt to gain special privileges or wrench favours from the Church of the Dark Mother, the Artrabi get what they want through their criminal cat's-paws. Specializing in illicit trade, murder for hire, and extortion, the members of this noble house have built a very impressive base of power for themselves.

Vile rumours swirl around them, however, and not just in regards to the dark way in which they earn their money and pursue their goals. The Artrabi have always been secretive, but the past several years have seen them withdraw completely from drow society. They act only through proxies and agents, now, and meet with even their most trusted allies only rarely and in darkened rooms filled with fragrant incense. Though many see this as nothing more than an increasingly paranoid stance by the house, others are starting to whisper that the Artrabi may be living up to their reputation for heresy.

The physical estate is understated, yet threatening. The walls are lined with deep recesses that allow shadows to pool in their corners and the corpeslights are designed to flicker and dim whenever anyone approaches the gates or other entrances. Gloomy and theatrical, the estate matches the dark and secretive nature of its inhabitants. Others, however, tend to find the whole thing a bit overdone and lacking in basic amenities.

Household Guard

The Artrabi are not particularly well-set for guardians. While they have a number of demonic servitors bound to the members of their family, the estate is not so well protected.

Soldiers: 100 (drow/war5)

Commanders: 10 (drow/war7)

Captain of the Guard: 1 (drow/fr 10)

The family also has their own household demons to protect them, as detailed below, and several members of the Shadowhands can be found on the estate at virtually all times (2d6 drow/rog4).

Household Staff

The Artrabi estate has approximately 30 staff on hand at any time.

The Artrabi Family

The Artrabi are a family built on secrecy and deception. Though they possess very limited military power, they have significant influence in the city, based solely upon their vast spy network and criminal contacts. While they may not be able to march a small army off to war, they can certainly raise a few hundred hardened criminals to launch assassination attempts against their enemies.

Recruiting into the Artrabi family is handled very carefully, and new members are quite rare. If more than a single inductee is brought into the estate in a year, that is considered a very busy year for recruiting, and it is more typical to see a single recruit in three to five years. Replacements for fallen family members are named within days, however, as the family keeps a running list of suitable recruits for just such a tragedy.

Family Members

The Artrabi are a relatively small family, with around twenty living in the estate. There are only four of any real importance, however, the matriarch and her favoured children. The other family members and recruits are kept in the estate to bolster the power of the family and to keep them from feeling slighted. Though they have no real place in the family's power structure, these drow are pampered and given tasks to make them feel important and to ensure their continued loyalty to the family.

Anglis Artrabi, Family Matriarch

Standing nearly six feet tall, Anglis is quite tall for a drow and the manner in which she piles her long, silvery hair atop her head makes her seem even taller. Though her face is smooth and unlined, Anglis is nearly six hundred years old.

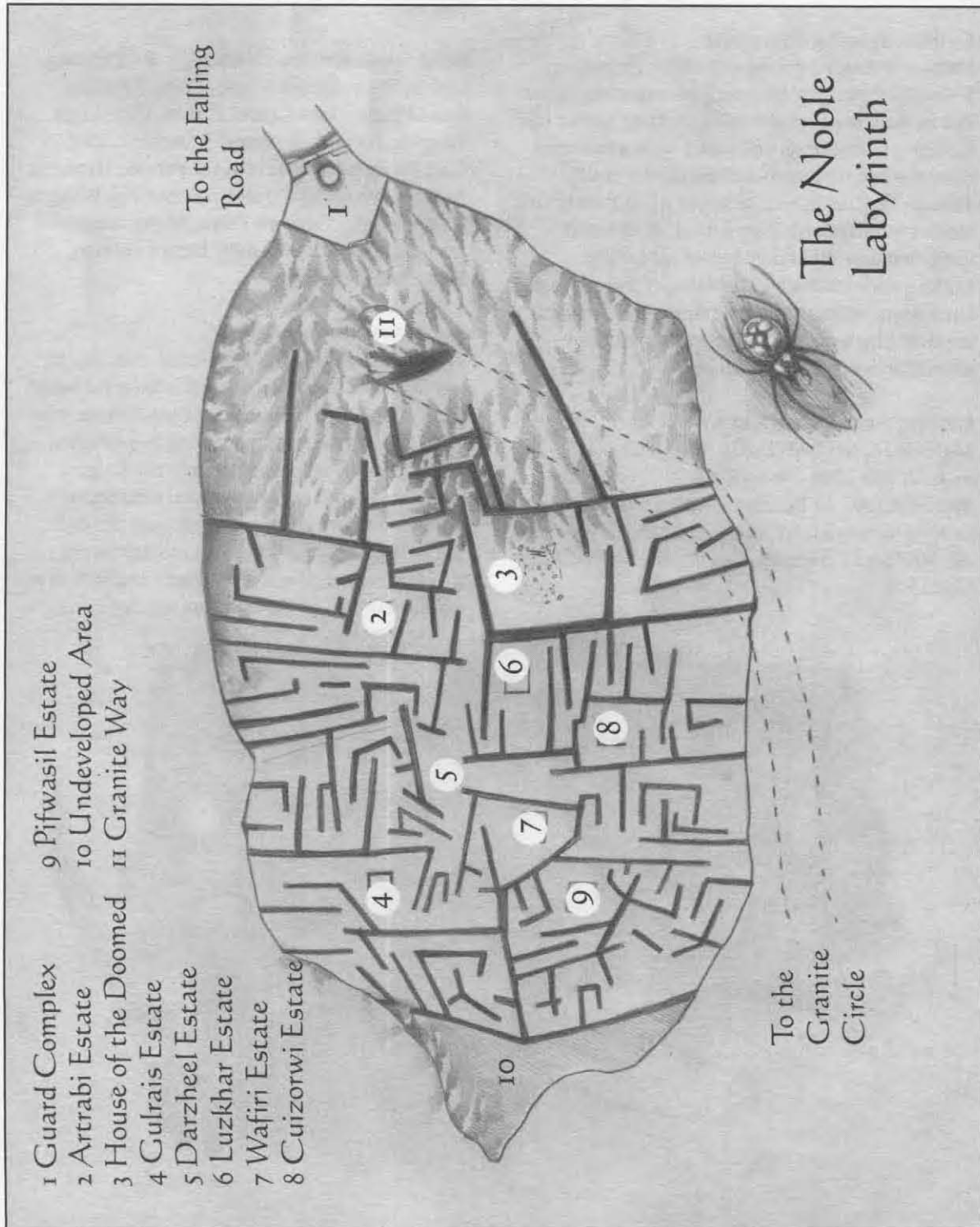
Though her violet eyes seem glassy and vacant, she is a shrewd judge of character and is far more observant than most believe.

Anglis Artrabi, Family Matriarch

Female elf (drow) Rog15: CR 16; Size M (5 ft., 11 in. tall); HD 15d6; hp 53; Init +9 (+5 Dex, +4 Improved initiative); Spd 30 ft.; AC 15 (+5

Dex); Attack +11/+6/+1 melee, or +16/+11/+6 ranged; SV Fort +5, Ref +14, Will +7; AL CE; Str 11, Dex 21, Con 11, Int 16, Wis 14, Cha 14.

Languages Spoken: Common, Elven, Gnome, Goblin, Orc, Undercommon.



Skills and feats: Appraise +15, Balance +17, Bluff +8, Craft +18, Diplomacy +17, Forgery +18, Hide +5, Innuendo +22, Listen +20, Move silently +5, Open lock +23, Perform +16, Pick pocket +19, Read lips +20, Search +5, Spot +19, Use magic device +14; Combat reflexes, Expertise, Improved critical (sword, short), Improved disarm, Improved initiative, Skill focus (innuendo).

Luthius Artrabi, Spymaster

Luthius is Anglis' doting son. Though lacking his mother's height, he is still an imposing figure due to the trio of ragged scars slashing across his face (a remnant of an encounter with a powerful demon some time ago) and his stocky build. Though Luthius is seen no more often than his mother or sisters, he does get out of the estate more than any other member of his family. Luthius coordinates the activities of the criminal enterprises managed by the family, a task which requires him to sneak about the city far more often than he finds comfortable.

Luthius Artrabi, Spymaster

Male elf (drow) Brd12: CR 13; Size M (5 ft., 3 in. tall); HD 12d6-24; hp 27; Init +2 (+2 Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 12 (+2 Dex); Attack +9/+4 melee, or +11/+6 ranged; SV Fort +6, Ref +10, Will +9; AL NE; Str 11, Dex 15, Con 16, Int 14, Wis 8, Cha 15.

Languages Spoken: Common, Elven, Gnoll, Orc, Undercommon.

Skills and feats: Concentration +9, Diplomacy +4, Escape artist +15, Gather information +15, Hide +2, Jump +15, Listen +1, Move silently +2, Perform +16, Pick pocket +11, Profession +13, Search +4, Spot +1; Blind-fight, Combat casting, Craft magic arms and armor, Dodge, Iron will.

Bard Spells Known (3/4/4/3/2): 0 - Dancing Lights, Daze, Detect Magic, Flare, Mending, Read Magic. 1st - Charm Person, Cure Light Wounds, Identify, Summon Monster I. 2nd - Cure Moderate Wounds, Hold Person, Hypnotic Pattern, Invisibility. 3rd - Cure Serious Wounds, Dispel Magic, Gaseous Form, Major Image. 4th - Cure Critical Wounds, Detect Scrying, Improved Invisibility.

Saczil Artrabi, Assassin

The hidden weapon of the Artrabi clan, Saczil is a beautiful young drow with a thirst for blood and the desire to inflict great pain on those who would oppose her family. Saczil is unleashed against targets who pose the gravest dangers to the house and uses her natural abilities of seduction to get close enough to seal the deal. Though secretly the lover of Luthius, Saczil also keeps a small stable of slaves and suitors in various corners of the estate to sate her hungers.



While Luthius is not jealous of his sister's many lovers, he is nervous that her use of sex to approach assassination targets may backfire and place her in a dangerous position. To date, this has not proved true, and Saczil views her brother's fears as unfounded and weak-hearted.

Saczil Artrabi, Assassin

Female elf (drow) Rog10/Asn 2: CR 13; Size M (5 ft., 0 in. tall); HD 12d6-12; hp 38; Init +2 (+2 Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 12 (+2 Dex); Attack +7/+2 melee, or +10/+5 ranged; SV Fort +2, Ref +12, Will +3; AL CE; Str 9, Dex 14, Con 8, Int 18, Wis 11, Cha 16.

Languages Spoken: Common, Elven, Gnoll, Gnome, Orc, Sylvan, Undercommon.

Skills and feats: Appraise +10, Balance +4, Climb +9, Decipher script +11, Disable device +13, Disguise +12, Hide +8, Innuendo +11, Intimidate +14, Intuit direction +8, Jump +10, Listen +14, Move silently +14, Open lock +13, Search +14, Sense motive +12, Spot +11, Swim +10, Use rope +7; Combat reflexes, Point blank shot, Rapid shot, Weapon finesse (sword, short).

Clortho Artrabi, Wizard

This student of the arcane uses her magical abilities to spy on the enemies of the house and to raise undead troops in time of need. Clortho also oversees the mystical training of the rest of the house, which gives the Artrabi's a surprising number of wizards on hand at any given time. When time permits, Clortho creates magical items for Saczil and Luthius to use in their forays into town. Agoraphobic and paranoid in the extreme, Clortho leaves the house only in the direst circumstances, preferring to remain in her study or near her mother at all other times.

Though the other members of the house are unaware of her connections (and would be deeply concerned if it came to their attention), Clortho has lately fallen in with the Incabulos. While she has yet to take the oath which will bind her to the group and infuse her with the stolen divine power, she is already deeply involved in their plots and schemes. Clortho hopes to one day induct her entire family into this group, offering them the power they need to pursue their goals more efficiently.

Clortho Artrabi, Wizard

Female elf (drow) Wiz11: CR 12; Size M (4 ft., 11 in. tall); HD 11d4-44; hp 11; Init +2 (+2 Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 12 (+2 Dex); Attack +7 melee, or +7 ranged; SV Fort +2, Ref +7, Will +8; AL CE; Str 14, Dex 15, Con 10, Int 19, Wis 13, Cha 16.

Languages Spoken: Common, Elven, Gnoll, Gnome, Goblin, Sylvan, Undercommon.

Skills and feats: Craft +18, Hide +2, Knowledge +17, Knowledge (arcana) +16, Knowledge (nature) +17, Knowledge (religion) +13, Listen +3, Move silently +2, Scry +17, Search +6, Spellcraft +14, Spot +3; Craft Wondrous item, Craft wand, Craft Magical Arms and Armor, Quicken spell, [Scribe scroll], Spell mastery (Feather Fall, Haste, Magic Missile), Still spell.

Wizard Spells Known (4/5/5/5/4/2/1): 0

- Arcane Mark, Dancing Lights, Daze, Detect Magic, Detect Poison, Disrupt Undead, Flare, Ghost Sound, Light, Mage Hand, Mending, Open/Close, Prestidigitation, Ray of Frost, Read Magic, Resistance. 1st - Change Self, Chill Touch, Feather Fall, Identify, Mage Armor, Magic Missile, Shield, Shocking Grasp, Silent Image, Sleep. 2nd - Knock, Acid Arrow, Summon Swarm. 3rd - Greater Magic Weapon, Haste, Hold Person, Invisibility Sphere, Lightning Bolt, Sleet Storm, Slow, Suggestion. 4th - Arcane Eye, Bestow Curse, Charm Monster, Fire Trap, Polymorph Self. 5th - Cone of Cold, Hold Monster, Nightmare, Summon Monster V, Transmute Rock to Mud, Wall of Force, Wall of Stone. 6th - Analyze Dweomer, Disintegrate, True Seeing.

Miscellaneous: There are twenty other members of the house in residence at any given time.

Allies

The Artrabi have two types of ally – criminals and demons. The former are kept in line through the threat of attacks by the latter, who are in turn bound to the family through a series of ancient pacts and dark promises. While the Artrabi are not true heretics, their reliance on demonic servitors places them in a precarious position should anyone ever learn how to free

the demons from their bindings. This is what has led the Artrabi to withdraw into their estate and avoid contact with others. By limiting their exposure to those outside the house, the Artrabi hope to avoid anyone discovering the truth of their demonic reliance and using it to bring the house down.

The Network: This collection of merchants and traders are expert smugglers who operate a very large scale of traffic in illegal or restricted goods. The Artrabi use their spies to help the Network uncover new sources of trade goods and markets to exploit.

Shadowhands: These thieves and spies are a great source of information for the house. With nearly 300 members, divided into small cells which are ignorant of one another, the Shadowhands provides the house with reliable intelligence about the activities of other noble houses within the city.

Xitarys Cognate: This collection of demons is bound to the Artrabi family as a result of a pact forged nearly a thousand years ago. This bond requires the demons to serve the house as needed, providing one of their number to each of the five eldest members of the house at all times. At the current time, Anglis is served by a Balor, Luthius keeps a Marilith on hand, and the others are all protected by Glabrezu. It is important to note that these demons do not necessarily enjoy their work, but they will risk their own lives in order to protect their drow masters.

Enemies

The Artrabi are not a well-liked family. Their secretive nature and clever assassinations of their enemies leave them with few who will trust them at dagger's reach and even fewer who would tie their fates to such a treacherous house. Even amongst the drow, 'lie like an Artrabi' is a vile insult, as the house has gone far beyond the caprice of evil favoured by most dark elves and into the realm of the completely untrustworthy. As a result, the family counts all other noble houses as enemies.

THE GULRAIS ESTATE

Formerly the most powerful of all the noble families of Sheoloth, the Gulrais have fallen

on very hard times over the past few decades. Their once proud home has fallen into disrepair as their debts mounted and their ability to pay them faltered. The downfall of the Gulrais is a direct result of their interest in external military endeavours and their unreasoning hatred of all things gnomish. While the other drow noble houses spend a great deal of time protecting their interests inside the city and take every opportunity to augment their income, the Gulrais squander their power and influence on crusades against enemies outside the city.

Greatly weakened by their folly, the leaders of the Gulrais family were recently exterminated by a band of doppelganger assassins. These strange creatures now rule the house and are working to bring it back from the brink of disaster. If they are not discovered, these shapechangers may succeed in their coveted goal – the downfall of Sheoloth.

The estate is adorned with metallic blades and hooks on the exterior walls, with crumpled shields and broken weapons within. These decorations were taken from the enemies of the drow by the members of this house, who pride themselves on their ancient victories.

Household Guard

Soldiers: 1,000 (drow/ft7)

Commanders: 50 (drow/ft9)

Captain of the Guard: 5 (drow/ft10)

Household Staff

This house has a very small staff now, with a mere 10 servants on hand. As a result, the estate is quite run down in appearance and many of the tunnels below it have fallen into such disrepair they are no longer safe. This is just as the doppelgangers want things, as the general sense of decay and collapse leads others to underestimate the still potent army housed within its walls.

The Gulrais Family

Though the family at its height counted more than 50 nobles amongst its number, their influence and power has waned so dramatically over recent years that they now number fewer than 20 in the estate at any given time. Once

proud and powerful, the Gulrais are much subdued – not only because of the assassins who have taken the place of their leaders, but because the rank and file nobles can see their influence on the world dwindling.

The Gulrais family once recruited its members from amongst the soldiers in its command. Those who displayed cunning or ferocity on the battlefield, or who used tactics and skill to accomplish difficult tasks, often found their way into the noble house in short order. The high turn-over amongst the nobles here as a result of their frequent wars outside the city gave most commanders a glimmer of hope that they would one day find their way into the estate, but that glimmer has faded entirely now.

The Gulrais have no interest in recruiting soldiers of any kind into the family. Instead, they are working actively to recruit any doppelganger they can find, and have an open invitation for those who wish to come and live in the city. Though these doppelgangers all disguise themselves as drow, naturally, the fact that they are virtually unknown in the city is starting to raise some eyebrows. The once-potential recruits in the military are now starting to wonder what is happening in the Estate and may begin asking some hard questions if they don't get answers soon.

Family Members

While the majority of the upper levels of this house are now replaced by doppelgangers, most of the family remain drow and are starting to wonder exactly what is happening in their estate. The aggressive Gulrais leadership has become quite passive over the past months, preferring to work out new schemes to regain influence and power within the city rather than throwing their troops against enemies beyond Sheoloth's walls. While the turnaround has benefited the house, the younger drow are certain something is up and they want to know what it is.

Aglarok Gulrais, General and Patriarch: In his time, Aglarok was one of the most powerful warriors of Sheoloth. He turned hopeless battles into victories, bringing death and destruction to his enemies wherever he found them. A head injury thirty years ago gravely affected his

intellect and ability to make rational decisions, however, which lead to the decline in the house's fortunes. Where he had once spent a great deal of effort identifying targets that were not only ripe for conquest but also likely to provide rich booty after the battle, he began attacking hopeless targets that cost far more to beat than they could ever repay through looting.

Struck down during a fateful battle several years ago, Aglarok was replaced by a doppelganger. Though not as powerful a fighter as the drow, the doppelganger was much more canny and has since used its intelligence and cunning to begin rebuilding the house. Aided by a trio of doppelganger allies, the new Aglarok intends to maintain his position in the city as long as possible, slowly bringing in more and more of his kind to supplant murdered members of the Gulrais clan.

Aglarok Gulrais, General and Patriarch

Male doppelganger Ftr12: CR 15; Size M (5 ft., 8 in. tall); HD 4d8+12 + 12d10+36; hp 141; Init +4 (+4 Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 18 (+4 Dex, +4 Natural); Attack +20/+15/+10 melee, or +19/+14/+9 ranged; SV Fort +15, Ref +14, Will +10; AL CE; Str 21, Dex 18, Con 16, Int 15, Wis 14, Cha 15.

Languages Spoken: Abyssal, Common, Infernal.

Skills and feats: Bluff +13, Climb +18, Craft +10, Disguise +13, Forgery +5, Hide +4, Jump +19, Listen +11, Move silently +4, Ride +14, Sense motive +6, Spot +8, Swim +16; [Alertness], Blind-fight, Combat reflexes, [Dodge], Expertise, Improved critical (greatsword), Improved disarm, Lightning reflexes, Mobility, Mounted combat, Power attack, Weapon focus (strike, unarmed), Weapon focus (greatsword), Weapon specialization (strike, unarmed).

Grimvil Gulrais, Lieutenant: When Aglarok was taken down, his son Grimvil was also slaughtered and replaced by a doppelganger. Loyal to a fault in life, the new Grimvil is just as unswerving in his devotion to his leader as the drow was to his father. The new Grimvil is very subdued compared to the original, but is no less powerful a figure when engaged in battle.



Grimvil Gulrais, Lieutenant

Male doppelganger Ftr10: CR 13; Size M (6 ft., 0 in. tall); HD 4d8+16 + 10d10+40; hp 122; Init +2 (+2 Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 16 (+2 Dex, +4 Natural); Attack +17/+12/+7 melee, or +15/+10/+5 ranged; SV Fort +15, Ref +9, Will +9; AL CE; Str 19, Dex 14, Con 18, Int 16, Wis 14, Cha 13.

Languages Spoken: Abyssal, Common, Giant, Gnoll.

Skills and feats: Craft (Alchemy) +9.5, Bluff +12, Climb +17, Concentration +8, Craft +15, Diplomacy +4, Disguise +13, Hide +2, Listen +13, Move silently +2, Sense motive +6, Spellcraft +4.5, Spot +8, Swim +17; [Alertness], Cleave, Combat reflexes, [Dodge], Endurance, Great cleave, Improved bull rush, Improved critical (greatsword), Power attack, Sunder, Weapon focus (gauntlet, spiked).

Varus Gulrais, Wilderness Dweller: Varus was the wildest member of the Gulrais family during her life. She spent dozens of years living in the wilds of the Underdeep, surviving on her wits and the blind rage which consumed her in battle. Sadly, it was Varus' habit of living alone that led to her eventual destruction and the downfall of her house. Varus was slain by a doppelganger who replaced her and used its influence to infiltrate her house. The new Varus is just as wild as the original, but lacks the barbarian range and other abilities attributed to the drow she replaces. This leads her to spend as much time as possible away from her family, to avoid discovery.

Varus Gulrais, Wilderness Dweller

Male doppelganger Rgr8: CR 11; Size M (5 ft., 8 in. tall); HD 4d8+16 + 8d10+32; hp 103; Init +9 (+5 Dex, +4 Improved initiative); Spd 30 ft.; AC 19 (+5 Dex, +4 Natural); Attack +12/+7/+2 melee, or +16/+11/+6 ranged; SV Fort +14, Ref +11, Will +7; AL CE; Str 13, Dex 20, Con 18, Int 13, Wis 13, Cha 14.

Languages Spoken: Common, Undercommon.

Skills and feats: Bluff +13, Disguise +13, Hide +5, Intuit direction +12, Knowledge (nature) +11, Listen +10, Move silently +5, Search +10, Sense motive +5, Spot +14, Swim

+12, Wilderness lore +8; [Alertness], [Dodge], Expertise, Improved initiative, [Track], Weapon finesse (dagger).

Ranger Spells Per Day: 2.

Zhinra Gulrais, Priest of the Killer: Zhinra doesn't spend much time at the estate, mostly because he is constantly tending to the needs of his temple. Though he was not part of the last mission of his family, during which various members of his family were replaced with doppelgangers, he is becoming concerned that something is wrong. Previously, he was called up by Aglarok to take part in at least one mission per month, but has not been asked to perform any tasks for nearly three months. Though Zhinra is glad of the free time he has gained, he may begin investigating his own family soon, which could reveal the horrible truth about that last battle.

Zhinra Gulrais, Priest of the Killer

Male elf (drow) Clr10: CR 11; Size M (4 ft., 10 in. tall); HD 10d8; hp 53; Init +2 (+2 Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 12 (+2 Dex); Attack +9/+4 melee, or +9/+4 ranged; SV Fort +7, Ref +7, Will +11; AL CE; Str 15, Dex 14, Con 11, Int 13, Wis 18, Cha 10.

Languages Spoken: Common, Draconic, Elven, Undercommon.

Skills and feats: Diplomacy +6, Heal +16, Hide +2, Listen +6, Move silently +2, Scry +9, Search +3, Spellcraft +14, Spot +6; Combat casting, Craft wondrous item, Enlarge spell, Lightning reflexes.

Cleric Domains: Death, War.

Cleric Spells Per Day: 6/5+1/5+1/4+1/4+1/2+1.

Miscellaneous: In addition to those listed above, this noble house has a dozen family members in residence at any time.

Allies

The Gulrais have long been self-sufficient, but they do have strong alliances with the Church of the Killer and the Church of the Dark Mother, both of which have called upon the Gulrais to help defend Sheoloth in the past. More

importantly, for the doppelgangers in control now, the Gulrais were also quite friendly with the Darzheel family and made extensive use of their necromatons in breaking up well-defended locations. Currently, the Gulrais family has withdrawn from all of its allies, preferring to deal with them through letters and messengers rather than risk a face-to-face meeting that could reveal the truth about the doppelgangers.

The Church of the Dark Mother: The Gulrais estate needed the permission of this church to bulk up its army for expeditions beyond Sheoloth. In return, the Dark Mother's priestesses have made several claims on the house in the past, including supplementing the city's military forces and acting as advanced forces in border disputes with various kingdoms of the Underdeep. As a result, the Church views the Gulrais fondly, but uses them callously when needed.

The Church of the Killer: This church is devoted to the destruction of the enemies of the drow, making it a natural companion for the Gulrais family. The church works closely with the Gulrais commanders, though not recently, to formulate battle plans and carry the war to their enemies. The close ties of the family to the church through Zhinra have been cemented in the past decade or so, since Zhinra has dedicated himself wholeheartedly to advancement in the church.

Darzheel Estate: The Darzheel are clever necromancers who were the first to discover the secrets of necrore and its many uses. Their small army of necromatons has given the family a powerful military edge which it parlayed into a strong alliance with the Gulrais family. In exchange for more conventional military support from the Gulrais, the Darzheel provide necromatons. The agreement has worked out well for both sides, leading the other noble houses to eye them warily for military aggression.

Enemies

Houses without the military power of the Gulrais bear them no love, but are also careful to hide their anger and envy lest they become targets. The current, peaceful mode of the

Gulrais estate has the rest of the nobles in a state of some confusion – some believe the Gulrais are preparing for a massive assault of one sort or another, while others believe the house has finally overextended itself and is no longer able to engage in the kinds of military blitzes for which it was so famous.

The Artrabi Family: The Gulrais make no qualms about their dislike for the Artrabi, whom they see as little better than heretics. Lately, however, the Gulrais have made quiet overtures toward their former enemies, requesting an exchange of intelligence information for military protection. While the doppelgangers in charge of the Gulrais estate are unaware of this fact, the Artrabi plan to use this as an opening to infiltrate and destroy the house from within.

THE DARZHEEL ESTATE

Famed for their necromantic skills and exquisite taste in art and food, the Darzheel's are well-liked amongst the other nobles. Generally inoffensive and with no apparent desire to improve their position in drow society, the Darzheel amuse themselves with wild parties and the pursuit of necromantic theories.

To further ingratiate themselves with the other nobles and power factions in the city, the Darzheel have quietly rebuffed most alliance offers and do not hold grudges over imagined slights. As far as possible for a drow family, the Darzheel seem to have neither pride, nor ego. As long as they are left to continue their experiments, the Darzheel have no complaints.

Of course, not all is as simple as it appears. Long ago, the Darzheel family made a pact of sorts with a group of vampires and other intelligent undead. In exchange for providing these dire creatures with living space and the sustenance they need, the Darzheel receive assistance in their necromantic studies and information about necrore.

Naturally, the Darzheel are in constant danger of discovery and conviction of heresy for their intimate association with such intelligent undead, none of which were created with the approval of the Church of the Dark Mother. The family hopes to avoid such issues by continuing



to ply the other nobles with fine food, drink, and parties, all the while currying favour with the powerful military house of Gulrais. Though hardly a foolproof plan, it has worked for the family so far and they have no plans to rock the boat by changing their plans.

To further mollify those who visit them, the Darzheel have turned the upper portion of their estate into a sensual house of pleasure. Their household staff are not merely skilled at their normal jobs, but are also ready to submit to the wishes of any noble who finds them appealing. The best chef in the city works in their kitchen and the walls are adorned with the most exquisite pieces of art outside of the Church of the Dark Mother. Parties held here are well-attended and no one regrets a moment of time spent in the hospitality of the Darzheel.

The lower levels of the estate, of course, are given over entirely to the study of the necromantic arts and the care and feeding of the many powerful, intelligent undead allied with the Darzheel family. No one is allowed down here and the necromatons at the door make sure no one gets any ideas about trying to force their way in, either.

In keeping with their appearances, the Darzheel estate is adorned with images of nude drow and stately spiders, all of which support the drow ideals. But woven throughout these carvings are strange, skeletal faces, which seem to be leering at the user unpleasantly.

Household Guard

The Darzheel have no real guard to speak of, but their small estate is protected by a 30 heavy necromatons. They also benefit from the undead lurking below the house, all of which are more than happy to kill any intruder they stumble across. At any time, there are an additional 10 vampires, two liches, and around two dozen other intelligent undead of various types.

Household Staff

The Darzheel have a large and well-trained staff to keep their home in tip-top shape. In addition to the standard cooks, maids, and other staff, the Darzheel employ several artists, the best chef in the city (though opinions on this vary

and the chef's identity changes often), and other experts who have no tasks other than making the estate the most elegant, comfortable place to be in the entire city. By and large, the staff are confined to the upper levels of the estate and never venture below – those who do tend to become meals for the undead they find, which serves to both protect the secrets of the Darzheel and satisfy the hungers and lusts of their undead allies.

The Darzheel Family

More than any other noble family, the Darzheel take great pains to appear as neutral and unassuming as possible. Men and women of the family wear only the latest styles in dress, hairstyle, and accessories, and are the yardstick by which other drow are measured for their 'fashion sense.' Flying in the face of their necromantic background and expertise, the Darzheel are neither somber nor stinking of rotting flesh, instead seeming to be dilettantes constantly in search of a good party.

Recruiting into the family is a touchy prospect and one that is not undertaken lightly. Due to their heretical ties to the undead and the dangers outsiders pose to the family, the Darzheel go to great pains to ensure their recruits are ready for the induction. Potential nobles are wined and dined for months; dinner conversations are used to plumb the depths of the recruit's political leanings and the strength of their devotion. Those who make it past the first cut are led down a dark and winding road, during which they are exposed to an increasing number of heresies and offered insights into the necromantic arts for their complicity. At a certain point, the ultimate decision is made by the family – those who prove themselves worthy and who accept the heretical bent of the family are kept in the family, while those who present a threat are killed and used in experiments.

Family Members

Each of the Darzheel are perfectly aware that their entire power base is built on a heretical reliance on intelligent undead who serve no master and were not approved by the Church of the Dark Mother. This forces them to hide their true feelings at all times and to do their best to avoid suspicion of others by maintaining their pleasant demeanour and throwing lots of parties.

There are currently sixty-three nobles in the Darzheel estate, though only half of these are ever seen. The other half live far below the estate in deep catacombs where they can study necrore and undeath at their leisure. These hidden members of the family are often grotesquely deformed, their bodies twisted and pustulent from exposure to necrore over generations. Driven by their desire to master undeath, these are the most powerful of the necromancers in the family, and each has at least a half-dozen necromatons of different shapes and sizes ready for use at a moment's notice.

Lurat Darzheel, Matriarch: Lurat once served the Church of the Dark Mother, but was granted leave to pursue her necromantic studies outside the church after three decades of exemplary service as a summoner of the dead. She secured her release from her vows after uncovering a juicy affair between the priestesses above her and a captured group of high elves. Since that time, Lurat has quietly led her family down their dark road while also hosting the wildest and most extravagant parties in Sheoloth. Most believe she was released from the church because she was somewhat dim, because she acts vapid in public and rarely speaks on any matters of import. Her high, melodious voice causes most to see her as childlike and frail, which results in most drow wanting to destroy her or possess her.

Lurat Darzheel, Matriarch

Female elf (drow) Clr15: CR 16; Size M (5 ft., 4 in. tall); HD 15d8+45; hp 115; Init +0; Spd 30 ft.; AC 10; Attack +12/+7/+2 melee, or +11/+6/+1 ranged; SV Fort +12, Ref +5, Will +11; AL CE; Str 12, Dex 11, Con 16, Int 19, Wis 15, Cha 12.

Languages Spoken: Common, Draconic, Elven, Gnome, Orc, Sylvan, Undercommon.

Skills and feats: Craft (Alchemy) +9, Escape artist +2, Gather information +5, Heal +19, Hide +0, Jump +1.5, Knowledge (arcana) +21, Listen +4, Move silently +0, Open lock +5.5, Profession +19, Scry +20, Search +6, Spellcraft +21, Spot +4; Combat casting, Craft magic arms and armor, Extra turning, Extra turning, Forge ring, Weapon focus (dagger).

Cleric Domains: Darkness, Evil.

Cleric Spells Per Day: 6/6+1/6+1/5+1/4+1/4+1.

Kahna Darzheel, Mutant: Living in the deepest holes below the estate, Kahna pursues avenues of study that others find horrifying and alien. Even for a drow she is cruel and vicious, often destroying a dozen or more test subjects at a time if her results are not what she feels they should be. Long term exposure to necrore has destroyed her body almost entirely, leaving her with a set of hideously twisted legs and vestigial arms that twitch restlessly at her sides. Kahna gets around with the aid of necromaton limbs, which jut from her back and hips.

Kahna Darzheel, Mutant

Female elf (drow) Wiz12: CR 13; Size M (4 ft., 9 in. tall); HD 12d4+12; hp 41; Init +2 (+2 Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 12 (+2 Dex); Attack +6/+1 melee, or +8/+3 ranged; SV Fort +5, Ref +6, Will +8; AL CE; Str 10, Dex 15, Con 12, Int 19, Wis 10, Cha 7.

Languages Spoken: Common, Elven, Goblin, Orc, Sylvan, Undercommon.

Skills and feats: Bluff +2, Climb +6, Hide +7, Knowledge +19, Knowledge (arcana) +19, Listen +2, Move silently +2, Profession +15, Ride +3.5, Spellcraft +15, Spot +6; Craft magic arms and armor, Empower spell, Extend spell, Quicken spell, [Scribe scroll], Spell focus (necromancy), Spell mastery (Mage Armor, Web, Magic Missile), Spell penetration.

Wizard Spells Known (4/5/5/5/4/3/2): 0

- Arcane Mark, Dancing Lights, Daze, Detect Magic, Detect Poison, Disrupt Undead, Flare, Ghost Sound, Light, Mage Hand, Mending, Open/Close, Prestidigitation, Ray of Frost, Read Magic, Resistance. 1st - Cause Fear, Feather Fall, Jump, Mage Armor, Magic Missile, Sleep, Spider Climb. 2nd - Blur, Darkness, Invisibility, Knock, Pyrotechnics, Summon Monster II, Web. 3rd - Blink, Dispel Magic, Fly, Halt Undead, Haste, Hold Person, Lightning Bolt, Summon Monster III. 4th - Charm Monster, Fire Shield, Fire Trap, Improved Invisibility, Lesser Geas, Polymorph Other, Polymorph Self, Summon Monster IV. 5th - Animate Dead, Cloudkill, False Vision, Persistent Image, Teleport. 6th - Analyze Dweomer, Disintegrate, Flesh to Stone, Summon Monster VI.





Infrir Darzheel, Diplomat: Originally consigned to life as a research assistant, Infrir later discovered he could combine his taste for history with his talent for singing. His career as a successful musician would have been assured, were he a commoner who performed for the masses, but instead he travels from party to party, playing for the entertainment of other nobles. He is also an accomplished diplomat and his honeyed words and silken voice are enough to sway those drow who oppose his family. That he is also delicious cruel when the mood strikes makes him the quintessential drow rake, popular wherever he goes.

Infrir Darzheel, Diplomat

Male elf (drow) Brd10: CR 11; Size M (5 ft., 3 in. tall); HD 10d6; hp 45; Init +4 (+4 Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 14 (+4 Dex); Attack +6/+1 melee, or +11/+6 ranged; SV Fort +3, Ref +11, Will +9; AL CE; Str 9, Dex 18, Con 10, Int 17, Wis 14, Cha 16.

Languages Spoken: Common, Draconic,

Elven, Gnoll, Gnome, Undercommon.

Skills and feats: Balance +10, Bluff +13, Decipher script +16, Hide +4, Knowledge (arcana) +15, Listen +4, Move silently +4, Perform +15, Pick pocket +13, Search +5, Sense motive +15, Spot +4, Swim +9, Use magic device +10; Brew potion, Craft wand, Maximize spell, Point blank shot.

Bard Spells Known (3/4/4/3): 0 - Daze, Detect Magic, Flare, Prestidigitation, Read Magic, Resistance. 1st - Identify, Silent Image, Sleep, Summon Monster I. 2nd - Blur, Cure Moderate Wounds, Hold Person, Invisibility. 3rd - Clairaudience/Clairvoyance, Haste, Invisibility Sphere, Summon Monster III.

Kazorth, Undead Organizer: Captured years ago by Kahna, Kazorth now serves as an interface between the Darzheel family and their undead allies. Though he detests his job (which also includes being Kahna's consort), Kazorth is hopelessly addicted to the wide variety of blood he is provided with thanks to his position. Originally a human, Kazorth is powerfully built,

with arms and legs so thickly muscled they appear unnatural. Though Kazorth would love to return to his wild days as an undead bandit, he knows only too well that he could never live such an opulent lifestyle with his meagre skills. Instead, he sulks and does the bidding of his masters, unable to shake free of the velvet prison they have created for him.

Kazorth, Undead Organizer

Male human (vampire) Ftr7: CR 7; Size M (6 ft., 1 in. tall); HD 7d12; hp 57; Init +6 (+2 Dex, +4 Improved initiative); Spd 30 ft.; AC 12 (+2 Dex); Attack +10/+5 melee, or +9/+4 ranged; SV Fort +5, Ref +8, Will +6; AL CE; Str 22, Dex 19, Con -, Int 14, Wis 13, Cha 12.

