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W A Y F I N D E R

A Pathfinder Fanzine made by Fans for Fans



The Darklands



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A PATHFINDER FANZINE MADE BY FANS FOR FANS

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FOREWORD

A lot has happened since the last time I crept into these pages.

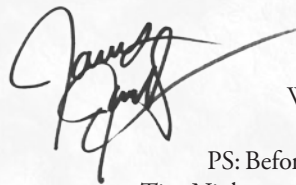
As I write this, I'm edging up on my 10-year anniversary at Paizo. A decade ago, I was working as a contractor at a different game company most of you have heard of, splitting my time between the sales department and the web team, but my mind wasn't really on that work. After all, I'd just accepted a job offer to come work at Paizo as an Associate Editor. Since joining Team Purplegolem, I've seen plenty of amazing things. Some random highlights follow:

- Watching a snake and a raven fight to the death in the parking lot.
- Helping Sean K Reynolds catch an enormous spider the size of a shot glass that was cruising around outside of Jason Bulmahn's office.
- Seeing my adventure "Burnt Offerings" turned into a play and receiving a real-life dogslicer as a thank you.
- Cruelly murdering Erik Mona's character with a moon gun (actually, it was a serpentfolk who did the deed, but Erik still blames me, I think).
- Boggling (and perhaps frightening) Wes Schneider with the aid of James Sutter during the one and only performance of Operation Banjo Thug.
- Taking command of the Demon's Kiss, the scale-model pirate ship Rob McCreary built for his Skull & Shackles game.
- Experiencing the panic and elation in a meeting room when it became apparent we were going to put Rasputin on the cover of Pathfinder.
- Chatting with a police officer who came by the Paizo office one Saturday while I was working alone on a deadline—the alarm had gone off in the other side of our building (it turned out to be a false alarm), and while his partner was looking around the building out back, he sorta geeked out on me when he found out he was at Paizo. Turns out, he was a big Pathfinder fan!
- Getting the honor of writing the very first foreword for the very first Wayfinder.

Yeah, an awful lot has happened, but Wayfinder is still here. And as you're about to see when you turn the page, it's better than ever! This time, the theme is the Darklands, a topic that is really quite near and dear to my heart. I've long been intrigued by and obsessed with the idea of an entire world hidden below our feet. It probably began back in my childhood when I saw *Journey to the Center of the Earth* (dinosaurs!).

In any case, I pushed hard for us to publish a book about the world below Golarion's surface, and volunteered to write the book as a way to make sure it happened. It'd be wrong to say that the Darklands were all mine, though. My inspiration ranged from the aforementioned movie, of course, but also to Lovecraft (from whom the idea of a tripartite underground realm has always intrigued me), Clark Ashton Smith (and his cities filled with undead necromancers), H. G. Wells (and those pesky morlocks), Gary Gygax (I'm still a huge fan of drow, and always will be), and much more. And of course, Wes had plenty to say about those drow as well—he invented Zirnakaynin, after all, and populated the Darklands with some of the most deranged drow I've seen. And when I came to the grim realization that I wasn't going to have time to write the whole book, my good friend Greg Vaughan was there to step in and help me out by writing half of the book. I like to blame him for all the parts of the book that killed your characters over the past few years. Although I have to take the blame for all those seugathi attacks, I guess.

And that, of course, takes me to this volume. The Darklands are a vast place, and we've only barely scratched the (sub)surface of what they're hiding. All sorts of new and creepy and awesome surprises await you in the following pages. And know what? I've kept you from discovering those surprises long enough. Turn the page and prepare to witness the darkness that dwells below!



James Jacobs
Wayfinder Fan

PS: Before I go, I'd like to give a special shout out to Tim Nightengale. He's the reason Wayfinder's still here, after all! (Sorry I made Rob's character shoot your character in the head, Tim! And to celebrate Wayfinder #9, *Justice* just increased its enhancement bonus by +1!)



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WEAL OR WOE: DARK HARVEST

BY NEIL SPICER

ART BY
HUGO "BUTTERBROG"
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The Darklands contain many untapped resources both hazardous and benign. Adventurers seeking these discoveries—from exotic reagents to valuable ores—may find favor, fortune, or a grisly death.

Weal: Kaldeshorn

The oread explorer and professional miner named Kaldeshorn claims a mixed heritage of dwarven and elemental blood. His frequent forays into the tunnels below Janderhoff have marked a number of resources for the industrious dwarves to exploit. He has a sixth sense for identifying the best yields for ores and mineral deposits, often braving the Darkland wilds to retrieve new samples or special requests. Dependable and good-hearted, he works tirelessly to defend others against the depredations of those who would do evil below the earth.

Adventure Hooks

- Dwarves of Janderhoff may refer the PCs to Kaldeshorn if they require a guide in the Darklands or want to purchase rare ores at a discount.
- Kaldeshorn aids the PCs as they wander the Darklands, stumbling across them as he works to open a new vein of ore in caverns overrun by duergar or drow.
- Kaldeshorn's friends might ask the PCs to investigate the oread's disappearance after he fails to return from an expedition.

Boon

Kaldeshorn can sell a variety of unique ores to PCs venturing into the Darklands. Anyone impressing him with a DC 20 Knowledge (dungeoneering) or Craft skill check involving worked stone or metal receives a 10% discount on the additional construction cost of items made from adamantine, alchemical silver, cold iron, or mithral.



Init +3; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +7

DEFENSE

AC 21, touch 12, flat-footed 19 (+7 armor, +1 Dex, +1 dodge, +1 natural, +1 shield)

hp 61 (6d10+24)

Fort +7, **Ref** +6, **Will** +3

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee +1 *heavy pick* +9/+4 (1d8+5/x4) and mwk light hammer +9 (1d6+2) or +1 *heavy pick* +11/+6 (1d8+7/x4) or mwk light hammer +11/+6 (1d6+4)

Ranged mwk heavy crossbow +8 (1d10/19–20) or mwk light hammer +8/+3 (1d4+4)

Special Attacks favored enemy (dwarves +4, elves +2), treacherous earth^{ARG} (10 ft., 6 minutes)

Ranger Spells Prepared (CL 3rd; concentration +4)
1st—*lead blades*^{APG}, *longstrider*

TACTICS

Before Combat Kaldeshorn drinks his *potion of feather step* and raises a region of treacherous earth around himself to impede attackers. He then casts *longstrider* to improve his mobility followed by *lead blades* to make his melee weapons more dangerous.

During Combat Kaldeshorn fights beside his animal companion, Urdu, directing the badger to burrow behind opponents to flank them. He fights with pick and hammer against multiple enemies or wields the pick two-handed against more armored foes.

Morale If reduced below 15 hp, Kaldeshorn drinks his *potion of cure light wounds* and retreats through his treacherous earth, spreading caltrops to dissuade pursuit.

Base Statistics Without his spell effects, Kaldeshorn's statistics are **Speed** 20 ft.; **Melee** +1 *heavy pick* +9/+4 (1d6+5/x4) and mwk light hammer +9 (1d4+2) or +1 *heavy pick* +11/+6 (1d6+7/x4) or mwk light hammer +11/+6 (1d4+4).

STATISTICS

Str 18, **Dex** 13, **Con** 14, **Int** 12, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 6

Base Atk +6; **CMB** +10; **CMD** 22

Feats Dodge, Dwarf Blooded^{ARG}, Endurance, Toughness, Two-Weapon Defense, Two-Weapon Fighting

Skills Appraise +5, Climb +7, Handle Animal +5, Heal +5, Intimidate +7, Knowledge (dungeoneering) +8 (+10 when underground), Knowledge (geography) +5, Knowledge (local) +2, Knowledge (nature) +5, Linguistics +2, Perception +7 (+9 when underground, +10 to notice unusual stonework), Profession (miner) +5, Stealth +7 (+9 when underground), Survival +10 (+12 when underground, +13 to identify or follow tracks)

Languages Common, Dwarf, Terran, Undercommon

SQ deep knowledge +2, granite skin^{ARG}, hunter's bond (badger named Urdu), slow and steady, stone in the blood^{ARG}, stonecunning, track +3, wild empathy +4

Combat Gear caltrops (3 bags), *potion of cure light wounds*, *potion of feather step*, thunderstones (2); **Other Gear** +1 *breast plate*, +1 *heavy pick*, ale (1 gallon), antitoxin, bedroll, clay jug, explorer's outfit, hammer, hemp rope (50 ft.), flint and steel,

KALDESHORN

CR 5

XP 1,600

Male oread ranger (deep walker^{UC}) 6

NG Medium outsider (native)

map case, masterwork backpack, masterwork heavy crossbow with 10 bolts, masterwork light hammer, pitons (15), sunrods (3), waterskin, 103 gp, 16 sp

BADGER (WOLVERINE) ANIMAL COMPANION

CR -

N Small animal

Init +4; **Senses** low-light vision, scent; Perception +5

DEFENSE

AC 19, touch 15, flat-footed 15 (+4 Dex, +4 natural, +1 size)

hp 22 (3d8+9)

Fort +5, **Ref** +7, **Will** +2

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft., burrow 10 ft., climb 10 ft.