Languages Spoken: Abyssal, Common, Elven, Infernal.

Skills and feats: Craft (Alchemy) +3.5, Climb +12, Heal +1, Hide +2, Jump +13, Listen +2, Move silently +2, Sense motive +3, Speak language +2, Spellcraft +6, Spot +2; Alertness, Blind-fight, Combat reflexes, Dodge, Improved initiative, Lightning Reflexes, Weapon focus (greatsword), Weapon focus (strike, unarmed), Weapon specialization (greatsword).

Allies

The Darzheel keep their distance from everyone, while simultaneously appearing to be very friendly to all who approach them. As a result, they have only one strong alliance which does not even appear to be that strong from the outside. Part of their survival plan is a reliance on neutrality to protect them from the predations, machinations, and investigations of the other noble families.

The Gulrais Family: The Darzheel *know* that something is wrong with their former allies, but they are unsure of exactly what the problem is. What they do know is that the change in demeanor of Aglarok Gulrais and his family has made life much easier for the Darzheel. Previously, Aglarok and his crude kin would show up at all the parties to which they were invited, leading to the picking of fights, insults, and general boorish behaviour that smeared the Darzheel estate with a crude stain. Now, the Darzheel do not need to worry that one of the warrior drow will show up – the Gulrais are not

answering invitations at all anymore. Though this does trouble the Darzheel, they believe the Gulrais will hold up their end of the bargain, if only to keep their Darzheel necromatons in good operating condition.

Enemies

Because of their attitude and their manipulation of noble opinion, the Darzheel family has no dedicated enemies. Though the schemes of other drow often ensnare a Darzheel in their webs, it happens with no particular malice and no more often than any other happenstance. The Darzheel have miraculously stayed completely out of the power struggles within Sheoloth and yet maintain their position in the overall pecking order.

The Church of the Dark Mother: Unfortunately, not all is perfect in the house of the Darzheel. The biggest issue they face is their continued heresy and the danger of its discovery. As a result, they treat the Dark Mother's minions as enemies, keeping them at a distance as much as possible and avoiding contact with their inquisitors whenever possible. Should the church ever discover what the Darzheel are up to, the estate would likely be purged from the city and its members destroyed as brutally as possible.

THE LUZKAR ESTATE

The Luzkar are merchants extraordinaire; they secured their position in the labyrinth by devastating their mercantile opposition through careful purchases and brutal shakedowns. Always operating just on the edges of the law, the Luzkar are the most cutthroat of traders in the city, ready to resort to violence to settle pricing differences whenever the fancy strikes them. On the other hand, they know better than to incite the wrath of the trade guilds and pick their targets accordingly.

Though ridiculously wealthy, the Luzkar are regarded as low-class commoners by most other nobles. Having ascended to their position less than 50 years ago, the Luzkar did so over the protestations of the other nobles, who did not believe wealth alone should be used to determine the rights of nobility. The Church of the Dark Mother, sensing a chance

to destabilize the noble alliances and power structure, disagreed and the Luzkar were officially recognized as a noble family. Since then, the Luzkar have spent vast sums of wealth to cement their position and protect themselves from their enemies – the cost of mercenaries and spies is high indeed, especially when you are only newly ennobled.

The Luzkar family has decided to keep their estate low-key and tasteful. Though scrollwork and bronze nameplates hang over the doorways, there is little external ornamentation. Not wanting to give the other noble houses a reason to attack has forced the Luzkar to keep their home's décor to a minimum.

Household Guard

Soldiers: 500 (drow/war5) (mercenaries)

Commanders: 20 (drow/war7)

Captain of the Guard: 2 (drow/fr 10)

The estate guards are mercenaries in the truest sense of the word, with no real ties to the estate as a whole they will fight to defend their employers, but only because not doing so means they will not get paid. Given a better offer,

at least half of these soldiers would desert the Luzkar, which is why even common soldiers are quite well paid (5gp per day).

Household Staff

The Luzkar estate is well-tended, but not extravagant. Most of the household staff spend their time running to and from the accounting area of the estate, where the Luzkar tally their earnings and debts. Few visitors are received in this estate, so the staff are merely adequate at seeing to the needs of the occasional outsider who spends time in the estate.

The Luzkar Family

The Luzkar are acquisitive in all things and have a very large family as a result. Approximately seventy family members can be found in the estate at any time, with at least twenty of them furiously scribbling away in the accounting chambers. The rest spend their time either scheming together to bring about the downfall of their competitors or devising elaborate plans to increase their ability to generate wealth from their existing holdings.

The Luzkar recruit frequently and ruthlessly,

Aside from home back in Sun Gate, this was her favorite ward of all, the Noble Labyrinth. The shifting walls and tangled passages were perfect for both her training from Blade and her natural inclination to find dark tunnels and explore them wherever they went. She was content here, a rare feeling for her in this vile city. Even at peace, however, she never let her guard down. That was why Blade felt comfortable waiting for her at the entrance to the Labyrinth while she spent hours learning its twists and turns alone.

Of course, his laxity was hardly out of generosity. Dorianne had a gift for mazes even he did not possess, and many of his toughest assignments were in these confusing passages and the sprawl of tunnels that lay beneath them. If he was ever going to be able to take out any of his targets living here, he would need a map of the area he could rely on.

That was why Dorianne have been given the gift of a scribe's set he picked up in the Foreign ward from a book merchant in exchange for 'protection'. She did not yet realize it, or maybe she did and did not care, but she was going to be the stalking horse that gave him the keys to places he could not get to himself. She would need more training before she was ready for that burden, but for now, her enthusiasm and keen memory were valuable enough for him to endure her continued breathing. Blade never expected to consider a woman valuable, but it helped that even from the side, there was very little about the girl to suggest that she was female.

Looking out at the sheer stone walls of the Labyrinth, Blade pondered how he would work Dorianne into his routines in the future. He hated to think that she had become important enough to him that he was thinking that far ahead, but he convinced himself it was merely for as long as she stayed useful. That excuse was becoming thin, but he was drow. His people, born in darkness, had a way of lying convincingly, even to themselves.

offering positions within the family in exchange for control of businesses or ridiculously large sums of money. It is quite possible to buy your way into the family, and it is just as possible to be brought in against your will – threats against popular and profitable businesses work very well to coerce the owners to join the family. Despite their heavy-handed methods, however, the Luzkar are shrewd businessmen and most who join their number do not regret the decision, no matter how they were brought into the estate. The raw profit is significant and the risk of going solo is eliminated when one belongs to the Luzkar family.

Family Members

The Luzkar are all greedy and ruthless, skilled merchants who use their superior wealth and access to noble power to enforce their dealings with their lesser. Instilled with a strong sense of family pride and a desire to make the most money possible, these merchants have little trouble inflicting great suffering on those who oppose them, using their wealth and power to topple businesses, destroy lives, and bring ruin to their enemies.

Croula Luzkar, Matriarch: Highly skilled and utterly without compassion for others, Croula began her rise to power by literally backstabbing her master. Born into a slave family, Croula spent her early years toiling for a fungal merchant, clambering into and out of fungus trunks to slather them with preservative gels and sanding down their surfaces for varnishing. The chemical stew she worked with every day stunted her growth and left her scarcely three feet tall. After killing her master, she led the other slaves on a night-long murder spree which ended the lives of all who might lay claim to the master's business. She then claimed her freedom and ownership of the business through the Rite of Death. Her rise to power was meteoric after that, and those first slaves are still part of Croula's extended family, fanatically loyal to her and ready to do her bidding.

Croula Luzkar, Matriarch

Female elf (drow) Rog6/Exp10: CR 16; Size M (3 ft., 1 in. tall); HD 6d6-12 + 10d6-20; hp 35; Init +10 (+6 Dex, +4 Improved initiative); Spd 30 ft.; AC 16 (+6 Dex); Attack +13/+8/+3 melee,

or +17/+12/+7 ranged; SV Fort +3, Ref +14, Will +11; AL CE; Str 15, Dex 22, Con 7, Int 12, Wis 14, Cha 16.

Languages Spoken: Common, Elven, Gnome, Undercommon.

Skills and feats: Appraise +14, Concentration +11, Craft +11, Diplomacy +8, Escape artist +17, Handle animal +5, Heal +8, Hide +6, Innuendo +10.5, Intuit direction +13, Jump +10, Listen +4, Move silently +14, Open lock +15, Perform +12, Profession +15, Search +3, Spot +4, Tumble +15, Use magic device +15, Use rope +14; Ambidexterity, Combat reflexes, Improved initiative, Improved unarmed strike, Skill focus (craft), Skill focus (intuit direction).

Thelozi Luzkar, Chief Accountant: As part of the original uprising that freed Croula and set her on her road to destiny, Thelozi has been the matriarch's constant companion. The two share quarters, take meals together, sleep in the same bed, and are otherwise so closely linked together the one is sometimes mistaken for the other. Thelozi oversees all of the accounting for the Luzkar enterprises and her keen eye for numbers and legendary cruelty keep the lesser accountants trustworthy and the books in line. Towering over her diminutive matriarch, Thelozi is as tall as Croula is short, standing a staggering six feet tall.

Thelozi Luzkar, Chief Accountant

Female elf (drow) Exp15: CR 15; Size M (6 ft. tall); HD 15d6; hp 51; Init +4 (+4 Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 14 (+4 Dex); Attack +9/+4/-1 melee, or +15/+10/+5 ranged; SV Fort +5, Ref +9, Will +10; AL LE; Str 7, Dex 19, Con 11, Int 17, Wis 13, Cha 12.

Languages Spoken: Common, Draconic, Elven, Gnome, Sylvan, Undercommon.

Skills and feats: Bluff +18, Diplomacy +17, Escape artist +22, Hide +20, Jump +4, Knowledge (religion) +17, Listen +5, Move silently +4, Perform +5, Profession +18, Read lips +20, Search +5, Sense motive +8, Spellcraft +6.5, Spot +5, Swim +15; Alertness, Expertise, Run, Skill focus (perform), Skill focus (spellcraft), Toughness.

Eorzi Luzkar, Enforcer: A former gladiator,



Eorzi took his winnings and bought a small stable of promising young slaves. Though his retirement from the fight clubs was disappointing to many, he quickly brought his new fighters up to snuff and began earning a sizeable income from their flashy, potent fighting styles. Though never able to fully emulate his own devastating sneak attacks, his fighters still make significant money and are ranked amongst the top of the fighting circuit. Eorzi joined the Luzkar family only after a protracted and bitter battle in which he lost two fighters to Croula's henchmen. That was nearly two dozen years ago, however, and Eorzi has moved on. He now acts as an enforcer for Croula's policies, helping her enemies realize the futility of opposing her one broken knee at a time.

Eorzi Luzkar, Enforcer

Male elf (drow) Ftr5/Rog10: CR 16; Size M (4 ft., 10 in. tall); HD 5d10+15 + 10d6+30; hp 110; Init +5 (+5 Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 15 (+5 Dex); Attack +15/+10/+5 melee, or +17/+12/+7 ranged; SV Fort +10, Ref +13, Will +6; AL NE; Str 16, Dex 20, Con 16, Int 17, Wis 10, Cha 7.

Languages Spoken: Common, Draconic, Elven, Gnome, Goblin, Undercommon.

Skills and feats: Craft (Alchemy) +7, Bluff +14, Climb +16, Craft +14, Disable device +16, Disguise +10, Gather information +11, Handle animal +3, Hide +5, Intuit direction +13, Knowledge (religion) +7, Listen +2, Move silently +13, Open lock +18, Pick pocket +10, Read lips +6, Ride +12, Search +5, Spot +7; Blind-fight, Combat reflexes, Improved critical (dagger), Improved unarmed strike, Iron will, Power attack, Quick draw, Shield proficiency, Skill focus (bluff).

Allies

The Luzkar do not have many allies. Their sudden rise to power and the fact they were ascended to nobility over the protestations of the families has done nothing to endear them to the other estate-holders in the labyrinth. The church, likewise, has had nothing to do with the Luzkar's after they approved their ascension – after all, the Dark Mother has no interest in her children as individuals, only as tools to further her ends. Since the Luzkar were able to stir up the nobility and added a new element to their struggles, the priestesses feel the merchant

clan has already been blessed and will need no further effort.

The Transfer Guild: On the other hand, the Luzkar do have some allies in the trade guilds, particularly amongst those who import and export goods. The so-called Transfer Guild relies on the Luzkar to keep the bribes flowing so their indiscretions in the Foreign Ward will not be investigated too closely. This allows the Transfer Guild to circumvent the normal restrictions on the type and number of goods which can enter the city. This gives the Guild the stock it needs to muscle in on the territories of others and its members are quickly pushing out members of the Barge and Barrel Guild. In return, the guilds provide a tithe to the Luzkar's and operate only in business approved by Croula's people.

Enemies

The Luzkar are not loved by any of the nobles outside their own house. They are not, however, actively being hunted by them anymore as they were in the first days after this family's founding. Instead, the hostilities are low-grade and occur on a trade level, which suits the Luzkar just fine.

The Network: This criminal organization continually meddles in various smuggling operations which is starting to impinge on the Transfer Guild's profits. The Luzkar family wants the tariffs and restrictions to remain in place and not be circumvented, as this cuts into the profits they create by artificially restricting their supplies of various goods. As a result, the Network forces often clash with Luzkar enforcers, and the two organizations have no love for one another at all. Fortunately for the Artrabi, the Luzkar are not aware of that family's connection to the Network – if they were, the Luzkar would certainly take the fight straight to the other nobles in an attempt to force them to back down. The results of this would not be pretty – the impact the financial giants the Luzkar's can have on any house is significant, but the bloody terror instituted by the Artrabi assassins is nothing to ignore, either.

THE WAFIRI ESTATE

The Wafiri long ago determined that the best way to protect themselves from danger was

to make their skills and personnel available to the highest bidder. As a result, they have thrived during turbulent times and managed to avoid the destruction of so many of the other noble families. As noble mercenaries, the house maintains a sense of neutrality at all times, siding only with those who buy their services, either with currency, magical items, or the promise of future favours (though this last requires some hefty promises).

Shrewd and calculating, the Wafiri do not just toss their lot in with anyone who pays, however, which allows the house to avoid becoming embroiled in bitter battles that lead nowhere. Though most of the other houses have been offended by the Wafiri at one point or another, either on the battlefield or because an offer was rebuffed, not one of them is willing to openly attack the house for fear of bringing down the wrath of the other houses onto its head.

The estate of the Wafiri family is beautiful and elegant. Glittering crystals are embedded in the stone next to engravings of weapons of war and images of past leaders of the family. Though the house does appear more like a tomb than a home, from the outside, its interior is comfortable and impressive.

Household Guard

The Wafiri have a large, well-trained guard, which is one of their greatest assets. Led by wizards and sorcerers, the guard has the benefit of arcane firepower that most other household guards do not possess.

Soldiers: 300 (drow/ft8), 100 (drow/sor 9 or drow/wiz9)

Commanders: 10 (drow/wiz 12)

Captain of the Guard: 2 (drow/ft 15)

Household Staff

Obedient and very subservient, the staff of the Wafiri estate are not otherwise terribly commendable. The cooks do an adequate job and the other staff are competent, but there are no stand-outs amongst their number. The Wafiri prefer it this way, however, as subservient and docile staff are less likely to get up to mischief.

The Wafiri Family

Skilled in negotiations and diplomatic to a fault, the Wafiri family survives because of its willingness to sell its services to other noble houses. With the house's varied skills and potent military, the Wafiri have little difficulty convincing others to avoid engaging them in open conflict. Furthermore, no house wants to earn the ire of other nobles by attacking the Wafiri – after all, as anyone could potentially need the house's services at any time, anything that weakens the house also weakens its potential clients.

Despite their neutrality and the amount of money they make from other houses each year, the Wafiri see other drow as contemptible and beneath their notice. As the oldest extant house in Sheoloth, the Wafiri may even be right on this count.

Family Members

To keep new blood flowing into the family, the Wafiri recruit the few worthy drow they find. Their recruiting drives are not energetic, by any stretch, but they are thorough. Informants from across the city are aware of the bounty the Wafiri pay to those who provide good prospects for recruitment, and a steady stream of potentials file through the family's files each week. While very few of these are selected, the Wafiri do recruit one or two every three months or so, more frequently if they need to replace fallen members of the house.

Those who do find themselves as part of the extended Wafiri clan all have specialized skills and show intelligence in using those skills. Wizards and sorcerers are quite prized by this clan, especially those who have no former allegiance to the Witch's Daggers, and are put to good use by the house in support of their household troops. Of course, anyone who joins Wafiri does so with the knowledge that they could find themselves fighting against anyone, anytime, anywhere within Sheoloth. Those who do not enjoy a good scrap should look elsewhere.

Cruilif Wafiri, House Matriarch: Cruilif is the oldest and arguably the most powerful noble in Sheoloth. She helped found the Wafiri hundreds of years ago and has kept it running all this



time. Her tactical skills and strategic insights allow her troops to dominate the battlefield and, along with the intense training regimen she mandates for all members of the house, makes her mercenary troops the most feared in the city. Cruilif does not, however, handle negotiations for the house, preferring instead to leave that to those with more patience and tact. She is a commander and a warrior, not a diplomat.

Cruilif Wafiri, House Matriarch

Female elf (drow) Ftr15/Wiz5: CR 21; Size M (4 ft., 10 in. tall); HD 15d10 + 5d4; hp 113; Init +5 (+1 Dex, +4 Improved initiative); Spd 30 ft.; AC 11 (+1 Dex); Attack +20/+15/+10/+5 melee, or +18/+13/+8/+3 ranged; SV Fort +10, Ref +7, Will +8; AL NE; Str 17, Dex 12, Con 11, Int 19, Wis 8, Cha 11.

Languages Spoken: Common, Draconic, Elven, Goblin, Orc, Sylvan, Undercommon.

Skills and feats: Craft (Alchemy) +8, Appraise +9.5, Disable device +9, Forgery +8.5, Handle animal +20, Heal +7, Hide +8, Innuendo +0, Intuit direction +1.5, Knowledge (religion) +10, Listen +3, Move silently +1, Pick pocket +2, Profession +6, Ride +4.5, Search +6, Spellcraft +10, Spot +3, Swim +21, Tumble +10; Alertness, Blind-fight, Cleave, Combat reflexes, Exotic weapon proficiency (siangham), Far shot, Improved initiative, Leadership, Point blank shot, Power attack, Precise shot, [Scribe scroll], Silent spell, Skill focus (handle animal), Still spell, Weapon focus (gauntlet), Weapon focus (shortbow).

Possessions: 220,000 gp in gear.

Wizard Spells Known (4/4/3/2): 0 - Arcane Mark, Dancing Lights, Daze, Detect Magic, Detect Poison, Disrupt Undead, Flare, Ghost Sound, Light, Mage Hand, Mending, Open/Close, Prestidigitation, Ray of Frost, Read Magic, Resistance. 1st - Feather Fall, Identify, Mage Armor, Magic Missile, Magic Weapon, Silent Image, Sleep. 2nd - Blur, Ghoul Touch, Levitate, Mirror Image, Summon Monster II, Web. 3rd - Flame Arrow, Haste, Slow.

Pashana Wafiri, Negotiator (drow/f/exp 20): Pashana is the chief spokesperson for her house, attending all public functions and meetings with other nobles. She also accepts or rejects

all offers put before the house and is the sole deciding factor when it comes to such decisions. She is not a combatant, but her diplomacy and negotiation skills make her absolutely invaluable. Though polite, Pashana has a core of steel and is not hesitant to speak her mind if it is to her advantage. Other members of the house respect and admire Pashana, though a few secretly have designs on her position for themselves.

Pashana Wafiri, Negotiator

Female elf (drow) Exp20: CR 20; Size M (4 ft., 10 in. tall); HD 20d6+20; hp 103; Init +9 (+5 Dex, +4 Improved initiative); Spd 30 ft.; AC 15 (+5 Dex); Attack +17/+12/+7 melee, or +20/+15/+10 ranged; SV Fort +7, Ref +11, Will +11; AL NE; Str 14, Dex 20, Con 12, Int 15, Wis 8, Cha 13.

Languages Spoken: Common, Draconic, Elven, Gnome, Undercommon.

Skills and feats: Animal empathy +9.5, Bluff +25, Climb +3.5, Craft +10.5, Diplomacy +24, Handle animal +2, Heal +20, Hide +5, Listen +23, Move silently +5, Search +12, Sense Motive +29, Spot +1, Swim +6, Use rope +27; Improved initiative, Point blank shot, Precise shot, Skill focus (bluff), Skill focus (search), Skill focus (animal empathy), Skill focus (sense motive).

Faziki Wafiri, Scout (drow/m/Rog 16): The Wafiri rely on good battlefield intelligence, even when they are not actively involved in a conflict of any kind. Faziki provides that information, sneaking about the city and managing his network of spies and informants to ensure his house is up-to-date on the latest happenings within Sheoloth. On the other hand, Faziki reports only to Pashana and Cruilif and is virtually invisible to others – few even know of this elusive rogue and fewer still know of his connection to the house of mercenaries. His anonymity allows Faziki to make his way through the city without becoming a target and he protects it ruthlessly. Those who discover his secret are wise to keep it a secret, lest they find themselves assassinated for their loose talk.

Faziki Wafiri, Scout

Male elf (drow) Rog16: CR 17; Size M (5 ft., 0 in. tall); HD 16d6+32; hp 85; Init +6 (+6 Dex);

Spd 30 ft.; AC 16 (+6 Dex); Attack +14/+9/+4 melee, or +18/+13/+8 ranged; SV Fort +7, Ref +16, Will +8; AL CE; Str 14, Dex 23, Con 15, Int 19, Wis 16, Cha 12.

Languages Spoken: Abyssal, Common, Draconic, Dwarven, Elven, Gnome, Goblin, Halfling, Ignan, Orc, Sylvan, Undercommon.

Skills and feats: Appraise +18, Craft +20, Forgery +18, Gather information +19, Heal +5, Hide +6, Innuendo +19, Intuit direction +19, Knowledge (arcana) +9.5, Listen +25, Move silently +23, Perform +19, Pick pocket +20, Search +10, Speak language +6, Spot +15, Tumble +19, Use rope +27; Alertness, Endurance, Improved critical (short sword), Point blank shot, Quick draw, Skill focus (use rope).

Allies

The Wafiri have no constant allies, though they are looked on fondly by the both the Church of the Dark Mother and the Witch's Daggers for their neutrality and ability to stabilize the city in times of crisis. The house prevents itself from seeming too friendly with any one group, which prevents it from forming any stronger alliances.

Enemies

As mercenaries, the Wafiri have quite a few enemies, but none willing to risk the ire of the other noble houses by launching an assault against them. The last house to openly attack the Wafiri ended up cut off from its allies and left to the mercies of the mercenary nobles, who promptly destroyed the house and left its nobles hanging from the twisted gates. For now, then, the Wafiri can be considered to have no credible enemies, though they also have no credible allies (see above).

THE CURIZORWI ESTATE

The stone surrounding Sheoloth is laden with rich veins of precious metals and thick flows of gemstones have also been discovered. The city is also in constant need of skilled miners to excavate new territories into which the city can expand, which led to the rise of the Curizorwi

estate several hundred years ago. Raised up from a clan of drow miners, the Curizorwi quickly became famous for the ability of its workers to extract ore and gems from the stone and their skill at creating new living space.

Since their inception, the Curizorwi have protected themselves by touting the necessity of their skill to the survival of Sheoloth. If anything were to happen to them, their secret mining techniques would be lost and the rest of the city left to the mercy of those with much less skill. The Curizorwi claim that cave-ins and other disasters would be very common and prey on those fears to secure their position in drow culture.

It has worked, to a great extent, and the Curizorwi have little to fear from other nobles. What they do fear, however, is the discovery of some very efficient magical means to circumvent skilled mining entirely, which would leave them defenceless and ripe for conquest by their enemies.

To highlight their mining skills, the Curizorwi built their home from raw stone, carving it from the floor of the cavern of the noble labyrinth. It has since been steadily decorated by the members of the house, who engrave small touches on its surface whenever they have the chance. Worn smooth by generations of polishing, the smooth stone is a truly impressive sight.

Household Guard

The Curizorwi have a small, elite group of guards they use to provide security for their homestead and for any mining operations. These guards are toughened fighters and veterans of many scraps with other drow and creatures of the Underdeep, providing excellent protection for the miners.

Soldiers: 200 (drow/ft 7)

Commanders: 10 (drow/rgr9)

Captain of the Guard: 1 (drow/ft 12)

Household Staff

The staff of the Curizorwi estate tend to be educated and intelligent, ready to assist their masters in research or any other duties that come



to hand. Unlike many other noble estates, the Curizorwi believe in elevating from within and have no problem promoting a capable servant into a full member of the house. As a result, their household staff works very hard and is always ready to help out when needed.

The Curizorwi Family

The Curizorwi family is larger than any other noble family, because every member of their family is also a miner. To ensure the quality of their work never flags, the Curizorwi only use family members to do the planning and mining, though slave labour is used to haul out tailings and waste. This means the family must recruit aggressively and often, as mining accidents can kill even the most skilled miners.

Once recruited, a new family member undergoes extensive training, which often takes several years. During this time, the recruit is taken out to mining sites and given hands-on training to instil in them the proper respect for the mining profession and let them see how things are done. The house recruits, on average, ten new members every month, though it loses from three to five to accidents during the same time period.

Family Members

The Curizorwi are a skilled house, with few fighters or wizards amongst their number. Though most of those who mine will pick up a level or three of fighter just from dealing with the monsters encountered during a mining operation, experts are the most common class within the family.

Wanish Curizorwi, Engineer (drow/m/ftr5/exp12): As the most skilled engineer in the house, Wanish is also its head. He makes all decisions for the house as a whole and oversees the planning and execution of all mining operations. Though the other nobles often look down on the Curizorwi for allowing a mere male to lead them, it is difficult to argue with success. Wanish uses new technologies, including fleshcrafting, to keep his mining operations as safe and efficient as possible. His well-known Weeping Mine is played out, but others still make visits to the isolated location just to view the teary eyes of the fleshcrafted supports

Wanish Curizorwi, Engineer

Male elf (drow) Ftr5/Exp12: CR 17; Size M (4 ft., 9 in. tall); HD 5d10 + 12d6; hp 74; Init +8 (+4 Dex, +4 Improved initiative); Spd 30 ft.; AC 14 (+4 Dex); Attack +16/+11/+6 melee, or +18/+13/+8 ranged; SV Fort +8, Ref +9, Will +10; AL LE; Str 15, Dex 18, Con 11, Int 17, Wis 12, Cha 8.

Languages Spoken: Common, Draconic, Elven, Sylvan, Undercommon.

Skills and feats: Craft (Alchemy) +12, Appraise +20, Craft +10, Forgery +4, Handle animal +5, Heal +6, Hide +4, Intimidate +14, Intuit direction +7, Jump +4, Knowledge (nature) +18, Listen +5, Move silently +4, Open lock +11, Search +5, Spellcraft +9, Spot +12, Tumble +9; Alertness, Improved initiative, Point blank shot, Power attack, Precise shot, Skill focus (spellcraft), Skill focus (appraise), Sunder.

Kirinkle Curizorwi, Miner: Kirinkle is the highest-ranked miner in the house and her skill is beyond dispute. Not only is she good at mining, she is also a remarkably tough fighter who swings her pick at enemies almost as often as she swings it at rocks. Her taste for liquor and tendency to crush the windpipes of her lovers are both legendary, so she often drinks alone between jobs, hoping to pick up a suitable victim for the evening.

Kirinkle Curizorwi, Miner

Female elf (drow) Ftr10/Exp5: CR 15; Size M (5 ft., 4 in. tall); HD 10d10+20 + 5d6+10; hp 94; Init +6 (+2 Dex, +4 Improved initiative); Spd 30 ft.; AC 12 (+2 Dex); Attack +16/+11/+6 melee, or +15/+10/+5 ranged; SV Fort +10, Ref +6, Will +8; AL CE; Str 18, Dex 15, Con 15, Int 14, Wis 12, Cha 11.

Languages Spoken: Common, Draconic, Elven, Orc, Undercommon.

Skills and feats: Climb +9, Concentration +5, Decipher script +3, Disguise +7, Gather information +8, Hide +2, Intuit direction +9, Jump +11, Listen +5, Move silently +2, Perform +2.5, Profession (miner) +17, Search +12, Spot +13, Tumble +4; Alertness, Ambidexterity, Combat reflexes, Deflect arrows, Dodge, Far shot, Improved initiative, Improved unarmed strike, Point blank shot, Power attack, Precise shot, Weapon focus (pick).

SV Fort +4, Ref +9, Will +9; AL CE; Str 10, Dex 20, Con 10, Int 16, Wis 13, Cha 12.

Languages Spoken: Common, Draconic, Elven, Gnoll, Orc, Undercommon.

Skills and feats: Climb +13, Escape artist +12.5, Forgery +20, Handle animal +16, Hide +10, Intimidate +3, Intuit direction +16, Jump +15, Knowledge (arcane) +6, Listen +5, Move silently +20, Profession +14, Search +5, Spot +11; Alertness, Improved initiative, Improved unarmed strike, Point blank shot, Skill focus (forgery).

Allies

The Curizorwi are in the enviable position of having a skill that everyone else needs, but which is difficult to master and extremely dangerous to practice. This places them in a very secure position within Sheoloth, albeit a position that could unexpectedly crumble if someone else discovers a magical mining technique that is cheaper, faster, and safer than the manual techniques used by the Curizorwi. Because of this, the family has several allies, all of which are quite dependent on their skill.

The Church of the Dark Mother: The church hands out all construction and mining assignments in the town and has been very pleased with the work of the Curizorwi. The mining family has all contracts to continue work on the city and to engage in prospecting and mining operations beyond its borders. Though this makes the family rich beyond imagining, it does place them at the mercy of their benefactors. Should the church ever come up with a cheaper, better alternative, life would become very short for the Curizorwi.

Enemies

Because of their great skill, the Curizorwi family are despised by a number of factions. While the protection of the church keeps these other factions at bay, the Curizorwi know they are in a precarious situation.

The Guild of Masons: This guild believes they should have the rights of construction in the city and are very disturbed that the Curizorwi family is in charge of such projects. As a result, the Guild is funding magical research by the



Rawir Curizorwi, Mapper: Perhaps the hardest-working member of the house, Rawir is responsible for keeping the maps of the estate projects up to date. This requires him to not only visit sites to determine the changes that have been made to them, but also to return to his workshop and make the changes to the maps. Though he could pass off much of this work to his apprentices, Rawir keeps it all to himself. He secretly believes there is an arcane symbol forming in the mining operations of his family, and is desperate to discover what it is before it is complete. Whether this is true or not is a matter for the DM to decide.

Rawir Curizorwi, Mapper

Male elf (drow) Exp12: CR 12; Size M (5 ft., 0 in. tall); HD 12d6; hp 49; Init +9 (+5 Dex, +4 Improved initiative); Spd 30 ft.; AC 15 (+5 Dex); Attack +9/+4 melee, or +14/+9 ranged;

wizards of the Witch's Daggers to find faster and better techniques for mining using magic.

The Witch's Daggers: This collection of wizards is in league with the Guild of Masons and hopes to come up with some new spells and magical items that will convince the Church of the Dark Mother to allow the Guild of Masons to take over some mining jobs. Of course, the Curizorwi know this and are planning to hire some assassins and thieves to disrupt the research before it can come to fruition.

THE PIFWASIL ESTATE

Comfortably ensconced within Sheoloth, most drow are content to let their military handle affairs beyond the walls of the city. The Pifwasil, however, are explorers by trade, moving frequently through the dark and hidden places in search of ancient secrets and forgotten lore. They dispatch teams to the outside quite frequently, in search of lost tombs and legendary dungeons; sometimes, they even make a truly important discovery and find themselves much the richer for their delving into these dangerous locations.

Most of the time, however, they are doomed to relative obscurity on the bottom rungs of Sheoloth's political ladder. They are seen as little more than packrats by other houses and are considered glorified thieves by the Church of the Dark Mother. Still, they do find ways to benefit the city as a whole and so are allowed to continue their explorations.

Household Guard

Comprised of former adventurers, the guards of the Pifwasil estate are older than most who protect the noble houses. They are also quite aggressive and more than willing to mix it up with anyone who threatens their home. Because these men and women have often seen horrific battles while adventuring, they have few qualms about fighting other drow and will defend their home to the death.

Guards: 100 (mixed classes, from 5th to 10th level)

Commanders: The Pifwasil house has no formal command structure.

Household Staff

The Pifwasil family keeps their staff small, primarily because they so rarely have much to do with their actual estate. The physical building of the estate, while just as impressive on the outside as those held by any other noble family, is a shell inside. There are fewer than 20 full-time staff staying in the estate, most of which are simply there to keep thieves and vandals from ripping the place apart.

The Pifwasil Family

No one gets into the family without also being an adventurer and very few of the members are even blood relatives. The house is thus quite varied with different strengths and weaknesses embodied in each of its members. As a whole, the house is perhaps the strongest and most versatile of all Sheoloth's noble families, though it lacks a strong military presence.

Fortunately for the other nobles, the Pifwasil have no interest in events within Sheoloth, either. They are dedicated to the adventuring lifestyle and exploring the Underdeep to the best of their abilities. Because those who survive for long within the family tend towards the fabulously wealthy from their share of the loot from their adventures, there is no shortage of applicants to join the family. This is good, as death finds members of this house regularly on their adventures, and sometimes the bodies cannot be recovered for clerical aid.

Family Members

Each member of this family is an adventurer, recruited for their skill in dungeon crawls and exploration. This means there are no bookkeepers, scribes, or other non-adventuring members of this house, such support roles are filled by hirelings and henchmen. Individual members of this house are no less refined or cultured than members of other noble houses, they are simply more adventurous and willing to take risks for greater rewards.

Pyldaris Pifwasil: The undisputed master warrior of Sheoloth, Pyldaris is also the undisputed leader of her family. With nearly two hundred years of successful adventuring behind her, Pyldaris has proven her ability to lead and survive in the most hostile and

dangerous of situations, earning her the respect and fear of her allies and enemies, alike.

Pyldaris has a nasty temper, however, and has killed more than one member of her family for failing her in one way or another. The closer one comes to Pyldaris, the greater the rewards and the more adventures await, but one becomes much more likely to die by her hand, as well.

Pyldaris Pifwasil

Female elf (drow) Ftr20: CR 21; Size M (4 ft., 9 in. tall); HD 20d10+60; hp 177; Init +8 (+4 Dex, +4 Improved initiative); Spd 30 ft.; AC 14 (+4 Dex); Attack +26/+21/+16/+11 melee, or +24/+19/+14/+9 ranged; SV Fort +15, Ref +10, Will +8; AL CE; Str 22, Dex 18, Con 16, Int 19, Wis 14, Cha 17.

Languages Spoken: Common, Draconic, Elven, Gnoll, Gnome, Goblin, Undercommon.

Skills and feats: Climb +28, Craft +22, Disguise +3, Forgery +4, Handle animal +15, Hide +4, Intimidate +15, Jump +25, Listen +14, Move silently +9, Ride +26, Search +10, Swim +9; Blind-fight, Combat reflexes, Endurance, Expertise, Improved bull rush, Improved critical (morningstar), Improved critical (lance, light), Improved initiative, Mounted combat, Point blank shot, Power attack, Rapid shot, Ride-by attack, Two-weapon fighting, Weapon focus (morningstar), Weapon focus (lance, light), Weapon specialization (morningstar), Weapon specialization (lance, light).

Konrol Pifwasil: Konrol is a rarity in the house, as he joined rather late in his career and wasn't much of an adventurer before that. Most of his experience came from time spent with the Sheoloth Military, where he served as a support spellcaster for numerous scouting expeditions. Since he was approached by Pyldaris, he has become much more adventurous. His greed is directly related to his willingness to take risks and was the reason he agreed to join the family in the first place. Always eager to add to his personal wealth, Konrol follows Pyldaris on any adventure she undertakes and has become her most trusted and valued companion.

Konrol Pifwasil

Male elf (drow) Wiz19: CR 20; Size M (5 ft., 1 in. tall); HD 19d4+19; hp 65; Init +3 (+3 Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 13 (+3 Dex); Attack +9/+4 melee, or +12/+7 ranged; SV Fort +7, Ref +9, Will +10; AL CE; Str 11, Dex 16, Con 12, Int 20, Wis 9, Cha 12.

Languages Spoken: Common, Draconic, Elven, Goblin, Sylvan, Undercommon.

Skills and feats: Appraise +9, Bluff +1.5, Concentration +17, Craft +24, Disguise +3.5, Forgery +8, Heal +3, Hide +3, Knowledge (arcana) +21, Knowledge (nature) +25, Listen +1, Move silently +3, Profession +7, Search +7, Sense motive +2, Spellcraft +26, Spot +1; Ambidexterity, Brew potion, Craft staff, Craft



wand, Forge ring, Heighten spell, Leadership, Run, [Scribe scroll], Still spell, Toughness.

Wizard Spells Known (4/6/5/5/5/5/4/4/3/3): 0

- Arcane Mark, Dancing Lights, Daze, Detect Magic, Detect Poison, Disrupt Undead, Flare, Ghost Sound, Light, Mage Hand, Mending, Open/Close, Prestidigitation, Ray of Frost, Read Magic, Resistance. 1st - Burning Hands, Change Self, Charm Person, Identify, Silent Image, Spider Climb, Summon Monster I, Floating Disk. 2nd - Alter Self, Blur, Bull's Strength, Darkvision, Ghoul Touch, Invisibility, Levitate, Acid Arrow, Mirror Image, Misdirection, Rope Trick, Web. 3rd - Fireball, Flame Arrow, Fly, Haste, Hold Person, Lightning Bolt, Secret Page, Slow. 4th - Arcane Eye, Dimension Door, Improved Invisibility, Locate Creature, Polymorph Other, Polymorph Self, Rainbow Pattern. 5th - Animate Dead, Permanency, Persistent Image, Prying Eyes, Teleport, Wall of Force, Wall of Iron. 6th - Acid Fog, Analyze Dweomer, Antimagic Field, Chain Lightning, Disintegrate, Eyebite, Flesh to Stone, Mass Haste, Summon Monster VI, True Seeing. 7th - Banishment, Delayed Blast Fireball, Finger of Death, Forcecage, Mass Invisibility, Phase Door, Power Word, Stun, Sequester, Teleport without Error. 8th - Horrid Wilting, Incendiary Cloud, Mass Charm, Polymorph Any Object, Summon Monster VIII, Trap the Soul. 9th - Dominate Monster, Meteor Swarm, Power Word, Kill, Shapechange, Summon Monster IX, Teleportation Circle.