Melee bite +7 (1d4) and 2 claws +7 (1d3)

Special Attacks rage (as barbarian for 6 rounds/day)

STATISTICS

Str 11, **Dex** 18, **Con** 15, **Int** 2, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 10

Base Atk +2; **CMB** +1; **CMD** 15 (19 vs. trip)

Feats Toughness, Weapon Finesse

Skills Climb +12, Perception +5, Stealth +12

Woe: Bravdallip

When the vegepygmies of House Udrinor in Zirnakaynin rebelled against their drow masters during the murderous period known as the Stalking Death, many fell victim to the demons summoned by the elves to eradicate them. Forced to retreat, their shamans never forgot this defeat, and some sought to cultivate their own relationships with demons of the Abyss—specifically, Cyth-V'sug, the lord of parasites. Since then, the ensuing years have given rise to a new leader among their kind—a powerful, man-sized vegepygmy called Bravdallip. This tribal chieftain has perfected the secrets of alchemy in Cyth-V'sug's name, hungering for an opportunity to resume the Stalking Death. For now, he does so by targeting the dwarves and duergar of Nar-Voth to assimilate them into a new army of vegepygmies, but he plans to turn his attention soon to the hated drow once more.

Adventure Hooks

- Bravdallip disperses mold spores into dwarven communities with russet ale, which can infect anyone drinking it. The PCs must put down the ensuing vegepygmy outbreak while tracing its source back to the vegepygmy chieftain.
- The PCs disturb one of the many cultures of mold, ooze, or slime Bravdallip uses to supply his alchemist's lab, drawing his ire and retribution.
- Bravdallip's tribe captures a friendly acquaintance of the PCs, whom they must find and quickly rescue before the alchemist's spores turn the friend into a vegepygmy.

Drawback

PCs who slay Bravdallip attract the attention of Cyth-V'sug, who forms his minion into a powerful hezrou and sends him back to Golarion to sow further corruption.

BRAVDALLIP

CR 7

XP 3,200

Advanced giant vegepygmy alchemist 5

CE Medium plant

Init +4; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Perception +8

DEFENSE

AC 22, touch 14, flat-footed 18 (+4 Dex, +8 natural)

hp 85 (6 HD; 6d8+59)

Fort +14, **Ref** +8, **Will** +5; +4 vs. poison

DR 5/slashing or bludgeoning; **Immune** electricity, plant traits

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee 2 claws +12 (1d4+9 plus russet mold spores) or +1 spear +13 (1d8+14 plus poison/x3)

Ranged +1 spear +8 (1d8+10 plus poison/x3)

Special Attacks bomb 10/day (3d6+3 fire or acid, DC 15)

Alchemist's Extracts Prepared (CL 5th)

2nd—*alchemical allocation*, *bull's strength*, *spider climb*

1st—*cure light wounds*, *expeditious retreat*, *jump*, *keen senses*, *polypurpose panacea*^{UM}

TACTICS

Before Combat Bravdallip drinks his extract of *alchemical allocation* followed by his *elixir of hiding* and an extract of *spider climb* to crawl to the ceiling and blend with the natural rock formations. He then lies in wait so he can ambush intruders, drinking an extract of *bull's strength* and his Constitution mutagen before applying terinav root poison to his +1 spear.

During Combat Bravdallip hurls precise acid bombs or his poisoned +1 spear to weaken opponents. Thereafter, he drinks an extract of *jump* to leap upon the least armored foe so he can expose them to russet mold spores with his claw attacks. If surrounded, he leaps away again, before hurling another bomb to catch as many targets as possible.

Morale Bravdallip seeks to escape if brought below 20 hp, pausing only to drink his extract of *cure light wounds* or *expeditious retreat* before scrambling away.

Base Statistics Without his elixir, extracts, and mutagen, Bravdallip's statistics become: **hp** 73; **Fort** +12; **Melee** 2 claws +10 (1d4+7 plus russet mold spores) or +1 spear +11 (1d8+11 plus poison/x3); **Ranged** +1 spear +8 (1d8+8 plus poison/x3); **Str** 24, **Con** 22; **CMB** +10, **CMD** 24; **Skills** Climb +10, Stealth +15 (+23 in vegetation)

STATISTICS

Str 28, **Dex** 18, **Con** 26, **Int** 16, **Wis** 15, **Cha** 13

Base Atk +3; **CMB** +12; **CMD** 26

Feats Brew Potion, Extra Bombs, Iron Will, Throw Anything, Toughness

Skills Climb +12, Craft (alchemy) +12, Heal +8, Knowledge (arcana) +8, Knowledge (dungeoneering) +5, Knowledge (nature) +10, Knowledge (planes) +5, Knowledge (religion) +5, Perception +8, Spellcraft +10, Stealth +25 (+33 in vegetation), Survival +10;

Racial Modifiers +4 Stealth (+12 in vegetation)
Languages Abyssal, Common, Dwarven, Undercommon, Vegepygmy

SQ alchemy (alchemy crafting +5, identify poisons), discoveries (acid bombs, precise bombs [3 squares]), mutagen (+4/-2, +2 natural, 50 minutes), poison use, swift alchemy

Combat Gear alkali flasks (3), *elixir of hiding*, ghastretch flasks (2), mutagen (Constitution), *potion of feather fall*, terinav root poison (1 dose); **Other Gear** +1 spear, handy haversack, two 50 gp agates, 100 gp sapphire ✕✕



THE FOEHAMMER

PROMISE:

A SIDE-TRIP ADVENTURE

BY NEIL SPICER

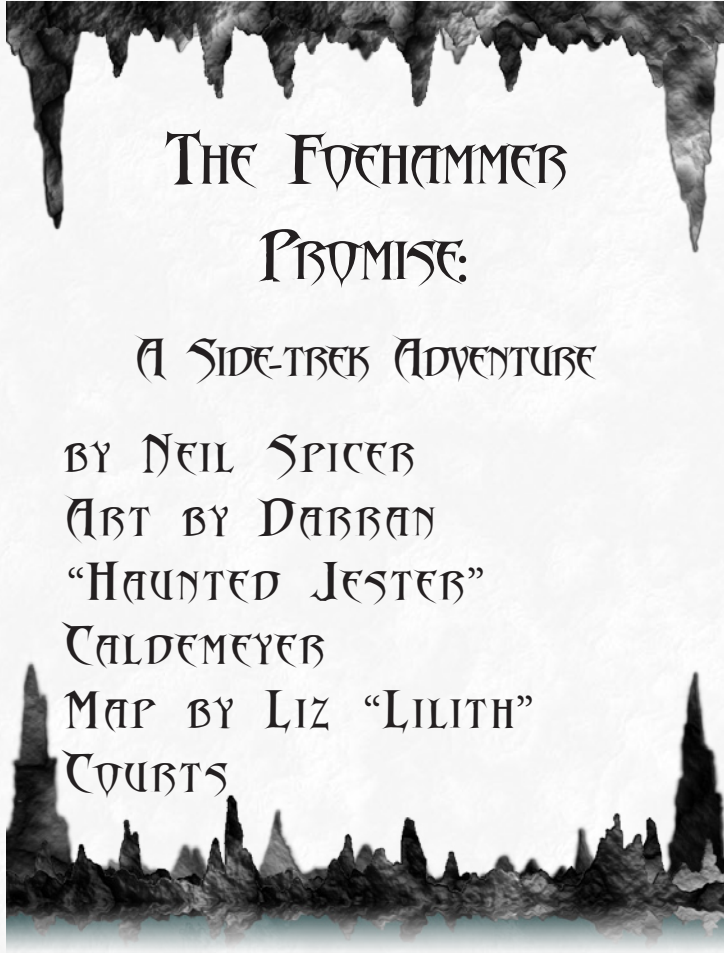
ART BY DABBAN

“HAUNTED JESTER”

CALDEMAYER

MAP BY LIZ “LILITH”

COURTS



The scions of a renowned dwarven patriarch seek to honor his dying wish by returning his remains to the tomb of his forefathers deep within the dangerous Darklands.

Adventure Background

The Foehammer clan of Janderhoff has long held a position of prominence among dwarvenkind. From their active role in the Quest for Sky, to the founding and defense of the Sky Citadel itself, their warriors, craftsmen, and seers stand without equal. But the recent, sudden passing of the clan’s visionary patriarch, Morgrym Foehammer, has put the entire clan in disarray. For Morgrym died long before his time—some say by poisoning, while others attribute his death to a foul, incurable Darkland disease, or even a genetic anomaly borne by his bloodline.

A Dying Wish

On his deathbed, Morgrym tasked his immediate family with returning his remains to the ancient tomb his forefathers built many centuries ago in the Darklands beyond Janderhoff. This tradition of escorting deceased Foehammers to their final resting place carries significant honor and responsibility. Pallbearers are usually handpicked from the clan’s most promising scions, retainers, and allies.

The journey also carries a significant, secondary purpose for the surviving Foehammer children. Each lord of the clan commissions the crafting of a new crown, leaving it behind for his successor to retrieve from the tomb. Those found worthy by the tomb’s guardian are given the crown, whereupon they may return to claim leadership of the clan itself. As a result, Morgrym’s children are not only expected to lay his remains to rest, but also to vie for rule over the clan.

Moldy Remains

Morgrym Foehammer actually died from a unique form of mold poisoning perpetrated by a vegepygmy alchemist named Bravdallip. Driven to spread the taint of his demon lord, Cyth-V’sug, Bravdallip concocted an insidious ale containing elements of russet mold, which he delivered through intermediaries to the dwarf and duergar populations of Janderhoff and Fellstrok. Morgrym came by this ale as a gift from a friendly merchant conducting business with the Foehammers. Though initially quite tasty, the ale’s ill effects grew more pronounced over time, leading to Morgrym’s eventual—and untimely—demise.

Ironically, Bravdallip’s base of operations also lies within the same tomb used by the Foehammers. Usually left sealed until the arrival of pallbearers laying the next Foehammer to rest, a recent earthquake caused a rift in one of the tomb’s chambers. Bravdallip and his growing tribe of vegepygmies emerged from this chasm to take over the tomb, turning it into a moldy lair, garden, and alchemy lab.

Adventure

Summary

The journey to return Morgrym’s body to the tomb of his forefathers spans several miles through the Darkland tunnels north of Janderhoff. In their travels, the PCs are ambushed by duergar slavers and encounter a band of Bravdallip’s vegepygmies laying siege to a dwarven ruin where an oread miner is holed up. When they finally reach the Foehammer tomb, they must brave the dangers of their ancestors’ mold-ridden remains and drive out the corruption brought by Bravdallip’s fungal gardens and alchemical experiments. Even then, they must complete the ritual to lay Morgrym to rest and compete against one another for the right to lead their clan.

ADVANCEMENT TRACK

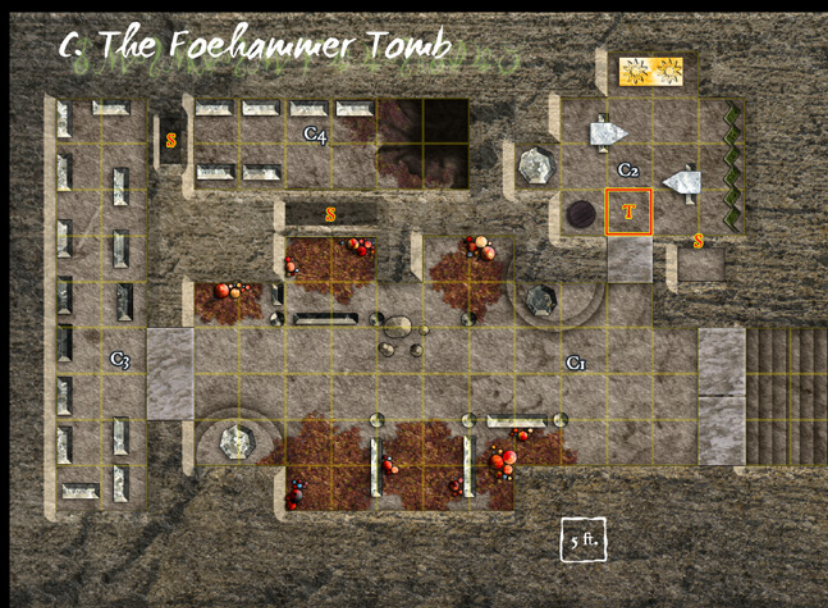
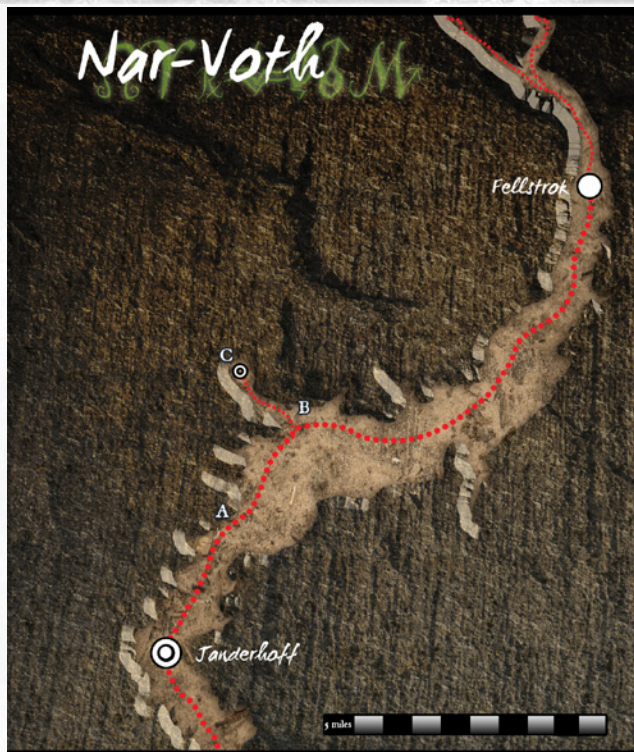
This adventure is designed for four dwarven PCs who are friends or family members of the Foehammer clan from Janderhoff in the Mindspin Mountains of Varisia. Characters should be 4th level at the start of the adventure and should accumulate enough XP under the Medium advancement track to reach halfway to 5th level.

A Solemn Gathering

Shortly after Morgrym’s passing, his wife **Ingra** (N female dwarf expert 6) gathers the elder Foehammer children together—along with their friends and companions—to explain their father’s dying wish. To get the action underway, read or paraphrase the following:

In Janderhoff, grief and a great sense of loss have overcome the stalwart Foehammer clan. For its leader—Lord Morgrym Foehammer—recently passed away, leaving his family and clan holdings in disarray. According to his wife Ingra, his dying wish was that his children and friends should come together and return his remains to the tomb of his ancestors—a hidden place in the Darklands that none have accessed in many decades. These scions are also expected to undergo the Test of the Tomb, an honored tradition to determine which of them will lead the Foehammers into the next phase of their long history.

The adventure assumes the PCs are the offspring, close cousins, and/or long-time friends of Morgrym Foehammer. As such, it further assumes they willingly undertake Lord Morgrym’s last command. Alternatively, the PCs could simply be mercenaries or retainers hired by Lady Ingra to see her husband to his final resting place, in which case she herself might accompany them in order to complete the Test of the Tomb and claim the Foehammer crown.



LADY INGRA **CR 4**

XP 1,200

hp 39; (use the statistics of an expert blacksmith from NPC Codex 262)

A. The Long Walk

Once the PCs are ready, Lady Ingra grants them enough provisions to see them on their way. Lord Morgrym's body is tightly wrapped in linen and placed inside a decorative box with which to convey him to the tomb. It requires two PCs to carry, but should have no impact on their overland travel rate. After entering Janderhoff's lower halls, their procession passes through the final gate and into the Darklands. Their journey proves uneventful for the first two days as they stick to the more heavily patrolled and protected tunnels known as the Long Walk. On the third day, however, their path takes them through a maze of lesser passageways and into an area preyed upon by duergar slavers.

A1. Tunnel Entrance

The tunnel widens as it leads east, sloping downward between two 10-foot-high escarpments on either side, before rising again in the distance. A soft glow from luminescent, blue lichen fills the area, casting weird shadows among the columns of stone supporting the

30-foot ceiling overhead. The largest of these columns bears the marks of many runes and glyphs etched into the stone.

This part of the tunnels has often served as a resting place and campsite for travelers in the Darklands. Six duergar from nearby Fellstrok have since turned it into an ambush site to capture unwary travelers they can sell into slavery.

A2. Trapped Waymarker (CR 3)

Dozens of inscriptions cover the largest wall within this cavern. The writing is barely readable in the ambient light provided by the lichen growing alongside them.

Most of the runes carved on this stone wall serve as waymarkers, citing directions and distances to Janderhoff, Fellstrok, and other destinations of note throughout the Long Walk. Others are merely the graffiti and personal runes of dwarves wishing to add their marks on the wall.

Trap: Gossamer-thin strands of spider silk run between the floor and wall as part of a special trap placed here by the duergar. Anyone venturing into the trapped area marked with a "T" on the map is subjected to volley of tanglefoot bags designed to hold them fast while the duergar (at area A3) close in and claim their

prize.

TANGLEFOOT TRAP **CR 3**

XP 800

Type mechanical; **Perception** DC 20; **Disable Device** DC 20

EFFECTS

Trigger location; **Reset** manual

Effect Functions as a tanglefoot bag across a wide area, automatically hitting and inflicting a –2 penalty to attack rolls and a –4 penalty to Dexterity, while also forcing a DC 15 Reflex save to avoid being glued to the floor; multiple targets (all targets in a 10-foot-square area)

A3. Campsite (CR 5)

Multiple steps rise to this high escarpment overlooking the tunnel passageway below. Half-eaten rations and six bedrolls lay spread upon the stone floor.

Creatures: Six duergar slavers have readied an attack here, alert to any travelers passing through the tunnel below. All of them wait for the tanglefoot trap to activate (at area A2) before attacking.

ADVANCED DUERGAR SLAVERS (6) **CR 1/2**

XP 200 EACH

hp 8; *Pathfinder Bestiary* 117, 294

TACTICS

Before Combat Three duergar cast *invisibility* to move into the tunnel below the escarpment so they can surround travelers and cut off escape.

During Combat Half the duergar fire their crossbows from the safety of higher ground, using the escarpment as cover while targeting those entangled by their trap. The invisible slavers in the tunnel cast *enlarge person*, before engaging those who remain with their warhammers.

Morale The duergar in melee fight to the death, but any crossbowmen who remain after their comrades fall quickly cast *invisibility* so they can flee down the escarpment and back to Fellstrok.

B. The Broken Gates

Two days further along their path, the PCs should come upon the remains of a dwarven ruin dating back centuries to the time of the dwarven Quest for Sky. An oread miner named Kaldeshorn often uses this place as a secure base from which to explore for veins of ore in the side passages of the Long Walk and beyond. One of his most recent forays took him towards the Foehammer Tomb where he discovered and consumed some of Bravdallip's fungi growing outside, including some striped toadstools which poisoned his mind. The vegepygmy tribe soon set upon him for this transgression and he led them on a frantic race back to his camp where he hoped to reach his antitoxin and recover. Now, however, the vegepygmies have the oread cornered in the chamber where he took shelter.