Lasguthal Pifwasil: Lasguthal joined the family at the direct behest of the Church of the Killer, where he served as a priest for dozens of years. The church wanted an ally in a noble house without political ambition, and the marriage of Pifwasil with the Killer's clergy was a natural fit. Since that time, Lasguthal has found countless opportunities to test his faith and skills, growing stronger with every adventure. Along with Konrol, he forms Pyldaris' primary magical support and is rarely far from her side.

Lasguthal Pifwasil

Male elf (drow) Clr15: CR 16; Size M (5 ft., 4 in. tall); HD 15d8; hp 75; Init +2 (+2 Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 12 (+2 Dex); Attack +15/+10/+5 melee, or +13/+8/+3 ranged; SV Fort +9, Ref

+7, Will +10; AL CE; Str 18, Dex 14, Con 10, Int 16, Wis 13, Cha 16.

Languages Spoken: Common, Draconic, Elven, Gnoll, Gnome, Undercommon.

Skills and feats: Concentration +17, Diplomacy +20, Heal +17, Hide +2, Knowledge (arcana) +19, Knowledge (religion) +12, Listen +5, Move silently +2, Search +5, Spellcraft +19, Spot +5; Alertness, Craft staff, Dodge, Extend spell, Improved critical (mace, heavy), Spell focus (transmutation).

Cleric Domains: Destruction, War.

Cleric Spells Per Day: 6/6+1/5+1/5+1.

Chessila Pifwasil: Apprehended and sentenced to death for stealing a family heirloom from the Gulrais family (before they were taken by the dopplegangers), Chessila found herself facing death within hours. Her fate was changed, however, when Pyldaris purchased her life from the courts for an exorbitant cost. Technically, Chessila is a slave at this point, but Pyldaris has all but granted her legal freedom. The two are not friends, but they work well together and Chessila obeys her master without question. As one of the most talented rogues in all of Sheoloth, Chessila's skills are certainly worth every copper Pyldaris paid for them.

Chessila Pifwasil

Female elf (drow) Rog17: CR 18; Size M (5 ft., 0 in. tall); HD 17d6; hp 68; Init +8 (+4 Dex, +4 Improved initiative); Spd 30 ft.; AC 14 (+4 Dex); Attack +11/+6/+1 melee, or +16/+11/+6 ranged; SV Fort +5, Ref +14, Will +6; AL NE; Str 9, Dex 19, Con 10, Int 14, Wis 13, Cha 11.

Languages Spoken: Common, Elven, Gnome, Undercommon.

Skills and feats: Balance +16, Climb +17, Disguise +20, Escape artist +20, Hide +4, Innuendo +16, Intimidate +19, Listen +24, Move silently +24, Search +21, Sense motive +18, Spot +7, Swim +1, Use magic device +9; Alertness, Blind-fight, Improved critical (dagger), Improved initiative, Two-weapon fighting, Weapon finesse (sword, short).

Allies

The Pyldaris family does not have much contact with the other noble houses, which has not given them the chance to build strong alliances within the political structure. On the other hand, they have some surprising allies in other areas of the city, which may serve them in better stead in the long run.

The Church of the Killer: This church of warriors and murderers finds the Pifwasil family a willing and able partner in its riskier ventures. As the church has accumulated a large store of knowledge concerning several artefacts of war, the Pyldaris family is called upon often to assist in the recovery or search for these items. To date, the Church of the Killer has recovered only a handful of the items detailed in its libraries, but its search is never-ending and the drow have great patience.

The Witch Daggers: Konrol's knowledge and his own need for assistance in some of his magical research led to a strong alliance between the Pifwasil family and the wizards of the Witch Daggers. Over time, this alliance has only strengthened and the Pifwasil are now the only family who openly acknowledges their friendship with these once-exiled wizards. As a result, the Pifwasil family wants for nothing when it comes to magical supplies, giving it a powerful edge in its adventures.

Enemies

Because the Pifwasil family has shown no interest in joining the political fray of Sheoloth, it has no strong opposition amongst the other noble houses. It does, however, face some underhanded opposition from two religions of Sheoloth and one trade organization, because of its ties to the Church of the Killer and its destabilizing effect on the local magical item economy.

Church of the Dark Mother: Though the church has not gone so far as to publicly announce their displeasure with the Pifwasil family, the priestesses are not happy with their tight ties to the Church of the Killer. Because the Pifwasil are so powerful, individually, even a few of their members worshipping at the

temples of the Killer would be a bit of a slight to the Dark Mother's church, but when the whole family is allied with the mail priesthood, the priestesses get a bit testy. As a result, they subtly work to undermine the efforts of the Pifwasil and stand ready to denounce them publicly if they get out of hand. This has little day-to-day effect on the family, but has resulted in the failure of some of their adventures in the past.

Church of the Filth-eater: The Filth-eater's followers oppose the Killer's plans, on principle, and thus oppose this house, as well. The priestesses of the Filth-eater are also upset by the Pifwasil family's refusal to attempt to breed in any way, shape, or form. This is upsetting the ovarisites, which are pressuring the Filth-eater's midwives to do something about the issue. See pg 56: Powers of Sheoloth, for more information about the ovarisites.

The Transfer Guild: The importation of magical items in great quantities has a grave destabilizing effect on the trade of such items in the city. Because the Pifwasil have the nasty habit of occasionally pouring a dozen or so items of some magical value into the marketplace, the Transfer Guild has a difficult time setting and controlling prices of such items. As a result, the guild is doing its best to limit the avenues the Pifwasil have for delivering the items to the marketplace – in this way, they hope to control the price of magical items (at least those commonly found by adventurers) and keep their prices in line. If the guild were to simply approach the Pifwasil, however, they could end the problem immediately. The Pifwasil have no interest in engaging in a trade war with the Transfer Guild, and would gladly sell only to the guild in exchange for good prices on their wares. Once again, drow paranoia and plotting gets in the way of reasonable behaviour and a mutually beneficial alliance.



OUTLAND THIEVES

This ward is an outgrowth of the Foreign Ward and provides the wealthy from that ward with a place to call home. While this area is not officially part of Sheoloth, it is still patrolled regularly by troops from the Ashen Bulwark, who want to make sure none of the wealthy merchants who live here are using the money they get from their trade with the dark elves to start any trouble.

AT A GLANCE

This ward is an eclectic mix of building styles and is lit with brightly glowing rods of steel enchanted with *continual flame* spells. The residents here are of many different races, with dwarves being the most numerous, quickly followed by gnomes, then everyone else. A surprising number of halflings live here, as well, outcasts from their own people and evil to the core.

The whole place has a slightly decayed air to it, as many of the buildings are constructed from expensive, but now rotten, wood imported from the surface. In an attempt to appear wealthy, many of the merchants now appear destitute as their extravagant homes rot in the damp dark of the Underdeep.

HISTORY

The Outland Thieves is a ward the drow did not build, but allowed to be built when overcrowding in the Foreign Ward reached riot levels. This area was originally supposed to hold only housing, but this quickly changed as it became impossible to police all the construction in the area. As a result, merchants and workshops began to spring up and now offices, hospitals, and other necessary buildings have appeared throughout the ward.

ALLEGIANCES

The Outland Thieves have no allegiance except to themselves. They hold nothing to be important beyond the bounds of their ward, though they do realize their dependence on trade with the drow. It is a hateful relationship, with the outlanders doing their best to prey upon the wealth of the drow, who do their best to oppress and restrict the actions of the foreigners.

IMPORTANT PERSONAGES

A great and unseen power within the Outland Thieves ward is Palagrael Tazahm, a lich invited to reside here years ago by a consortium of dwarven merchants. Palagrael is kept hidden beneath the manor of Zarkuk Blighthammer (see below) in a spacious and luxurious suite of her own design. Provided with all the magical components and materials she needs, Palagrael creates magical items for sale but also advises the Outland Thieves. Her potent scrying capabilities and powerful magical support gives the merchants here a hidden edge when dealing with the drow. Of course, if her presence is ever discovered, Palagrael will immediately become a victim of a purge by the drow, who despise intelligent undead in all their forms.

Palagrael Tazahm

Human (lich)(undead) Wiz18: CR 18; Size M (5 ft., 4 in. tall); HD 18d12+54; hp 168; Init +2 (+2 Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 17 (+2 Dex, +5 natural armor); Attack +9/+4 melee, or +11/+6 ranged; SA Fear Aura, Paralyzing Touch; SQ Turn Resistance, DR 15/+1, Immunities; SV Fort +9, Ref +8, Will +13; AL LE; Str 10, Dex 15, Con -, Int 22, Wis 16, Cha 16.

Languages Spoken: Common, Draconic, Orc, Terran.

Skills and feats: Alchemy +23, Craft +25, Hide +10, Knowledge +25, Knowledge (nature) +26, Listen +11, Move silently +10, Perform +7, Profession +18, Scry +26, Search +11, Sense Motive +11, Spellcraft +25, Spot +11; Brew potion, Craft staff, Craft wondrous item, Enlarge spell, Extend spell, Heighten spell, Improved unarmed strike, Maximize spell, [Scribe scroll], Shield proficiency, Spell penetration, Still spell.

Wizard Spells Known (4/6/5/5/5/4/3/3/2): 0

- Arcane Mark, Dancing Lights, Daze, Detect Magic, Detect Poison, Disrupt Undead, Flare, Ghost Sound, Light, Mage Hand, Mending, Open/Close, Prestidigitation, Ray of Frost, Read Magic, Resistance. 1st - Alarm, Burning Hands, Chill Touch, Color Spray, Hypnotism, Identify, Mage Armor, Shield, Silent Image. 2nd - Blindness/Deafness, Invisibility, Acid Arrow, Mirror Image, Misdirection, Web. 3rd - Blink, Dispel Magic, Fireball, Flame Arrow, Fly, Gentle Repose, Haste, Hold Person, Invisibility Sphere, Keen Edge, Lightning Bolt, Protection from Elements, Slow, Summon Monster III. 4th - Arcane Eye, Dimension Door, Improved Invisibility, Minor Globe of Invulnerability, Polymorph Other, Polymorph Self, Shadow Conjunction, Wall of Fire, Wall of Ice. 5th - Cloudkill, Cone of Cold, Fabricate, Hold Monster, Lesser Planar Binding, Permanency, Teleport, Wall of Iron. 6th - Analyze Dweomer, Chain Lightning, Contingency, Disintegrate, Eyebite, Flesh to Stone, Mass Haste. 7th - Control Undead, Delayed Blast Fireball, Mass Invisibility, Power Word, Stun, Summon Monster VII. 8th - Etherealness, Mass Charm, Polymorph Any Object, Protection from Spells. 9th - Crushing Hand, Meteor Swarm, Shapechange, Summon Monster IX.

Zarkuk Blighthammer is the unofficial leader of the merchants who live in this ward. Though he was once a barbaric outcast from his own tribe, living off the flesh of his fallen enemies and dwelling in the furthest reaches of the Underdeep, Zarkuk is now a prosperous and urbane merchant. The turning point in his life was a brief imprisonment by a group of svirfneblin, who instructed him in the ways of gemcutting. After killing his captors and escaping, Zarkuk used his skills to make a name for himself and quickly had his own business on the surface. He returned to the Underdeep after hearing of the opportunities in Sheoloth and has not felt the need to move since. Despite his cultured and polished appearance, Zarkuk still has a very dark edge and his rage is available should he ever need to call upon it.

Zarkuk Blighthammer

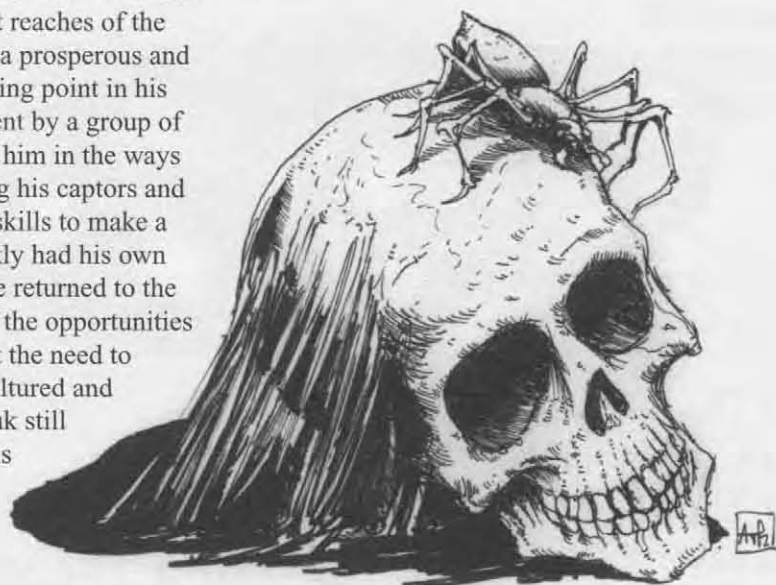
Male dwarf (hill) Bbn5/Exp12: CR 16; Size M (4 ft., 3 in. tall); HD 5d12+15 + 12d6+36; hp 114; Init +8 (+4 Dex, +4 Improved initiative); Spd 30 ft.; AC 14 (+4 Dex); Attack +16/+11/+6 melee, or +18/+13/+8 ranged; SV Fort +11, Ref +9, Will +9; AL CE; Str 15, Dex 18, Con 16, Int 16, Wis 11, Cha 11.

Languages Spoken: Common, Dwarven, Gnome, Undercommon.

Skills and feats: Appraise +7, Craft (gemcutting) +17, Concentration +18, Craft +12, Handle animal +14, Hide +4, Innuendo +2, Intimidate +5, Jump +12, Knowledge (arcana) +17, Listen +9, Move silently +4, Open lock +9, Pick pocket +5, Spellcraft +7, Spot +10, Swim +10, Tumble +9, Wilderness lore +10; Improved initiative, Power attack, Skill focus (intimidate), Skill focus (wilderness lore), Skill focus (ride), Sunder.

BUYING AND SELLING

Within the Outland Thieves ward, shoppers will find nearly 200 workshops, stores, and offices all ready and willing to do business with anyone who has the coin. These businesses appear to be well-run and are somewhat less frantic in their demeanor than the extremely busy, crowded shops one finds in the Foreign Ward. Discerning drow often find their way here, where items can



be purchased more leisurely and the staff has more time to work with individual customers.

Noted Shops of Outland Thieves

The following is a selection of shops found in the Outland Thieves ward.

1. The Gilded Quill

This workshop provides a service found nowhere else in Sheoloth – the copying and transcription of spellbooks. Unlike most copyists, the Gilded Quill’s staff is actually able to copy a scroll *into* the spellbook of a wizard using that wizard’s particular magical script. Spells copied in this way require the same amount of time to scribe into the book, but the wizard does not have to spend the time copying them himself. More importantly, any spells copied into a spellbook by the scribes of this shop can be prepared by the wizard with no chance of spell failure. The fee for this service is 100gp per level of the spell to be copied into the spellbook and it normally takes 1d4 days + 1 day per spell level to complete the process.

While this would normally mean the spellcaster would be without his precious spellbook for a significant period of time, the Gilded Quill offers another service of great use to wizards. For the fee of 200gp per page, the copyists

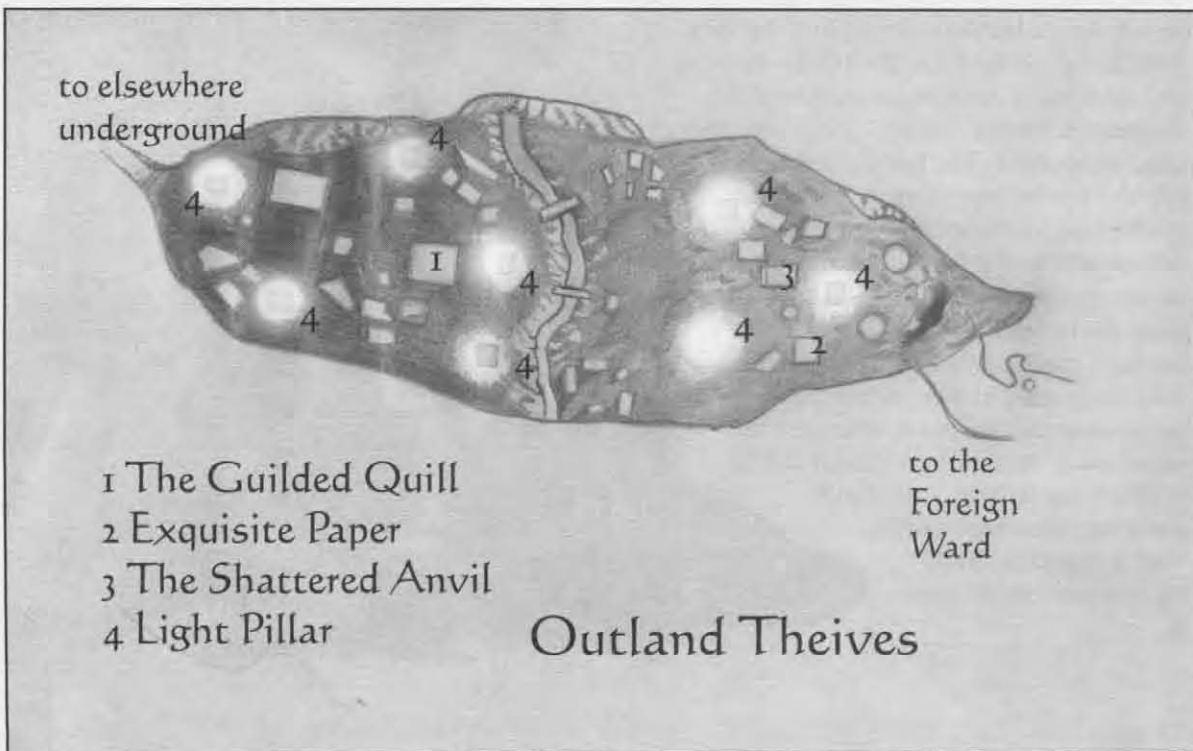
will make a complete copy of a spell book for a wizard. This allows wizards to leave one spellbook with the copyists and keep another on their person. Spells scribed into one spellbook will be scribed into the second spellbook (at the normal cost) the next time the book is left at the Gilded Quill.

Of course, the scribes who work here take the opportunity to make copies of any spells they find in a spellbook which they do not already have themselves. This gives the Gilded Quill the largest selection of spells to be found in anywhere in the city, though they rarely discuss this with their clients. Instead, they refer customers who want scrolls to one of the many magical item shops in the city, most of which purchase their scrolls from the Gilded Quill, anyway.

Plot Hooks: The secret methods of the Gilded Quill are precious and well-guarded. Characters could be paid to steal the secrets (a difficult task involving the kidnapping of a scribe who works at the Quill) or to steal the secrets back after a scribe is kidnapped.

2. Exquisite Paper

For wizards and others who use scrolls, the paper is a crucial part of the scroll-making process. Without the right materials on which



to scribe the scroll, the entire process is doomed to failure. This shop offers paper of such high quality it produces scrolls that are more durable than normal. The paper is more expensive, tripling the cost of scribing a scroll, but it allows the caster to cast the same spell from the scroll twice, rather than once. The spellcaster does not have to pay the experience cost for scribing the spell more than once unless the spell has an inherent experience point cost (this still needs to be paid twice). He also does not need to expend additional material components at the time the spell is scribed, unless the spell component(s) cost more than 100 gold pieces, in which case he must pay for these twice.

Wizards and clerics from all over the city flock to this shop at the first of each month, when the paper is put up for sale. By the end of the day, no paper is left and the shop closes again for another month to create more paper for sale.

Plot Hook: The secrets of this paper are simple – they are created from the processed flesh of innately magical creatures. The basement of the shop is filled with fats of mild acid which are used to render the flesh down into a sludgy paste, which is pressed between two massive stones to create the sheets of paper. Innately magical creatures are those with any innate supernatural abilities, including spell resistance or the natural ability to cast spells.

3. The Shattered Anvil

The high dwarven population in this ward has lent itself to some fine metalwork, but not as much as some might think. The dwarves that

are here tend to be outcasts and criminals who rarely arrive with their own tools and have a hard time adapting to anyone else's. The thin but nigh indestructible forging tools of the drow are ill-suited to dwarven hands, but not impossible to use. The proprietor of this forge/storefront, Nurrosh Clansunder, has not only adapted to the drow way of doing things; he has thrived since coming here. He has never mentioned where he came from or what drove him to Sheoloth, but those who buy his goods rarely stop admiring their masterwork goods long enough to inquire.

Plot Hook: The forge gets its name both from Nurrosh's reason for leaving his clan home and a rare magical treasure hidden on the forge's premises. He stole his clan's ancient, enchanted anvil from its heartforge and tried to bring it here to ransom it to the drow. Greedy to the core, he realized after arriving that far more money would be made by simply using it and selling his wares. The first time a drow smithing hammer touched the anvil's surface, it splintered under the blow. A fragment of the anvil entered Nurrosh's chest and has been slowly borrowing its way to his heart. After a frantic investigation, Nurrosh discovered that his only chance to live was to restore the anvil to its unbroken condition. He has since bent every resource he has to find a way to do this. Ironically, his vast wealth is mostly gone now, and he has to work three times harder than he ever did at home just to afford the magical healing that keeps him from dying in much deserved agony.



ROARING GATE

Sandwiched between the Ebon Dock and the Leviathan Shield, this ward is an eclectic blend of discipline and freedom. The people here are traders who benefit from the flow of goods from the ebon docks, but also from an atmosphere where artists and other creative types are allowed to indulge their impulses. The ward has an eerie, vibrant feeling to it, as if too much energy was seething just below the surface.

AT A GLANCE

The ward is one of the most heavily decorated in the city. While the spies of the Dark Mother and the Eight-Eyed Masks have dotted the rest of the city with their spider sculptures and leering masks (both of which are used to spy on the populace, see Appendix B: Adventuring in Sheoloth), this ward has a style all its own. The artists who live here have copied and integrated the artistic vision of other races into their own work, creating perverted and distorted kuo-toa murals, elven paintings, dwarf sculptures, and even aboleth mucous crystals. The mocking art is displayed openly for all to view, managing to both elevate the drow and denigrate other races by mimicking their own art styles.

In addition to the artists who live here, the Gravemother has also established a flourishing colony of ovarisites in the ward. These spidery creatures can be seen going about their business at all hours of the day and night, clinging to the backs of their broodmares or scuttling about on their spiny, segmented legs.

HISTORY

This ward was originally nothing but an empty buffer cavern between the Ebon Dock and the Leviathan Shield. It was decided that any battle fought between the forces of Sheoloth and outsiders would take place in this area, with the maze-like tunnels being used to separate and ambush invading forces.

Five hundred years ago, however, overcrowding within the city reached a critical level and

this space was allocated for new houses and businesses. It filled up quickly with the families of merchants who came here to benefit from the overflow of goods into the Ebon Docks and was soon regarded as a fine addition to the city of Sheoloth.

Two hundred years ago, artists and other creative types began to filter into the area, searching for a region close to the outskirts of the city where they could absorb more of the world outside the city of woven shadows. The Foreign Ward was rejected by most, as it was so heavily patrolled by drow forces it was difficult to see the cultures at work there. Instead, the artists settled here and ventured to the Ebon Dock to see the goods that were brought in from these other cultures firsthand. Since that time, this ward has been a haven for artists of all types.

The name of the ward is taken from the sound of the river, which reverberates through this cavern to create a dull roar at all hours of the day and night. Some claim the sound inspires them to great artistic feats, while others claim it does nothing but drive them slowly mad.

ALLEGIANCES

There are many workshops in this ward, giving it some strong ties to the Allied Craftsmen's Guild. It is also tied closely to the Gravemother's church by the presence of so many ovarisites, but the area is otherwise unaffiliated with any faction.

IMPORTANT PERSONAGES

An envied artist, Lozish Truilos, is perhaps the wealthiest painter in the city. His exquisite and provocative works of art sell for hundreds of gold pieces for the smallest and least significant of his works, to upwards of several thousand gold pieces for works he finds important or particularly impressive. Lozish is a master at self-promotion and has done more to convince others of his worth than a hundred of his most ardent supporters. His work is good, if horribly gaudy, and gains a special touch from having pigments made with human blood. Lozish's greatest accomplishment, as far as the other artists and craftsmen in the area concerned, is the fact that his public exhibitions only occur in

the Roaring Gate and attract large crowds who often spend their money here.

Lozish Truilos

Male elf (drow) Exp12: CR 12; Size M (5 ft., 2 in. tall); HD 12d6-12; hp 47; Init +5 (+5 Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 15 (+5 Dex); Attack +9/+4 melee, or +14/+9 ranged; SV Fort +3, Ref +9, Will +10; AL CE; Str 10, Dex 21, Con 9, Int 15, Wis 15, Cha 13.

Languages Spoken: Abyssal, Elven, Gnome, Dwarven, Undercommon.

Skills and feats: Appraise +17, Bluff +15, Disguise +15, Forgery +6, Gather information +14, Heal +14, Hide +5, Knowledge +4, Listen +18, Move silently +9, Perform +12, Sense motive +17, Spot +14, Swim +2; Endurance, Skill focus (appraise), Skill focus (bluff), Skill focus (disguise).

Rikik leads the ovarisites who live in this ward. Though his people are not as numerous as the massive clutch of spiderlings who inhabit the Burning Pit, Rikik keeps his ovarisites much more closely organized. His plans to overthrow the drow and enslave the hateful race to his people are far from fruition, but he strives constantly toward his ultimate goal. As a result, there are dozens of busy ovarisites in this ward

at any time of day or night, skittering across the stone on one mission or another. Rikik hates the drow but does his best to put on a good face, pretending to care for their children and the health of their race. When given a chance, however, Rikik will have his minions harm or inconvenience any drow they come across.

BUYING AND SELLING

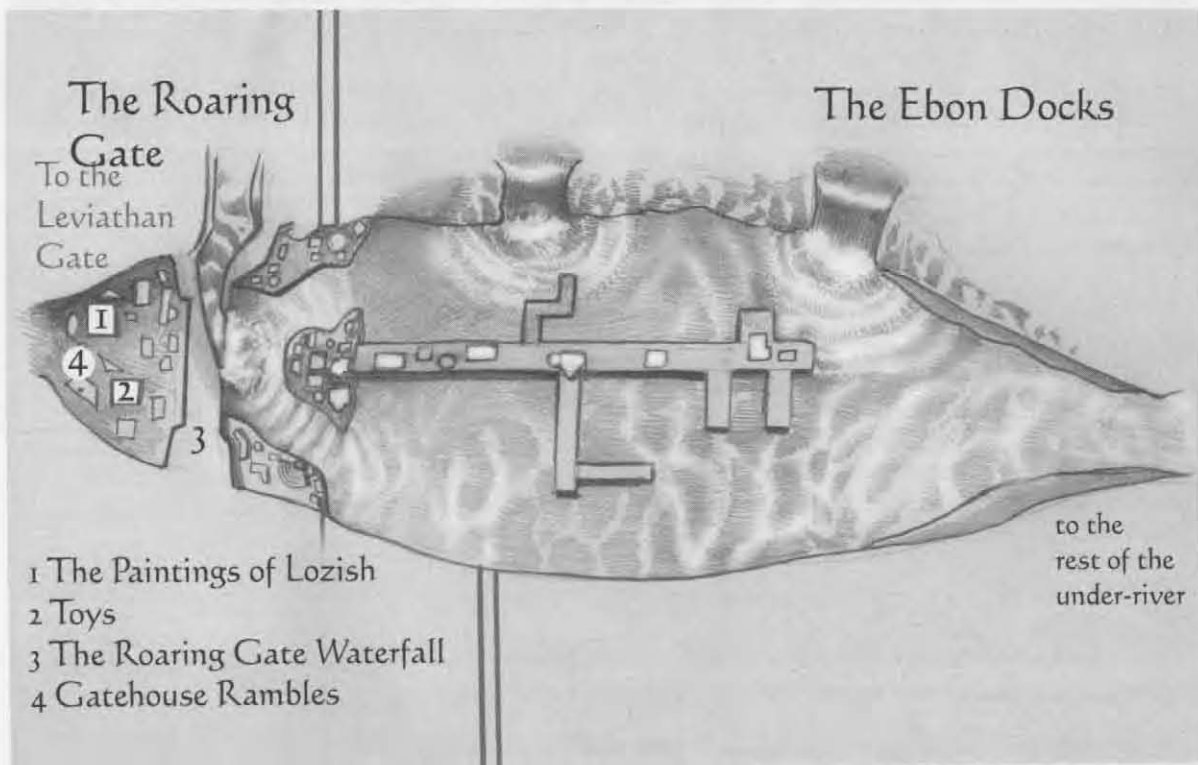
Shopping here is a delight, as the items found in the area are of good quality with the added bonus of some very artistic flairs added to even the simplest of items. Offsetting this, of course, is the higher price of items found in this ward, which generally cost 10% more than the prices listed in *Core Rulebook I*.

Noted Shops of Roaring Gate

The following is a selection of shops found in the Roaring Gate ward.

1. The Paintings of Lozish

This small gallery is frequented by many of the cities richest drow, who come from all over Sheoloth to see the new paintings put up in Lozish's gallery. Most leave empty handed; Lozish charges an exorbitant sum of money for his paintings, so that few outside the nobility can afford any but the smallest of his works.



Plot Hooks: Lozish is an agent of the Deceiver. His paintings are good, but not as good as most make them out to be, and the artist hopes to one day use this to his advantage. While he sells many paintings, he still lives quite humbly as most of his income is diverted directly to the priests of the Deceiver who have taken up residence in this ward. This money is used to fund attacks by the agents of the Deceiver against the other churches and to provide their agents with the money and supplies they need to carry out infiltration missions. As an added bonus, the Deceivers will one day assist Lozish in discrediting himself as any sort of artist, immediately devaluing his works by 'proving' they were actually painted by non-drow.

2. Toys

This shop has had a dozen or more owners over the past one hundred years, with each falling victim to one sort of accident or another. As a result, its name has been gradually shortened and no longer includes the owner's name, only the type of goods sold here.

The toys found in this shop are exquisitely crafted with numerous moving parts and a few

are even clockwork devices that move on their own. Regarded very highly amongst the nobles, these toys are purchased as quickly as they can be made, even though they cost from 100gp to 500gp each.

Plot Hooks: This toy store is the front of the local ovarisites, who use it as a subtle way to spread their influence through the city. The clockwork toys all play strange, atonal tunes when wound up, which the ovarisites can use to prepare the minds of their hosts for domination. They also hold secret symbols and strange runes which the ovarisites believe are holy and magical. More dangerous, however, are the tiny vials of poison gas contained within each of the toys. When broken, these vials release a cloud that quickly disperses to fill a 20 ft. x 20 ft. x 20 ft. cube of deadly gas (Fort Save (DC 15), initial damage 1d6 Con, secondary damage, 1d8 Con). The ovarisites believe they have a magical device (controlled by Rikik) which will one day cause all the vials in the city to break at once, killing thousands of the drow and leaving the rest weakened and unable to resist the power of their new ovarisite masters.

One of the benefits to shopping in an establishment like Lozish's private gallery was the magical soundproofing that kept the continuous roar of the waterfalls above the ward to a dim thunder. Dorianne hated coming here as much as Blade, but the painter always paid handsomely for her master's special tinctures and, if her suspicions were correct, the artist sometimes made special requests about who his next 'paint donor' should be.

All around the antechamber downstairs, she saw paintings every shape and size, with disturbingly vivid colours that were dark and blinding at the same time. The only thing more outlandish than the art style was the horde of tiny price stickers tied to the corner of each one. The numbers on them were so high, Dorianne honestly thought she had gotten them wrong in her head. She was still very new at reading and writing, but she thought she had been doing very well at it. That many zeros on one number just could not be right. She sighed heavily. That meant more bookwork for her when they got home.

Blade came back down the stairs with a long plaque in his hands and a sour look on his face. She knew that look well and kept her mouth shut until they were well away from the gallery and the droning cacophony of the Roaring Gate itself. Only then did she try to get a look at the plaque.

It was a shadow box with black velvet lining and a set of hooks holding a wide bladed throwing dagger above its soft, warm surface. The blade had been turned into a canvas with a twining black rose running down its surface and the most romantic image of her lord she could imagine, shirt open to his waist, superimposed over its thorns and delicate petals.

'I... I think he likes you, lord,' she said trying to suppress a giggle.

'I know he does. We need to get this home so I can burn it before anyone else sees it. Goddess below! How many times do I have to tell that silk-shrouded bastard I am *not* gay?!?'

Dorianne blinked a few times. 'You aren't?'

RUSTED VEIN

The last step above the slums for those drow on their way down the ladder, Rusted Vein is an area that reeks of desperation. Those who work and live here know they are hanging on to a life in the mainstream of Sheoloth by the slenderest of threads and that any of their neighbours would gladly slice through those threads at any time.

AT A GLANCE

The walls of Rusted Vein are streaked with thick scabs of oxidized iron ore, the remnants of the mine which was the original purpose of this ward. The coppery stink of rusting metal taints the air, overpowering even the strong aroma of sweating, unbathed bodies and the perfume used in a vain attempt to hide their stench. The refuse which gathers in the streets is cleared less often than in other housing areas, leading to even more filth and the aroma of rotting food and offal.

HISTORY

The military machine of Sheoloth once had a prodigious appetite for metal, particular iron which could be used to craft weapons and armour. During the early days of the city, when fighting was a way of life rather than a religious crusade, the need for raw materials for the blacksmiths was even greater. The Rusted Vein was the first iron mine founded near the city of Sheoloth and it served them quite well for more than a hundred years before it played out. The veins were chased through the stone to create the current tangle of passages and, when the last of the iron ore was pulled out, the area was abandoned.

As the city expanded, it was only natural to make use of the already-carved-out passages and the poor of the city were allowed to take up residence here. Unfortunately for those who lived in the area, the city did not install proper magical wells for more than three generations, during which time the residents drank from a few natural springs located earlier by miners. These springs were heavily tainted by lead deposits, which led to a great deal of problems for the drow. The birth defects and slow

degradation of the mental capabilities of those living in the area became famous jokes for the rest of the city.

Even now, with the magical wells in place, the people of the Rusted Vein are scorned and mocked for their ancestry. While it is true that the natives of the area are less intelligent than they might have been had their forebears not consumed large quantities of lead, the current residents of the Rusted Vein are as competent as any other drow – they just had the misfortune to be born in Rusted Vein, where opportunities are rare.

ALLEGIANCES

The Pifwasil noble family is very popular here. The nobles of that house spend a great deal of time scouring this ward for any potential adventurers to add to their number. The young of this ward are also offered rewards by the Pifwasil for performing certain acts which show bravery or cunning. While some of these tasks seem simple, a few are much more dangerous and even deadly – the Pifwasil once offered 500 gp to the first young drow who brought them a gallon of blood. Any they find who seem to have the right stuff to become adventurers are given some personalized training and set on the road of exploration and danger. In a few years, such drow may even be invited into the house, provided they have not fallen prey to misadventures or ravening monsters.

The residents of Rusted Vein also cling to the faith of the Dark Mother. It is their lifeline and the only way many can get through their day – knowing that the Dark Mother waits to feast on their bones for eternity should they choose to commit suicide is enough to keep most of the drow from taking the easy way out.

IMPORTANT PERSONAGES

Malikosa Shulzthin is the high priestess of the Dark Mother in this ward. She was sentenced here a decade ago after a rash decision to defy her superiors within the church led to her untimely demise. A *resurrection* spell put Malikosa back on her feet and in service of the church, but her reputation was ruined



RUSTED VEIN

and she would likely never advance further in the church. She uses her power in this ward to amuse herself and bring terror and pain to those around her. Malikosa is known to have young drow brought to her abode where she can perform vivisections to satisfy her curiosities about the location of the soul within the drow.

A quiet citizen's rebellion has been brewing in this ward for decades, ever since Malikosa took charge of the ward. Her cruelty and the extreme methods of her ministry (inquisitions are common in this ward and the Faceless Watch are especially cruel to any suspected heretics they uncover) have turned the people against Malikosa. Led by Gelthsharn Nasaael, this rebellion has not yet blossomed into open rioting or overt action. Currently, the members have been scraping together whatever coppers they can in the hopes they can hire an assassin to remove Malikosa from their lives. They are not interested in changing the city of Sheoloth; they really want nothing more than to remove the threat to their lives.

Malikosa Shulzthin

Female elf (drow) Clr15: CR 16; Size M (5 ft., 0 in. tall); HD 15d8+15; hp 101; Init +1 (+1 Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 11 (+1 Dex); Attack +14/+9/+4 melee, or +12/+7/+2 ranged; SV Fort +10, Ref +6, Will +12; AL CE; Str 17, Dex 12, Con 13, Int 10, Wis 17, Cha 13.

Languages Spoken: Common, Elven, Undercommon.

Skills and feats: Climb +4, Gather information +1.5, Hide +1, Knowledge (anatomy) +11, Knowledge (religion) +18, Listen +5, Move silently +1, Search +2, Spot +7; Brew potion,

Craft rod, Craft staff, Scribe scroll, Silent spell, Weapon focus (quarterstaff).

Cleric Domains: Darkness, Fear.

Cleric Spells Per Day: 6/6+1/6+1/6+1/4+1/4+1/3+1/2+1.