B1. Crossroads (CR 5)

The passage runs through a ruined crossroads from an ancient town here, opening into a courtyard watched over by several dwarven statues. A pair of broken gates lies before their gaze, half-buried within a pile of rubble. To the east, a portcullis is missing the lower three feet of its iron bars, half-eaten by rust. An open-air stable lies north, silent and empty, while a set of steps leads through an archway to the west. The tunnel itself continues northeast and northwest.



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In ancient times, this crossroads linked Janderhoff with the dwarven communities still deep within the Darklands, most notably the city of Fellstrok, now overrun by the duergar who stayed behind during the Quest for Sky. The ravages of time and ancient battles have since destroyed this town, once called Baradok in the annals of dwarven history.

Creatures: Three vegepygmies from Bravdallip's tribe have pursued the oread miner Kaldeshorn (see area B3) to this location, pinning him down in the storehouse to the west. They were charged by Bravdallip to eliminate those who might stumble across their lair and readily attack anyone else arriving here. The vegepygmies have been unable to breach the stone door, held at bay both by the barricade as well as Kaldeshorn's badger animal companion, Urdu, which has made itself a burrow just inside the archway's alcove.

ADVANCED GIANT VEGEPYGMIES (3) **CR 2**

XP 600 EACH

hp 9; *Pathfinder Bestiary* 273, 294-295

TACTICS

During Combat The vegepygmies attack first with their spears, having coated their blades with greenblood oil.

Morale The vegepygmies all fight to the death.

URDU **CR -**

Badger (wolverine) animal companion

hp 22 (see pg. 3)

TACTICS

During Combat Urdu is smart enough to recognize the difference between dwarves and vegepygmies, treating the former as allies and the latter as enemies.



Morale If reduced to half its hit points, Urdu burrows back into the storehouse (area B3).

B2. Collapsed Gatehouse (CR 4)

A small antechamber lies beyond the damaged portcullis to this gatehouse, but the tunnels beyond have long since collapsed under tons of rock and debris.

Whatever battle overran the town of Baradok completely destroyed the inner halls once marked by this active gatehouse. Bits of metal from the armor and weapons of the dwarves who perished defending it still jut from the rocks which crushed them.

Creatures: A gray ooze has eaten away the bottom half of the iron bars to the portcullis here and now lies among the loose rubble, foraging for additional metal to feed upon. With the arrival of so many vegepygmies, it withdrew to hide, preferring to ambush solitary prey. It still attacks anyone who ventures here, however.

GRAY OOZE CR 4

XP 1,200

hp 50; *Pathfinder Bestiary* 166

B3. Storehouse (CR 5)

Double-doors open into this vaulted chamber with a 20-foot ceiling. A short flight of steps leads into an area filled with the moldering remains of ancient crates and boxes, while a bedroll lies close to another door leading north.

Creatures: A dwarven-blooded oread named Kaldeshorn took refuge here after fleeing Bravdallip's minions. Poisoned by the striped toadstools he ate from the vegepygmy's garden, he's

currently suffering from a loss of Wisdom and Intelligence, unable to easily tell friend from foe. He wisely barred the stone door (hardness 8, 60 hp, Break DC 28) in an effort to outlast his enemies while he administers the antitoxin he keeps among his campsite belongings.

Hazard: Kaldeshorn spread his three bags of caltrops in the area immediately below the steps and before the archway in an effort to impede anyone who enters.

KALDESHORN CR 5

XP 1,600

hp 61 (currently suffering from 10 Wis damage and 4 Int damage); see pg. 2

TACTICS

During Combat Kaldeshorn calls for his animal companion, Urdu, to join him in battle if the badger still lives. Otherwise, he fights alone, hallucinating that the PCs are actually vegepygmies.

Morale The oread fights until reduced to 15 hit points or less. His vision then clears and he recognizes the PCs as someone other than his tormentors, surrendering as he pleads for aid.

B4. Repository (CR 6)

Several casks stand within this domed chamber, seemingly in good repair. An iron lockbox rests beside them.

Treasure: Bravdallip's vegepygmies used this chamber as a trading place with their intermediaries, arranging the delivery of russet ale in exchange for other goods placed in the lockbox. Currently, there are 15 pints of russet ale remaining in the casks, and the lockbox contains a pouch of diamond dust worth 500 gp, three emeralds worth 100 gp each, a piece of ivory carved to resemble a dwarf maiden worth

25 gp, a bejeweled amulet worth 40 gp, a *bag of holding* (Type I) with a variety of alchemical reagents and supplies equivalent to a portable alchemist's lab, as well as 35 pp, 178 gp, 42 sp, and 236 cp.

C. The Foehammer Tombs

After less than a day's journey to the northeast, the PCs finally arrive at the Foehammer family tomb. The exterior is overgrown with enough toadstools and other fungi to hide its entryway unless visitors already know what to look for or succeed on a DC 25 Perception check.

C1. Mausoleum Entry (CR 5)

Beyond these massive double-doors, a wide hall extends over 60 feet. Large, rune-carved slabs of stone hang from iron chains connected to narrow pillars, creating small alcoves along its length. Within these nooks, piles of mushrooms and various molds grow in close proximity, their spores drifting hazily in the surrounding air. Two stone statues of dwarven sentinels stand in the hall's northeast and southwest corners, while exits lead north and west.

The fungi and molds growing in this chamber pose no immediate hazard or threat to outsiders. Instead, they help provide many of the ingredients Bravdallip uses in his alchemical experiments and in crafting the russet ale.

Creatures: Three vegepygmies tend the gardens here. They immediately attack any intruders.

ADVANCED GIANT VEGEPYGMIES (3) CR 5

XP 1,200
hp 9; *Pathfinder Bestiary* 273, 294-295

C2. Shrine

Two massive anvils dominate this holy chamber. They stand in the center of the room before a golden altar in the northern alcove. A statue of the dwarven god Torag stands to the west, and a large tapestry to the east depicts an image of dwarven craftsmen forging a crown. In the southwest corner, an iron barrel holds an array of hammers, tongs, and other crafting materials matching those displayed in the tapestry.

The door to this chamber can only open with a special key provided by the former ruler of the Foehammers. It then serves as the choosing ground for the clan's next leader. After laying the prior lord to rest in the tombs (at area C3), his children are expected to craft their own crowns upon the magic anvils before offering them on the altar of Torag one at a time. This requires an untrained DC 10 Craft check to initiate the ceremony. Any offering found unworthy is ignored, but the crafter may try again until they have a viable crown. Thereafter, the statue of Torag stirs to life in the western alcove, speaking with a *magic mouth* to pose questions about dwarven history and rulership to those participating in the ceremony.

Each candidate must make four successful skill checks to impress the tomb's spirit so it will grant its blessing. The DC of these skill checks doesn't matter. Only the final total of all four rolls from a Diplomacy, Knowledge (history), Knowledge (nobility), and Sense Motive check will determine the winner. The candidate with the highest score is granted rulership over the Foehammer clan.

C3. Tombs

Many stone coffins line this long hall. Most bear the likeness of their assumed occupants, carved into the stone lids as they once appeared in life.

Most of the Foehammer clan's more recent leaders lie buried here among the coffins. Those closer to the north remain empty, including

the coffin prepared for Lord Morgrym. A secret door (DC 20 Perception check to notice) in the upper end of the hall leads to the tombs of more ancient Foehammer heroes.

Treasure: Bravdallip and his minions have already looted these stone coffins, piling an array of impressive weaponry and armor in the south end of the hallway, including a +1 *warhammer*, +1 *dwarven waraxe*, +1 *heavy spiked shield*, +1 *breastplate*, +1 *chain shirt*, and *boots of striding and springing*. They planned to sell or trade these items for additional favors in distributing the russet ale into more locations.

C4. The Shattered Tomb (CR 7)

More coffins line this ancient passage serving as makeshift tables for an array of bottles, beakers, tubing, and charcoal burners. The hall itself ends abruptly before a gaping chasm to the east where dark red mold covers the surrounding stone.

This chamber once held the remains of the Foehammer clan's most vaunted heroes, but Bravdallip promptly discarded their bodies, disposing of them down the same chasm he and his vegepygmies used to access the tomb. Now, it serves as his alchemist's lab, containing all the reagents and notes he's used to craft russet ale. Secret doors lead west and south from this room (DC 20 Perception check to notice).

Creatures: Bravdallip spends almost all of his time here, concocting new poisons and fungal diseases from the molds and toadstools grown in his garden. He remains quite attentive to happenings elsewhere in the tomb, fully capable of using the secret doors to respond to intruders after taking time to prepare himself.

BRAVDALLIP CR 7

XP 3,200
hp 85; see pg. 3

Concluding The Adventure

Award each PC an additional story award of 300 XP if they successfully lay Lord Morgrym to rest in the tomb. Assuming at least one of them successfully completed the Test of the Tomb and received the guardian spirit's blessing, Ingra recognizes the champion as the next leader of the Foehammer clan. She will hold the throne in regency until the selected scion reaches the age of ascension (usually middle-age), marking them as a clan elder. Regardless, the rest of Janderhoff treats the new heir with profound respect, granting him or her an automatic +4 circumstance bonus on Diplomacy checks with their fellow dwarves. ✕

RUSSET ALE

A pint of russet ale can be crafted with a steady supply of russet mold spores and a DC 25 Craft (alchemy) or Profession (brewer) check. When imbibed, it afflicts a victim with a slow-acting poison and disease of increasing intensity. If left untreated, the affliction can cause death as well as the manifestation of a new patch of russet mold upon the victim's corpse 1–2 weeks later.