Gelthsharn Nasaael

Male elf (drow) Com14: CR 14; Size M (5 ft., 1 in. tall); HD 14d4+14; hp 48; Init +3 (+3 Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 13 (+3 Dex); Attack +11/+6 melee, or +10/+5 ranged; SV Fort +5, Ref +7, Will +7; AL N; Str 18, Dex 17, Con 13, Int 12, Wis 16, Cha 16.

Languages Spoken: Common, Elven, Goblin, Undercommon.

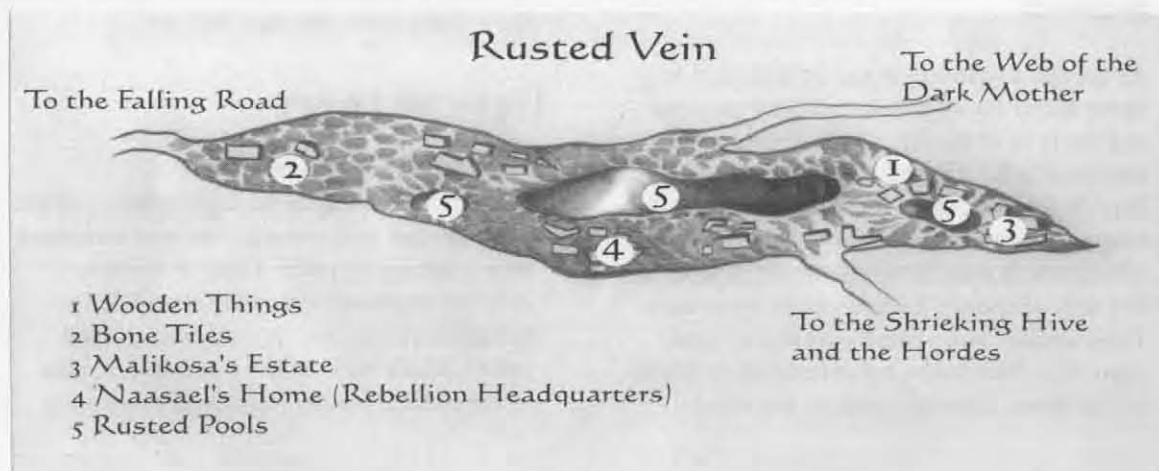
Skills and feats: Climb +18, Handle animal +18, Hide +3, Listen +16, Move silently +3, Perform +22, Search +3, Spot +5.; Power attack, Skill focus (perform), Skill focus (climb), Skill focus (listen).

BUYING AND SELLING

This ward has many places of business, but they are all teetering on the brink of going out of business. Poverty is rampant here and evident in the boarded up windows of many businesses and the gaunt faces of those who live here. It is possible to find good deals here, as most items cost 10% less than the prices listed in *Core Rulebook I*, but the goods for sale are shoddy, in most cases. Any item purchased here is considered poor and has a flat 10% chance of breaking any time it is used.

Noted Shops of Rusted Vein

The following is a selection of shops found in the Rusted Vein Ward.



1. Wooden Things

Despite the poverty gripping this area of the city, there is one thing it has that no one else seems to be able to get – wood. Wooden Things sells furniture made from wood at the costs found in the *Core Rulebook I* and its owner has done fairly well for himself as a result. No one else in the city knows where this wood comes from and given that any investigation requires actually spending time in the Rusted Vein, no one cares enough to find out.

Plot Hooks: The wood found here comes from a site the locals know only as The Graveyard. This massive cavern is accessible only by passing through the polluted pools near the walls of this ward and following them to their source. Within the graveyard, thousands of coffins are stacked, their occupants long since rotted to

dust, leaving behind only brittle, crumbling bones, and wood that is oddly well-preserved for the length of time it has rested in the damp and dark.

2. Bone Tiles

Perhaps the most obvious sign of poverty in this ward is the willingness of its people to prey upon one another for the slightest of gains. The Bone Tiles shop is one such predator. The owners make their living by taking the teeth and small bones (such as those found in the hands and feet) of children and using them to create mosaics for nobles and wealthy merchants. The owners of the Bone Tiles shop do not actively hunt down the children; they purchase the teeth and bones from drow parents, who often arrive at the shop with their bloody trophies clenched in their scratched and bitten hands.

He had been sour with her for days. She had tried everything to apologize to him, but nothing helped, not even her learning to cook his favorite mushroom dish. The thick clouds of smoke from her first experiment at soufflés, the ones that had driven them out of the shop until the fire could be put out, might have had something to do with her lack of success on that one.

‘Please, master. I really am sorry. It’s just... well... you seem to hate women so much.’

They were walking at a faster pace than usual though this ward, one of her least favorites in the whole city. The flaking red ore all around and the huge puddles of poisonous, standing water the colour of blood, made the Rusted Vein wholly unpleasant to travel through. That, and the packs of roving thugs, the teeming masses of poor and destitute drow willing to do anything- or anyone- for coin, and the constant smell of rotting iron. This was no place to get lost in, but her master’s quick pace threatened to do just that if she could not keep up.

‘I didn’t mean to offen...’ Her sentence was cut short as his sudden stop made her almost bounce off his back. She heard the sound of a dagger being drawn and then the unmistakable shred of it cutting through thick cloth straps. His shirt fell open to his waist, deft arms sliding out of the shoulders to let it pass.

Blade’s back was a morass of scars, some slim and dark grey, others much wider and deeper. In a few places, the old wounds were so severe and the flesh so thin at their depths that she could see the shadow of pale bone beneath them. She could not count all of the scars; they made a woven pattern of pain too complex to make out individual strands.

‘I....,’ she said breathlessly.

‘This is why I hate women. Being a magicless bastard in a house that prizes first born sons with a gift for wizardry is not a life anyone should have to endure.’ His tone was calm and controlled, though the blade was still in his hand. Dorianne realized that he was telling her this so that he did not give in his violent instinct and kill her. She moved back and bowed her head.

‘Forgive me.’

Blade started walking again, shrugging back into his shirt. ‘Maybe. Now hurry up. I don’t like this place any more than you do. Let’s get the wood pieces we came for and get out of here. I have handles to carve.’



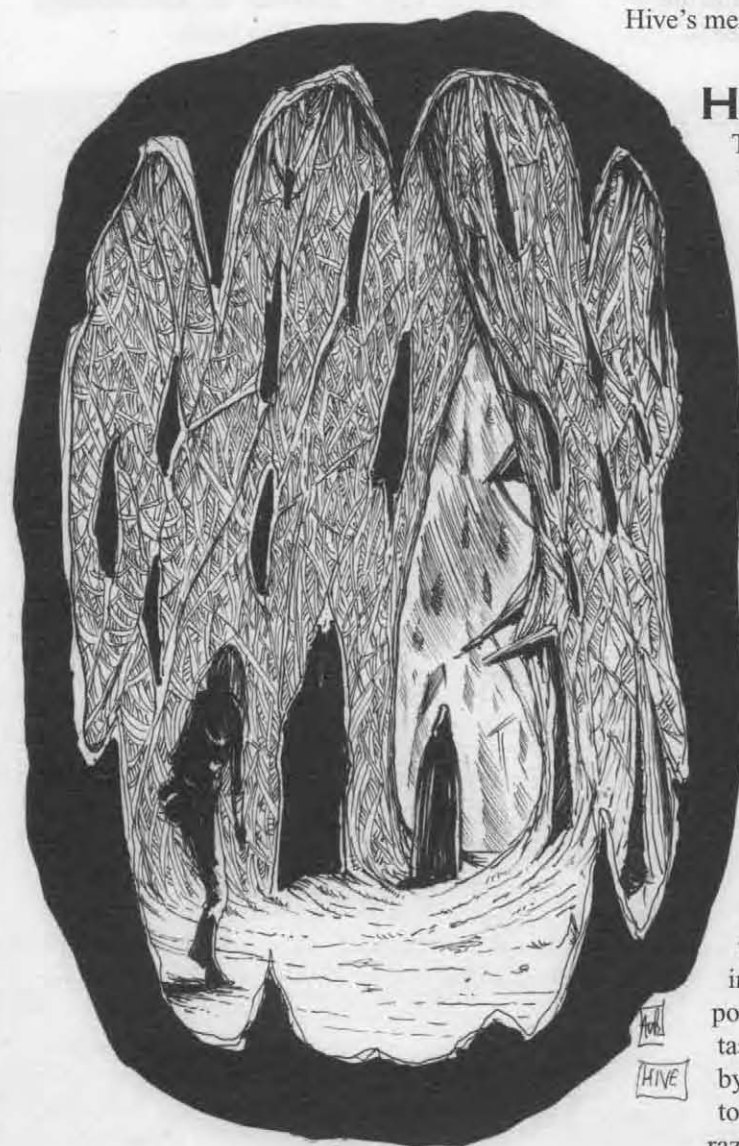
SHRIEKING HIVE

The poorest of the poor live here, their lives are endless parades of horror and depravity. Those with a little bit of money (or even a lot of money) come here to purchase cheap thrills and abuse the locals. As with all things in drow culture, this ward is ruled by the strong who lord their power over the weak. The Shrieking Hive is named for the sounds emanating from behind its closed doors at all hours of the day and night. The raw,

savage screams come from victim and predator alike, as the circle of life and death chases its tail into a deadly spiral.

AT A GLANCE

The Shrieking Hive is filled with the stench of death and decay. Its buildings are old and half-collapsed; the construction webbing used in their creation has dried out and is no longer able to support its own weight. Bodies are piled in stinking heaps at the ends of passages, to dissuade enemies from coming any nearer and to make them more easily accessible to the waste crews who come through to rid the city of its filth. Since they come by less than once a month, this area is often clogged with the bodies of drow and foreigners, victims of the Shrieking Hive's menace.



HISTORY

The natural cavern that formed the basis for this ward was considered cursed long before the drow chose to settle here. Primitive creatures from the dawn of prehistory believed the entire area was plagued by spirits of vengeance and hatred and their more advanced descendants found little to change their minds. The stone of this ward is riddled with fossils and the petrified remains of all manner of unidentifiable creatures, all of which died a horrible death judging by the way the bones are crushed and their surfaces marred by ring-shaped bites.

When the drow discovered this cavern during the expansion of the city, they were originally eager to populate it and spread their people further from the crowded sections of Sheoloth. The original settlers in this region found the whole area to be intolerable – the stink of corrosion was powerful and the natural water supplies tasted bitter. Eventually, it was decided by the church that it would be easiest to simply move the poor to this region, raze their former homes, and allow

the middle-classes to start anew in the older territories of Sheoloth.

The March of Copper was a grand event in Sheoloth. The priestesses of the Dark Mother and the Faceless Watch herded the poor from their homes and drove them into the newly-discovered area with lashes and the flat of their blades. The impact of the forcible relocation was tempered, if only slightly, by the copper coins given to the poor by the church of the Dark Mother to help them start anew.

Since that time, the Shrieking Hive has become a dumping ground for the unfit. Mentally deranged children are left here to fend for themselves, along with crippled and elderly drow. The ward is a place for the downtrodden and misshapen, a place of screams and nightmares made real.

ALLEGIANCES

The Church of the Dark Mother is the most powerful influence in the region. Though the church has all but abandoned the worshipers here, they cling to the remnants of their faith as a link to the culture that has turned its back upon them. The priestesses who are here hold the allegiance of the faithful, though the clergy rarely dare to venture forth from their armoured shrines, lest they be mobbed by the poverty-stricken seeking alms or simple relief from their wretched existence.

IMPORTANT PERSONAGES

Calthauga Versta is the high priestess of the Dark Mother in the Shrieking Hive. She lives in constant fear for her life and is certain her appointment here was nothing but an attempt to have her killed by the citizens she is supposed to minister to. The rest of the clergy feel the same way – they cower in the sanctuaries of their churches in the hopes they will not be destroyed by the deranged residents who sweep through this section of the city on a regular basis.

Calthauga Versta

Female elf (drow) Clr12: CR 13; Size M (5 ft., 2 in. tall); HD 12d8-24; hp 38; Init +1 (+1 Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 11 (+1 Dex); Attack +10/+5 melee, or +10/+5 ranged; SV Fort +6, Ref +5, Will +12; AL CE; Str 12, Dex 13, Con 7, Int 11, Wis 19, Cha 16.

Languages Spoken: Common, Elven, Undercommon.

Skills and feats: Concentration +11, Hide +1, Knowledge (arcana) +8, Listen +6, Move silently +1, Search +2, Spellcraft +11, Spot +6; Combat casting, Dodge, Extra turning, Quicken spell, Skill focus (concentration).

Though not a specific individual, the mortificants also play a very important role here in the Shrieking Hive. Their insanity is contagious, it seems, and they draw others with their thirst for blood and violence to their hiding places. The cults which surround these mortificants spring up suddenly, with dozens of members congregating as if by a secret signal. When their numbers reach a critical mass, the mortificants lead them into battle, howling through the streets of the city in search of prey and worthy battles.

BUYING AND SELLING

There is little to purchase here, except for the bodies and lives of the poor and deformed. Unable to fend for themselves, the weak are sold by the strong to the drow who come here to spend their money on pleasures and horrors they can find nowhere else in the city. This led to the creation of Haedistika, a loose affiliation of business that have encircled the central area of this ward. Though they have other businesses during parts of the day, for several hours surrounding midnight, they transform their shops into a nightmarish swirl of sweat, fear, and lust.



Noted Shops of the Shrieking Hive

The following is a selection of shops found in the Shrieking Hive ward.

1. Haedistika

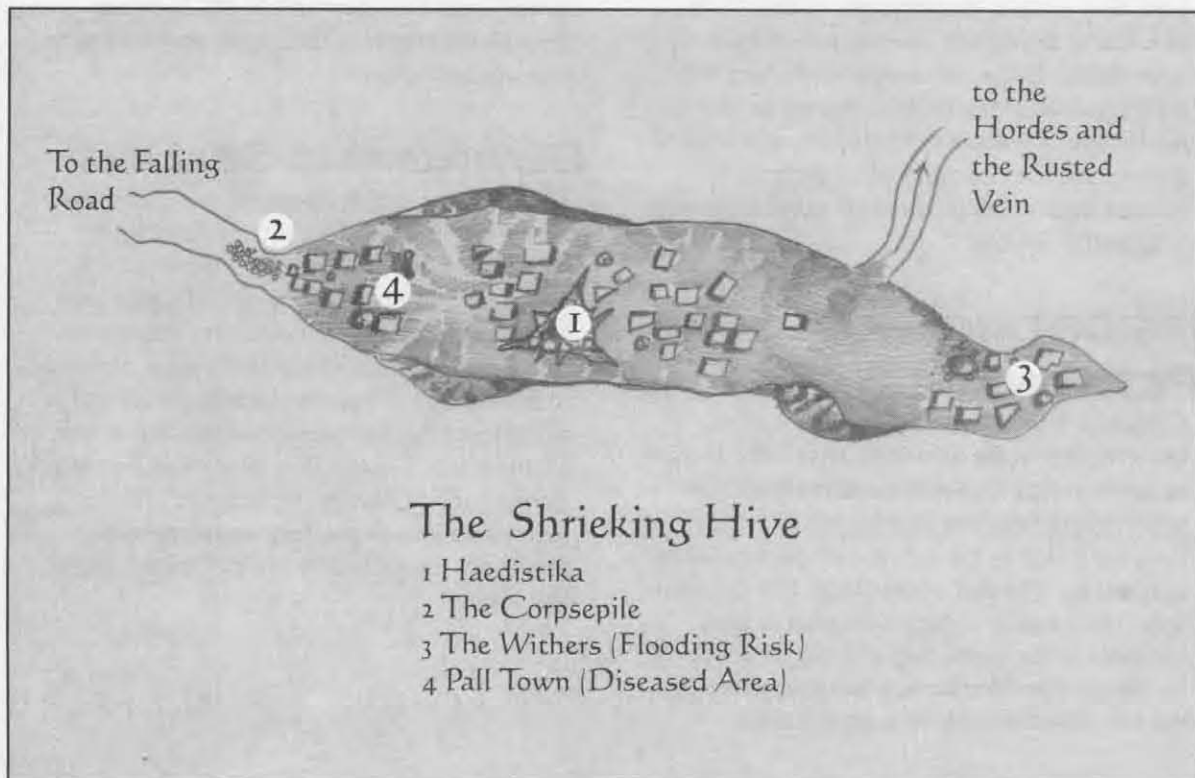
Not a single business, the Haedistika is a collection of businesses located in the centre of this ward. They operate the normal businesses for all but four hours of the day. During these four hours, however, their shops become hellish brothels, in which the lusts of the most deprived citizens of Sheoloth are satiated. The poor and weak are herded into these shops and guards hired by the business owners prevent them from escaping back into the streets. Those who pay the entry fee, normally a hundred gold pieces, can do whatever they want to those they find locked in the shops.

Though sex is certainly involved, violence is far more common. Those sold here often find their flesh flensed from their bones, their legs shattered, their eyes gouged from their heads, and their stomachs covered with deep burns.

This is where angry drow come to vent their rage, to purge their hatred by wrapping it in the screams and tortured flesh of their victims.

The church of the Dark Mother is well aware of the Haedistika, but they do nothing to stop its practices. It is, after all, an expression of the survival of the fittest as the weak are tested by the tortures they face and either die or become stronger for their suffering.

There is an element of risk for everyone in the Haedistika, however. The mortificants are attracted to the smells and sounds of violence which emanate from this area and will sometimes bring their cultists here, leading them on a bloody parade through the flesh dens of the Shrieking Hive. The survivors of such sweeps claim it was the most exhilarating experience of their life, the threat of death hanging just over their heads intensified everything they felt and saw that night. A few are so moved by the purity of the violence they witness they abandon their lives and join the mortificant cults.



SILVER STREET

Ordery and covered in the sacred symbols of the Dark Mother, Silver Street is the ultimate expression of the drow drive to get ahead. Though not noble, those who live here are nearly as wealthy as the residents of the Noble Labyrinth. This planned ward was designed to showcase their homes and businesses, providing them with a web of power from which to manage their tiny empires.

AT A GLANCE

This ward is laid out to resemble a spider's web, with passages radiating out from the centre of the ward, connected to one another by side passages. The streets are patrolled heavily by the Faceless Watch and the watchful agents of the Eight-Eyed Masks sweep the area with their scrying spells frequently. Unlike most areas of the city, the ceiling of the ward soars high overhead, giving the area a spacious, open feel.

HISTORY

When the wealthy decided they needed a new place to live, they did not simply go looking for a cavern to settle in. They approached the nobility and the Church of the Dark Mother and requested permission to carve out a new territory, one that would celebrate the power and glory of Sheoloth. The rulers agreed and the planning for Silver Street began.

It took nearly one hundred years but, in the end, the ward was completed. Its passages were lined with strands of silver, embedded into the stone painstakingly by the hands of gnome slaves. The ceiling was adorned with glittering continual flame spells, giving the impression of a red-starred sky covered with constellations representing the Dark Mother and her allies.

Since that time, Silver Street has been the home of the wealthiest and most influential people of Sheoloth. Though nobles and the priestesses do not live here, those who make their homes here struggle and strive to usurp the positions of those above them. While they watch their inferiors from on high, the rulers

of Sheoloth are well aware of the dangers this ward poses to their positions, which is why the law enforcement is so strong here. It does keep the criminals in line, but it also reminds the residents of the dangers they face should they ever attempt to rebel.

ALLEGIANCES

The Luzkar estate commands more loyalty in this ward than even the church of the Dark Mother. The merchant family is directly responsible for putting many of the families who enjoy their homes in Silver Street where they are today. More importantly, the Luzkar family could easily send anyone who lives in this ward tumbling into the arms of the poverty stricken if the mood took them.

The Church of the Dark Mother is a close second in influence here, with the Faceless Watch constantly patrolling to keep the residents in line. While the rich may resent the powerful reminder of their own fragility in the face of the priestesses, they at least have no complaints about the lack of crime in this ward.

A distant third, the Transfer Guild is favoured here, as well. Most who live here have some need to remain in the guild's good graces for the sake of their businesses and act accordingly.

IMPORTANT PERSONAGES

Xushail Barisol has his home in this area, an impressive home with an extensive tunnel network below it. While Xushail is the leader of the Network, he is very careful to keep the criminal organization out of this ward to avoid any possible overlap between his personal and business life. Xushail likes his privacy and enjoys his appearance as a law-abiding citizen, which allows him to move freely through the city without worry.

Xushail Barisol

Male elf (drow) Exp20: CR 20; Size M (5 ft., 2 in. tall); HD 20d6; hp 74; Init +10 (+6 Dex, +4 Improved initiative); Spd 30 ft.; AC 16 (+6 Dex); Attack +16/+11/+6 melee, or +21/+16/+11 ranged; SV Fort +6, Ref +12, Will +13; AL CE; Str 13, Dex 22, Con 11, Int 17, Wis 12, Cha 12.

Languages Spoken: Common, Draconic,

Elven, Gnoll, Goblin, Undercommon.

Skills and feats: Craft (Alchemy) +8, Appraise +26, Craft +5, Diplomacy +24, Disable device +7, Escape artist +29, Gather information +14, Hide +7, Innuendo +24, Listen +3, Move silently +6, Perform +24, Read lips +25, Search +5, Spellcraft +10, Spot +28, Tumble +9, Use magic device +1; Ambidexterity, weapon focus (short sword), Improved initiative, Skill focus (appraise), Skill focus (gather information), Skill focus (spot), Toughness.

Overseeing the activities of the Faceless Watch in this ward is difficult – Yazaes Austhan must be sure the Watch performs its duties properly, but must also be sure they do not offend the local merchants and their families. The balancing act is difficult and the stress shows. Though Yazaes knows she has a highly coveted position in the Watch, it feels like a punishment because of its difficulties.

Yazaes Austhan

Female elf (drow) Clr13: CR 14; Size M (5 ft., 1 in. tall); HD 13d8; hp 83; Init +2 (+2 Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 12 (+2 Dex); Attack +12/+7 melee, or +11/+6 ranged; SV Fort +8, Ref +6, Will +10; AL CE; Str 16, Dex 15, Con 10, Int 11, Wis 15, Cha 12.

Languages Spoken: Common, Elven, Undercommon.

Skills and feats: Craft +14, Heal +11, Hide +2, Listen +4, Move silently +2, Search +2, Spellcraft +11, Spot +4; Brew potion, Combat casting, Craft staff, Leadership, Skill focus (craft).

Cleric Domains: Darkness, Evil.

Cleric Spells Per Day: 6/6+1/6+1/4+1/4+1/3+1.

Vemivail Austhan runs the spectacles that occur in the City Central plaza. Every day, some new act of barbarity or depravity is performed here for the amusement of the nobility. While the years have passed and taken with them all of Vemivail's brightest and most creative ideas of terror and entertainment, she still manages to make certain that those who congregate around the plaza still have something to watch when the bells toll at noon. She is always on the watch for new 'talent', an effort aided greatly by her

older sister Yazaes.

Vemivail Austhan

Female elf (drow) Clr11: CR 12; Size M (5 ft., 2 in. tall); HD 11d8; hp 59; Init +2 (+2 Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 12 (+2 Dex); Attack +10/+5 melee, or +10/+5 ranged; SV Fort +7, Ref +7, Will +10; AL CE; Str 14, Dex 14, Con 11, Int 10, Wis 17, Cha 17.

Languages Spoken: Common, Elven, Undercommon.

Skills and feats: Hide +2, Knowledge (nature) +2.5, Listen +5, Move silently +2, Perform +13, Scry +11, Search +2, Spot +5; Brew potion, Combat casting, Lightning reflexes, Silent spell.

Cleric Domains: Darkness, Fear.

Cleric Spells Per Day: 6/6+1/5+1/5+1/3+1/2+1/1+1.

BUYING AND SELLING

Oddly, the stores and workshops in this area are not the most efficient or luxurious in the city. While they are certainly of high quality, they are run by individuals who do not actually live in this ward. The truly successful businesses are elsewhere in the city and provide the wealth for the merchants to live here. These businesses simply cater to the wealthy, providing them with their daily necessities.

Noted Shops of Silver Street

The following is a selection of shops found in the Silver Street ward.

1. Detherage Attorneys

This firm specializes in trade contracts and does a lucrative business creating and reviewing the mind numbingly complex and obtuse contract used by the Transfer Guild. Anyone who signs one of these contracts without the assistance of an attorney is asking for trouble, as the Guild is known to lace its contracts with strange clauses and crippling restrictions.

Plot Hook: Detherage is an ancient dark elf, his skin lined with wrinkles and his hair clinging to his scalp in wispy tufts. But his eyes are still sharp and his mind cuts like a razor through legal jargon. His skill at writing contracts is so well known that he is often called up on to help negotiate with summoned demons or other

extraplanar servitors. While such dealings within the city are strictly illegal, that does not stop the drow from seeking out the advice of an attorney to protect themselves from their infernal servitors.

2. Sarlastis Chirurgery and Undertaking

Small and well kept, this business is constructed from brightly-stained construction silk in vivid patterns. Inside, however, the place is sombre and covered with thick, blackened silks. A pair of tables stands in the centre of the room, surrounded on all sides by racks of surgical instruments and vats of preservative fluids. In this chamber, Hunthrash Sarlastis both performs surgery and prepares bodies for their burials (in the rare instances when the body is not going to be cremated).

Hunthrash Sarlastis

Male elf (drow) Exp12: CR 12; Size M (5 ft., 1 in. tall); HD 12d6; hp 39; Init +4 (+4 Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 14 (+4 Dex); Attack +9/+4 melee, or +13/+8 ranged; SV Fort +4, Ref +8, Will +11; AL NE; Str 11, Dex 19, Con 10, Int 19, Wis 16, Cha 10.

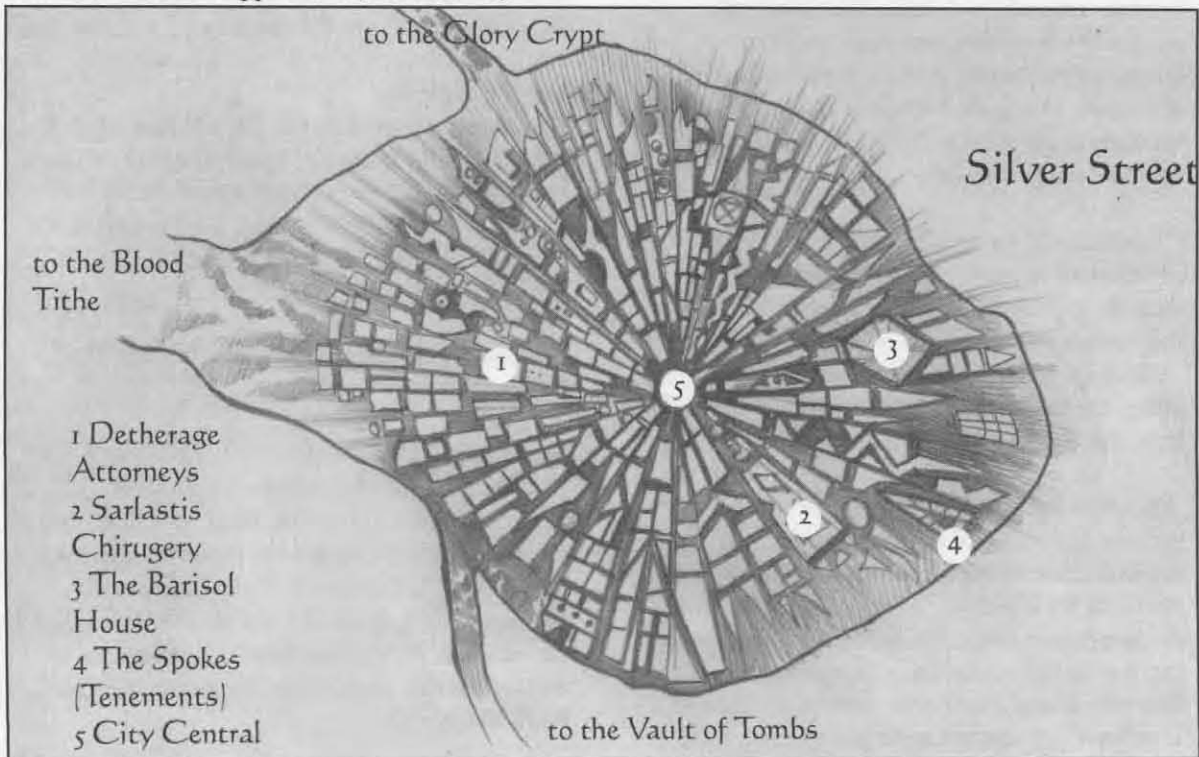
Languages Spoken: Common, Elven, Gnoll, Gnome, Goblin, Sylvan, Undercommon.

Skills and feats: Appraise +8, Balance +7,

Concentration +1.5, Disguise +14, Escape artist +19, Hide +10, Heal +15, Listen +7, Move silently +11, Profession (chirurgeon) +17, Profession (undertaker) +19, Scry +9, Search +13, Spot +11, Use magic device +3.5, Use rope +9; Alertness, Point blank shot, Skill focus (scry), Skill focus (profession), Weapon finesse (dagger).

Plot Hook: Sarlastis is one of the few doctors with the guts to perform abortions in Sheoloth. The unborn child is regarded as wholly sacred by the drow and any who harm them are condemned to death. Sarlastis, however, hates his race and everything it stands for. Those who enter his chirurgery looking for healing rarely leave alive, as he does not need their coin and takes great pleasure in destroying them. The majority of his income is from the wives of merchants, who do not wish to be subjected to the ovarisites when pregnant. Sarlastis quietly removes the offending lump of flesh and tosses it aside.

This, of course, is something the churches of Sheoloth cannot tolerate. If Sarlastis is ever discovered, he will need help escaping the city and will be able to pay very, very well.



SUN GATE

Close to the surface, the Sun Gate handles virtually all imports of goods from the world of the sun. Though still hundreds of feet below the surface of the earth, the Sun Gate is still exposed to confrontations and trade with the upper world on a regular basis. Not all who live above fear the drow beyond reason and a brave few trade food and other items from the surface for the goods of the drow.

AT A GLANCE

This marketplace sees considerable traffic from the surface. Orcs and evil humans rub shoulders with the drow here, though they are careful to never attempt to proceed beyond the boundaries of the Sun Gate. The Faceless Watch is heavily present here, though only in the form of the drunken, belligerent guards normally stationed in the Night Seal. The drunken louts are not a terribly efficient military force, but they gather here in large numbers and are quick to lash out at other races who 'get above themselves' while in the city of the drow.

HISTORY

After the destruction of the surface elves, the drow decided to expand their control over the territory around the Falling Stair and built residences, barracks, and other structures in the passages leading into the main body of Sheoloth. Designed to protect the city from invaders from outside, the ward soon took on a new and dangerous role.

Clandestinely, those who lived on the frontier of Sheoloth nearest the surface began to trade with orcs, goblins, and other races who lived on the surface and in the caves below. They traded meat from goats and cows for minor potions, silken armour, and refined steel weapons which gave the orcs the edge they needed to survive.

When this trade was discovered, those responsible were put to the sword and their corpses allowed to swing over the gates to Sheoloth for a month. At the end of this time, the forerunner of the Transfer Guild was created and the church of the Dark Mother announced that only it could authorize trade with outsiders. The Sun Gate was renamed and given a trade

quota to operate within. It has remained this way ever since, providing a steady flow of goods and coin from the surface to feed the city of Sheoloth.

ALLEGIANCES

The Transfer Guild is the most important faction in this section of the city. Only by its auspices does any trade occur at all. The Luzkar family would love to expand their influence here, but they have had no luck doing so. The Church of the Dark Mother and the Church of the Killer would also like to gain a foothold in the Sun Gate, but they have been thus far unsuccessful. The people of the Sun Gate remember the iron boots of the churches standing on the necks of their ancestors and are in no hurry to suffer the same fate.

IMPORTANT PERSONAGES

Imwi Lusakras lives in this ward, far from the centre of Sheoloth where she can indulge her penchant for lustful violence and where disappearing young drow are not missed. She controls the operations of the Network in the Sun Gate and deals efficiently with orcs, hobgoblins, and even the brutal bugbears. Imwi now lounges within her home, luring paramours to their doom in between trade meetings with the surface dwellers she despises.

Imwi Lusakras

Female elf (drow) Exp15: CR 15; Size M (5 ft., 0 in. tall); HD 15d6+15; hp 67; Init +4 (+4 Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 14 (+4 Dex); Attack +12/+7/+2 melee, or +15/+10/+5 ranged; SV Fort +6, Ref +9, Will +11; AL CE; Str 12, Dex 18, Con 13, Int 17, Wis 15, Cha 13.

Languages Spoken: Common, Elven, Gnoll, Sylvan, Undercommon.

Skills and feats: Balance +22, Bluff +2, Climb +17, Decipher script +18, Disable device +4.5, Disguise +19, Heal +20, Hide +4, Intimidate +6.5, Listen +10, Move silently +4, Perform +1.5, Search +5, Sense motive +2.5, Spellcraft +3.5, Spot +24, Swim +18, Use magic device +2.5, Wilderness lore +17; Alertness, Ambidexterity, Blind-fight, Expertise, Far shot, Point blank shot.

The Shawalon is an insane drow afflicted with lycanthropy. As a were-bat, she spends her nights huddled in a roost in a tunnel high above the ward. In her moments of lucidity, the Shawalon roams the streets of the Sun Gate begging for hand outs or a few coppers. Neither the drow who see her wandering the streets, nor the were-bats who worship her as a goddess in her lycanthropic form, are aware of her other identity. The were-bats believe she leaves them to pursue prophetic visions, which she returns with to guide them to a new age of prosperity. In truth, the Shawalon is simply insane and can see little beyond her immediate needs. If she can ever be convinced of her deific nature, however, she is likely to become very, very dangerous.

The Shawalon

Female elf (drow) Rog13: CR 14; Size M (4 ft., 10 in. tall); HD 13d6; hp 41; Init +8 (+4 Dex, +4 Improved initiative); Spd 30 ft.; AC 14 (+4 Dex); Attack +9/+4 melee, or +13/+8 ranged; SV Fort +6, Ref +12, Will +8; AL CE; Str 11, Dex 18, Con 10, Int 16, Wis 14, Cha 11.

Languages Spoken: Common, Draconic, Elven, Gnoll, Goblin, Orc, Undercommon.

Skills and feats: Balance +19, Bluff +16, Climb +16, Craft +18, Decipher script +18, Diplomacy +15, Hide +4, Intuit direction +18, Jump +16, Listen +8, Move silently +4, Perform +14, Search +22, Speak language +2, Spellcraft +8, Spot +8, Wilderness lore +4; Ambidexterity, Dodge, Improved critical (sword, short), Improved initiative, Track.

(As werebat) Rog13: CR 16; Size M (4 ft., 10 in. tall); HD 13d6; hp 41; Init +8 (+4 Dex, +4 Improved initiative); Spd 30 ft.; AC 16 (+4 Dex, +2 natural armor); Attack +9/+4 melee, or +13/+8 ranged; SA Lycanthropic Empathy, Curse of Lycanthropy; SQ DR 15/silver; SV Fort +6, Ref +12, Will +8; AL CE; Str 11, Dex 18, Con 10, Int 16, Wis 14, Cha 11.

Languages Spoken: Common, Draconic, Elven, Gnoll, Goblin, Orc, Undercommon.

Skills and feats: Balance +19, Bluff +16, Climb +16, Craft +18, Decipher script +18, Diplomacy +15, Hide +4, Intuit direction +18, Jump +16, Listen +4, Move silently +4, Perform +14, Search +18, Speak language +2, Spellcraft +8, Spot +4, Wilderness lore +4; Ambidexterity, Blindsight, Dodge, Improved Control Shape, Improved critical (sword, short), Improved initiative, Track.

She preferred the feel of the Sun Gate to any other ward in the city, even the Noble Labyrinth. She had all but memorized the latter and master Blade had been so proud of her maps that she felt no more need to explore it. No, this ward felt like home, with its tall buildings, walkways of webbing, and guards who were usually so drunk that a swift thief could get away with anything here.

She had gotten pretty good at the latter; evading stumbling watchmen, even a large group of them, was child's play now. Of course, she was still in many ways a child, but given the kinds of games most drow children her age played, running from the authorities was an extremely tame pastime.

Right now, she was indulging one of her other favorite hobbies- people hunting. Well, people watching was more like it. There was an insane woman down in the streets of the Sun Gate who survived by handouts and skillful pickpocketing. Dorianne, or Dori as Blade had taken to calling her lately, loved to find a high perch and see what new thing the woman would rant on about or steal from some unsuspecting merchant in the marketplace. It was an amusing game- one of the few Blade would let her play by herself outside the shop.

It was during a late night playing 'spot the Shawalon' that she saw something terrifying. The insane woman started climbing a hidden face in the canyon wall. Certain that she was well hidden, Dorianne watched her using a brass rod Blade had given her a few months back. The Shawalon was screeching softly to herself, which was nothing new, but as she climbed, fur began sprouting out of her arms and exposed legs. That was definitely something new.

By the time the Shawalon had reached a cave in the roof of the Sun Gate cavern, she was fully seven feet tall and looked like an unholy cross between a drow woman and a bat. Dori had the urge to chase after her and find out what was in that cavern, but good sense and her instinct to survive convinced her not to try. Besides, this was certainly something Blade needed to hear about.

BUYING AND SELLING

The Sun Gate is famed for its trio of butchers who prepare fresh meat carved from the bones of cows and deer, which are brought below by orcs and bugbears who steal them from herders in the lands above. This meat is often dried and sold as jerky to drow stores within Sheoloth. This ward also has some of the only non-drow prostitutes to be found in the city, a surprisingly popular feature of the ward which accounts for a large amount of its profits.

Adventurers congregate here, as well, flocking to the taverns to discuss their upcoming plans or recruit additional companions. The pawnshops here, as well, overflow with goods brought back from these adventures and the wise shopper can often find 'used' goods at reasonable prices (20% less than those found in *Core Rulebook I*).

Noted Shops of the Sun Gate

The following is a selection of shops found in the Sun Gate

1. Sun Pawn

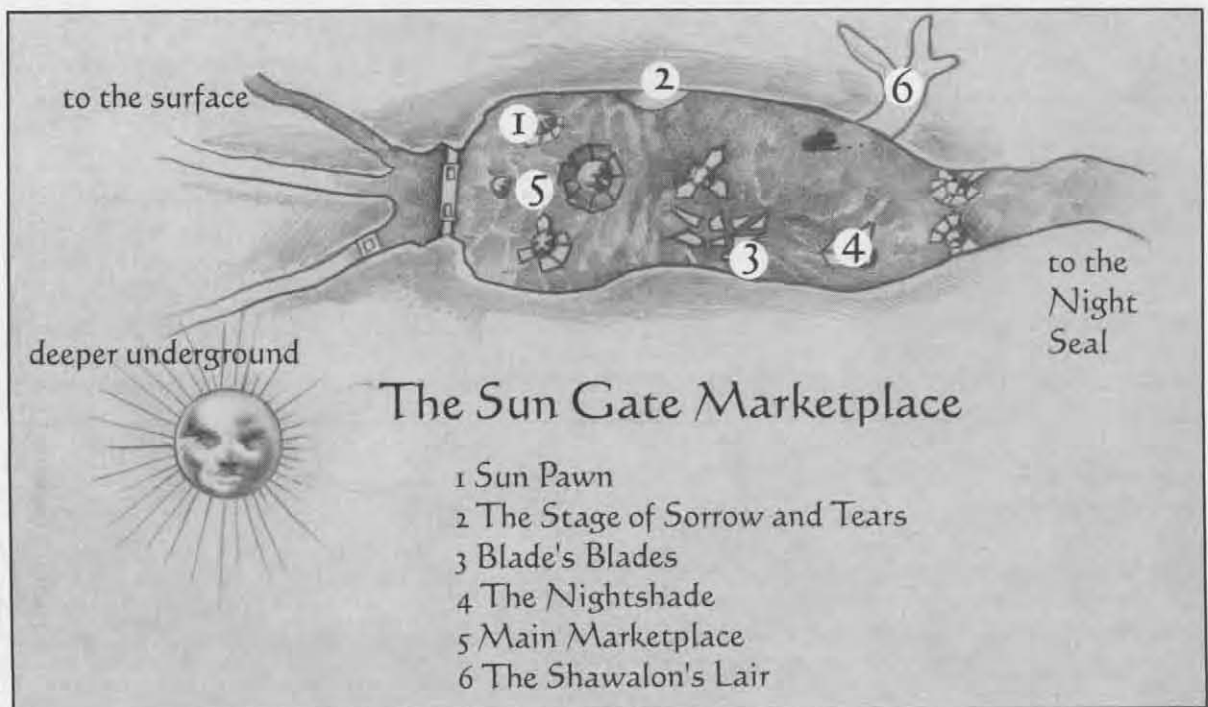
This small shop takes goods from incoming adventurers and often resells them to outgoing adventurers in the same day. Sun Pawn has established itself as the spot to buy and sell adventuring goods, thanks in large part to Imwi's advertising. As the secret owner of Sun Pawn, she does her best to make sure that

adventurers drop their goods here, rather than seek out a better price elsewhere. Her trained staff then pores over the items and extracts those of most interest and potential value. These are then sent into the city for resale in more prestigious and upscale locations. Goods are purchased here for roughly half their value and sold for approximately 75% of their actual value, as shown in *Core Rulebook I*.

Plot Hooks: Imwi does not want anyone knowing she operates Sun Pawn. Because the pawn shop skates around the import restriction by not dealing with traders from other cultures, it provides her with access to rare goods without the need to pay import taxes. This savings is not passed on to the Network, a fact which could get Imwi into dire trouble. Xushail may hire the characters to find out where Imwi is getting her seemingly endless flow of cash and he will not be happy to discover she is the owner of Sun Pawn. For her part, Imwi will no doubt try to seduce and kill any who come to investigate her dealings.

2. The Stage of Sorrow and Tears

This massive stage of solid rock, flanked by pillars of silver ore carved to resemble flowing tear drops down pale stone, built against one of the walls of the Sun Gate cavern is a popular gathering area outside the huddled merchant stalls and crowded warehouses that cater to the many denizens of this district. The Stage



alternates between slave auctions and actual productions of varied entertainment value.

While the Stage rarely has drow performers, it typically has a number of drow in the audience, waiting for the chance to hurl a dagger or spell at an entertainer who fails to amuse them.

Plot Hooks: The Stage of Sorrow and Tears is one of the few places in Sheoloth where humans and other surface dwellers can interact with the drow of the city in anything other than a captive or slave relationship. The drow treat this place as a welcome relief from the Game of Bones; there is an uneasy but enduring truce in front of the Stage. Characters in this area may be able to make contacts and discuss city events with drow or other merchants/travellers. This allows the Game Master to seed conversations with other plot hooks as he sees fit.

3. Blade's Blades

A weapon shop dealing exclusively in swords, daggers, and throwing weapons with edges, the proprietor Blade, whose real name is not known, offers decent prices for good quality merchandise but has no time or patience for anything less than masterwork craftsmanship. It is a poorly kept secret that Blade has a stock of magical weapons for sale to those who convince him to sell them, but he is very exclusive about who he does business with and while his goods are top quality, his prices are exorbitant. It is an even worse kept secret that the store is also a front for Blade's true profession, assassination.

Plot Hooks: Blade is as neutral as drow get and will take a contract out on anyone, his fellow drow included, for the right price. In truth, he hates the foul and vile things his race does and would much rather escape the Game of Bones entirely and find somewhere to do business without interference if he could. His detest at the lifestyle of other drow has nothing to do with any good intentions; he just thinks fleshcrafting and the constant blood-drenched pointlessness of their lives show no sense of style.

Blade

Male elf (drow) Ftr4/Rog6/Asn5: CR 16; Size M (5 ft., 9 in. tall); HD 4d10+4 + 11d6+11; hp 97; Init +9 (+5 Dex, +4 Improved initiative); Spd 30 ft.; AC 15 (+5 Dex); Attack +15/+10/+5 melee, or +17/+12/+7 ranged; SV Fort +8, Ref

+13, Will +5; AL NE; Str 17, Dex 20, Con 12, Int 18, Wis 12, Cha 12.

Languages Spoken: Common, Elven, Undercommon.

Skills and feats: Craft (Alchemy) +10, Appraise +8, Balance +10, Bluff +10, Craft (poisonmaking) +15, Diplomacy +10, Escape artist +15, Gather information +14, Hide +15, Listen +10, Move silently +15, Search +15, Sense Motive +15, Spot +10, Tumble +15, Use rope +15, Use Magic Device +10; Alertness, Ambidexterity, Dodge, Weapon Focus (dagger), Weapon Specialization (dagger), Improved critical (dagger), Improved initiative, Point blank shot, Two Weapon Fighting, Mobility.

4. The Nightshade

This establishment caters directly to the non-drow transient population of the Sun Gate, providing reasonable quality wine, rooms, and companionship for unreasonable prices. The Nightshade's prices and luxurious décor have given it something of an elitist reputation, something the owner of the place, Kaleshia 'Silk' Vorasht, appreciates greatly. She ensures that all the patrons of her house are treated well and kept safe for exactly as long as they have money and influence left to spend. Guests would be wise to leave before either run out.

Plot Hooks: Kaleshia 'Silk' Vorasht appears like any other domineering female drow in the Sun Gate, albeit a bit more reasonable than most given her apparent tolerance of outsiders. In truth, Kaleshia is not a drow at all, but an elf sent into the city years ago to infiltrate and discover any weaknesses in the drow's line of defence against a mass assault. This assignment was supposed to last three years, but the deeper she got into drow culture, the more she realized that Sheoloth had very few breaches in security and was all but impervious to full scale attack. Worse, she found herself entrenched with no safe way out again. Now more than a decade has passed and aside from occasional messages, she has had no contact with the surface world. She has no idea if her people are still planning an assault or if so, when. The Player Characters could be very valuable to her in that regard, if they prove themselves trustworthy enough to either get her to the surface in safety or bring news of her people back to her (Games Master's discretion as to what this plot line could entail).

THE VAULT OF TOMBS

A wide, reasonably uncluttered cavern with buildings of well-worked stones along the primary walls of the cave and a huge edifice of construction webbing and bonecraft in its center, the Vault of Tombs serves a bizarre but logical (from a drow point of view) dual nature. This cavern serves as the repository for the dead and a baking institution for dark elven currency. In a society where the uncared for dead are routinely violated but all manner of black sorcery, a series vaults to protect bodies from such degradation is both very practical and highly valued.

AT A GLANCE

While the house vaults are impressive structures of grey and black stone, carved to resemble ancient drow scions of the first houses of Sheoloth acting as pillars along their front sides, the most important and eye-catching building in the Vault of Tombs is the monolithic bank called the Adamant Spire. Over a hundred feet tall and seemingly crafted from a single seamless piece of adamantine, the Spire dominates the cavern by its sheer size and ornate construction. The Spire's four tall, barbed points end only a dozen feet from the cavern's ceiling and are enchanted with a random, flickering *faerie fire* that leaps from edge to edge constantly, bathing the whole Vault in ever-shifting shadows.

The entire cavern floor of the Vault of Tombs is inlaid with bone tiles of various ages, lending a strangely shifting effect of white, grey, and yellow everywhere visitors to the cave walk. This inlay, smoothed by the steady passage of thousands of booted feet and bordered by hundreds of feet of fleshcrafted rope marking off lanes of traffic, is both an effective method of floor tile and a silent reminder of what will happen to the bodies of the honoured dead kept here if protection payments are not paid on time.

The mood here tends to be a somber one, as the drow that live in the Adamant Spire exist solely to collect taxes, exchange coin with foreign

agents, and maintain the bodies of noble drow kept here under potent necromantic magic. This life is lives almost completely in silence, with only the occasional wail of a merchant who has run out of gold and must answer to the slaver's guildsmen as punctuation against the cave's eternally quiet night.

HISTORY

The Vault of Tombs, like so many other things in drow history, was born in blood. When the drow of Sheoloth discovered fleshcrafting and gravebonding magic, it took them into a dark age of corpse snatching and assassination. These experiments brought their researchers great power at the cost of a mountains of bodies. When Sheoloth ran out of slaves to butcher, the drow turned on themselves for the fuel they needed to keep the magic going. House battled house over nothing more noble than graveyards, tearing open ancient crypts not for gold or magic but for the bodies interred within.

This nearly brought the Sprawling City to utter ruin, but wiser heads prevailed before the houses could consume each other in an orgy of necrophagic abandon. The armies of the city moved to quell the battles, strict laws with unimaginably cruel punishments were levied, and the war over the corpses ended in the stranglehold of even worse brutality. Knowing that this control would never last, another solution had to be found- one that would bring a permanent peace over the dispute.

The Vault of Tombs was that solution. Already in existence as a simple commerce level with a small garrison keep to help collect taxes, the Vault was chosen to house secure mausoleums for the purpose of interring bodies in relative safety. The only problem with the plan was the limited space. The Vault was not large enough to hold the dead population of the city for any significant amount of time.

In typical drow fashion, the decision came quickly to limit the Vault to the bodies of nobility and to charge a blood and gem fee for the privilege of doing so. Those without noble birth or the funds to pay for the service had to provide their own security, which neatly provided bodies for those mages and priests

willing to collect them, offered the wealthy and powerful a way to escape such depravity, and created a functioning new source of revenue for the rulers of Sheoloth with the side benefit of requiring very little maintenance or effort.

ALLEGIANCES

Control of the Vault of Tombs is a more important role in the society of Sheoloth than most drow would believe. To the majority of the dark elves here, the Vault is a horribly somber place that gets visited as quickly as possible and then left. It reminds them of their own mortality, a lesson no drow ever truly wishes to learn, and so most given this place as much space as possible and never think about it unless they have to.

This suits the Black Chancellor of the Vault, Hilvask Maeldurn just fine. His continuous alliance with the cult of the Gravemother ensures the best care for the dead drow in his keeping and makes certain that anyone trying to raid his vast vaults receive an unpleasant and very final welcome for their trouble. The arrangement has been going so well that Hilvask is one of the richest drow in all of Sheoloth, mostly because he is intelligent enough not to advertise his wealth and power to anyone in the city. Even his defenses would not be enough to stop a concerted effort by one of the major power groups in the city if his affluence caught their eye.

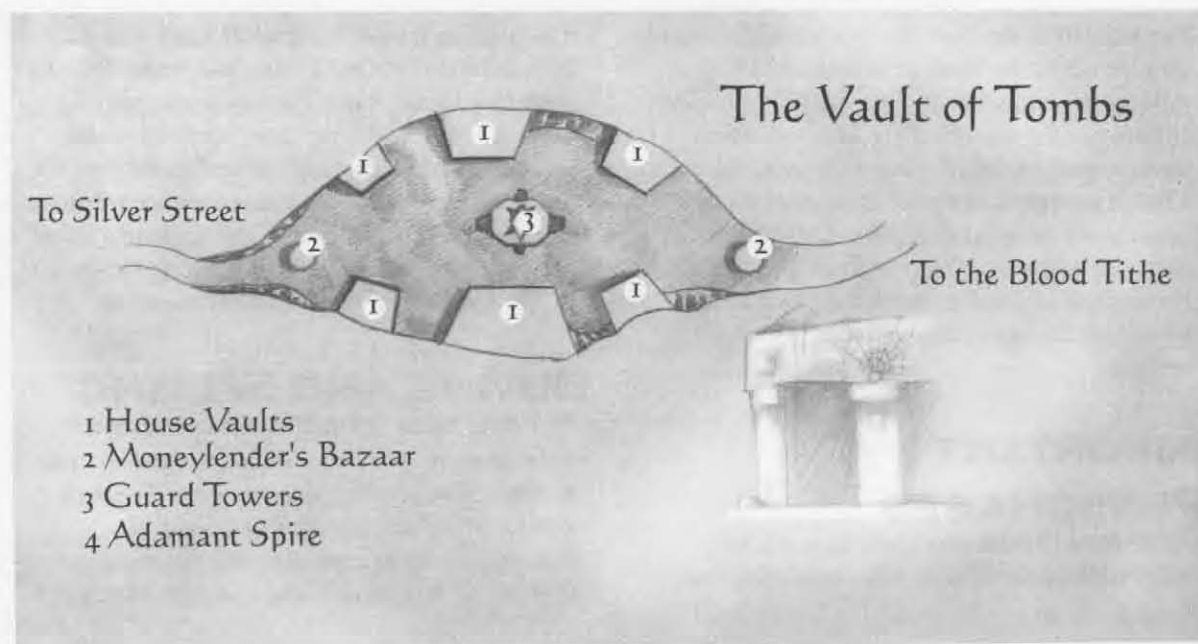
Hilvask Maeldurn

male elf (drow) Rog9: CR 10; Size M (5 ft., 0 in. tall); HD 9d6; hp 40; Init +6 (+2 Dex, +4 Improved initiative); Spd 30 ft.; AC 12 (+2 Dex); Attack +5/+0 melee, or +8/+3 ranged; SV Fort +0, Ref +8, Will +4; AL NE; Str 9, Dex 15, Con 10, Int 14, Wis 13, Cha 14.

Languages Spoken: Common, Elven, Gnoll, Undercommon.

Skills and feats: Appraise +8, Bluff +12, Decipher script +10, Diplomacy +10, Hide +14, Innuendo +13, Knowledge (religion) +5, Listen +5, Move silently +5, Open lock +14, Pick pocket +13, Profession (banker) +10, Search +15, Sense motive +13, Spot +10; Alertness, Dodge, Improved initiative, Skill Focus (Bluff).

The Incabulos have seeded one of their agents in the Vault to learn its secrets and to maintain a base of operations for the cult. Jhendrisyl is currently serving as an adjunct to the office of the Chancellor, having gained her position through the favourable attentions of Maeldurn and a few serendipitous poisonings of those in her way. The role gives her all the access she needs to Vault records and documents; her findings have brought her to the eye of the master of the Incabulos himself and it is only a matter of time before she finds herself serving him directly.



Jhendrisyl

Female elf (drow) Wiz8/Rog3: CR 12; Size M (4 ft., 10 in. tall); HD 8d4+16 + 3d6+6; hp 45; Init +3 (+3 Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 13 (+3 Dex); Attack +8/+3 melee, or +9/+4 ranged; SV Fort +5, Ref +8, Will +7; AL NE; Str 15, Dex 17, Con 14, Int 16, Wis 11, Cha 14.

Languages Spoken: Common, Elven, Gnome, Goblin, Undercommon.

Skills and feats: Appraise +5, Bluff +12, Climb +6, Concentration +10, Craft (leatherworking)+6, Gather Information +8, Hide +9, Jump +5, Knowledge (arcana) +10, Listen +5, Move silently +10, Profession (banker) +5, Ride +5, Search +9, Spellcraft +10, Spot +5; Combat Casting, Exotic weapon proficiency (whip), Silent Spell, [Scribe scroll], Skill focus (Bluff), Still Spell.

Wizard Spells Known (4/5/4/3/2): 0 - Arcane Mark, Dancing Lights, Daze, Detect Magic, Detect Poison, Disrupt Undead, Flare, Ghost Sound, Light, Mage Hand, Mending, Open/Close, Prestidigitation, Ray of Frost, Read Magic, Resistance. 1st - Charm Person, Chill Touch, Comprehend Languages, Feather Fall, Mage Armor, Magic Missile, Protection from Law, Shield, Shocking Grasp, Silent Image, Sleep. 2nd - Blindness/Deafness, Blur, Knock, Mirror Image, Web. 3rd - Blink, Explosive Runes, Haste, Slow. 4th - Charm Monster, Improved Invisibility, Lesser Geas, Phantasmal Killer.

The Church of the Dark Mother has surprisingly little power in the Vault of Tombs. As long as tithe money finds its way into their blasphemous coffers and the wealth of the Adamant Spire never appears to be rivalling their own, the Church is content to ignore its operations and concentrate on other matters. This freedom to maintain business as he sees fit only increases the amount of prestige and influence Hilvask possesses, though it also enforces his need for secrecy.

IMPORTANT PERSONAGES

Aside from Hilvask, the Vault does not have many individuals of note. The institutions here

effectively run themselves without the need for any important or extraordinary overseers. The sole exception to this is the Deathmaster in charge of the interments, Trilagoth the Pale. It is his responsibility to make sure that the edicts of the Vault are applied swiftly and impartially to every bodies that enters the establishment. He plans the funerary rites, he watches over the small horde of underpriests and apprentice mages and work the necromancy magic the Vault is based on, and he is the one ultimately responsible for the safekeeping of the Vault's bodies.

Trilagoth the Pale

Male elf (drow) Clr11: CR 12; Size M (5 ft., 4 in. tall); HD 11d8; hp 67; Init +5 (+1 Dex, +4 Improved initiative); Spd 30 ft.; AC 11 (+1 Dex); Attack +10/+5 melee, or +9/+4 ranged; SV Fort +7, Ref +4, Will +11; AL CE; Str 15, Dex 12, Con 11, Int 15, Wis 19, Cha 9.

Languages Spoken: Common, Draconic, Elven, Gnoll, Undercommon.

Skills and feats: Hide +4, Intuit direction +5, Knowledge (religion) +10, Knowledge (anatomy) +5, Listen +6, Move silently +4, Profession (mortician) +16, Scry +10, Search +5, Spellcraft +14, Spot +6; Blind-fight, Extend Spell, Improved initiative, Maximize Spell

Cleric Domains: Death, Darkness

Cleric Spells Per Day: 6/6+1/5+1/5+1/4+1/2+1/1+1.

The banking part of the Vault is fairly straight forward and is not run by any one person beyond the Black Chancellor. The banks accepts currency of virtually any sort, converts it into the many macabre monies of the Sprawling City, and keep a generous amount as revenue for the service. It is an effective money making system and it has fueled hundreds of the ruling body's projects in the centuries since its founding.

BUYING AND SELLING

This level exists to facilitate the economy, not to be an active part of it. As such, there are not as many stores here as in many other Sheoloth wards. Still, there is a sizable population here that serves to keep the vault functioning- soldiers, priests, mages, and commoners pressed

into service- and these individuals are not prone to wander far from their work. As such, the commerce that does exist here caters almost exclusively to these personnel.

The only other business interest in the Vault is an uncommon one for the surroundings but an integral part of the way Sheoloth operates in general. Slavers have an outlet in the Adamant Spire, feeding off the destitute that are brought here for their final chance to pay their taxes. Those that cannot afford their fees are remanded to the Slaving Guild and taken away in regular shipments to other wards for processing. The 'captive audience' that is brought to the Vault of Tombs on a regular basis is too fertile a field for the slavers of Sheoloth not to reap.

Noted Shops of the Blood Tithe

1. The House Vaults

The House Vaults usually contain stores of many different varieties, each one fulfilling a specific need for those who visit here. The buildings of the Vaults themselves represent the only effect places for smaller businesses to expand and the enclosed surroundings make for more comfortable shopping. These Vault stores also provide goods brought in by the Houses whose dead are contained here. This practice has created a sort of showcase effect whereby those who will brave the journey here can see a representation of the goods each House can provide.

Plot Hooks: The House Vault stores can be an excellent place for new drow products to be introduced to Player Characters. Prices here are usually very reasonable because so few ever shop in these places beyond the employees of the Adamant Spire and their wages are not enough to bear exorbitant profits. Also, items (and bodies) on display here attract the attention of thieves all the time; this attention can lead to numerous adventures dealing with either protecting the Vaults or trying to figure out a way to break into them.

2. The Adamant Spire

Hilvask Maeldurn makes his home here and has attracted the best businesses he could cajole subtly into attendance. The closest thing this ward has to decadence and fine merchantry can be found in the well-defended walls of the Adamant Spire. Drugs, fine furs, and exotic

items from as far away as the surface world itself can be found in the businesses successful enough to maintain a presence here despite the incredibly high cost of renting space within the Spire.

Plot Hooks: Some of the merchants in this part of the city have begun to suspect Hilvask is sitting on more money than he lets on. Player Characters might be approached to perform a 'scouting' expedition into the guarded depths of the Adamant Spire and discover the truth for them. Assuming the characters can survive the armed drow guards, automated defences, and magical wards that lie in their way, they could discover the amassed wealth of the Black Chancellor. Surviving this discovery will be an even more difficult endeavour.

3. Moneylender's Bazaar

A pair of small towers near both cavern entrances, these buildings effect exchanges of foreign currency without visitors having to venture into the ward itself. This is a point of security for the Vault, but it also effectively isolates the House Vault and Spire businesses from any kind of casual shopping that would occur elsewhere in the city. Though Hilvask does not care about this problem since all money in this area eventually comes to him, the other merchants do and sooner or later, they may be driven to do something about it themselves.

Plot Hooks: In addition to the plot seed given above, the Bazaars can be a hotbed for adventure in a number of different ways. Because almost ever foreign merchant must come here or send a representative here, it is a great place for Player Characters to make contacts. Members of the noble houses have to come past these towers to pay their tithes to the Adamant Spire, providing another possible method of contact. Thieves also lurk near the Bazaars because the pickings are so generous and there is an 'easy' escape waiting for them in the main exits to the cavern nearby should they get caught...



THE WAILING WAY

Aptly named, this cavern is rarely silent. The ruins of an ancient city lie here, crumbling masonry rotting in the endless shadows of the Underdeep. Throughout this dark place, the ghosts of its fallen people writhe and moan, forever cut off from their afterlife by the foul magic of Sheoloth and subject to a terrible hunt by the drow that lurk here now. The Wailing Way is a source of great power for those drow of the Sprawling City willing to brave the undead of this lost vale long enough to harvest their souls.

AT A GLANCE

The entire back end of this huge cavern is cut off by a massive landslide that trapped this city forever from the sun and sealed its fate centuries ago. Most of the city was caught beneath the tons of falling rock and lie entombed still, but much of it did not. Instead, it was shattered and left to fester in the lightlessness of this cave until the first drow to explore it discovered what lay buried in the tumbled earth.

The ruins that can be seen have been picked over thousands of times, but occasionally new treasures can still be discovered among the wreckage. There are no longer visible bodies stretching up dead hands into the darkness, but corpses still lie restless under the rocks and sometimes burst forth to take their cold revenge on those that would despoil their rest. The marks of countless battles against the formidable undead of the Wailing Way can be seen in the scorched stone and trails of lightning that scar this cavern's sundered walls.

The only new building in this entire ward is a spiked and spired keep built out of the ancient city's gravestones. This fortress holds back the encroaching undead and gives the necromancers within the safety they need to study the unique negative energies that pervade this cavern. Untold and unspeakable experiments occur within this terrible fortress. The wails of the living sometimes drown out even the unending

shrieks of the dead here, as the Necromancer's Safehold is legendary for the sheer volume of slaves it purchases elsewhere in the city.

HISTORY

Technically one of the oldest wards in the city, its dangers and proximity to the surface kept it from even being explored until late in Sheoloth's history. It was not until the advent of gravebonding enchantments that the drow turned their attention to this place. The power offered by that black magic was such that the dangerous undead and the roaming souls of the Wailing Way become not a hazard but a mine of boundless potential waiting to be reaved.

The first few expeditions into the Wailing Way went disastrously, with the first two teams to go in being slain within minutes of entry. The teeming undead of the cavern were far stronger than any of the drow could have believed; their own pride and arrogance cost them dozens of lives in these failed assaults. After the third loss, the forces of Sheoloth assembled a massive attack force and took the cavern through sheer force of arms and heavy amounts of powerful clerical magic. Through the influence of the Dark Mother herself, the cavern was tamed long enough for a guard post to be established and a war against the undead to begin in earnest.

It took four years for the drow to effectively destroy the power of Undeath in the Wailing Way. Undead thought destroyed would spontaneously rise again, sometimes only moment after being put down, and slain corporal undead would often manifest as ghostly assailants and continue to battle without pause. The drow eventually overcame them through magic and might, but it was a costly victory.

Since then, the necromancers of the city have struggled to make the lives lost in these battles worth the value they can squeeze from its remaining energies. This has been a success on all accounts, with the power of gravebond and fleshcrafting magic being strongest within the citadel built by these dark wizards and priests out of the original guard post. This Safehold, one of the most magically secure facilities in all of Sheoloth, generates hundreds of experiments and necromantic products each year for the

defence of the city and the edification of those wealthy enough to afford their extreme prices.

ALLEGIANCES

The only true alliance in the Wailing Way is the Bone Pact, the community of necromancers both divine and arcane that swear to protect and aid each other during their time here. This Pact began of convenience and has become a binding tradition among the gravebonders and fleshcrafters that ply their trade here. One of the only places in the Sprawling City where these two groups can work in peace and isolation, the Wailing Way has become a very important place to them. As such, the usual drow backstabbing and betrayals are all but unheard of here, giving way to a remarkable spirit of cooperation and unity.

This is not to say that everything here is completely placid between the drow of the Way. These wizards and priests are still drow after all, and their inner nature shines through despite their intentions to work together, often at the worst possible moments. For the price of a new spell, an undiscovered prayer, or some new path of power, most of the members of the Bone Pact are willing to sell out their fellows, though this price comes much higher than what other drow normally settle for.

IMPORTANT PERSONAGES

The Bone Lords, Kevvett Olnarvyn, his brother Darnev Olnarvyn, and a rogue female priestess of the Gravemother named Shroud adjudicate every major decision affecting the Necromancer's Safehold, their dealings with the other drow of Sheoloth, and the rights and limitations of the Bone Pact. All three are very unified in their decisions and in their utter intolerance of anyone who would step outside the bounds of the Pact to further their own agendas. It is their unity and strength of communal will that has kept the Bone Pact together for as long as it has. In fact, three are rumoured to be so close that an informal 'marriage' of sorts exists between all three.

Kevvett Olnarvyn

Wiz14: CR 15; Size M (5 ft., 1 in. tall); HD

14d4+14; hp 57; Init +2 (+2 Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 12 (+2 Dex); Attack +7/+2 melee, or +9/+4 ranged; SV Fort +5, Ref +8, Will +9; AL CE; Str 10, Dex 14, Con 13, Int 19, Wis 11, Cha 10.

Languages Spoken: Common, Draconic, Elven, Goblin, Orc, Undercommon.

Skills and feats: Craft (Craft (Alchemy)) +21, Climb +5, Hide +2, Innuendo +3, Knowledge (arcana) +21, Profession (vivisectionist)+13, Scry +17, Search +6, Spellcraft +17, Spot +8; Craft wondrous item, Enlarge spell, Leadership, Lightning reflexes, Maximize spell, [Scribe scroll], Spell mastery (Vampiric Touch, Animate Dead, Finger of Death), Still spell.

Wizard Spells Known (4/5/5/5/3/3/2): 0

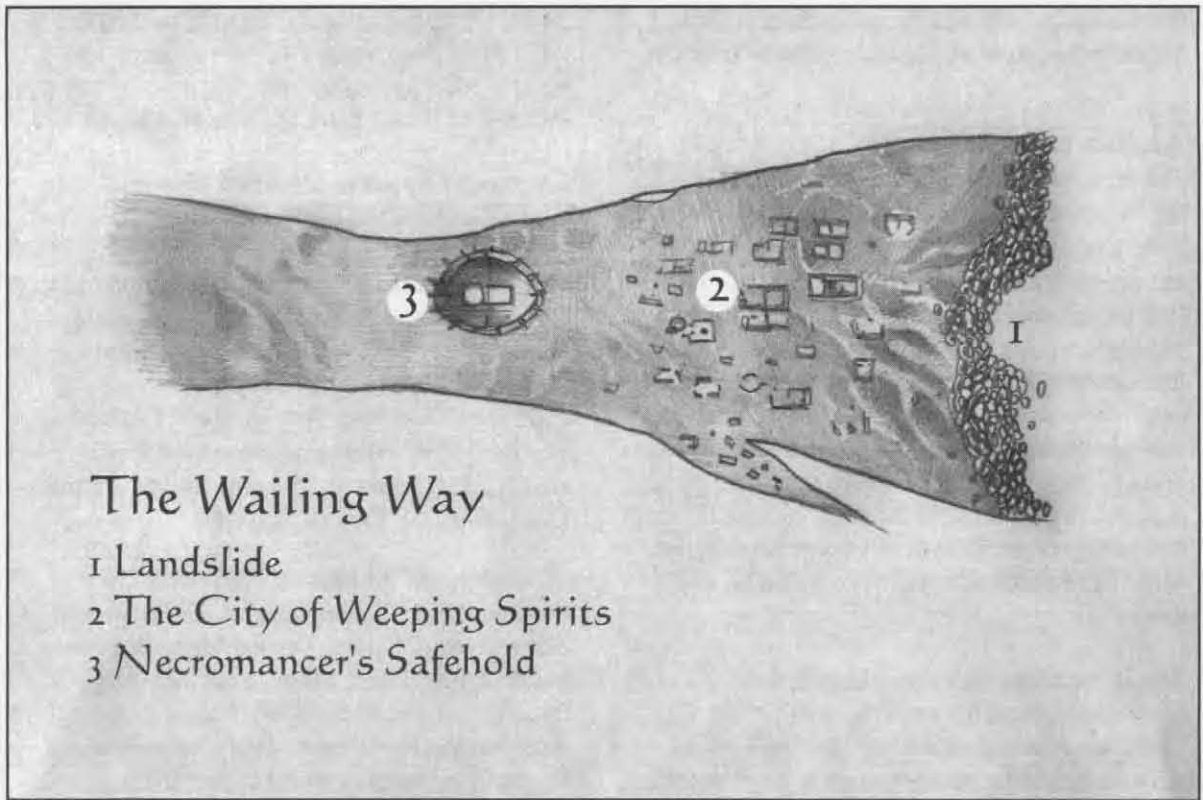
- Arcane Mark, Dancing Lights, Daze, Detect Magic, Detect Poison, Disrupt Undead, Flare, Ghost Sound, Light, Mage Hand, Mending, Open/Close, Prestidigitation, Ray of Frost, Read Magic, Resistance. 1st - Charm Person, Hypnotism, Mage Armor, Magic Missile, Message, Protection from Good, Sleep, Summon Monster I. 2nd - Blindness/Deafness, Detect Thoughts, Invisibility, Knock, Locate Object, Acid Arrow, Mirror Image, See Invisibility, Web. 3rd - Blink, Haste, Magic Circle against Chaos, Nondetection, Sleet Storm, Vampiric Touch. 4th - Bestow Curse, Charm Monster, Dimension Door, Lesser Geas, Resilient Sphere, Polymorph Other, Polymorph Self, Wall of Fire. 5th - Animate Dead, Cloudkill, Dominate Person, Greater Shadow Conjuration, Hold Monster, Lesser Planar Binding, Summon Monster V, Teleport, Transmute Mud to Rock, Transmute Rock to Mud, Wall of Force, Wall of Stone. 6th - Forceful Hand, Contingency, Geas/Quest, True Seeing. 7th - Finger of Death, Limited Wish, Mass Invisibility, Spell Turning, Summon Monster VII, Teleport without Error.

Darnev Olnarvyn

Wiz14: CR 15; Size M (5 ft., 1 in. tall); HD 14d4+14; hp 60; Init +2 (+2 Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 12 (+2 Dex); Attack +8/+3 melee, or +9/+4 ranged; SV Fort +5, Ref +8, Will +9; AL CE; Str 12, Dex 14, Con 13, Int 17, Wis 11, Cha 10.

Languages Spoken: Common, Draconic, Elven, Gnoll, Orc, Undercommon.

Skills and feats: Craft (Craft (Alchemy))



The Wailing Way

- 1 Landslide
- 2 The City of Weeping Spirits
- 3 Necromancer's Safehold

+15, Hide +9, Innuendo +5, Knowledge (arcana) +20, Move Silently +9, Profession (vivisectionist)+15, Scry +10, Search +6, Spellcraft +15, Spot +8; Craft wondrous item, Enlarge spell, Lightning reflexes, Maximize spell, [Scribe scroll], Spell mastery (Vampiric Touch, Cloudkill, Disintegrate), Silent spell, Toughness.

Wizard Spells Known (4/5/5/5/3/3/2): 0

- Arcane Mark, Dancing Lights, Daze, Detect Magic, Detect Poison, Disrupt Undead, Flare, Ghost Sound, Light, Mage Hand, Mending, Open/Close, Prestidigitation, Ray of Frost, Read Magic, Resistance. 1st - Charm Person, Hypnotism, Mage Armor, Magic Missile, Message, Protection from Good, Sleep, Summon Monster I. 2nd - Blindness/Deafness, Detect Thoughts, Invisibility, Knock, Locate Object, Acid Arrow, Mirror Image, See Invisibility, Web. 3rd - Blink, Haste, Magic Circle against Chaos, Nondetection, Sleet Storm, Vampiric Touch. 4th - Bestow Curse, Charm Monster, Dimension Door, Lesser Geas, Resilient Sphere, Polymorph Other, Polymorph Self, Wall of Fire. 5th - Animate Dead, Cloudkill, Dominate Person, Greater Shadow Conjuration, Hold Monster, Lesser Planar Binding, Summon Monster V, Teleport, Transmute Mud to Rock, Transmute Rock to Mud, Wall of Force, Wall of Stone. 6th

- Forceful Hand, Contingency, Geas/Quest, True Seeing. 7th -- Finger of Death, Limited Wish, Spell Turning, Summon Monster VII, Teleport without Error.

Shroud

Female elf (drow) Wiz14/Clr3: CR 18; Size M (5 ft., 1 in. tall); HD 14d4 + 3d8; hp 54; Init +5 (+5 Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 15 (+5 Dex); Attack +12/+7 melee, or +14/+9 ranged; SV Fort +7, Ref +10, Will +14; AL CE; Str 16, Dex 20, Con 11, Int 22, Wis 15, Cha 15.

Languages Spoken: Abyssal, Celestial, Common, Draconic, Dwarven, Elven, Infernal, Orc, Undercommon.

Skills and feats: Craft (Craft (Alchemy)) +23, Concentration +12, Craft (flesh sculptures) +22, Escape artist +6, Forgery +8, Heal +8, Hide +5, Innuendo +3, Knowledge (anatomy) +25, Knowledge (arcana) +21, Knowledge (religion) +18, Listen +4, Move silently +5, Open lock +9, Profession +8, Scry +15, Search +8, Sense motive +5, Speak language +3, Spot +4; Empower spell, Extend spell, Forge ring, Leadership, Maximize Spell, [Scribe scroll], Skill focus (Spellcraft), Spell focus (necromancy), Spell penetration.

Wizard Spells Known (4/6/6/5/5/4/4/2): 0

- Arcane Mark, Dancing Lights, Daze, Detect Magic, Detect Poison, Disrupt Undead, Flare, Ghost Sound, Light, Mage Hand, Mending, Open/Close, Prestidigitation, Ray of Frost, Read Magic, Resistance. 1st - Burning Hands, Change Self, Charm Person, Chill Touch, Erase, Expeditious Retreat, Identify, Magic Missile, Shield. 2nd - Alter Self, Blindness/Deafness, Blur, Daylight, Fog Cloud, Glitterdust, Acid Arrow, See Invisibility. 3rd - Fireball, Flame Arrow, Hold Person, Nondetection, Shrink Item, Water Breathing. 4th - Charm Monster, Ice Path, Improved Invisibility, Minor Globe of Invulnerability, Polymorph Other, Polymorph Self, Rainbow Pattern, Summon Monster IV. 5th - Cloudkill, Cone of Cold, Dominate Person, Permanency, Summon Monster V, Wall of Force, Wall of Stone. 6th - Chain Lightning, Disintegrate, Eyebite, Globe of Invulnerability. 7th - Grasping Hand, Limited Wish, Phase Door, Teleport without Error.

Cleric Domains: Death, Chaos

Cleric Spells Per Day: 4/3+1/2+1.

BUYING AND SELLING

No trade of the normal variety exists in the Wailing Way because few merchants come here and the members of the Bone Pack and magically create anything they require. The only commerce here is that of necromancy. Drow and other visitors to Sheoloth who desire the best on fleshcrafting or a powerful gravebond to increase their personal power look no further than the Necromancer's Safehold for the goods they need. The Bone Pact administers prices and performance closely, demanding the highest level of both. A customer in the Safehold can expect both incredibly workmanship and a price that echoes that value.