RUSSET ALE MOLD POISONING

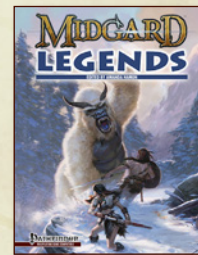
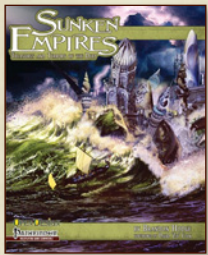
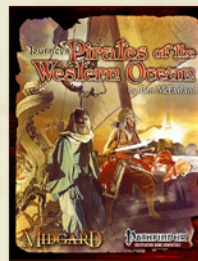
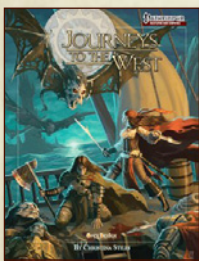
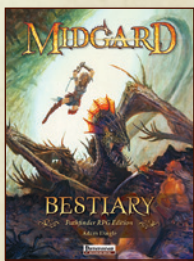
Type disease, poison, ingested; **Save** Fort DC 15
Onset 1 day; **Frequency** 1/day
Effect 1 Con damage; **Cure** russet ale mold poisoning can only be cured with a successful save, followed by *neutralize poison* and *remove disease* within 1 minute of each other.

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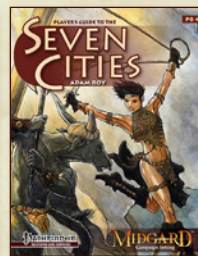
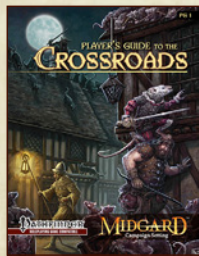
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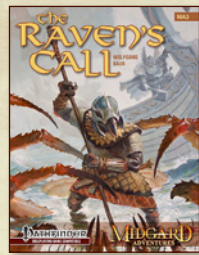
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BELOW AND BEYOND

BY DEBEK "CUBN
BOUNDER" JOHNSON

ART BY JAMES M. KEEGAN

I'd no doubt that my time with Brimman was nearing its end. His condition had worsened each day since my arrival in Rahadoum. In Absalom, a healer might have pled with the gods to keep the dwarf's mind, body, and spirit together, but no such pleading would be heard in this land. I had no time for meticulous, patient methods. Instead, I pressed relentlessly for Brimman to reveal what had put him in this frail state.

An hour of each day's conversation began with him retelling what he'd told me the day prior. I'd heard many times about the artifact retrieved from a tomb in the Ruins of Tumen in Garund's far east and how it was stolen from the Lodge in Sothis by a pack of ghouls and taken beneath the Osirioni sands. Brimman and three fellow Pathfinders, Vinnia, Grett, and Milo chased the thieves and the artifact, a pursuit that led them through the vast ghoulish city of Nemret Noktoria and eastward through hundreds of leagues of tenebrous tunnels to the Sightless Sea.

His eyes widened. "Those ghouls were horribly clever." I imagined his voice was once gruff, but whispering smoothed its rough edges. "Their gibbering echoed in the dark tunnels and massive caverns. They whispered of their prize and of pleasing the muculent seeker awaiting their arrival. They laid ambushes and set traps, leading us into the lairs of horrible creatures—things without eyes that felt our movements in the rocks, things that slobbered at the prospect of living flesh. But none of us fell to the snares or the horrors. By the graces of Torag and Desna, we followed the filth to their destination."

Today was the day. Today I would get him to tell me the end. I liberally applied the tincture provided by Chief Healer Tuanin—much more than he recommended.

"It wasn't mere darkness," Brimman whispered, then fell silent.

I cursed under my breath. He didn't blink. He stared at the ceiling—or beyond it. Tuanin warned me not to touch him. Doing so would greatly upset him, so I called the dwarf's name several times, increasing in volume each time. I ceased when I realized my shouting had shattered the serenity within the infirmary's peaceful

environs.

Then, he abruptly turned to look me in the eye. "There, the gods abandoned us." His voice was less than a whisper. His eyes cast about as he confessed. "I left them. I don't know if they're really dead.

"We'd tracked the ghouls under Thuvia, through the eastern stretches of Rahadoum, to the Arch of Aroden—all in the oppressive darkness below the hot sands. When we finally caught up to them they stood in the midst of five robed figures—men, by all appearances. They stood on an outcropping that jutted into a chamber the likes of which I had never seen, a cavern containing a massive sea that rolled with the same motion as the Arcadian Ocean miles above."

I leaned forward. He'd never taken me this far.

"The largest of the robed figures placed a sack upon a massive stone table, polished smooth. He gestured toward it with a sleeve from which no sign of a hand emerged. The ghoulish figure carrying the artifact moved forward, its furtive motion betraying its fear and reverence. Once there, it quickly snatched the sack and replaced it with the artifact. The item lay there, wrapped in the same mummified skin that had covered it for hundreds, if not thousands, of years. The five robed figures stood around it, heads bowed, making no move to touch it.

"The ghouls withdrew only a short distance before opening and rummaging through the sack they'd been given. Appearing satisfied, they slunk back into the cavern through which we'd recently come. They had to know we hid nearby, but they acted as if they'd completely forgotten us. Grett wanted to pursue them, but we convinced her that revenge came second to reclaiming the artifact.

"We remained hidden, observing the figures below. Almost immediately, they began some form of ritual, as if they'd been waiting, constantly vigilant, for the many weeks it took the ghouls to complete their errand. They moved closer to the item on the pedestal but never touched it. Their bodies began to sway.

"That was when I heard the music. It was only a beat really, but not one made by drums—a deep thrumming, like a massive stringed instrument plucked at increasingly lower octaves.

"Milo stood and began creeping forward. I pulled at his scabbard, urging him to get down before he was spotted. He didn't react, but it mattered little, for the robed figures paid no mind to anything outside of their circle. I looked back for the ghouls but saw nothing. They'd likely fled back to their homeland. When I turned again to the robed figures I could see the dark water beneath the outcropping upon which the altar stood churning, swelling and roiling like a massive spring.

"The skin enveloping the artifact melted away, leaving no trace. As it dissolved the thrumming increased both in tempo and volume. I longed to look more closely at the object. From where I stood, I could only see that it was as long as a human thigh bone, dark and shimmering like onyx but with a greenish hue. Vinnia and Grett stood, unable to fight the same urge I felt to draw closer. They picked their way down the rocky ledge. I meant to chase them, to restrain them, but something in the depths of my mind told me to stop."

"IT DEVOURED
LIGHT, AS IF
THE LIGHT OF
THE STARS WAS
CONSUMED BY THE
SPACE BETWEEN
THEM, NEVER TO
BE REFLECTED."

Brimman turned away from me, his gaze cast to a place I could not see. He was slipping away, but not gone yet.

"You do not know darkness," he declared. "Far above, the sun washes down onto rolling blue waves, and gulls call out over the song of the sea breeze. Down below, on the shores of the Sightless Sea, the sky is dark, the water is dark, and no birds sing. The salty air presses in, adding weight to the crushing darkness.

"The denizens of those places have learned over the centuries that silence preserves life deep in the rocks. Sound brings death. Those corners of the world never have, never will, know the warmth and light provided by the sun. A dwarf is used to such things.

"But what came next, from the altar and from the water, was not merely the absence of light, it ... it devoured light, as if the light of the stars was consumed by the space between them, never to be reflected."

He paused again, and then began muttering, whispering disjointed phrases. I had to piece together his words to make sense of them.

"It spoke to me. It knew me. I knew it. Vinnia, Grett, and Milo all drew closer to the ritual and its fruit. They left me. I let them. The robed ones paid no heed, lost in the ecstasy of their ritual. They knelt at the edge of the precipice, arms raised. Hiding was pointless, so I emerged and followed a short distance behind my companions who had now almost reached the altar.

"Then it rose out of the water, slowly like the sun's opposite, breaching the crest of the outcropping. The robed ones chanted. The thrumming pounded in my head. My companions continued moving forward. I did not have the will to pull them back. I wanted them to continue. And then it began to ... eat them? It drew them into itself. Their forms melded with it, became dark. First the robed ones, then Milo, then Vinnia, and then Grett. I stood still. I no longer felt the urge to move forward. It wanted something else from me.

"Then, suddenly, the horror jolted through me. I turned to run. I wanted only to escape the chamber where the black water rolled, to return to the light above. I made it as far as the tunnel when something struck me, not bodily, but in my mind..."

There Brimman stopped. His chest heaved and his eyes locked onto whatever it was that he saw beyond his tiny room. I called to him a number of times, again raising my voice to shouting before Chief Healer Tuanin returned to the room and told me that my time with Brimman had come to an end.

Here ends my account of the Pathfinder, Brimman. I am sending this manuscript with a package, the only item found on Brimman's person. It appears to be something akin to a humanoid limb, but it is completely contained, not unlike a sausage. It has no sign of wounds or imperfections. It's just a soft cylinder of flesh with something like a bone in its center. It is most certainly worth further inquiry.

*Pathfinder Kane Leatherby
Azir, Rahadoun
18 Lamashan 4013*



DARK EXPLORERS:

ARCHETYPES OF THE DARKLANDS

BY ANTHONY "TEMPLATE FU/
MAP FU" ADAM & JAMES
"ICONOCLASSICIST" WYLIE
ART BY STEPHEN WOOD

The Darklands are a dangerous place, rife with deadly denizens and strange hazards. Few who enter return to recount their nightmare. But along with danger, the Darklands promise rewards; lures that many adventurers cannot resist. Experienced explorers will tell you that, although surviving in the Darklands mainly depends on luck, luck always goes best with preparation.

These archetypes give you options to make sure your characters are prepared to survive—and prosper. The Darklands scout is a ranger attuned to the lightless depths. The delver is a rogue explorer of caves and master of avoiding their dangers. The tunneler is a fighter who applies his knowledge of stone, mining, and metal to great effect.

Darklands Scout (Ranger)

Enigmatic and silent, a Darklands scout is still as stone until provoked, but springs suddenly from the very rocks to attack. Those who wish to trade or explore the forgotten and lost passageways of the Darklands are wise to seek out a Darklands scout for aid.

Rock Sight (Su): Starting at 1st level, by touching a rock surface as a full-round action, a Darklands scout can see from the tip of any stalactite or stalagmite within 10 feet per level. This projected sight uses the scout's own senses and lasts for as long as the touch is maintained. This ability replaces the wild empathy class feature.

Favored Ally (Ex): Starting at 1st level, a Darklands scout becomes a fierce ally to those he guides and protects. This ability works exactly like the favored enemy class feature with the following changes:

- When choosing from the favored enemies table, he is in fact choosing those he most favors to guide and protect.
- Normal bonuses earned from favored enemy are halved. (+1 at 1st level, +2 at 5th, etc.).
- The Darklands scout gains bonuses to attack and damage rolls against creatures targeting his favored allies.
- The Darkland scout applies his favored ally bonus on Diplomacy checks when dealing with favored allies who are at

least indifferent toward the Darklands scout. He does not gain a bonus on Intimidate checks.

- The spells *hunter's howl* and *instant enemy* (*Advanced Player's Guide*) are modified so that the scout can count targeted creatures as his favored ally for the duration of the spell. The bonuses are still halved. Allies cannot be shaken by *hunter's howl*. When an attacker uses an ability, attack, or spell that targets multiple allies, the Darklands scout uses the highest favored ally bonus of the targeted allies.

This ability replaces the favored enemy class feature.

Find the Lost (Ex): At 1st level, a Darklands scout adds half his level (minimum 1) to Survival skill checks made to follow or identify tracks of his favored allies. He can also use scent to track a favored ally in any passage or cavern the ally was in within the previous 4 hours, even if they are bound or carried and leave no tracks. This ability replaces track.

Distending Body (Su): At 3rd level, a Darklands scout can stretch and flex his body into a thin, narrow, or elongated shape, allowing him to pass through gaps in rocks six inches wide or holes six inches in diameter at half his speed. He is considered flat-footed while using distending body. This ability replaces the endurance bonus feat.

Stalagmite Stride (Sp): Starting at 7th level, a Darklands scout can step into any stalagmite and emerge immediately from any other stalagmite within 10 feet per Darklands scout level he possesses. He leaves no sign of his entry or exit on either stalagmite. He can pass through as many stalagmites as his speed allows but cannot end his turn inside a stalagmite. The entry and exit points are treated as adjacent during such movement. If the Darklands scout is able to fly, he can also use stalactites for entry and exit points. This ability replaces woodland stride.

Rock Face (Su): Starting at 12th level, the Darklands scout can alter his skin twice per day to become textured and colored like a stratified rock surface matching his immediate surroundings. He must touch the surface he wishes to emulate and make a Stealth skill check with a +5 circumstance bonus to become hidden, even if there is no cover or concealment in the area of the rock surface touched. This does not allow him to make a Stealth check while observed. He is able to move at up to half his speed without making additional Stealth skill checks, as his coloration blends with the surface he is touching as he moves. Moving faster than half his speed requires a Stealth check for every round of movement, and the Darklands scout loses the +5 circumstance bonus. Rock face lasts for as long as he touches the rock surface. The Darklands scout gains hardness 2 while in this form and for 2 rounds after contact with the rock surface ends. This ability replaces camouflage.

Darklands Rock Body (Su): Starting at 17th level, the Darklands scout can assume the form of living rock for 10 rounds twice per day. While in rock form, the Darklands scout gains hardness 8. His speed is reduced by 10 feet, and if staggered or moderately or heavily encumbered, his speed is reduced to 5 feet. Using this form does not count as a use of rock face. Rock face and Darklands rock body cannot be used at the same time. This ability replaces hide in plain sight.

Delver (Rogue)

Delvers explore deep caverns and forgotten dungeons. Their skills at climbing and balancing on narrow perches help them avoid dangerous hazards and uncover the deepest and most secret corners of caverns. However, their skills are more focused than those of typical rogues.



Skills: A delver adds Knowledge (engineering) to her list of class skills.

Hazard-Finding (Ex): A delver adds a bonus equal to 1/2 her rogue level (minimum +1) to Perception and other skill checks made to notice or identify dungeon, cave, or underground hazards, such as cave-ins, slimes, fungi, and those described in *GameMastery Guide*. This ability replaces trapfinding.

Hazard Sense (Ex): At 3rd level, a delver gains an intuitive sense that alerts her to danger from dungeon, cave, or underground hazards, giving her a +1 bonus on Reflex saves made to avoid their effects. This bonus increases by +1 for every three levels (+2 at 6th level, +3 at 9th level, up to +6 at 18th level). This ability replaces trap sense.

Uncanny Balance (Ex): At 4th level, a delver is no longer flat-footed when using the Acrobatics skill to move across narrow or uneven surfaces. This ability replaces uncanny dodge.

Improved Uncanny Balance (Ex): At 8th level, a delver is no longer flat-footed when using the Climb skill. This ability replaces improved uncanny dodge.

Tunneler (Fighter)

Tunnelers are warriors with an expert knowledge of mining, stone, and metal. Their unique skills are well-suited to underground adventuring and fighting creatures of earth.

Miner's Sense (Ex): Starting at 2nd level, a tunneler gains a

+1 bonus on Craft (stonemasonry), Knowledge (dungeoneering), Knowledge (engineering), and Profession (miner) checks. This bonus increases by +1 for every four levels beyond 2nd level. This ability replaces bravery.

Tunnel Weapons (Ex): At 5th level, a tunneler gains a +1 bonus on attack rolls, damage rolls, and sunder combat maneuvers made with the following weapons: heavy pick, light pick, gnome hooked hammer, light hammer, and warhammer. This bonus increases by +1 for every four levels beyond 5th. This ability replaces weapon training 1.

Crumbling Strikes (Ex): At 9th level, a tunneler treats all attacks made with a weapon to which his Tunnel Weapons ability applies as if they were made by an adamantine weapon, ignoring hardness less than 20 and negating the appropriate damage reduction. This ability replaces weapon training 2.

Haul (Ex): At 13th level, a tunneler doubles his Strength score for the purpose of calculating carrying capacity and encumbrance. Additionally, he is fatigued by effects that normally cause exhaustion, and ignores effects that normally cause fatigue. This ability replaces weapon training 3.

Golem Smasher (Ex): At 17th level, the critical threat ranges of a tunneler's attacks against constructs or creatures with the earth subtype double. This does not stack with other effects that expand the threat range of a weapon. Such creatures are subject to critical hits, even if they normally wouldn't be (due to being an elemental, for example). This ability replaces weapon training 4. ✖

FLESHFORGING AND FLESHWELDING

BY JASON "MIKAZE" GABBETT
ART BY MICHAEL JAECKS

The twisted society of the drow has produced a multitude of depravities, but the art of fleshwarping stands out as one of the greatest examples of why the dark elves are so feared. Svirfneblin commonly remark that those taken by drow are lucky if given death, for the sadism of this demon-revering culture goes far beyond anything simple killing could satisfy.

Victims of fleshwarping serve as living examples of drow cruelty, but when this brutality meets the aesthetics and twisted beauty of drow fashion, their transmutation art quickly descends to even darker depths of insanity.

Under the patronage of the demon lord Haagenti, House Parastric established fleshwarping as a mainstay of drow culture. As both these mad artists and their clients grew more imaginative, they developed more refined techniques to repurpose the entirety of their victims. Mirroring the common fate of souls in the Abyss, the derived arts of fleshforging and fleshwelding have provided methods for drow to become even closer to demons in form and spirit.

Fleshforging

Fleshforging is in essence the art of turning people into things, literally and symbolically dehumanizing them in the most humiliating way possible. While this technique can create a wide array of items, it is most often used to create clothing, armor and, to a lesser extent, weaponry due to the benefits of their living nature and their visibility.

The process of fleshforging starts with the victim being partially or entirely rendered into a malleable semifluid state. This living clay is then molded around a "skeletal" framework for the item being crafted, such as a wire frame for lighter clothing or bands and plates of steel for armor. These frameworks are etched with sustaining magic or sometimes simply a clear spindle ioun stone.