For some, this has been less a detriment than a mark of station. Since the work the Safehold mages and priests perform is very unique, it is obvious to those with an eye for such things where the craftsmanship of their items originates. Bearers of a fleshcraft or gravebond from the Wailing Way tend to show off their prizes; this has led to a kind of 'elite' status where buyers of these items can only go to the Wailing Way if they can afford it and are shown to be connoisseurs if they do so.

Still strongly guarded after all this time because of the occasional spawns of undead that come from the nearby ruins, the Wailing Way boasts some of the most hardened warriors in all of Sheoloth. While the forces of the drow here are all very powerful, few of them fight on so constant a basis. This brings a great deal of status to soldiers in the Sprawling City's armies with service time here and provides a valuable commodity of protection to merchants who visit the Wailing Way and are willing to pay for an escort. Those who do not pay tend to be pointedly ignored by the Wayguard, even when a dozen wraiths are tearing apart their souls.

New Feats: Benefits of Wayguard Training

Gravesense (General)

You can feel the undead when they are close, even if they are invisible, incorporeal, or otherwise hidden from sight.

Prerequisites: Wisdom 12+, innate spell-like abilities from another permanent source

Benefit: You gain the spell-like ability to cast *detect undead* at will, much as a paladin can use *detect evil*. This power replaces one of your innate spell-like abilities, but it can be any one of your choice and its uses per day are not limited to the replaced ability. This ability is automatically blocked by a foot or more of earth (soil, sand, rocks, etc.) or any magical form of *non-detection*; no other material or spell (aside from anti-magic of any kind) impedes its effectiveness.

Reaper's Blow (General, Fighter)

Long years of training have shown you how to strike the undead for maximum effectiveness.

Prerequisites: Base Attack Bonus 9+, Improved Critical, Weapon Specialization (with the same weapon the Improved Critical feat has been taken for).

Benefit: You can inflict a critical hit on an undead as if it was another creature type vulnerable to such attacks. This ability also allows you to inflict sneak attack damage on an undead assuming you already possess the ability to do so. This ability is tied to the weapon type of the prerequisite feats for Reaper's Blow and cannot be used when wielding any weapon you do not have these feats for.

WEB OF THE DARK MOTHER

Just where it should be, the Web of the Dark Mother is a wide ring cavern that extends out like many grasping arms over the other levels of Sheoloth. The heart of the city, this massive, twisting cavern is dotted with hundreds of side passages just deep enough to house private shrines, public temples, slave cells for soon-to-be sacrifices, and the chambers of the ovarisites. The immense temple-fane to the Dark Mother is here as well; its black, foreboding buttresses and wide arched walls making it the largest single structure in all of Sheoloth with the sole exception of the Leviathan Shield.

AT A GLANCE

Compared to the rambles in the Rusted Vein and the Hordes, the Web of the Dark Mother is almost Spartan and austere. Except for the bloodsport arena in the far eastern side of the cavern and the huge spider headed temple overlooking the southern edge, there are very few structures. This was done to give penitents and worshippers the easiest possible time getting from temple to temple and to reduce the number of dark alleys in which assassins could lurk. While the drow have no sense of pity or concern for others, the priests and priestesses certainly do not wish to risk their own lives and dead drow on their way to worship only diminishes the deafening voices of the faithful that continuously ring through this unholy level of Sheoloth.

The only place on the Web level with heavy security is the stretch of tunnels running between the Grand Temple and the primary farms south of it. This farm is both the private (and therefore more secure) source of nourishment for the clergy here and it serves as a secluded fungal garden surrounding the most vital function of the Web; the ovarisites and their breeding chambers. None of the other temples here, many of which are dedicated to deities other than the Dark Mother, have any basic security patrols, but their own clergy are usually enough to dissuade attack.

HISTORY

Most of the relevant facts about the Web of the Dark Mother can be found in other sections of this book, but the basic history of the level is important enough to note here. This cavern, unlike many in Sheoloth, has never been altered or formed other than to dig shallow emplacements for hundreds of temples along its walls. The cavern, with its size and tendril-like extensions,



was discovered early in the city's history by diggers looking for ways to expand and accommodate their growing population. When the Web was found, its spider like arms and dark mineral deposits were seen as favoured by the dark goddess herself. By priestess' decree, the entire level was set aside as a temple district and built up to its present form.

In Sheoloth's long and bloody history, violence has never raged out of control here as it has on other levels. Between the immense power of the combined clergies and the ruthless nature of the ovarisites and their protection of their spawning ground, anyone foolish enough to attack this level is quickly destroyed and after a few such bloody examples of misdirected aggression, no one has been foolish enough to attempt an insurrection again.

The temples here are of differing types, purposes, and ages. Only the Grand Temple to the Dark Mother has existed in its original form through the decades of continual turmoil that have plagued the lesser shrines and temples along the cavern walls of the Web. While there is a tenuous peace between the church of the Dark Mother and the other deities with representation here, the individual shrines are not so peaceful. No open war in the cavern has ever been allowed, but knives in the dark and poisoned libation goblets have claimed countless devout lives quietly and without incident. No death here goes unavenged, however, and dozens of minor shadow feuds shake the strands of the Web endlessly.

ALLEGIANCES

The churches here are tangled and enmeshed in so many alliances and vague promises whispered across altars and bedchambers that charting them all would be a futile gesture. Not only are they an uncountable morass of ill intentions and withheld violence, but they change by the hours and the political landscape of the Web is never the same from one day to the next. There are a few allegiances that bear noting, as they have endured for years and will likely continue to do so for decades assuming no major changes arise or they cease being convenient.

The first and foremost is between the high

clergy of the Dark Mother and the ovarisites that maintain the fresh crops of drow children for them. This arrangement has been mutually beneficial to all sides, though both forces have constantly sought to better their end of the bargain. The ovarisites have been less aggressive in this effort; the few children they take from each harvest are enough for their needs. The drow clergy have been looking for a way to retain more children from each crop for years to no success. If there were a way to magically control the ovarisites, a method of dominating them into performing their vital function without free will or payment, the Dark church would leap at it like a starving spider.

Another important alliance in the Web is the agreement between the eight High Priestesses of the Dark Mother and the cult of the Filth-eater, a disease obsessed sect of religious fanatics devoted to the bilious forms of death and decay. Their predilection with filth and grime make them the perfect drow to deal with the distasteful chore of childbirth; their acceptance of this task has ensured their constant, though unenvied, place in Sheoloth society. The church of the Dark Mother tolerates the followers of the Filth-eater in the Web only as long as they continue to serve. Were they to step out of line, even once, the Dark Eight would descend upon them and leave nothing but bones in their wake.

Support from the armies of the Killer and the powers of the Gravemother maintain their rights to keep temples on the Web. The alliances here are some of the strongest, as without the protection of the Killer's devoted troops and the spiritual efforts of the Gravemother, the Dark Mother's power in Sheoloth would begin to crumble and erode. Levels of allegiance and betrayal exist within this tripartite relationship, but on the whole the system works brilliantly. On their own, each of the three churches would be overcome and devoured by other drow; together, they survive through violence and domination.

IMPORTANT PERSONAGES

The most important drow in the Web are without a doubt the Dark Eight, the priestesses of the Dark Mother that rule over the entire church



structure of Sheoloth. It was by their direction that Sheoloth expanded to its original size, it was their guidance that opened the outer edges of the city up to foreign goods and merchants, and it is through their power that the tunnels are filled with enough temples and shrines to provide clergy to serve in battle and to keep the drow population in line with the teachings of the Dark Mother herself.

The Dark Eight are a paranoid lot, with very little known about them other than their approximate ability and ruthless nature. This is made even more difficult for those who would pry into their affairs by the fact that they keep obscurement magic upon their persons at all times through the use of their arachnid-inspired *facewebs*, magical mask-helms that are detailed below. Once in the history of Sheoloth and the Web of the Dark Mother, a mask was wrested from a dead member of the Dark Eight. Whatever she looked like was never revealed, because the mask became a massive phase spider and consumed the assailant before he could tell anyone, or so the rumour mill would have it believed.

While the Dark Eight are often seen but barely known, another important figure in the power struggles of Sheoloth is well known but rarely seen. Sanguis the Stalker, the High Master of the Hell's Hunt, is the apparent leader of the Incabulos in the city, though his whereabouts at any given time are a mystery even to the powerful witches of the Gravemother. Somehow able to evade even the most powerful of divinations, Sanguis is rumoured to have his dark cult's base of operations somewhere in the Web as a direct flout to the power of the Dark Mother and her servants. The Eight patrol the Web regularly with vast numbers of guards in a constant search for the Hell's Hunt, but aside from straggler cultists with no useful information, they always return without their quarry.

Sanguis the Stalker

Male elf (drow) Ftr12/Rog3/Asn4: CR 20; Size M (6 ft., 2 in. tall); HD 12d10+36 + 7d6+21; hp 165; Init +9 (+5 Dex, +4 Improved initiative); Spd 30 ft.; AC 15 (+5 Dex); Attack +22/+17/+12/+7 melee, or +22/+17/+12/+7 ranged; SV Fort +15, Ref +16, Will +9; AL CE; Str 20, Dex

21, Con 16, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 11.

Languages Spoken: Common, Elven, Undercommon.

Skills and feats: Balance +15, Climb +19, Gather information +10, Handle animal +15, Hide +5, Listen +12, Move silently +5, Open lock +10, Search +5, Spot +10, Tumble +14; Blind-fight, Power attack, Cleave, Great Cleave, Endurance, Great Fortitude, Improved critical (shortspear), Improved initiative, Improved Disarm, Lightning reflexes, Iron Will, Two-weapon fighting, Weapon focus (shortspear), Weapon Specialization (shortspear).

One of the reasons for this constant failure is that the Stalker is only the figurehead of the Incabulos heresy. Its true leader, a powerful drow sorcerer by the name of Gaelex with all the knowledge of the Incabulos rites and connections to every one of his students through binding magic that lets him know their exact location, level of divine power, and health at all times. Gaelex created Sanguis the Stalker out of a fleshcrafter's cast-off experiment years ago through his own bloody magics and can summon him and his *hematite hellhounds* (see the New Magic Items section below) at will as per a *planar ally* spell through a special bone talisman he wears. The Stalker lasts one hour, though he disappears if 'killed' before this time, and always reforms 24 hours after dismissal or death, ready to be summoned again.

Gaelex

Male elf (drow) Sor19: CR 20; Size M (5 ft., 2 in. tall); HD 19d4+19; hp 71; Init +8 (+4 Dex, +4 Improved initiative); Spd 30 ft.; AC 14 (+4 Dex); Attack +10/+5 melee, or +13/+8 ranged; SV Fort +7, Ref +10, Will +10; AL CE; Str 13, Dex 19, Con 12, Int 16, Wis 9, Cha 17.

Languages Spoken: Common, Elven, Gnoll, Goblin, Undercommon.

Skills and feats: Craft (Alchemy) +10, Craft +25, Escape artist +6, Forgery +12, Hide +5, Listen +1, Move silently +12, Profession +20, Search +5, Spellcraft +25, Spot +1, Swim +7; Craft wondrous item, Scribe Scroll, Enlarge spell, Extend spell, Heighten spell, Still Spell,

Improved initiative.

Sorcerer Spells Known (6/7/7/7/6/6/6/6): 0 - Dancing Lights, Detect Magic, Ghost Sound, Light, Mage Hand, Mending, Ray of Frost, Read Magic, Resistance. 1st - Charm Person, Mage Armor, Magic Missile, Shield, Sleep. 2nd - Acid Arrow, Mirror Image, Protection from Arrows, Pyrotechnics, Web. 3rd - Flame Arrow, Hold Person, Lightning Bolt, Wind Wall. 4th -- Illusory Wall, Polymorph Other, Summon Monster IV, Wall of Fire. 5th - Cone of Cold, Hold Monster, Teleport, Wall of Stone. 6th - Disintegrate, Eyebite, True Seeing. 7th - Limited Wish, Plane Shift, Teleport without Error.

Velduuna the Vile, the highest ranking priestess of the cult of the Filth-eater, directs her people to steer clear of these hunts. She is not worried about them turning on her followers, but by staying out of the way, she gets to benefit from the trail of broken bodies that always fall in the wake of their violent passing. By the same token, she makes certain that her services are available to the church of the Killer and its powerful lord, Jezdivyn Urklaar.

Velduuna the Vile

Female elf (drow) Clr13: CR 14; Size M (5 ft., 1 in. tall); HD 13d8; hp 72; Init +1 (+1 Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 11 (+1 Dex); Attack +12/+7 melee, or +10/+5 ranged; SV Fort +8, Ref +5, Will +11; AL CE; Str 16, Dex 13, Con 11, Int 12, Wis 17, Cha 15.

Languages Spoken: Common, Elven, Undercommon.

Skills and feats: Concentration +10, Heal +5, Hide +5, Listen +5, Knowledge (religion) +10, Move silently +5, Scry +6, Spot +5; Brew potion, Combat casting, Combat reflexes, Quicken spell, Weapon focus (mace, light).

Cleric Domains: Chaos, Evil.

Cleric Spells Per Day: 6/6+1/6+1/5+1/4+1/3+1/2+1/1+1.

Jezdivyn is not the most powerful member of his church, but his massive frame and superlative skills in battle keep him in a position of leadership there. He does not appreciate the attentions of Velduuna, especially as her

interests seem to be along the lines of a more 'physical' nature, but he tolerates her because the Filth-eaters keep the streets clear of the rot and festering corpses that would otherwise lie in the tracks of his troops as they make their rounds. Until she gives him a reason to do otherwise, he will not move against her for fear of rousing the ire of the Dark Eight. Lately, her habit of waiting for him unannounced in his bedchambers has come very close to slipping his resolve on that account.

Jezdivyn Urklaar

Male elf (drow) Clr14/Ftr4: CR 19; Size M (4 ft., 11 in. tall); HD 14d8+42 + 4d10+12; hp 135; Init +2 (+2 Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 12 (+2 Dex); Attack +17/+12/+7 melee, or +16/+11/+6 ranged; SV Fort +16, Ref +7, Will +14; AL CE; Str 17, Dex 14, Con 16, Int 16, Wis 19, Cha 10.

Languages Spoken: Common, Elven, Gnoll, Gnome, Undercommon.

Skills and feats: Appraise +9, Concentration +10, Craft (sculpture)+12, Disable device +6, Gather information +6, Handle animal +6, Hide +2, Knowledge (religion) +10, Listen +6, Move silently +6, Pick pocket +10, Search +9, Spot +8, Use rope +5; Blind-fight, Combat Reflexes, Empower spell, Expertise, Improved critical (unarmed strike), Improved unarmed strike, Silent Spell, Weapon Focus (unarmed strike), Weapon Specialization (unarmed strike), Still spell.

Cleric Domains: Evil, Destruction.

Cleric Spells Per Day: 6/6+1/6+1/5+1/5+1/3+1/3+1/2+1.

The clergy of the Gravemother meet here constantly, though their duties with gravebonders and the necromancers throughout Sheoloth keep them from being here en masse at any given time. If the entirety of the Web were to burn and everyone in it killed, the Gravemother would lose the fewest priests and very few of her upper hierarchy. This point has not gotten past the Dark Eight, who watch the church constantly to ensure that none among the Gravematrns get any such ideas. If she is plotting such a move, the leader of the church, Hylviar Lusakras, has shown no sign of it. As the highest midwife in the city and the instigator

of that societal place for her priestesses, she is apparently content with life as it stands for the moment.

Hylviar Lusakras

Female elf (drow) Clr14: CR 15; Size M (4 ft., 11 in. tall); HD 14d8; hp 62; Init +2 (+2 Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 8 (-2 Dex); Attack +13/+8 melee, or +12/+7 ranged; SV Fort +9, Ref +7, Will +14; AL CE; Str 17, Dex 14, Con 11, Int 12, Wis 20, Cha 14.

Languages Spoken: Common, Elven, Orc, Undercommon.

Skills and feats: Concentration +12, Craft +17, Hide +5, Knowledge (arcana) +12, Knowledge (religion) +10, Listen +5, Search +3, Spellcraft +10, Spot +7; Craft wand, Lightning reflexes, Maximize spell, Empower spell, Weapon Focus (whip), Weapon Specialization (whip).

Cleric Domains: Darkness, Evil.

Cleric Spells Per Day: 6/7+1/6+1/5+1/5+1/4+1/3+1/2+1.

Though many of the clergy in the Web deny it with every virulent breath, there is a series of shrines on this level dedicated to the Deceiver. The reason they seem invisible is that none of the shrines appear as anything but devout places of worship to the Dark Mother. Their facades hide a growing network of traitors to the Dark Mother's church and many more replaced clergy through the use of *polymorphs* and other subversive magic. Penitents coming to these hidden Deceiver shrines are walked through the usual prayers, but all the while their minds are being probed subtly through *detect thoughts*. Those with the potential to be turned are approached quietly at another time, while those truly dedicated to the Dark Mother are silently noted and dismissed without further incident.

The Deceiver is very patient and though it may take another hundred years for these dark sites of conversion to have a lasting effect on the populace of Sheoloth, the power of the Deceiver is beginning to flow out of them like a black cancer. Deceiver priests on the Web answer to a cowed and mysterious master known to them only as 'Traacherous'. This figure, who has exhibited enough magic to reveal himself as an immensely potent priest (drow/m/rog2/clr18), comes in the darkest hours of the under night

and gives them their orders for days or weeks to come and then is not seen again for that time. He carries messages and claims to communicate with others above him, though none have ever been seen. Traps laid for Traacherous never work, and they usually end up dead for those that set them.

There are no notable nobles or criminals on this level that are not serving with the churches. The Web of the Dark Mother is not a residence cavern, so it is spared most of the infighting and jostling with knives for position that occurs in Silver Streets and the like. The nobility void is one that the Houses of Sheoloth feel strongly but are utterly powerless to correct. Without the tools of the nobility that exist in other cultures (alliance by marriage, blood heirs conceived in secret and kept hostage, or forms of blackmail that only work among more civilized beings), the Houses are left with no recourse but to tighten their fists around the power they wield elsewhere in the Sprawling City.

BUYING AND SELLING

The Web has no commerce or trade to speak of, though many of the churches work within themselves to barter and trade for the goods they need rather than venture to other wards of Sheoloth and expose themselves to possible retribution by angry drow jealous of their power. This has set up a small internal market based around trade goods of a kind that can be made in the temples and shrines along the web. Items like clothing turned out from the spider-looms of the Gravemother, clothing manufactured in Filth-eater shrines, and the foodstuffs harvested from the private farms maintained by slaves in return for delaying their own trips to the dining table.

The only other vestiges of a marketplace or economy exist at the Web furnace, called the Pyre of the Lost because of its use in disposing of sacrificial corpses not deemed worthy of use by fleshcrafters and gravebonders in service to the churches. The Filth-eaters hate the Pyre, thinking it a waste of perfectly good infectable flesh, but they do not have the influence to stop the burnings entirely. Instead, they bribe the carriage drivers that come here to 'look at the cavern ceiling' while devotees of Filth pull corpses off their wagons. The bribes have

almost become an unofficial toll due to their regularity and it is a rare trip to the Pyre that ends with one burned corpse for every dead sacrifice loaded aboard at the temple.

The Arena is the primary entertainment for the clergy caught in the Web and the one place where all of them, regardless of divine affiliation, can mingle without feuds erupting in the seats. The Faceless Watch keep a close eye on the clergy here to enforce that peace, but their intervention is rarely necessary. In times of feast when the cells are overflowing with more sacrifices than the temples and shrine can efficiently use, the surplus is filtered for strong or interested bodies and those chosen get brought here.

Gladiatorial combat, almost always to the death, amuses the audience sufficiently to keep the peace as long as blood is flowing. Player

Characters who get captured and brought to the Web may find themselves in a shrine sponsored stable and given the choice of fighting in the Arena or death on an altar top. While fighters here have very little chance of freedom and certainly no chance of being set loose through his efforts in the Arena, there are benefits to good performance. Many of the priests and priestesses take a liking to showy or powerful gladiator slaves and express that favour in any number of ways. Compared to the altar, it can be better life than most captives ever get. (To run a plotline involving the Temple Arena, Games Masters my wish to consult *Gladiator: The Sands of Death* for rules regarding the management of events and other arena-based scenarios.)

New Magic Item - Faceweb

These enchanted full masks are woven of construction-strength webbing and incorporate pieces of ornate, darkly inlaid jewelry. The effect of these inclusions makes the *faceweb* resemble an intricate spider with its legs attaching itself to the wearer's face and head, covering every inch of flesh and hair with the sheathes of webbing between its points. Black jewels burning with an inner fire cover the wearer's eyes, but they do not impede sight in any way.

The *faceweb's* true purpose is misdirection, though one element of its construction inflicts retribution upon those who would invade the wearer's privacy. To these ends, the magical mask-helm continuously radiates *non-detection* over itself and the user, generates a *screen* spell that prevents divination magic from seeing anything but a teeming mass of spiders behind its webbing visor or beneath the wearer's clothes, and can cast a *phantasmal killer* against anyone who tries to pry in such a manner so long as they are within 180 feet when doing so. *Caster Level:* 16th; *Prerequisites:* Craft Wondrous Item, *nondetection*, *screen*, *phantasmal killer*; *Market Price:* 165,000gp (though selling this item anywhere in Sheoloth or wearing it within the boundaries of the city would be suicidal)

New Magic Item – Figurines of Baleful Power (Hematite Hellhounds)

New Magic Item – Figurines of Baleful Power (Hematite Hellhounds)

These six perfectly matched hematite statuettes of hounds are carved to resemble hunting dogs in the midst of a chase and are connected by a series of tiny adamantine chains attached to demon leather collars. When cast to the ground with the intention of summoning them forth, six ashen grey hellhounds of maximum hit points for their hit dice and a +2 morale bonus to all attack and damage rolls appear as the figurines vanish. These hellhounds fight for and obey the user's every silent command, linked to him through the chain they are bound by and the leash that the user must hold to control them. The leash is magical, can extend up to 30 feet, and allows the hellhounds to get no further than five feet from any one other of their kind. If killed, the hellhounds vanish until the last one is gone. When this occurs or if the hellhounds are dismissed by the user by releasing the leash (either willingly or because he is forced to drop it) before their one hour time limit is up, the six statuettes reappear and cannot be used again for 24 hours.

Caster Level: 12th; *Prerequisites:* Craft Wondrous Item; *animate objects*, *rary's telepathic bond*, *burning hands*, *endurance*; *Market Price:* 64,000gp



WITCH DAGGERS

Those few visitors allowed to enter the caverns of the Witch Daggers are usually taken aback by its ethereal beauty. While it evinces the usual construction webbing found in other Sheoloth caverns, it bears an ethereal quality that almost marks it as being more elven than dark elven. The lights and colours from the enchanted crystals studding the stalactite towers of the arcanists living here only shrouds the darkness burning in their hearts. Visitors are quickly dissuaded of any notion that the drow here are in any way more peaceful or kinder than their fellows, usually at the end of a violent spell or the stinging point of a heavily enchanted dagger.

AT A GLANCE

The first barrier to entrance into this ward is the brightly glowing Mage Gate, a construct of pure elemental energy that wreathes a solid set of stone walls suspended permanently in the ethereal plane. By command of the wizard-lords who live here, the Mage Gate can be exchanged for the stone construction instantly, allowing the ward to be blocked off from both physical and extradimensional approach or opened up completely. The unique gate is a source of contention between the wizards here and the church of the Dark Mother, but in the interests of not beginning another war while their focus is needed elsewhere fighting the Incabulos, they have not pressed the point yet and the Mage Gate remains.

Past that formidable buttress, the cavern opens up into a place of deceptive beauty. Glowing mists of hundreds of dim but subtly different hues coil along the floor around the buildings of the commoners that serve as the wizard-lords' work force and 'subjects', though that last status is under some contention. Motes of shifting colours float aimlessly through the cavern, casting ever-moving shadows all around its quartz-studded walls. The entire effect is dazzling, but it pales in comparison with the buildings that give the Witch Daggers ward its name- the stalactite inverted towers where the wizards live.

These monumental achievements of magical architecture have been hollowed out and converted into multiple level abodes of crystal laden rock. The veins of semi-precious stones and quartz are so thick in these stalactites run deeply enough that lights inside the towers shine through at various points and create the illusion of a starry night over the mist-shrouded floor of the cave. Dark bridges of construction webbing connect some of the towers, while others remain solitary and foreboding.

HISTORY

The Witch Daggers ward was built as a way of both containing and concentrating the wizard population of Sheoloth into one place. While they were and remain a valuable resource of power for the city, their insurrections and their desire to lead Sheoloth keep them from being trusted by the general populace and continue to inspire the wrath of the church whenever their ideals clash. Given the carnage and destructive power unleashed in the clash that created the Charred Gate, both groups are happy to have this arrangement for now. The wizards enjoy the idea of a group of drow below them to rule over in lieu of their dreams of conquest, and the churches of Sheoloth get to draw on their magical talents without having to always watch out for them growing too connected to the rest of the city.

Since the wizard-lords were given this cavern and allowed to rule it as they saw fit, there have been very few conflicts between them and the church. For the most part, they remain an effective part of Sheoloth's greater community and quickly lend their support against any threat to the stability of the city. Of course, all of this would change in a mystic heartbeat if the wizard-lords thought they had a chance to remove the church's yoke over their expansion plans and rule Sheoloth entire. The priestesses of the Dark Mother know this all too well and while they do not censure the wizards of the Witch Daggers for it, they do keep a very close eye on them.

ALLEGIANCES

The wizard-lords hold only themselves in any form of allegiance structure, deeming any such arrangement with those outside the

Witch Daggers to be items of convenience, easily discarded. The nine massive towers that dominate the underside of the cavern's roof are home to the Nine Shards, the wizard-lords that rule this cavern and interact with each other at various levels of cooperation and antipathy. The union of the wizard-lords is far from universal, with the fractious nature of their politics having a direct effect on the people they attempt to rule.

On the cave floor, the drow living in the Witch Daggers have their own alliance; it exists in the form of a sufferance pact that keeps the populace from revolting against the wizards only as long as there is profit and benefit to be had in remaining peaceful. If the wizard-lords ever push their tyranny too far, they will find blades at their back before they could lift a staff in self-defense. For now, things are peaceful and the lack of presence by the church of the Dark Mother may keep it that way indefinitely.

IMPORTANT PERSONAGES

The Nine Shards are well known to the people of the Witch Daggers, though only seven show themselves with any frequency and one is merely a legend, even to the other lords. The accepted, if only through force of spell and personality, leader of the Shards is the wizard-lord Kezaralyn. His skill at evading enemy spells has made him a nigh unbeatable opponent and kept him alive long enough to defeat his rivals long enough to claim and hold the leadership title among his equally tyrannical peers.

Kezaralyn

Male elf (drow) Rog2/Wiz18: CR 21; Size M (4 ft., 10 in. tall); HD 2d6+2 + 18d4+18; hp 75; Init +4 (+4 Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 14 (+4 Dex); Attack +11/+6 melee, or +14/+9 ranged; SV Fort +7, Ref +13, Will +15; AL LE; Str 12, Dex 18, Con 12, Int 24, Wis 18, Cha 10.

Languages Spoken: Common, Draconic, Elven, Gnoll, Goblin, Orc, Undercommon.

Skills and feats: Craft (Craft (Alchemy)) (+10), Concentration +20, Bluff +10, Diplomacy +10, Hide +14, Intimidate +8, Knowledge (arcana) +28, Knowledge (religion) +10, Listen +17, Move silently +9, Scry (+10), Search +14, Sense

motive +14, Spellcraft +25, Spot +13, Tumble +10, Use rope (+5); Alertness, Craft staff, Craft wand, Dodge, Empower spell, Extend spell, Forge ring, Improved Initiative, Quicken spell, [Scribe scroll], Silent spell.

Wizard Spells Known (4/6/6/6/5/5/4/3/2): 0

- Arcane Mark, Dancing Lights, Daze, Detect Magic, Detect Poison, Disrupt Undead, Flare, Ghost Sound, Light, Mage Hand, Mending, Open/Close, Prestidigitation, Ray of Frost, Read Magic, Resistance. 1st - Burning Hands, Charm Person, Chill Touch, Identify, Magic Missile, Message, Mount, Protection from Good, Protection from Law, Sleep, Spider Climb, True Strike. 2nd - Blur, Knock, See Invisibility, Ray of Enfeeblement, Summon Monster II, Web. 3rd - Blink, Clairaudience/Clairvoyance, Dispel Magic, Flame Arrow, Fly, Gaseous Form, Haste, Hold Person, Lightning Bolt, Major Image, Phantom Steed, Protection from Elements, Slow, Summon Monster III. 4th - Arcane Eye, Charm Monster, Black Tentacles, Improved Invisibility, Minor Globe of Invulnerability, Summon Monster IV, Wall of Ice. 5th - Cloudkill, Cone of Cold, Dominate Person, Hold Monster, Mind Fog, Permanency, Shadow Evocation, Stone Shape, Summon Monster V, Teleport. 6th - Analyze Dweomer, Chain Lightning, Circle of Death, Eyebite, Flesh to Stone, Mass Haste, Mass Suggestion, Shades. 7th - Banishment, Delayed Blast Fireball, Finger of Death, Sequester, Teleport without Error. 8th - Demand, Horrid Wilting, Incendiary Cloud, Iron Body, Mass Charm, Polymorph Any Object, Summon Monster VIII. 9th - Astral Projection, Dominate Monster, Meteor Swarm, Disjunction, Power Word, Kill, Shapechange, Wish.

Fefayn the Bilious is Kezaralyn's chief rival and the most powerful wizard of all the Shards. The other Shards refuse to follow him, mostly because of his association with the Filtheaters and his less than stellar personality and grooming habits. An oddity among drow, Fefayn has no concern for his own appearance and is usually unkempt and scabrous from his latest necromantic project in the field of tailored diseases. If Fefayn were to clean up and work on his social skills, he would be an attractive, powerful leader but as he is now, there is little chance of him commanding the Shards in any significant fashion.

WITCH DAGGERS

Fefayn the Biliou

Male elf (drow) Wiz19: CR 20; Size M (5 ft., 1 in. tall); HD 19d4+57; hp 105; Init +2 (+2 Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 14 (+4 Dex); Attack +10/+5 melee, or +13/+8 ranged; SV Fort +9, Ref +8, Will +12; AL LE; Str 13, Dex 15, Con 17, Int 22, Wis 12, Cha 8.

Languages Spoken: Common, Elven, Gnoll, Gnome, Goblin, Orc, Sylvan, Undercommon.

Skills and feats: Craft (Alchemy) +28, Concentration +25, Disguise +10, Hide +12, Knowledge (arcana)+27, Listen +3, Move silently +4, Pick pocket +8, Search +9, Spellcraft +20, Spot +4; Craft rod, Craft staff, Craft wondrous item, Dodge, Expertise, Extend spell, Forge ring, [Scribe scroll], Silent spell, Simple weapon proficiency (mace, heavy), Spell mastery (Contagion, Teleport, Horrid Wilting, Dispel Magic).

Wizard Spells Known (4/6/6/5/5/5/4/3/3): 0

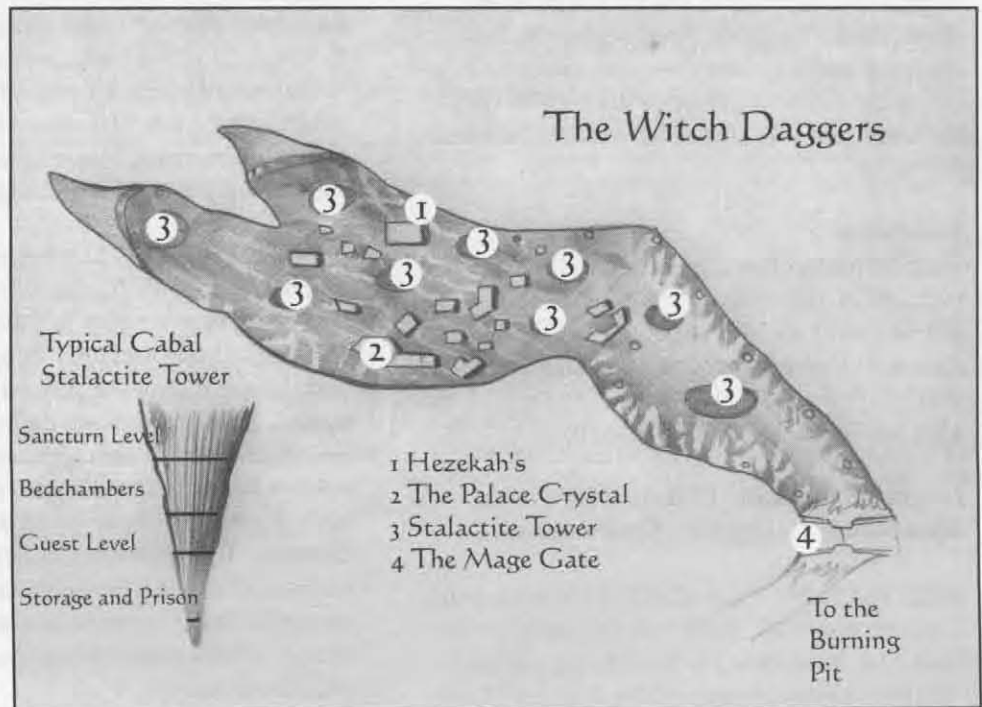
- Arcane Mark, Dancing Lights, Daze, Detect Magic, Detect Poison, Disrupt Undead, Flare, Ghost Sound, Light, Mage Hand, Mending, Open/Close, Prestidigitation, Ray of Frost, Read Magic, Resistance. 1st - Charm Person, Enlarge, Identify, Magic Missile, Shield, Shocking Grasp, Summon Monster I. 2nd - Blur, Detect Thoughts, Fog Cloud, Glitterdust, Invisibility, Knock, Levitate, Mirror Image, Web. 3rd - Dispel Magic, Fireball, Haste, Hold Person, Slow, Summon Monster III. 4th - Arcane Eye, Charm Monster, Contagion, Improved Invisibility, Lesser Geas, Minor Globe of Invulnerability, Scrying, Summon Monster IV, Wall of Fire. 5th - Animal

Growth, Animate Dead, Cloudkill, Cone of Cold, Feeblemind, Hold Monster, Telepathic Bond, Shadow Evocation, Teleport, Wall of Force, Wall of Iron, Wall of Stone. 6th - Acid Fog, Chain Lightning, Contingency, Control Water, Disintegrate, Eyebite, Flesh to Stone, Mass Haste, Summon Monster VI. 7th - Control Undead, Delayed Blast Fireball, Limited Wish, Mass Invisibility, Power Word, Stun, Summon Monster VII, Teleport without Error. 8th - Binding, Horrid Wilting, Incendiary Cloud, Mass Charm, Polymorph Any Object, Power Word, Blind, Summon Monster VIII, Sunburst, Symbol. 9th - Energy Drain, Meteor Swarm, Disjunction, Summon Monster IX, Time Stop, Weird.

Dezzok has no allegiance to anyone but himself and long ago severed the bridges that tied his tower to others. While he occasionally attends meetings of the Shards, Dezzok has no intention of ruling the people of the cavern and simply wants to be left along to pursue his studies of golem craft. His tower is manned by dozens of creatively worked small obsidian golems with all the power of stone golems in much smaller, drow-like forms.

Dezzok

Male elf (drow) Wiz18: CR 19; Size M (4 ft., 11 in. tall); HD 18d4+36; hp 86; Init +2 (+2



Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 12 (+2 Dex); Attack +13/+8 melee, or +11/+6 ranged; SV Fort +8, Ref +8, Will +12; AL NE; Str 18, Dex 15, Con 14, Int 22, Wis 12, Cha 14.

Languages Spoken: Common, Draconic, Elven, Gnoll, Gnome, Goblin, Orc, Undercommon.

Skills and feats: Craft (Alchemy) +27, Bluff +12, Concentration +19, Craft (sculpture) +23, Heal +3, Hide +2, Knowledge (arcana) +27, Listen +3, Move silently +2, Scry +27, Search +8, Spellcraft +26, Spot +3, Swim +11, Tumble +5.5; Brew Potion, Craft rod, Craft staff, Craft wand, Empower spell, Extend spell, Forge ring, Scribe scroll], Spell focus (alteration), Spell focus (abjuration), Still spell.

Wizard Spells Known (4/6/6/5/5/5/3/3/2): 0
- Arcane Mark, Dancing Lights, Daze, Detect Magic, Detect Poison, Disrupt Undead, Flare, Ghost Sound, Light, Mage Hand, Mending, Open/Close, Prestidigitation, Ray of Frost, Read Magic, Resistance. 1st - Animate Rope, Burning Hands, Charm Person, Chill Touch, Feather Fall, Identify, Mage Armor, Magic Missile, Magic Weapon, Shocking Grasp, Silent Image, Sleep. 2nd - Alter Self, Blindness/Deafness, Blur, Darkvision, Invisibility, Knock, Acid Arrow, Mirror Image, See Invisibility, Web. 3rd - Dispel Magic, Haste, Lightning Bolt, Secret Page, Shrink Item. 4th - Charm Monster, Dimension Door, Fire Trap, Improved Invisibility, Lesser Geas, Phantasmal Killer, Polymorph Other, Polymorph Self. 5th - Cone of Cold, Feeblemind, Hold Monster, Faithful Hound, Permanency, Summon Monster V, Teleport, Wall of Iron, Wall of Stone. 6th - Acid Fog, Antimagic Field, Chain Lightning, Disintegrate, Eyebite, Flesh to Stone, Mass Haste, Stone to Flesh, Veil. 7th - Delayed Blast Fireball, Insanity, Limited Wish, Mass Invisibility, Sword, Summon Monster VII, Teleport without Error. 8th - Horrid Wilting, Incendiary Cloud, Polymorph Any Object, Screen, Sunburst. 9th - Dominate Monster, Imprisonment, Summon Monster IX.

The enigmatic Veliayn is the only female wizard in the Witch Daggers and holds her place as a Shard through her skills with enchantment of magical items and her stunning good looks, which she normally keeps concealed behind

billowing cloaks of spider silk and a magical mask of mirrored crystal. The other Shards have all seen her behind these accoutrements and many are enticed by her unspoken promises of favour in return for their support. None of them have ever actually enjoyed such favour, but as she is fond of saying to her confidants in the Palace Crystal, 'One can buy more with promises than with payment.'

Veliayn

Female elf (drow) Wiz17: CR 18; Size M (4 ft., 11 in. tall); HD 17d4+51; hp 100; Init +2 (+2 Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 12 (+2 Dex); Attack +10/+5 melee, or +10/+5 ranged; SV Fort +10, Ref +7, Will +11; AL NE; Str 15, Dex 15, Con 16, Int 24, Wis 12, Cha 15.

Languages Spoken: Common, Draconic, Elven, Gnoll, Gnome, Orc, Undercommon.

Skills and feats: Craft (Alchemy) +21, Climb +3, Concentration +22, Disable device +9, Hide +2, Knowledge (arcana) +18, Knowledge (religion) +13, Listen +13, Move silently +2, Profession (seductress)+18, Scry +6, Search +9, Spellcraft +21, Spot +10; Combat Casting, Craft wand, Heighten spell, Maximize spell, Quicken spell, [Scribe scroll], Silent Spell, Spell focus (enchantment) Still Spell.

Wizard Spells Known (4/6/6/6/5/5/5/4/2/1): 0
- Arcane Mark, Dancing Lights, Daze, Detect Magic, Detect Poison, Disrupt Undead, Flare, Ghost Sound, Light, Mage Hand, Mending, Open/Close, Prestidigitation, Ray of Frost, Read Magic, Resistance. 1st - Burning Hands, Change Self, Charm Person, Chill Touch, Feather Fall, Identify, Mage Armor, Magic Missile, Shield, Silent Image, Sleep, Ventriloquism. 2nd - Blindness/Deafness, Blur, Ghoul Touch, Knock, Levitate, Summon Monster II, Web. 3rd - Haste, Hold Person, Lightning Bolt, Slow, Tongues. 4th - Arcane Eye, Charm Monster, Dimension Door, Dimensional Anchor, Fire Shield, Hallucinatory Terrain, Minor Globe of Invulnerability, Polymorph Other, Polymorph Self, Solid Fog, Wall of Ice. 5th - Cloudkill, Cone of Cold, Dominate Person, Hold Monster, Secret Chest, Teleport, Wall of Force, Wall of Iron, Wall of Stone. 6th - Acid Fog, Analyze Dweomer, Chain Lightning, Contingency, Disintegrate,

Eyebite, Flesh to Stone, Mass Haste, Planar Binding. 7th - Delayed Blast Fireball, Forcecage, Mass Invisibility, Magnificent Mansion, Summon Monster VII, Teleport without Error. 8th - Incendiary Cloud, Mass Charm, Summon Monster VIII, Symbol, Sympathy. 9th - Power Word, Kill.

Barandoz has been trying to gain mastery of the ninth level of magic for years with no success. His failures are well known among the Shards and while they are amused to see him try so hard to no avail, none of them are responsible for his lack of success. He feels differently and his suspicions are turning into raving paranoia. The truth is his mind is just not advanced enough to grasp the intricacies of the spells he wants to cast but his stubborn nature will not let him admit it to himself.

Barandoz

Male elf (drow) Wiz16: CR 17; Size M (5 ft., 2 in. tall); HD 16d4+32; hp 76; Init +2 (+2 Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 12 (+2 Dex); Attack +9/+4 melee, or +10/+5 ranged; SV Fort +9, Ref +7, Will +14; AL CE; Str 12, Dex 15, Con 14, Int 18, Wis 14, Cha 9.

Languages Spoken: Common, Draconic, Goblin, Undercommon.

Skills and feats: Craft (Alchemy) +23, Craft +23, Heal +3, Hide +2, Knowledge (arcana) +22, Listen +8, Move silently +5, Profession (scribe) +20, Ride +5, Search +6, Spot +6; Brew potion, Craft wondrous item, Empower spell, Extend spell, Forge ring, Great Fortitude, Heighten spell, [Scribe scroll], Iron Will, Still spell.

Wizard Spells Known (4/5/5/5/4/3/3/2): 0 - Arcane Mark, Dancing Lights, Daze, Detect Magic, Detect Poison, Disrupt Undead, Flare, Ghost Sound, Light, Mage Hand, Mending, Open/Close, Prestidigitation, Ray of Frost, Read Magic, Resistance. 1st - Alarm, Identify, Mage Armor, Magic Missile, Magic Weapon, Shield, Sleep, Spider Climb. 2nd - Blur, Flaming Sphere, Fog Cloud, Invisibility, Knock, Trap, Acid Arrow, Mirror Image, See Invisibility, Summon Monster II, Web. 3rd - Blink, Dispel Magic, Flame Arrow, Fly, Haste, Hold Person, Invisibility Sphere, Lightning Bolt, Slow, Summon Monster III, Water Breathing. 4th

- Bestow Curse, Charm Monster, Dimension Door, Fire Shield, Fire Trap, Improved Invisibility, Lesser Geas, Polymorph Other, Polymorph Self, Summon Monster IV, Wall of Fire. 5th - Animate Dead, Cloudkill, Cone of Cold, Major Creation, Telekinesis, Wall of Force, Wall of Iron. 6th - Acid Fog, Chain Lightning, Disintegrate, Eyebite, True Seeing. 7th - Delayed Blast Fireball, Instant Summons, Limited Wish, Mass Invisibility, Teleport without Error. 8th - Binding, Incendiary Cloud, Mass Charm, Power Word, Blind.

With only one arm and a sheer, scar-covered pate where the ear and hair on the left half of his head should be, Izan the Ruined (drow/m/Wiz 16) is responsible for his own disfigurement. His fascination with force magic took a heavy toll when, ten years ago, a spell he was researching called *wave of razors* rebounded and left him with the face he bears now. He does not mask himself and actually takes pride in his scars as they show all of Sheoloth the price he is willing to pay for his art. (If the Games Master has access to Encyclopaedia Arcane: Conjuraton, Izan should have at least four levels of the Force Mage prestige class.)

Izan the Ruined

Male elf (drow) Wiz16: CR 17; Size M (4 ft., 11 in. tall); HD 16d4+32; hp 64; Init +3 (+3 Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 13 (+3 Dex); Attack +9/+4 melee, or +11/+6 ranged; SV Fort +7, Ref +8, Will +14; AL CE; Str 12, Dex 16, Con 15, Int 24, Wis 18, Cha 7.

Languages Spoken: Common, Draconic, Elven, Gnoll, Goblin, Orc, Undercommon.

Skills and feats: Climb +3, Craft (force and light effects) +26, Escape artist +10, Hide +9, Knowledge (the planes) +26, Knowledge (arcana) +26, Knowledge (religion) +5, Listen +6, Move silently +3, Ride +12, Search +11, Spellcraft +26, Spot +6; Craft rod, Craft staff, Empower spell, Forge ring, Maximize spell, Quicken spell, [Scribe scroll], School Focus (conjuraton), Spell penetration.

Wizard Spells Known (4/6/6/6/5/5/4/4/2): 0 - Arcane Mark, Dancing Lights, Daze, Detect Magic, Detect Poison, Disrupt Undead, Flare, Ghost Sound, Light, Mage Hand, Mending,

Open/Close, Prestidigitation, Ray of Frost, Read Magic, Resistance. 1st - Burning Hands, Change Self, Charm Person, Feather Fall, Identify, Magic Missile, Obscuring Mist, Shocking Grasp, Silent Image, Sleep, Floating Disk. 2nd - Blur, Bull's Strength, Cat's Grace, Invisibility, Knock, Levitate, Rope Trick, See Invisibility, Spectral Hand, Web. 3rd - Blink, Dispel Magic, Fireball, Haste, Hold Person, Lightning Bolt, Sepia Snake Sigil, Slow, Suggestion, Water Breathing. 4th - Arcane Eye, Dimension Door, Improved Invisibility, Locate Creature, Polymorph Self, Stoneskin. 5th - Animate Dead, Cloudkill, Cone of Cold, Contact Other Plane, Hold Monster, Permanency, Teleport, Wall of Force. 6th - Analyze Dweomer, Chain Lightning, Control Water, Eyebite, Guards and Wards, Summon Monster VI. 7th - Delayed Blast Fireball, Finger of Death, Limited Wish, Mass Invisibility, Statue, Summon Monster VII, Teleport without Error. 8th - Horrid Wilting, Irresistible Dance, Symbol. Izan also knows all of the high level Fist and Hand spells.

Shaezhan, the Burning Thane is certifiably crazy but tolerated among the Nine Shards because of his unshakable devotion to their cause. Shaezhan has been an evoker for as long as he can remember, casting his first fire spell as a young child before he could clearly talk. Ever since that time, he has held that his incredible gift for evocation magic comes from a special relationship he has with his 'lord', the Pyremaster. To hear him tell it, the Pyremaster is an ancient god of flame that was lost to the world when the elves were still young. To date, none of the other Shards have ever seen any evidence that the Pyremaster is anything more than Shaerzhan's fevered delusion.

Shaezhan, the Burning Thane

Male elf (drow) Evo15: CR 16; Size M (5 ft., 1 in. tall); HD 15d4+45; hp 90; Init +0; Spd 30 ft.; AC 10; Attack +9/+4 melee, or +7/+2 ranged; SV Fort +8, Ref +5, Will +9; AL CE; Str 15, Dex 11, Con 16, Int 21, Wis 11, Cha 12.

Languages Spoken: Common, Draconic, Elven, Gnoll, Goblin, Ignan, Undercommon.

Skills and feats: Craft (Alchemy) +20, Craft (fire art) +19, Knowledge (the Planes) +20, Knowledge (arcana) +22, Listen +2, Scry

+11, Search +7, Spellcraft +20, Spot +2; Combat casting, Craft rod, Craft staff, Craft wand, Enlarge spell, Extend spell, Forge ring, Maximize spell, [Scribe scroll], Spell Mastery (Burning Hands, Fireball, Wall of Fire).

Wizard Spells Known (4/6/5/5/5/3/2/1): 0

- Arcane Mark, Dancing Lights, Daze, Detect Magic, Detect Poison, Disrupt Undead, Flare, Ghost Sound, Light, Mage Hand, Mending, Open/Close, Prestidigitation, Ray of Frost, Read Magic, Resistance. 1st Burning Hands, Charm Person, Comprehend Languages, Endure Elements, Enlarge, Identify, Magic Missile, Magic Weapon, Obscuring Mist, Shield, Sleep, Summon Monster I, Floating Disk, Unseen Servant. 2nd - Blur, Endurance, Flame Arrow, Invisibility, Knock, Summon Monster II, Web. 3rd - Blink, Dispel Magic, Fireball, Fly, Gaseous Form, Hold Person, Tiny Hut, Lightning Bolt, Slow. 4th - Arcane Eye, Charm Monster, Fire Shield, Ice Path, Minor Globe of Invulnerability, Resilient Sphere, Polymorph Other, Polymorph Self, Wall of Fire. 5th - Animate Dead, Telepathic Bond, Wall of Force, Wall of Stone. 6th - Analyze Dweomer, Antimagic Field, Control Weather, Mass Haste. 7th - Delayed Blast Fireball, Instant Summons, Limited Wish, Mass Invisibility. 8th - Clone, Mass Charm.

Lyzharvin is the eyes and ears of the Shards, making up for his relative lack of power compared to his peers through his incredible skill at sensory magic. If the Dark Mother's clergy ever do decide to move against the wizard-lords, he will likely know about it first and can prepare the Shards for a counterassault before the priestesses have even formulated their battle plans.

Lyzharvin

Male elf (drow) Div14: CR 15; Size M (4 ft., 10 in. tall); HD 14d4+28; hp 64; Init +3 (+3 Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 13 (+3 Dex); Attack +6/+1 melee, or +10/+5 ranged; SV Fort +6, Ref +7, Will +9; AL CE; Str 9, Dex 17, Con 14, Int 23, Wis 11, Cha 14.

Languages Spoken: Abyssal, Auran, Common, Elven, Goblin, Ignan, Terran, Undercommon.

Skills and feats: Craft (Alchemy) +15, Bluff +6, Concentration +18, Craft +20, Hide +10, Knowledge (the planes) +23, Knowledge (arcana) +23, Listen +5, Move silently +3,

WITCH DAGGERS

Perform (singing, dancing) +7, Profession +10, Scry +20, Search +8, Spot +10; Craft rod, Craft wand, Heighten spell, [Scribe scroll], School Focus (divination), Silent spell, Skill Focus (scry), Spell Penetration.

Wizard Spells Known (4/6/6/5/5/4/4/2): 0

- Arcane Mark, Dancing Lights, Daze, Detect Magic, Detect Poison, Disrupt Undead, Flare, Ghost Sound, Light, Mage Hand, Mending, Open/Close, Prestidigitation, Ray of Frost, Read Magic, Resistance. 1st - Burning Hands, Charm Person, Chill Touch, Identify, Mage Armor, Magic Missile, Obscuring Mist, Shield, Shocking Grasp, Silent Image, Sleep, Spider Climb. 2nd - Alter Self, Blindness/Deafness, Blur, Invisibility, Levitate, Acid Arrow, Mirror Image, See Invisibility, Summon Swarm. 3rd - Clairaudience/Clairvoyance, Fireball, Fly, Haste, Lightning Bolt, Stinking Cloud. 4th - Bestow Curse, Detect Scrying, Fire Shield, Fire Trap, Resilient Sphere, Polymorph Other, Polymorph Self, Wall of Ice. 5th - Animate Dead, Cloudkill, Hold Monster, Sending, Summon Monster V, Wall of Iron. 6th - Contingency, Eyebite, Flesh to Stone, Move Earth, Summon Monster VI. 7th - Delayed Blast Fireball,

Ethereal Jaunt, Power Word, Stun, Teleport without Error.

The legend among the Nine Shards, Dhoveln was present for the first meeting of their council after they moved to the Witch Daggers and began their reign. He informed the assembled council that they would have his support in anything they wished to do as long as they never came to him for anything and left him alone until he was ready to present them with tools of great magic for their use. He gave them all the Shardblades (see the New Magic Item section below) as a sign of his intentions, secured their agreement, and retreated into his stalactite tower. Since that moment, he has never been seen again. His tower is warded very strongly and whatever he is working on, it must surely be an undertaking of immense proportions.

Dhoveln

Male elf (drow) Wiz20: CR 21; Size M (4 ft., 8 in. tall); HD 20d4+60; hp 114; Init +3 (+3 Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 13 (+3 Dex); Attack +12/+7 melee, or +13/+8 ranged; SV Fort +9, Ref +9, Will +16; AL CE; Str 14, Dex 16, Con 16, Int 25, Wis 14, Cha 13.

When he told her that they would be visiting the Witch Daggers ward, Dorianne did not know what to expect. In almost two years of being here with Blade, he had never taken her there. In fact, she honestly did not think he had ever gone there alone, though his late night 'business' trips could have taken him anywhere. From the way he was strapping on dagger belts and tucking away magical items, Blade obviously expected trouble.

She equipped herself in silence, clipping on the fine metal bracers he had given her recently and buckling the straps on a belt that enhanced her meager strength to something vaguely resembling tolerable. When she watched him slip three poisoned needles into his boot cuff, she had to ask. 'Lord? Are the Witch Daggers really so dangerous?'

He just nodded and kept arming himself. At this rate, her master would be carrying half the shop in the folds of his spidersilk armour before they left. 'More dangerous than the Shrieking Hive or the Temples of the Dark Mother?'

He nodded again. 'Much, much worse. Hand me that crossbow.'

She did, but this was getting hard to believe. 'You mean there is something there deadlier than the Lord of the Hell Hunt or a garrison-temple to the Killer?' She was getting nervous about this trip now.

Blade hooked his hand in the symbol for an emphatic yes as he stuffed a handful of serrated elfbone drow-slaying bolts into one of his leg quivers. 'For darkness' sake, my lord! What could possibly be so terrifying?'

He cocked the crossbow, clipped on his displacing cloak, and tossed her a wand of lightning. 'Family.'

Languages Spoken: Common, Draconic, Elven, Gnome, Goblin, Orc, Undercommon.

Skills and feats: Craft (Alchemy) +20, Bluff +10, Concentration +25, Diplomacy +5, Disable device +13, Disguise +4, Escape artist +10, Hide +10.5, Knowledge (herbalism) +28, Knowledge (arcana) +30, Listen +4, Move silently +3, Open lock +5, Pick pocket +5, Ride +8, Scry +15, Search +9, Spellcraft +29, Spot +4; Brew Potions, Craft magic arms and armor, Craft wand, Empower spell, Enlarge spell, Heighten spell, Iron will, Maximize spell, [Scribe scroll], Silent spell, Still Spell, Spell penetration.

Wizard Spells Known (4/6/6/6/5/5/5/4/4): 0 - Arcane Mark, Dancing Lights, Daze, Detect Magic, Detect Poison, Disrupt Undead, Flare, Ghost Sound, Light, Mage Hand, Mending, Open/Close, Prestidigitation, Ray of Frost, Read Magic, Resistance. 1st - Burning Hands, Charm Person, Identify, Mage Armor, Magic Missile, Shield, Shocking Grasp, Sleep, Spider Climb, Summon Monster I, Unseen Servant. 2nd - Alter Self, Blindness/Deafness, Glitterdust, Mirror Image, Misdirection, Tasha's Hideous Laughter, Web. 3rd - Dispel Magic, Fireball, Fly, Haste, Lightning Bolt, Slow, Summon Monster III. 4th -- Bestow Curse, Charm Monster, Dimension Door, Fire Shield, Improved Invisibility, Polymorph Other, Polymorph Self, Summon Monster IV. 5th -- Animate Dead, Cloudkill, Cone of Cold, Hold Monster, Magic Jar, Permanency, Wall of Iron. 6th - Analyze Dweomer, Antimagic Field, Chain Lightning, Contingency, Disintegrate, Eyebite, Flesh to Stone, Legend Lore, Mass Haste, Mass Suggestion, Summon Monster VI. 7th - Grasping Hand, Control Undead, Finger of Death, Mass Invisibility, Power Word, Stun, Spell Turning, Teleport without Error. 8th - Binding, Horrid Wilting, Incendiary Cloud, Mass Charm, Polymorph Any Object, Power Word, Blind, Summon Monster VIII, Sympathy. 9th - Energy Drain, Gate, Meteor Swarm, Disjunction, Power Word, Kill, Refuge, Shapechange, Teleportation Circle, Time Stop, Wish.

BUYING AND SELLING

Not surprisingly, the entirety of business in the Witch Dagggers caters to either the wizards above or the people they rule over below. The commerce here is based solely around the twin concerns of staying alive and providing wizards with the opulence and components most of them crave. Magical shops are common, though only the Nine Shards and those they favour tend to have enough money to shop in them, while amenities are rare since the wizard-lords can generally create these for themselves.

1. Hezekah's

Of all the stores in the Witch Dagggers that provide for wizards, Hezekah's is the most complete and the most frequented. Run by a drow scribe with no magical talent of his own, Olvanyn Melnuur, the store survives through business acumen and the proprietor's uncanny ability to stock exactly what is needed whenever it is desired in exactly the right quantities to keep from bankrupting himself. This streak of good fortune is not unnoticed by other shop owners, but Hezekah's is favoured by the Shards and none dare move against it while that preference is in effect.

Olvanyn Melnuur

Male elf (drow) Exp6: CR 6; Size M (4 ft., 8 in. tall); HD 6d6+12; hp 33; Init +7 (+3 Dex, +4 Improved initiative); Spd 30 ft.; AC 13 (+3 Dex); Attack +3 melee, or +7 ranged; SV Fort +4, Ref +5, Will +9; AL NE; Str 9, Dex 16, Con 15, Int 13, Wis 14, Cha 15.

Languages Spoken: Common, Draconic, Elven, Giant, Gnoll, Gnome, Goblin, Ignan, Infernal, Orc, Sylvan, Undercommon.

Skills and feats: Concentration +5, Craft (components) +9, Decipher script +7, Gather information +5, Hide +3, Knowledge (religion) +8, Listen +4, Move silently +3, Profession (scribe) +11, Search +3, Speak language +8, Spot +5; Iron Will, Skill focus (Profession (scribe)), Toughness.

Plot Hooks: Olvanyn's good luck is just a fluke of nature combined with his insightful wit and understanding of the nature of spellcraft and arcane matters. He is, however, believed to have some magical secret to his success that, while it does not exist, constantly runs the risk

of a competitor doing something drastic to get it away from him. Player Characters could get caught up in this commercial feud, especially if they are of the expendable kind and no direct connection to the store owner who hired them could be found.

2. The Palace Crystal

The Palace Crystal is the grandest social club and full tavern in the Witch Daggers, rivaling some of the gleaming towers above in its opulence. This competition for glory would not go unpunished by the wizard-lords were it not for the club owner's wisdom in leaving the doors of his establishment wide open for them and all the pleasures they seek within given at no charge. This arrangement becomes profitable because others in the city pay very large sums to be close the rulers of their cavern and possibly make valuable contact with them. Run by Pelnewyn 'Pel' Krimivorn, the Palace Crystal is financially successful enough that this noble does not mind playing host to 'lords' of generally common birth. If the money ever ran out, he would probably quickly find another ward to be in.

Pelnewyn 'Pel' Krimivorn

Male elf (drow) Wiz3/Rog6/Shd5: CR 15; Size M (5 ft., 1 in. tall); HD 3d4+3 + 11d6+11; hp 64; Init +9 (+5 Dex, +4 Improved initiative); Spd 30 ft.; AC 15 (+5 Dex); Attack +11/+6 melee, or +14/+9 ranged; SV Fort +7, Ref +13, Will +6; AL NE; Str 14, Dex 20, Con 12, Int 18, Wis 10, Cha 11.

Languages Spoken: Common, Elven, Gnome, Goblin, Orc, Shadow, Undercommon.

Skills and feats: Bluff +15, Climb +16, Craft +18, Gather information +7, Hide +15, Intimidate +14, Knowledge (arcana) +10, Listen +2, Move silently +19, Open lock +11, Perform (dance) +10, Scry +10, Search +6, Sense motive +14, Spot +14, Tumble +15, Use magic device +7; Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Improved initiative, Mobility, Point blank shot [Scribe scroll].

Wizard Spells Known (4/3/2): 0 - Arcane Mark, Dancing Lights, Daze, Detect Magic, Detect Poison, Disrupt Undead, Flare, Ghost Sound, Light, Mage Hand, Mending, Open/Close, Prestidigitation, Ray of Frost, Read

Magic, Resistance. 1st - Change Self, Charm Person, Feather Fall, Identify, Mage Armor, Magic Missile, Sleep. 2nd - Endurance, Invisibility.

Plot Hooks: Pel is here at the request of the Church of the Dark Mother and the Dark Eight themselves. His level of skill as a shadow dancer and a rogue are not known to the wizard-lords and his contact with them in a social setting makes him the perfect spy for them in this ward. He truly enjoys the part he is playing, but he never forgets his duty to the church and the very real possibility of a lingering, terrible death if the wizard lords were to ever discover his true identity.

New Magic Item – The Shardblades

These eight daggers are carved of an unknown, shadowy crystal with glimmers of opalescent light swimming constantly inside their faceted blades. The hilts of the *shardblades* are black bone and bear no inscription or inlay. Adamantine wire wrapped handles complete the appearance of exotic but otherwise unremarkable daggers of vicious drow styling. In the case of these potent weapons, appearances can be very deceiving.

Each *shardblade* is a +4 *keen*, *ghost touch* dagger with the *wounding* property and one other +1 equivalent bonus ability as listed in the *Core Rulebook II*. This ability can be changed at will by the bearer of the weapon as a free action once per day. In addition to these properties, *shardblades* can cast *sending* to anyone hold one of the other seven weapons at will, making them an invaluable tool for communication. The *shardblades* are virtually indestructible and cannot be harmed by physical force or elemental damage. Only anti-magic seems to affect them and they remain vulnerable to *disjunction*, *dispelling*, or similar disruptive effects.
Caster Level: 18th; *Prerequisites:* Craft Magical Arms and Armour; *keen edge*, *ethereal jaunt*, *greater magic weapon*, *sending*, *wish*; *Market Price:* 280,000 gp

MERCHANTS, OFFICES, AND WORKSHOPS BY WARD

ASHEN BULWARK

Type	Business	Number
Shop	Barbers	3
Shop	Dairy sellers	3
Shop	Engravers	3
Shop	Grocers	9
Shop	Haberdashers	1
Shop	Importers	4
Shop	Jewelers	2
Shop	Launderers	2
Shop	Pawnbroker	2
Shop	Prostitutes	3
Shop	Silk Harvesters	1
Shop	Silk Throwers	1
Shop	Tailors	1
Shop	Tinkers	1
Shop	Wine Merchants	2
Shop	Bakers	2
Shop	Basket Makers	8
Shop	Bellmakers	1
Shop	Blacksmiths	1
Shop	Bookbinders	1
Shop	Buckle Makers	3
Shop	Clock makers	1
Shop	Cobblers	14
Shop	Construction Weavers	2
Shop	Distillers	1
Shop	Furniture Makers	12
Shop	Girdlers	1
Shop	Glassmakers	2
Shop	Glove makers	1
Shop	Harness Makers	1

Shop	Inventors	1
Shop	Jewelers	1
Shop	Locksmiths	1
Shop	Masons	5
Shop	Painters	2
Shop	Paper Makers	6
Shop	Pastry Makers	1
Shop	Potionmakers	1
Shop	Potters	5
Shop	Rope Makers	1
Shop	Saddlers and Spurriers	1
Shop	Scabbard Makers	1
Shop	Sculptors	1
Shop	Silk Throwers	11
Shop	Skinners	1
Shop	Slavers	3
Shop	Soapmakers	1
Shop	Spider Merchants	2
Shop	Tanners	3
Shop	Tilers	1
Shop	Vintner	2
Shop	Weaponsmiths	1
Shop	Weavers	8
Shop	Wheelwrights	6
	TOTAL:	155

BLOOD TITHE

Building Type	Business	Main	Upper
Office	Advocates (lawyers)		1
Office	Architects		2
Office	Bankers		1

WARD SUMMARY

Office	Cartographers		1
Office	Construction Weavers		14
Office	Copyists		2
Office	Doctors, licensed		2
Office	Doctors, unlicensed		6
Office	Food Merchants		1
Office	Historians		1
Office	Liquor Merchants		1
Office	Livestock merchants		13
Office	Masons		16
Office	Moneychangers		2
Office	Panwbroker		3
Office	Sage/scholar		2
Office	Silk Merchants		7
Office	Spice merchants		3
Office	Tobacco merchants		1
Office	Wine merchants		4
Shop	Barbers	2	6
Shop	Booksellers	2	1
Shop	Brothel Keepers	2	1
Shop	Butchers	4	1
Shop	Clothiers, Used	2	9
Shop	Dairy sellers	2	6
Shop	Dentists	2	1
Shop	Drapers	2	5
Shop	Engravers	1	2
Shop	Fishmongers		1
Shop	Food Merchants		0
Shop	Furriers	4	1
Shop	Grocers	2	11
Shop	Haberdashers	2	2
Shop	Herbalists	2	1
Shop	Importers	9	3
Shop	Jewelers	2	3

Shop	Launderers	3	8
Shop	Liquor Merchants	3	1
Shop	Pawnbroker	8	3
Shop	Prostitutes	17	7
Shop	Silk Harvesters	2	7
Shop	Silk Merchants	2	3
Shop	Silk Throwers	2	7
Shop	Spell Components	1	0
Shop	Spice Merchants	1	1
Shop	Tailors	3	9
Shop	Tinkers	1	1
Shop	Wine Merchants	1	3
Shop	Woodsellers	1	1
	Total:	85	188

BURNING PIT

Building Type	Business	Number
Office	Advocates (lawyers)	1
Office	Architects	1
Office	Bankers	0
Office	Cartographers	0
Office	Construction Weavers	8
Office	Copyists	1
Office	Doctors, licensed	1
Office	Doctors, unlicensed	3
Office	Food Merchants	0
Office	Historians	0
Office	Liquor Merchants	1
Office	Livestock merchants	8
Office	Masons	9
Office	Moneychangers	1
Office	Panwbroker	2
Office	Sage/scholar	1
Office	Silk Merchants	4

WARD SUMMARY

Office	Spice merchants	2
Office	Tobacco merchants	1
Office	Wine merchants	2
Shop	Barbers	8
Shop	Booksellers	1
Shop	Brothel Keepers	1
Shop	Butchers	2
Shop	Clothiers, Used	14
Shop	Dairy sellers	9
Shop	Dentists	1
Shop	Drapers	8
Shop	Engravers	3
Shop	Fishmongers	2
Shop	Food Merchants	1
Shop	Furriers	2
Shop	Grocers	17
Shop	Haberdashers	3
Shop	Herbalists	2
Shop	Importers	4
Shop	Jewelers	5
Shop	Launderers	13
Shop	Liquor Merchants	1
Shop	Pawnbroker	4
Shop	Prostitutes	10
Shop	Silk Harvesters	11
Shop	Silk Merchants	4
Shop	Silk Throwers	10
Shop	Spell Components	1
Shop	Spice Merchants	2
Shop	Tailors	13
Shop	Tinkers	2
Shop	Wine Merchants	5
Shop	Woodsellers	1
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Workshop	Alchemists	1
Workshop	Artists	2
Workshop	Bakers	2
Workshop	Bowyer/Fletcher	2
Workshop	Chandlers	4
Workshop	Cobblers	7
Workshop	Construction Weavers	3
Workshop	Fungal Treaters	2
Workshop	Furniture Makers	3
Workshop	Glove makers	1
Workshop	Goldsmiths	1
Workshop	Harness Makers	2
Workshop	Jewelers	5
Workshop	Leatherworkers	3
Workshop	Locksmiths	1
Workshop	Painters	1
Workshop	Paper Makers	1
Workshop	Pastry Makers	1
Workshop	Perfumer	1
Workshop	Potionmakers	1
Workshop	Potters	4
Workshop	Purse Makers	3
Workshop	Sculptors	1
Workshop	Silk Throwers	4
Workshop	Silversmiths	2
Workshop	Soapmakers	1
Workshop	Spider Merchants	2
Workshop	Tanners	2
Workshop	Vintner	1
Workshop	Weaponsmiths	1
Workshop	Weavers	4
Workshop	Wheelwrights	3
Workshop	Woodcarvers	1
		73

CABAL HOLD

Building Type	Business	Number
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CHARRED GATE

Building Type	Business	Number
Office	Construction Weavers	1
Office	Doctors, unlicensed	1
Office	Moneychangers	1
Office	Panbroker	1
Shop	Dairy sellers	1
Shop	Engravers	1
Shop	Fishmongers	1
Shop	Grocers	1
Shop	Herbalists	1
Shop	Jewelers	1
Shop	Launderers	1
Shop	Prostitutes	1
Shop	Spice Merchants	1
Shop	Tailors	1
Workshop	Bakers	2
Workshop	Basket Makers	1
Workshop	Blacksmiths	1
Workshop	Bleachers	1
Workshop	Chandlers	1
Workshop	Cobblers	4
Workshop	Construction Weavers	1
Workshop	Fungal Treaters	1
Workshop	Furniture Makers	1
Workshop	Jewelers	1
Workshop	Leatherworkers	1
Workshop	Paper Makers	2
Workshop	Purse Makers	1
Workshop	Scabbard Makers	1
Workshop	Silk Throwers	2
Workshop	Soapmakers	1
Workshop	Tanners	1
Workshop	Weavers	4
Workshop	Wheelwrights	1

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CRYSTAL SPINE

Building Type	Business	Number
Shop	Barbers	9
Shop	Booksellers	3
Shop	Brothel Keepers	2
Shop	Butchers	2
Shop	Clothiers, Used	26
Shop	Dairy sellers	16
Shop	Drapers	14
Shop	Engravers	6
Shop	Expedition Outfitters	4
Shop	Fishmongers	7
Shop	Furriers	1
Shop	Grocers	16
Shop	Haberdashers	6
Shop	Herbalists	6
Shop	Importers	2
Shop	Jewelers	8
Shop	Launderers	16
Shop	Liquor Merchants	2
Shop	Pawnbroker	4
Shop	Prostitutes	17
Shop	Silk Harvesters	7
Shop	Silk Merchants	4
Shop	Silk Throwers	16
Shop	Spell Components	1
Shop	Spice Merchants	2
Shop	Tailors	8
Shop	Tinkers	1
Shop	Tobacco merchants	1
Shop	Wine Merchants	6
Shop	Wood sellers	3
Workshop	Alchemists	1
Workshop	Armors	6

WARD SUMMARY

Workshop	Artists	5
Workshop	Bakers	27
Workshop	Basket Makers	31
Workshop	Bellmakers	1
Workshop	Blacksmiths	7
Workshop	Bleachers	6
Workshop	Bookbinders	5
Workshop	Bowyer/Fletcher	9
Workshop	Brewers	10
Workshop	Buckle Makers	6
Workshop	Chandlers	14
Workshop	Clock makers	2
Workshop	Cobblers	81
Workshop	Construction Weavers	35
Workshop	Cutlers	5
Workshop	Distillers	4
Workshop	Dye Makers	1
Workshop	Fungal Treaters	13
Workshop	Furniture Makers	66
Workshop	Girdlers	4
Workshop	Glassmakers	7
Workshop	Glove makers	6
Workshop	Goldsmiths	10
Workshop	Harness Makers	7
Workshop	Illuminators	5
Workshop	Instrument makers	3
Workshop	Inventors	3
Workshop	Jewelers	31
Workshop	Leatherworkers	10
Workshop	Locksmiths	6
Workshop	Masons	27
Workshop	Painters	9
Workshop	Paper Makers	36
Workshop	Pastry Makers	12
Workshop	Perfumer	3
Workshop	Potionmakers	1
Workshop	Potters	40

Workshop	Purse Makers	10
Workshop	Rope Makers	13
Workshop	Rug merchants	7
Workshop	Saddlers and Spurriers	13
Workshop	Scabbard Makers	11
Workshop	Sculptors	5
Workshop	Silk Throwers	53
Workshop	Silversmiths	12
Workshop	Skinners	5
Workshop	Slavers	8
Workshop	Soapmakers	20
Workshop	Spider Merchants	10
Workshop	Tanners	9
Workshop	Taxidermists	3
Workshop	Tilers	4
Workshop	Toy makers	6
Workshop	Vestment Makers	3
Workshop	Vintner	5
Workshop	Weaponsmiths	3
Workshop	Weavers	29
Workshop	Wheelwrights	30
Workshop	Woodcarvers	6
		820

EBON DOCKS

Building Type	Business	Number
Office	Construction Weavers	5
Office	Copyists	1
Office	Doctors, licensed	1
Office	Historians	1
Office	Livestock merchants	1
Office	Masons	2
Office	Spice merchants	1
Shop	Barbers	1
Shop	Clothiers, Used	6

WARD SUMMARY

Shop	Drapers	1
Shop	Grocers	2
Shop	Importers	1
Shop	Launderers	2
Shop	Pawnbroker	1
Shop	Prostitutes	1
Shop	Silk Throwers	3
Shop	Tailors	2
Workshop	Armorers	1
Workshop	Artists	1
Workshop	Bakers	1
Workshop	Basket Makers	2
Workshop	Blacksmiths	3
Workshop	Bookbinders	1
Workshop	Buckle Makers	2
Workshop	Chandlers	2
Workshop	Clock makers	1
Workshop	Cobblers	2
Workshop	Construction Weavers	2
Workshop	Cutlers	1
Workshop	Fungal Treaters	1
Workshop	Furniture Makers	5
Workshop	Girdlers	1
Workshop	Glassmakers	2
Workshop	Goldsmiths	1
Workshop	Jewelers	3
Workshop	Leatherworkers	1
Workshop	Locksmiths	1
Workshop	Masons	3
Workshop	Paper Makers	3
Workshop	Pastry Makers	2
Workshop	Potters	2
Workshop	Purse Makers	1
Workshop	Rope Makers	1
Workshop	Saddlers and Spurriers	1
Workshop	Scabbard Makers	2

Workshop	Silk Throwers	5
Workshop	Soapmakers	2
Workshop	Toy makers	1
Workshop	Vintner	1
Workshop	Weaponsmiths	1
Workshop	Weavers	4
Workshop	Wheelwrights	2
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FOREIGN WARD

Building Type	Business	Lower	Upper
Office	Advocates (lawyers)	1	
Office	Architects	1	2
Office	Bankers		1
Office	Construction Weavers	2	10
Office	Copyists		2
Office	Doctors, licensed		2
Office	Doctors, unlicensed	2	3
Office	Engineer		3
Office	Food Merchants		3
Office	Historians		1
Office	Liquor Merchants		2
Office	Livestock merchants	2	14
Office	Magic Shop		2
Office	Masons	2	8
Office	Moneychangers		2
Office	Panwbroker		9
Office	Sage/scholar		3
Office	Silk Merchants		4
Office	Spice merchants		2
Office	Tobacco merchants		2
Office	Wine merchants		5
Shop	Barbers	10	17

WARD SUMMARY

Shop	Booksellers	1	3
Shop	Brothel Keepers	1	1
Shop	Butchers	1	3
Shop	Clothiers, Used	13	32
Shop	Dairy sellers	10	20
Shop	Dentists		1
Shop	Drapers	6	12

Shop	Engravers	1	3
Shop	Expedition Outfitters		1
Shop	Fishmongers	4	4
Shop	Food Merchants	1	1
Shop	Furriers		1
Shop	Grocers	15	27
Shop	Haberdashers	4	3
Shop	Herbalists	3	3