As the material is woven together and compressed according to the final item's size, further enhancements can be made upon customer request. After the essential elements have been put in place, the drow make finer aesthetic touches to ensure that these works of art are pleasing to drow eyes, whether through the addition of precious stones or the final adjustments of facial features.

Multiple victims can comprise a single item, whether for sake of aesthetics, cruelty, or for additional benefits, but this adds to the crafting cost. Heavier armor may require multiple victims to

provide the material needed. Light armor, clothing, and shields require only a single victim. Medium armor requires a minimum of 4. Heavy armor instead requires a minimum of 9.

The final product is a living object, effectively immortal unless destroyed. Such items often retain identifying features and enough sensory organs to be fully aware of their situation. Those unfortunate souls who retain their sanity through the painful forging process almost inevitably go mad from their helpless plight. The skin of these items is typically warm to the touch and soft, if slightly leathery, when not "in use." For items such as weaponry and armor, this flesh hardens into something closer to the framework material when in an active state. Damaged fleshforged objects can be healed as living creatures.

Armor and clothing created this way tend to be more flexible than standard items and appear to "breathe" when worn as their metabolisms synchronize with that of their wearers. While some drow desire the feature of hearing the vocalization of these items' suffering, many customers request that the items be rendered incapable of doing so for the sake of stealth or to avoid potential annoyance.

These items serve as symbols of status and power, openly displaying the fate promised to their owner's enemies and rivals should they be crossed. As such, those who wish to flaunt them often keep such items in open view when not in use, offering a safer substitute to irnakurses for living galleries of anguish. All too often however, many of these items end up forgotten in storage, left in silence and darkness by masters who care too little to remember past cruel experiments.

Fleshforging costs 1,000 gp for the first victim used and an additional 500 gp for each victim added to the building material. Fleshforged armor's flexibility is similar to mithral: it has spell failure chances lowered by 10%, maximum Dexterity bonuses increased by 2, and armor check penalties decreased by 3 (minimum 0). However, these items are much less sturdy: Fleshforged items have 10 hit points plus 5 hit points per victim used in their creation (maximum 50 hit points) and hardness 8.

Zirnakaynin Fleshforged Items

The Mindful Lovers: When a priestess of Nocticula caught her two closest lovers attempting to betray her for each other, she ensured that they would never be parted by having them entwined into this *medallion of thoughts*.

Reforged Guardian: This bodyguard failed to protect his employer's favorite daughter, but his employer gave him a second chance, by serving the family's second eldest scion as a reforged set of +2 *stanching studded leather armor*.

Rebellion's Reward: This +3 *cruel unholy greataxe* bears the wailing visages of five svirfneblin heroes who led a failed slave revolt. They served as this executioner's axe, ultimately vital to crushing the uprising they originally started.

Fleshwelding

Eventually the rendering processes of fleshforging and the grafting techniques of fleshshaping combined into new uses, leading to the practice of fleshwelding. Rather than crafting victims into objects, fleshwelding reflects demonic nature even more as drow use it to reduce people to parts of others.

Victims are merged into the flesh of their new masters in an amalgamation of tissue that, when done properly, keeps the two souls separate but with the "welds" utterly subservient to their master's will. Under the careful hands of Parastric surgeons and



alchemists, the master's form remains mostly preserved, while the welds are reshaped nearly beyond recognition.

Welds can take many forms and serve many purposes. Most often these welds are so reduced that only their visages stay preserved within the skin of their master, though some welds taken for physical augmentation bear the appearance of additional or unusually sculpted musculature.

Sometimes all that physically remains of a weld are the features a master wishes to add to their own. In all cases, the victim's soul is bound to the additional flesh. These souls are utterly broken under their master's will and are incapable of performing even the limited actions afforded by their new forms without their owner's allowance.

While many drow view fleshshaping with scorn for its perceived marring of their race's "purity," fleshwelding's overall reputation is slightly more complex. When drow make welds from others of their own race, drow society sees it in a similar light as fleshforging, as a display of power and status. Adding non-drow welds however is considered a cultural taboo, with those drow willing to taint themselves seen as utterly depraved.

Fleshwelding is the least commonly practiced fleshwarping art not only because of social stigmas, but for the risk involved. Turning oneself into an amalgamation requires great force of will to retain autonomy. While a drow's first weld carries little risk, the weld compromises them enough that any further welding carries not only the danger of insanity but also their form's complete

ruin. Every additional weld beyond the original requires a Will save (DC 15 + number of installed welds). Failure results in the affliction of insanity. If the master rolls a 1 for this save, the drow loses mental and physical cohesion entirely as all of the minds and souls contained within descend into utter madness, devolving into an amorphous blob of flesh similar to a gibbering mouter.

Fleshwelds function as magical items grafted into their owner's bodies, taking up the appropriate item slot. They cost an additional 1,000 gp over the price of the items they emulate. Each weld adds a number of hit points to the master equal to the victim's original hit dice. Welds added without functioning as crafted items do not take up a slot. Due to the bonding of souls, if the master is ever killed and subsequently raised, each weld must make an opposed Charisma check with the master or be forced to life again.

Menagerie of Zirnakaynin

Talinasva Vildrenin: This popular opera singer is famous for her unusual vocal range and ability to harmonize seemingly multiple voices from a single throat. Those few who have seen what lies behind her teeth might spot the choir of abducted rivals who made the mistake of having more talent than the narcissistic diva.

Malrethi Shaledriss: As an assassin sent on missions against the surface world, Malrethi's greatest value to his masters is his capacity for retrieving desired targets alive. Those targets who offered a challenge, and are no longer needed by this house, adorn Malrethi's chest as a living trophy gallery. ✖

SECRETS OF THE LORD OF CHANGE:

SEVEN NEW FLESHCRAFTINGS

BY JEFF "SHADOWBORN" LEE

ART BY PETER FAIRFAX



Isolated within the Moaning Vault, the drow of House Parastric delve into vile experimentations of alchemy, twisting flesh and bone into new and horrid forms. Even their fellow dark elves shudder when confronted with the monstrous changes coaxed forth by these ardent followers of the demon lord Haagenti. Yet House Parastric still finds buyers for its wares and works. Fleshcrafting poisons, in particular, find their price, as their transformations are admittedly useful, though thankfully temporary. The entries below detail seven of House Parastric's offerings.

Whenever a character uses a fleshcrafting poison, he must make a Fortitude save. On a successful save, the poison's effect and its associated penalty last for the duration given. If the save fails, the penalty's duration becomes twice the listed amount. If the result is a natural 1, there is instead an adverse reaction: the poison renders an acquired characteristic that is cosmetic only, but only the poison's penalties apply for its duration. To apply the poison's effects as permanent surgical changes, see the fleshcrafting cost.

BLINDING EYES (EYES)

Poison Duration 10 minutes

Saving Throw DC 15; **Penalty** -2 Wisdom

EFFECT

Your eyes enlarge into great white orbs that emit bright light with a range of 30 feet. You can use this light to see normally, and it can be repressed or resumed as a free action. Creatures within 30 feet of you are subject to a gaze attack and must make a Fortitude save (DC = 10 + 1/2 your Hit Dice + Constitution modifier) or be blinded for 1 hour.

COST

Fleshcrafting Cost 20,000 gp; **Poison Cost** 1,000 gp

DEFENSIVE QUILLS (CHEST)

Poison Duration 10 minutes

Saving Throw DC 15; **Penalty** -2 Constitution

EFFECT

You sprout cruel spines from your body. Any creature that strikes you with an unarmed strike, natural weapon, or non-reach melee weapon takes 1d4+1 points of piercing damage. Creatures damaged by the quills must make a Reflex save (DC = 10 + 1/2 your Hit Dice + Dex modifier) or one quill breaks off in its flesh, causing the target to become sickened until all embedded quills are removed. Removing a quill requires a DC 15 Heal check made as a full-round action. For every 5 by which the check exceeds the DC, one additional quill can be removed. On a failed check, a quill is still removed, but the process deals 1d4+1 points of damage to the victim.

COST

Fleshcrafting Cost 15,000 gp; **Poison Cost** 750 gp

MULTITUDINOUS EYES (HEAD)

Poison Duration 30 minutes

Saving Throw DC 20; **Penalty** -4 to saves vs. gaze attacks and spells with the pattern descriptor

EFFECT

Eyes emerge and open on all sides of your head. You gain all-around vision (*Pathfinder Roleplaying Game Bestiary 2*) and a +4 circumstance bonus to Perception checks.

COST

Fleshcrafting Cost 25,000 gp; **Poison Cost** 1,250 gp

POISONOUS SKIN (BODY)

Poison Duration 30 minutes

Saving Throw DC 20;

Penalty -1 hp per Hit Die

EFFECT

You exude a toxic substance from your skin. A creature that strikes you with an unarmed strike or natural weapon or grapples with you is exposed to the poison.

Skin—contact; save Fort DC (10 + 1/2 Hit Dice + Con modifier); frequency 1/round for 4 rounds; effect 1d2 Wisdom damage; cure 1 save.

COST

Fleshcrafting Cost 16,000 gp; **Poison Cost** 800 gp

SONAR HEARING (HEADBAND)

Poison Duration 30 minutes

Saving Throw DC 20; **Penalty** -4 to saves vs. effects with the



P.

sonic descriptor

EFFECT

Your ears grow large and bat-like, greatly enhancing your perception of sound. This modification grants you blindsense in a 40-foot radius.