Shop	Importers	6	6
Shop	Jewelers	9	9
Shop	Launderers	15	14
Shop	Liquor Merchants	4	4
Shop	Pawnbroker	6	5
Shop	Prostitutes	6	35
Shop	Silk Harvesters	4	19
Shop	Silk Merchants	2	4
Shop	Silk Throwers	9	27
Shop	Spell Components		2
Shop	Spice Merchants		6
Shop	Tailors		29
Shop	Tinkers		10
Shop	Tobacco merchants		4
Shop	Wine Merchants		15
Shop	Woodsellers		2
		131	323

GLORY CRYPT

Building Type	Business	Lower	Main	Upper
Office	Advocates (lawyers)	1	1	0
Office	Architects	0	0	1
Office	Bankers	0	0	1
Office	Construction Weavers	4	3	6
Office	Copyists	0	0	1
Office	Doctors, licensed	2	1	2



WARD SUMMARY

Office	Doctors, unlicensed	2	2	2
Office	Engineer	0	0	1
Office	Historians	0	0	1
Office	Liquor Merchants	3	1	1
Office	Livestock merchants	9	6	11
Office	Magic Shop	0	1	1
Office	Masons	2	4	6
Office	Moneychangers	0	1	1
Office	Panwbroker	1	2	4
Office	Silk Merchants	2	2	1
Office	Spice merchants	2	2	1
Office	Wine merchants	3	3	4
		31	29	45
Shop	Barbers	7	6	9
Shop	Booksellers	1	0	0
Shop	Brothel Keepers	1	0	0
Shop	Butchers	4	1	4
Shop	Clothiers, Used	11	10	16
Shop	Dairy sellers	10	10	16
Shop	Dentists	0	1	0
Shop	Drapers	9	7	14
Shop	Engravers	1	2	3
Shop	Expedition Outfitters	1	0	0
Shop	Fishmongers	0	1	1
Shop	Furriers	2	1	3
Shop	Grocers	12	11	17
Shop	Haberdashers	4	4	6
Shop	Herbalists	1	0	1
Shop	Importers	2	1	3
Shop	Jewelers	9	9	13
Shop	Launderers	11	10	16
Shop	Liquor Merchants	1	1	2
Shop	Pawnbroker	4	5	6
Shop	Prostitutes	10	10	15
Shop	Silk Harvesters	7	6	10
Shop	Silk Merchants	4	3	5
Shop	Silk Throwers	11	10	16

Shop	Spell Components	0	1	1
Shop	Spice Merchants	3	2	4
Shop	Tailors	10	9	14
Shop	Tinkers	0	1	1
Shop	Tobacco merchants	2	1	2
Shop	Wine Merchants	3	3	4
Shop	Woodsellers	0	1	1
		141	127	203

GRANITE CIRCLE

Building Type	Business	Lower	Main	Upper
Shop	Barbers	4	3	5
Shop	Booksellers	0	0	1
Shop	Brothel Keepers	1	1	2
Shop	Butchers	2	2	3
Shop	Clothiers, Used	13	12	17
Shop	Dairy sellers	7	7	9
Shop	Dentists	1	1	0
Shop	Drapers	6	5	8
Shop	Engravers	4	3	4
Shop	Expedition Outfitters	2	1	2
Shop	Food Merchants	1	1	0
Shop	Grocers	11	11	14
Shop	Haberdashers	1	1	1
Shop	Herbalists	2	1	2
Shop	Importers	3	3	3
Shop	Jewelers	5	5	7
Shop	Launderers	12	10	16
Shop	Liquor Merchants	1	1	0
Shop	Pawnbroker	3	3	4
Shop	Prostitutes	9	8	10
Shop	Silk Harvesters	7	6	9
Shop	Silk Merchants	2	2	3
Shop	Silk Throwers	10	9	14
Shop	Spell Components	1	1	2
Shop	Spice Merchants	2	2	3

WARD SUMMARY

Shop	Tailors	4	4	5
Shop	Tinkers	1	1	2
Shop	Wine Merchants	2	2	2
Shop	Woodsellers	1	1	1
Workshop	Armorers	4	4	6
Workshop	Artists	6	5	8
Workshop	Bakers	14	12	17
Workshop	Basket Makers	20	19	26
Workshop	Bellmakers	1	1	0
Workshop	Blacksmiths	7	7	10
Workshop	Bleachers	4	4	5
Workshop	Bookbinders	3	2	4
Workshop	Bowyer/Fletcher	4	3	5
Workshop	Brewers	5	5	6
Workshop	Buckle Makers	3	2	3
Workshop	Chandlers	10	10	13
Workshop	Clock makers	1	1	2
Workshop	Cobblers	42	38	53
Workshop	Construction Weavers	19	18	25
Workshop	Cutlers	5	5	7
Workshop	Distillers	2	2	3
Workshop	Dye Makers	2	1	2
Workshop	Fungal Treaters	13	12	16
Workshop	Furniture Makers	46	41	57
Workshop	Girdlers	3	2	3
Workshop	Glassmakers	3	2	3
Workshop	Glove makers	5	5	6
Workshop	Goldsmiths	9	7	10
Workshop	Harness Makers	5	5	7
Workshop	Illuminators	3	2	3
Workshop	Instrument makers	3	4	4
Workshop	Inventors	1	1	0
Workshop	Jewelers	17	16	22
Workshop	Leatherworkers	7	6	8
Workshop	Locksmiths	4	4	5
Workshop	Masons	15	14	19
Workshop	Painters	4	3	5

Workshop	Paper Makers	23	21	29
Workshop	Pastry Makers	10	10	13
Workshop	Perfumer	3	2	3
Workshop	Potionmakers	3	3	5
Workshop	Potters	24	21	30
Workshop	Purse Makers	6	6	8
Workshop	Rope Makers	5	5	6
Workshop	Rug merchants	4	4	6
Workshop	Saddlers and Spurriers	6	5	8
Workshop	Scabbard Makers	12	11	15
Workshop	Sculptors	3	3	5
Workshop	Silk Throwers	38	35	48
Workshop	Silversmiths	10	9	13
Workshop	Skinners	3	2	3
Workshop	Slavers	4	3	5
Workshop	Soapmakers	11	11	14
Workshop	Spider Merchants	4	4	5
Workshop	Tanners	6	5	8
Workshop	Tilers	3	2	3
Workshop	Toy makers	4	4	6
Workshop	Vestment Makers	1	0	1
Workshop	Vintner	3	3	4
Workshop	Weaponsmiths	2	2	3
Workshop	Weavers	24	21	30
Workshop	Wheelwrights	26	23	32
Workshop	Woodcarvers	4	3	5
		650	588	820

HORDES

Shop	Barbers	8
Shop	Booksellers	1
Shop	Brothel Keepers	1
Shop	Butchers	1
Shop	Clothiers, Used	12
Shop	Dairy sellers	11
Shop	Dentists	1
Shop	Drapers	2

Shop	Engravers	1
Shop	Furriers	1
Shop	Grocers	11
Shop	Haberdashers	2
Shop	Herbalists	1
Shop	Importers	3
Shop	Jewelers	2
Shop	Launderers	12
Shop	Pawnbroker	1



WARD SUMMARY

Shop	Prostitutes	6
Shop	Silk Harvesters	2
Shop	Silk Merchants	1
Shop	Silk Throwers	6
Shop	Spell Components	1
Shop	Spice Merchants	1
Shop	Tailors	7
Shop	Tinkers	1
Shop	Tobacco merchants	1
Shop	Wine Merchants	1
Workshop	Armorers	1
Workshop	Artists	3
Workshop	Bakers	9
Workshop	Basket Makers	17
Workshop	Blacksmiths	5
Workshop	Bleachers	1
Workshop	Bookbinders	3
Workshop	Bowyer/Fletcher	1
Workshop	Brewers	1
Workshop	Buckle Makers	5
Workshop	Chandlers	6
Workshop	Clock makers	1
Workshop	Cobblers	40
Workshop	Construction Weavers	12
Workshop	Cutlers	5
Workshop	Fungal Treaters	8
Workshop	Furniture Makers	27
Workshop	Girdlers	3
Workshop	Glassmakers	3
Workshop	Glove makers	4
Workshop	Goldsmiths	1
Workshop	Harness Makers	1
Workshop	Illuminators	2
Workshop	Instrument makers	3
Workshop	Inventors	2
Workshop	Jewelers	14
Workshop	Leatherworkers	4

Workshop	Locksmiths	3
Workshop	Masons	14
Workshop	Painters	3
Workshop	Paper Makers	20
Workshop	Pastry Makers	9
Workshop	Perfumer	2
Workshop	Potionmakers	1
Workshop	Potters	11
Workshop	Purse Makers	3
Workshop	Rope Makers	2
Workshop	Rug merchants	4
Workshop	Saddlers and Spurriers	5
Workshop	Scabbard Makers	6
Workshop	Sculptors	2
Workshop	Silk Throwers	27
Workshop	Silversmiths	4
Workshop	Skinners	2
Workshop	Slavers	2
Workshop	Soapmakers	7
Workshop	Spider Merchants	3
Workshop	Tanners	5
Workshop	Taxidermists	1
Workshop	Tilers	3
Workshop	Toy makers	7
Workshop	Vestment Makers	1
Workshop	Vintner	2
Workshop	Weavers	21
Workshop	Wheelwrights	13
Workshop	Woodcarvers	3
		466

LEVIATHAN SHIELD

Type	Business	Number
Shop	Barbers	7
Shop	Butchers	7
Shop	Clothiers, Used	15

Shop	Drapers	7
Shop	Engravers	7
Shop	Expedition Outfitters	4
Shop	Fishmongers	4
Shop	Grocers	5
Shop	Jewelers	7
Shop	Pawnbroker	7
Shop	Prostitutes	7
Shop	Silk Harvesters	11
Shop	Silk Throwers	4
Shop	Spell Components	4
Shop	Tailors	11
Shop	Tinkers	4
Shop	Wine Merchants	4
Workshop	Bakers	4
Workshop	Basket Makers	1
Workshop	Bellmakers	1
Workshop	Bleachers	1
Workshop	Bookbinders	1
Workshop	Brewers	2
Workshop	Chandlers	2
Workshop	Cobblers	7
Workshop	Construction Weavers	4
Workshop	Fungal Treaters	2
Workshop	Furniture Makers	11
Workshop	Glassmakers	2
Workshop	Goldsmiths	1
Workshop	Instrument makers	2
Workshop	Jewelers	5
Workshop	Leatherworkers	1
Workshop	Locksmiths	1
Workshop	Masons	3
Workshop	Paper Makers	6
Workshop	Pastry Makers	4
Workshop	Potionmakers	1
Workshop	Potters	5
Workshop	Rope Makers	1

Workshop	Rug merchants	1
Workshop	Sculptors	1
Workshop	Silk Throwers	7
Workshop	Skinner	2
Workshop	Slavers	2
Workshop	Soapmakers	6
Workshop	Tanners	1
Workshop	Toy makers	1
Workshop	Vestment Makers	1
Workshop	Weaponsmiths	1
Workshop	Weavers	4
Workshop	Wheelwrights	6
Workshop	Woodcarvers	1
		217

NIGHT SEAL

Type	Business	Number
Shop	Barbers	4
Shop	Clothiers, Used	15
Shop	Dairy sellers	7
Shop	Drapers	4
Shop	Engravers	4
Shop	Expedition Outfitters	4
Shop	Grocers	11
Shop	Herbalists	4
Shop	Jewelers	4
Shop	Launderers	7
Shop	Prostitutes	7
Shop	Silk Harvesters	10
Shop	Silk Throwers	7
Shop	Tinkers	4
Shop	Wine Merchants	4
Workshop	Armorers	1
Workshop	Artists	1
Workshop	Basket Makers	2
Workshop	Blacksmiths	3
Workshop	Bleachers	1

WARD SUMMARY

Workshop	Bookbinders	2
Workshop	Buckle Makers	1
Workshop	Chandlers	4
Workshop	Cobblers	9
Workshop	Construction Weavers	7
Workshop	Cutlers	1
Workshop	Fungal Treaters	3
Workshop	Furniture Makers	10
Workshop	Girdlers	1
Workshop	Glassmakers	2
Workshop	Goldsmiths	2
Workshop	Harness Makers	3
Workshop	Instrument makers	1
Workshop	Inventors	1
Workshop	Jewelers	3
Workshop	Leatherworkers	2
Workshop	Locksmiths	2
Workshop	Masons	4
Workshop	Painters	4
Workshop	Paper Makers	6
Workshop	Pastry Makers	4
Workshop	Potters	4
Workshop	Purse Makers	1
Workshop	Saddlers and Spurriers	1
Workshop	Sculptors	2
Workshop	Silk Throwers	10
Workshop	Silversmiths	1
Workshop	Soapmakers	2
Workshop	Spider Merchants	2
Workshop	Tanners	1
Workshop	Vintner	1
Workshop	Weaponsmiths	1
Workshop	Weavers	7
Workshop	Wheelwrights	3
Workshop	Woodcarvers	2
		214

NOBLE LABYRINTH

Type	Business	Number
Office	Architects	1
Office	Cartographers	1
Office	Construction Weavers	7
Office	Copyists	1
Office	Doctors, unlicensed	1
Office	Engineer	1
Office	Food Merchants	1
Office	Liquor Merchants	2
Office	Livestock merchants	3
Office	Masons	4
Office	Pawnbroker	1
Office	Sage/scholar	1
Office	Silk Merchants	1
Office	Spice merchants	2
Office	Tobacco merchants	1
Shop	Barbers	3
Shop	Booksellers	1
Shop	Butchers	2
Shop	Clothiers, Used	3
Shop	Dairy sellers	8
Shop	Engravers	2
Shop	Expedition Outfitters	1
Shop	Grocers	10
Shop	Haberdashers	2
Shop	Herbalists	1
Shop	Importers	1
Shop	Launderers	5
Shop	Liquor Merchants	2
Shop	Pawnbroker	3
Shop	Prostitutes	6
Shop	Silk Harvesters	3
Shop	Silk Throwers	5
Shop	Spell Components	1
Shop	Spice Merchants	1

Shop	Tailors	7
		95

OUTLAND THIEVES

Type	Business	Number
Office	Advocates (lawyers)	1
Office	Bankers	1
Office	Construction Weavers	4
Office	Copyists	1
Office	Livestock merchants	7
Office	Masons	3
Office	Panwbroker	2
Office	Silk Merchants	1
Office	Wine merchants	4
Shop	Barbers	5
Shop	Booksellers	1
Shop	Brothel Keepers	2
Shop	Butchers	3
Shop	Clothiers, Used	8
Shop	Dairy sellers	6
Shop	Drapers	3
Shop	Engravers	2
Shop	Fishmongers	1
Shop	Furriers	1
Shop	Grocers	8
Shop	Haberdashers	2
Shop	Importers	8
Shop	Jewelers	6
Shop	Launderers	7
Shop	Magic merchants	2
Shop	Pawnbroker	4
Shop	Prostitutes	5
Shop	Silk Harvesters	3
Shop	Silk Throwers	9
Shop	Spell Components	1
Shop	Spice Merchants	3

Shop	Tailors	2
Shop	Wine Merchants	4
Shop	Woodsellers	2
Workshop	Artists	3
Workshop	Bakers	1
Workshop	Basket Makers	1
Workshop	Bellmakers	1
Workshop	Blacksmiths	2
Workshop	Chandlers	2
Workshop	Cobblers	4
Workshop	Construction Weavers	4
Workshop	Cutlers	3
Workshop	Distillers	1
Workshop	Dye Makers	1
Workshop	Furniture Makers	6
Workshop	Glassmakers	1
Workshop	Goldsmiths	4
Workshop	Instrument makers	1
Workshop	Jewelers	7
Workshop	Leatherworkers	2
Workshop	Masons	1
Workshop	Paper Makers	2
Workshop	Potters	4
Workshop	Purse Makers	1
Workshop	Saddlers and Spurriers	1
Workshop	Sculptors	1
Workshop	Silk Throwers	3
Workshop	Slavers	1
Workshop	Soapmakers	2
Workshop	Tilers	1
Workshop	Vintner	1
Workshop	Weavers	4
Workshop	Woodcarvers	1
		189

WARD SUMMARY

ROARING GATE

Type	Business	Name
Office	Construction Weavers	1
Office	Doctors, licensed	1
Office	Doctors, unlicensed	1
Office	Liquor Merchants	2
Office	Livestock merchants	1
Office	Silk Merchants	1
Office	Spice merchants	1
Shop	Barbers	4
Shop	Brothel Keepers	1
Shop	Clothiers, Used	2
Shop	Dairy sellers	3
Shop	Drapers	2
Shop	Fishmongers	1
Shop	Grocers	3
Shop	Launderers	3
Shop	Liquor Merchants	2
Shop	Prostitutes	2
Shop	Silk Harvesters	1
Shop	Silk Throwers	1
Shop	Tailors	4
Shop	Tinkers	3
Shop	Wine Merchants	2
Workshop	Alchemists	2
Workshop	Artists	3
Workshop	Bakers	2
Workshop	Basket Makers	7
Workshop	Blacksmiths	1
Workshop	Bleachers	2
Workshop	Bowyer/Fletcher	1
Workshop	Brewers	1
Workshop	Buckle Makers	1
Workshop	Chandlers	2
Workshop	Cobblers	15
Workshop	Construction Weavers	3
Workshop	Distillers	1
Workshop	Dye Makers	1

Workshop	Fungal Treaters	2
Workshop	Furniture Makers	3
Workshop	Glassmakers	1
Workshop	Glove makers	1
Workshop	Goldsmiths	1
Workshop	Jewelers	4
Workshop	Leatherworkers	3
Workshop	Locksmiths	1
Workshop	Masons	3
Workshop	Painters	2
Workshop	Paper Makers	3
Workshop	Pastry Makers	2
Workshop	Perfumer	1
Workshop	Potters	3
Workshop	Rope Makers	1
Workshop	Rug merchants	1
Workshop	Saddlers and Spurriers	1
Workshop	Silk Throwers	4
Workshop	Slavers	1
Workshop	Soapmakers	4
Workshop	Tanners	2
Workshop	Tilers	1
Workshop	Toy makers	2
Workshop	Vintner	1
Workshop	Weavers	1
Workshop	Wheelwrights	4
		137

RUSTED VEIN

Building Type	Business	Main	Upper
Shop	Barbers	7	10
Shop	Booksellers	1	2
Shop	Brothel Keepers	2	2
Shop	Butchers	3	5
Shop	Clothiers, Used	10	14
Shop	Dairy sellers	7	9
Shop	Dentists	0	1

WARD SUMMARY

Shop	Drapers	6	9
Shop	Engravers	2	2
Shop	Expedition Outfitters	0	1
Shop	Fishmongers	1	1
Shop	Food Merchants	1	1
Shop	Furriers	2	2
Shop	Grocers	5	8
Shop	Haberdashers	0	1
Shop	Herbalists	2	2
Shop	Importers	1	2
Shop	Jewelers	4	5
Shop	Launderers	12	17
Shop	Liquor Merchants	2	2
Shop	Pawnbroker	1	2
Shop	Prostitutes	11	15
Shop	Silk Harvesters	5	8
Shop	Silk Merchants	1	1
Shop	Silk Throwers	6	9
Shop	Spell Components	0	1
Shop	Spice Merchants	2	2
Shop	Tailors	5	6
Shop	Tinkers	1	1
Shop	Tobacco merchants	0	1
Shop	Wine Merchants	1	2
Shop	Woodsellers	4	0
Workshop	Armorers	1	1
Workshop	Artists	5	7
Workshop	Bakers	11	16
Workshop	Basket Makers	19	26
Workshop	Bellmakers	0	1
Workshop	Blacksmiths	5	7
Workshop	Bleachers	4	5
Workshop	Bookbinders	3	5
Workshop	Bowyer/Fletcher	1	1
Workshop	Brewers	2	3
Workshop	Buckle Makers	6	7

Workshop	Chandlers	9	12
Workshop	Clock makers	1	1
Workshop	Cobblers	36	49
Workshop	Construction Weavers	22	29
Workshop	Cutlers	6	8
Workshop	Distillers	1	1
Workshop	Dye Makers	0	1
Workshop	Fungal Treaters	11	14
Workshop	Furniture Makers	33	46
Workshop	Girdlers	1	2
Workshop	Glassmakers	2	3
Workshop	Glove makers	1	2
Workshop	Goldsmiths	7	9
Workshop	Harness Makers	4	5
Workshop	Illuminators	2	2
Workshop	Instrument makers	3	3
Workshop	Inventors	1	2
Workshop	Jewelers	14	19
Workshop	Leatherworkers	4	6
Workshop	Locksmiths	4	5
Workshop	Masons	8	12
Workshop	Painters	4	6
Workshop	Paper Makers	23	31
Workshop	Pastry Makers	10	14
Workshop	Perfumer	4	5
Workshop	Potionmakers	3	4
Workshop	Potters	18	25
Workshop	Purse Makers	6	7
Workshop	Rope Makers	4	5
Workshop	Rug merchants	5	6
Workshop	Saddlers and Spurriers	6	9
Workshop	Scabbard Makers	4	6
Workshop	Sculptors	3	4
Workshop	Silk Throwers	27	37
Workshop	Silversmiths	6	8
Workshop	Skinner	1	2



WARD SUMMARY

Workshop	Slavers	1	1
Workshop	Soapmakers	13	18
Workshop	Spider Merchants	4	5
Workshop	Tanners	2	3
Workshop	Taxidermists	1	1
Workshop	Tilers	1	2
Workshop	Toy makers	4	5
Workshop	Vestment Makers	2	3
Workshop	Vintner	3	5
Workshop	Weaponsmiths	3	5
Workshop	Weavers	26	34
Workshop	Wheelwrights	14	18
Workshop	Woodcarvers	2	3
		532	726

SHRIEKING HIVE

Type	Business	Number
Shop	Barbers	2
Shop	Booksellers	1
Shop	Butchers	2
Shop	Clothiers, Used	7
Shop	Dairy sellers	1
Shop	Dentists	1
Shop	Drapers	2
Shop	Fishmongers	1
Shop	Furriers	1
Shop	Grocers	3
Shop	Haberdashers	1
Shop	Jewelers	5
Shop	Launderers	3
Shop	Liquor Merchants	1
Shop	Prostitutes	5
Shop	Silk Harvesters	4
Shop	Silk Merchants	2
Shop	Silk Throwers	4
Shop	Tailors	3
Shop	Tinkers	1

Shop	Wine Merchants	1
Shop	Woodsellers	1
Workshop	Artists	5
Workshop	Bakers	4
Workshop	Basket Makers	12
Workshop	Bleachers	3
Workshop	Bowyer/Fletcher	1
Workshop	Brewers	4
Workshop	Buckle Makers	2
Workshop	Chandlers	4
Workshop	Clock makers	1
Workshop	Cobblers	14
Workshop	Construction Weavers	4
Workshop	Cutlers	2
Workshop	Distillers	2
Workshop	Fungal Treaters	1
Workshop	Furniture Makers	14
Workshop	Girdlers	2
Workshop	Glove makers	1
Workshop	Goldsmiths	1
Workshop	Harness Makers	1
Workshop	Inventors	1
Workshop	Jewelers	6
Workshop	Masons	1
Workshop	Painters	2
Workshop	Paper Makers	7
Workshop	Pastry Makers	5
Workshop	Potters	10
Workshop	Purse Makers	3
Workshop	Rope Makers	2
Workshop	Rug merchants	1
Workshop	Saddlers and Spurriers	4
Workshop	Scabbard Makers	3
Workshop	Sculptors	1
Workshop	Silk Throwers	8

Workshop	Silversmiths	4
Workshop	Skinner	1
Workshop	Slavers	1
Workshop	Soapmakers	4
Workshop	Tanners	1
Workshop	Taxidermists	1
Workshop	Tilers	1
Workshop	Toy makers	1
Workshop	Weavers	8
Workshop	Wheelwrights	5
Workshop	Woodcarvers	2
		213

SILVER STREET

Type	Business	Number
Office	Advocates (lawyers)	1
Office	Architects	2
Office	Construction Weavers	6
Office	Copyists	1
Office	Doctors, unlicensed	1
Office	Liquor Merchants	2
Office	Livestock merchants	8
Office	Masons	4
Office	Panbroker	3
Office	Silk Merchants	4
Office	Spice merchants	2
Office	Wine merchants	5
Shop	Barbers	10
Shop	Booksellers	2
Shop	Brothel Keepers	5
Shop	Clothiers, Used	7
Shop	Dairy sellers	14
Shop	Dentists	2
Shop	Drapers	5

Shop	Engravers	4
Shop	Expedition Outfitters	2
Shop	Food Merchants	1
Shop	Furriers	4
Shop	Grocers	17
Shop	Haberdashers	7
Shop	Herbalists	5
Shop	Importers	8
Shop	Jewelers	10
Shop	Launderers	7
Shop	Liquor Merchants	3
Shop	Magic merchants	1
Shop	Pawnbroker	6
Shop	Prostitutes	15
Shop	Silk Harvesters	3
Shop	Silk Merchants	2
Shop	Silk Throwers	13
Shop	Spell Components	3
Shop	Spice Merchants	1
Shop	Tailors	7
Shop	Tinkers	3
Shop	Wine Merchants	4
Shop	Woodsellers	3
Workshop	Basket Makers	5
Workshop	Blacksmiths	1
Workshop	Chandlers	4
Workshop	Cobblers	9
Workshop	Construction Weavers	3
Workshop	Cutlers	2
Workshop	Furniture Makers	7
Workshop	Glassmakers	1
Workshop	Goldsmiths	2
Workshop	Harness Makers	1
Workshop	Instrument makers	1
Workshop	Jewelers	7

WARD SUMMARY

Workshop	Leatherworkers	2
Workshop	Masons	5
Workshop	Paper Makers	2
Workshop	Pastry Makers	2
Workshop	Potionmakers	2
Workshop	Potters	3
Workshop	Rug merchants	2
Workshop	Saddlers and Spurriers	1
Workshop	Scabbard Makers	1
Workshop	Sculptors	1
Workshop	Silk Throwers	7
Workshop	Silversmiths	1
Workshop	Slavers	2
Workshop	Soapmakers	5
Workshop	Taxidermists	2
Workshop	Toy makers	4
Workshop	Vestment Makers	1
Workshop	Weaponsmiths	2
Workshop	Weavers	7
Workshop	Wheelwrights	5
Workshop	Woodcarvers	1
		314

SUN GATE

Type	Business	Number
Office	Construction Weavers	4
Office	Masons	1
Office	Sage/scholar	1
Office	Spice merchants	1
Office	Wine merchants	2
Shop	Barbers	3
Shop	Butchers	3
Shop	Clothiers, Used	6
Shop	Dairy sellers	9
Shop	Furriers	3
Shop	Grocers	15
Shop	Haberdashers	3

Shop	Herbalists	9
Shop	Jewelers	6
Shop	Launderers	3
Shop	Magic merchants	3
Shop	Pawnbroker	3
Shop	Prostitutes	3
Shop	Silk Harvesters	4
Shop	Silk Throwers	12
Shop	Tailors	6
Workshop	Artists	1
Workshop	Bakers	2
Workshop	Basket Makers	4
Workshop	Bookbinders	1
Workshop	Chandlers	2
Workshop	Cobblers	8
Workshop	Construction Weavers	3
Workshop	Cutlers	1
Workshop	Dye Makers	2
Workshop	Fungal Treaters	3
Workshop	Furniture Makers	7
Workshop	Glassmakers	2
Workshop	Glove makers	2
Workshop	Goldsmiths	1
Workshop	Harness Makers	1
Workshop	Instrument makers	1
Workshop	Jewelers	7
Workshop	Leatherworkers	2
Workshop	Masons	3
Workshop	Painters	1
Workshop	Paper Makers	4
Workshop	Pastry Makers	2
Workshop	Saddlers and Spurriers	3
Workshop	Scabbard Makers	1
Workshop	Sculptors	1
Workshop	Silk Throwers	6
Workshop	Silversmiths	2

Workshop	Skinners	2
Workshop	Soapmakers	5
Workshop	Tanners	1
Workshop	Taxidermists	1
Workshop	Tilers	1
Workshop	Weavers	5
Workshop	Wheelwrights	4
		192

Workshop	Saddlers and Spurriers	2
Workshop	Sculptors	1
Workshop	Silk Throwers	2
Workshop	Skinners	1
Workshop	Soapmakers	3
Workshop	Toy makers	2
Workshop	Vestment Makers	1
Workshop	Weavers	3
Workshop	Wheelwrights	1
Workshop	Woodcarvers	1
		100

VAULT OF TOMBS

Building Type	Business	Number
Office	Architects	1
Office	Bankers	1
Office	Construction Weavers	4
Office	Doctors, unlicensed	5
Office	Historians	2
Office	Liquor Merchants	4
Office	Livestock merchants	10
Office	Masons	4
Office	Panwbroker	5
Office	Silk Merchants	1
Workshop	Armorsers	1
Workshop	Bakers	4
Workshop	Basket Makers	2
Workshop	Bleachers	2
Workshop	Bookbinders	1
Workshop	Brewers	1
Workshop	Buckle Makers	1
Workshop	Chandlers	2
Workshop	Clock makers	1
Workshop	Cobblers	5
Workshop	Construction Weavers	4
Workshop	Cutlers	2
Workshop	Furniture Makers	6
Workshop	Glassmakers	1
Workshop	Harness Makers	1
Workshop	Illuminators	1
Workshop	Jewelers	2
Workshop	Masons	1
Workshop	Pastry Makers	2
Workshop	Perfumer	1
Workshop	Potters	3
Workshop	Rope Makers	1
Workshop	Rug merchants	1

WAILING WAY

Building Type	Business	Number
Workshop	Artists	1
Workshop	Bakers	5
Workshop	Basket Makers	3
Workshop	Blacksmiths	2
Workshop	Bleachers	1
Workshop	Bookbinders	1
Workshop	Buckle Makers	1
Workshop	Chandlers	1
Workshop	Cobblers	9
Workshop	Construction Weavers	5
Workshop	Cutlers	1
Workshop	Dye Makers	1
Workshop	Fungal Treaters	3
Workshop	Furniture Makers	5
Workshop	Girdlers	1
Workshop	Glassmakers	1
Workshop	Goldsmiths	1
Workshop	Harness Makers	1
Workshop	Jewelers	6
Workshop	Leatherworkers	4
Workshop	Locksmiths	2
Workshop	Masons	1
Workshop	Paper Makers	4
Workshop	Perfumer	1
Workshop	Potters	4
Workshop	Rope Makers	1
Workshop	Scabbard Makers	1
Workshop	Silk Throwers	5
Workshop	Silversmiths	4
Workshop	Skinners	1

WARD SUMMARY

Workshop	Soapmakers	2
Workshop	Spider Merchants	2
Workshop	Tilers	2
Workshop	Toy makers	1
Workshop	Weavers	5
Workshop	Wheelwrights	4
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WEB OF THE DARK MOTHER

Type	Business	Number
Office	Construction Weavers	10
Office	Copyists	1
Office	Doctors, licensed	1
Office	Doctors, unlicensed	1
Office	Engineer	3
Office	Food Merchants	1
Office	Livestock merchants	12
Office	Masons	4
Office	Panwbroker	4
Office	Sage/scholar	1
Office	Silk Merchants	6
Office	Wine merchants	4
Shop	Barbers	5
Shop	Butchers	4
Shop	Clothiers, Used	6
Shop	Dairy sellers	3
Shop	Drapers	4
Shop	Fishmongers	2
Shop	Grocers	12
Shop	Haberdashers	3
Shop	Herbalists	3
Shop	Jewelers	3
Shop	Launderers	10
Shop	Pawnbroker	4
Shop	Prostitutes	8
Shop	Silk Harvesters	2
Shop	Silk Throwers	5
Shop	Tailors	5
Shop	Tinkers	3
Shop	Wine Merchants	3
Workshop	Alchemists	1

Workshop	Bakers	2
Workshop	Basket Makers	2
Workshop	Blacksmiths	1
Workshop	Bleachers	2
Workshop	Buckle Makers	1
Workshop	Chandlers	3
Workshop	Clock makers	2
Workshop	Cobblers	5
Workshop	Construction Weavers	4
Workshop	Distillers	1
Workshop	Fungal Treaters	3
Workshop	Furniture Makers	9
Workshop	Girdlers	1
Workshop	Glassmakers	1
Workshop	Goldsmiths	1
Workshop	Harness Makers	1
Workshop	Instrument makers	1
Workshop	Jewelers	3
Workshop	Leatherworkers	1
Workshop	Masons	4
Workshop	Painters	1
Workshop	Paper Makers	3
Workshop	Pastry Makers	2
Workshop	Potters	1
Workshop	Rug merchants	1
Workshop	Sculptors	1
Workshop	Silk Throwers	7
Workshop	Silversmiths	1
Workshop	Slavers	1
Workshop	Soapmakers	1
Workshop	Spider Merchants	1
Workshop	Tilers	1
Workshop	Toy makers	1
Workshop	Weaponsmiths	1
Workshop	Weavers	4
Workshop	Wheelwrights	6
Workshop	Woodcarvers	1
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It was late, and she was long since supposed to be asleep, when Dorianne heard a light tap at her door. She turned down the light of her lantern, knowing that the brighter it was, the less comfortable Blade was about entering her room. Just in case it was someone else, she slipped her jagged dagger out from under her pillow and kept it hidden by a blanket. 'Come in,' she said quietly.

The door opened slightly and her lord slipped into the room like a shadow. He had a tray in one hand with a covered silver dish and a wine bottle in the other. 'I did not wake you, did I?'

Dorianne smiled, mostly because this seemed like one of those rare times when she could do it without catching a vicious look from her master. She was right; he did not look upset with her at all. In fact, he looked almost nervous. Now she was worried. He rarely did anything he did not want to do, so distress was not something she was used to seeing. Dori began to wonder if the meal was poisoned and he had finally decided she was more trouble than she was worth.

'If I have done something wrong, lord, I will fix it. I swear, I can still be useful to you.' She knew she sounded pathetic, but she really meant what she said. Dori could not imagine any life outside these walls or without Blade to guide her. If he was not going to kill her, but only meant to banish her, she was certain she would prefer death.

Blade gave her a slight smile and set down the tray. The smile itself was a rare treasure on his lips, but the look of assurance made her heart leap. 'No, no. You are very useful, Dori-mouse. You get to keep breathing for another day.'

It took her a moment that he meant that last part as a joke. It took her even longer to realize that he did not intend to ever kill her. But, she wondered, if he was not here for that, then why was he in her room? With wine... and dinner? The look of bewilderment on her face must have been evident, because Blade smiled again softly. It was a little out of place on him, but she found the expression quite charming.

'Tomorrow marks the second year you have been here with me, you wretched rodent. On the surface, they call that an anniversary, and they celebrate them. Last year, we were going to have a party, but the Network interrupted it with that trio of assassins.'

Dorianne shuddered with the memory of that aborted night and the deep wound she had almost died from. If Blade had not carried her to the Temple and paid for her healing, she would have died that night.

'Well,' Blade continued, 'I wanted to do something special for you, but I didn't think making any big plans would be a good idea. Those Network bastards tracked me because of the special orders I placed for the party. So tonight, I thought I would just bring you dinner. Nothing special...'

Dorianne beamed happily. 'Yes, it is! Thank you, lord!'

Obviously embarrassed, he snarled at her without any real hostility behind it and shoved her dinner into her lap. It was a thick mushroom steak with honey glaze that had to be fresh from the surface. She loved honey, and he apparently knew it. She marveled at how much attention he paid to her and took a bite before she could wake up from this wonderful dream. A half hour passed this way, with her sharing bites with Blade and sipping on the fine bottle of elven wine.

After the meal, Blade looked uncomfortable again. She paid rapt attention, wondering what else he had planned. 'Dorianne, I want you to come with me tomorrow night for a... *job*. I think you are finally ready, but I will understand if you are not comfortable with the work I do at night. You've learned a great deal about stealth, but this is different. I would be asking you to...' He shifted again, his eyes darting around the room nervously.

'Kill? As in out of combat, just killing someone in their bed or from the shadows?' She smiled up at him and, moving more boldly than ever before, took his hands in her tiny ones. 'I want to come. I'll do anything you want me to, master.'

Blade looked at her for a long time, long enough to make her think that she had somehow given him the wrong answer. Fear began to creep into her heart, fear that was not abated when he asked, 'Why would you want to help me like that?'

She took a deep breath. She might be signing her own death warrant, but she had never lied to him and she was not about to start now. 'Because, my lord, where you go, I will go. Where you strike, I will strike. I am your shadow, and I will be there for you until you no longer want me.'

He stood up, obviously still troubled. 'That is not the Sheoloth way, Dori.'

She nodded, more certain of her words than ever before. 'No, my lord. It is your way, and that makes it my way.'

Blade came closer to her, his eyes locked onto hers. This festering city had created a jewel, somehow, out of all its perversion and filth. The Sprawling City had somehow produced something more precious than any idiot noble or raving priestess could ever dream of being. Sheoloth had finally spawned a woman he could adore and, in the typical fashion of his fellow drow, they had left her in the garbage...

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SHEOLOTH

City of the Drow

Crouched within a vast cavern complex, the city of Sheoloth is a skeleton of stone wrapped in tortured flesh and clad in robes of woven silk. From its first beginnings as a captured fortress, Sheoloth has slowly expanded over the decades. Expansion of the city eats away at the stone around it, leaving behind thick cores of marble and basalt to support the ceiling of the city. Glittering corouselights wander the streets, providing illumination to both the estates of the nobility and the meanest hovel of the most poverty-stricken foreigners. It is a place of strange beauty and stark power, at once serene and filled with chaotic violence, Sheoloth is a true home to the drow.

This mighty tome details a complete subterranean city, populated by the most vicious and twisted race ever depicted in fantasy - the Drow! Adaptable to any existing campaign, Sheoloth may be used as the centerpiece to many scenarios, pitting the players against the most evil elves to rule the Underdeep, or as the scene of destructive politicking between rival drow nobles.

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