COST

Fleshcrafting Cost 20,000 gp; **Poison Cost** 1,000 gp

SERPENT TAIL (FEET)

Poison Duration 20 minutes

Saving Throw DC 15; **Penalty** -4 Charisma

EFFECT

Your legs fuse together into a giant snake tail below the waist. You gain climb and swim speeds of 20 feet. You cannot be tripped, you gain a +4 to your CMB and CMD when grappling, and you can constrict a grappled opponent for 1d6 damage plus 1-1/2 times your Strength modifier.

COST

Fleshcrafting Cost 40,000 gp; **Poison Cost** 2,000 gp

STICKY TONGUE (HEAD)

Poison Duration 5 minutes

Saving Throw DC 15; **Penalty** -2 to Charisma

EFFECT

Your tongue elongates, becoming flexible and adhesive. You may make a touch attack with your tongue as a secondary natural attack. You have a reach of 10 feet with this attack, and all grapple checks involving your tongue gain a +4 bonus.

COST

Fleshcrafting Cost 6,000 gp; **Poison Cost** 300 gp ✕

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DEEPER AND DARKER

BY JOHN C.

“VALMATHEMAD” ROCK

ART BY TANYAPORN

“YUUKAMI THEFOOL”

SANGSNIT



“They have the Starchild.”

Cyon’s head swam, the accent was thick, but he’d understood the words. He kept his eyes closed, pushed away the shattering headache, the tearing pain in his shoulders, the cracked ribs that ached with every ragged breath, and the broken nose that choked his breathing. He retreated deep within his mind. There, he floated free, surrounded by the sea of pain but not within it, his attention focused solely on the voices.

“Who dares bring surface-meat down to the Vaults?”

Cyon immediately recognized the imperious tone. *Aasarrah*. He choked down the urge to spit at her name. *Aasarrah Vay-Tallandyr*. A voice he’d not heard since childhood, one he’d hoped to never hear again.

“If he knows anything...”

The thickly accented voice stirred memories of something short, heavy, and strong as black iron. *Kurgrik*.

Cyon felt their combined gaze fall upon him, sensed the dull weight of their scrutiny, and opened his eyes—or eye: Cyon thought his left might be missing. He smiled as best he could with the teeth he had left.

“My Dear Sister Aasarrah, how do you fare this fine and lovely ... evening? Or afternoon? Morning? You must forgive me, I seem to have left my wits in my pants—both of which I see are now gone.”

Aasarrah’s upper lip curled into a sneer, *“Half-sister.”*

“Only the lovelier half, indeed,” Cyon smiled weakly.

She was always like that around lessers—domineering, conceited, and cruel beyond measure or reason. It required unbearable effort to raise and turn his head but he had to see her. *Pity. Just as flawless as I remember ... shock-white hair, smooth obsidian skin, bright lavender eyes*. Cyon wanted nothing more than to drive a dull blade into her perfectly sculpted throat.

He coughed once, “Alas, while it is beyond a doubt the greatest pleasure of my life to receive your gracious hospitality, I came to speak with Mother.”

“Mother?” Aasarrah moved closer. She reached out slowly and carefully raised his chin, then raked her fingernails down Cyon’s cheek drawing thin lines of blood. When she spoke it was nearly a purr, “Mother isn’t here.”

Aasarrah smiled coldly, and then giggled behind her delicate hand, “Oh Cyon, it was so ... gruesome.”

She laughed again and turned to leave, “Kurg?”

The duergar nodded and bowed, but Aasarrah was already gone, deep purple cloak fluttering behind her.

Cyon regretted coming home. He desperately needed information, but his desperation now had him hanging from heavy iron shackles. The bands were so tight that he could feel blood—dried and fresh—where they cut into him. His wrists were bound together and hoisted up behind his back, rotating his chest forward until he was nearly facing the floor, driving excruciating pain into his shoulders. His legs hung limp. Bloodied, nail-less toes dangled mere inches above the floor.

So close. If he could stand and take the weight off his agonized wrists ... he eyed the duergar; *I could—if I could stand. Maybe I’m too weak. Perhaps I’d just collapse in a heap. She would love that. No. Better to hang here like a piece of meat. At least this is dignified ...* he snickered softly to himself ... *Yes, so very dignified.*

Kurgrik turned and stepped closer, regarding Cyon curiously. “No smarter in all those years above?”

“Smarter, yes. Wiser, no.” Cyon stared at the spot where Aasarrah had been, “She’s *Mother* now?”

Kurgrik nodded silently and motioned for a smallish figure to enter. Cyon glanced at the creature. Abnormally bald, skinny even for its kind, massive white eyes gleaming with anticipation, long, thin limbs with sharp and nimble claws where the fingers should be. *Derro*. Cyon remembered this particular one from childhood. But, even if he had not, the blood-spattered butcher’s apron left no doubt why it was here.

As it came closer it chortled and made clicking noises. Kurgrik stepped aside and the derro ran its taloned hands over Cyon’s chest. The scars from the creature’s recent fleshcrafting were still clearly visible. Opening its mouth in excitement, Cyon saw that it had no tongue.

The duergar translated, “Click says you have many beautiful scars.”

Cyon smiled as best he could, “And I say Click has a lovely singing voice.”

The derro hissed in rage and spat on the ground. It turned and stormed off to retrieve a bag of sharp metal implements from just outside the door.

Cyon sighed and rotated as best he could to look at Kurgrik. “And now?”

Kurgrik cranked a large iron wheel and lowered Cyon enough for his feet and knees to touch the ground. Pain shot from his ruined toes up through his back. He tried to stand but couldn’t. “Click will carve. You will scream. Aasarrah will watch, and preen. Eventually, it will end. Your sister will throw you to the caverns. Leave you for the Seugathi.”

“*Half-sister.*”

Kurgrik lowered his voice, “Survive.” He placed his dry, cracked lips close to Cyon’s ear, “I will bring gear,” the dwarf’s beard tickled his neck, “a healer.”

Cyon quirked an eyebrow, “In exchange ... ?”

“The Lorekeeper.” Kurgrik ignored Cyon’s half-choked laugh, “Discover who brings the *Verrtuk* back. Why. Exterminate them.”

Cyon regretted trying to shrug as pain shot through his arms, “Just that?”

Kurgrik paused and motioned Click off to fetch a torch. “And ...”

“You want the impossible with an ‘and’?”

Kurgrik ignored the sarcasm, “Kill your sister. Return me to Hagegraf.”

Cyon smiled as best he could, “If we’re counting—and we are—that’s *two* additional ‘ands’ ...”

“Light!” Imarra’s voice was harsher than normal.

Valen cursed. He hastily scooped up the pale blue glowstone he’d just dropped and drew his short sword. Light held shakily overhead, blade before him, he inched forward, teeth clenched together.

The gritty, gravelly terrain crunched with each step. He winced, sure that everything could hear him.

The dim light swayed and trembled, but Valen saw bright red blood pooling beneath the drow’s head. He strained to listen, but couldn’t hear anything beyond his own ragged breathing and the noise of his pounding heart.



Imarra pulled out a hand axe and hacked at the neck until the ruined head rolled free.

Valen's shoulders slumped as some of the tension left his body. He lowered the stone and sheathed his blade. "I feared he was one of the ones with the ... *things* ... or one of the others with the *faces* ..." He realized Imarra was staring at him. When he met her gaze she arched an eyebrow.

Valen smiled weakly, lips pressed tight and thin. Pulling the waterskin off his belt he tried to drink without uncapping it. "I'm fine." He frowned and yanked the cap off, "... considering we've lost the *'Starchild'* to those ..." a shiver ran down his spine, "... and everything down here can *taste* us for miles while we stumble around blind." He threw the metal cap at a wall he couldn't see, "Cyon's probably dead, we're—"

"*Not* lost." Imarra cut him off and turned away. She tore the dead drow's rich purple cloak and wiped down her gear. Satisfied, she rummaged through what little the drow had. He had traveled very light, for speed, and there was nothing to explain why he'd attacked them. Turning back to Valen she held out her hand, "Give me your Map of Infinite Maps. The gate to Sekamina must be nearby. Cyon will be there."

"Cyon said three days travel in Nar-Voth." Valen frowned as he scratched at the patchy stubble growing on his chin. "I think we're going on six. Maybe. Time's so strange down here. No light. No sun, no wind, no weather. Just rocks to break your ankle, cavern mazes to get you lost, nasty gibbering things to kill and eat you... I *hate* this place."

Imarra picked up Valen's waterskin, "You're surprised the Darklands are dark?"

Valen moved his pack closer and noticed something tiny crawling away, "Hello, strange little glowing worm, are you planning to kill me?"

Imarra spoke without looking, "Leave it alone."

Valen watched the pale white worm slowly inch away from their wan blue light. He shrugged glumly, "Where are all the magical wonders? The glowing caverns? Hanging cities? Azlanti ruins? Ancient civilizations? There's nothing but a labyrinth of empty tunnels and death."

Imarra took a deep breath of heavy, stale air. An undercurrent of earth and old leaves—despite there being none—left a sour taste in her mouth. Imarra took a long swig of Valen's water. It was warm and not very refreshing.

Valen tried to look past their very dim light, but beyond was black. He cleared his throat and held the map out, "Where in the Nine Hells is Cyon? Isn't he from here? How do you get lost going home?"

"Home here isn't like any we're used to." She remembered all the old scars on Cyon's chest, back, and arms. "Or could imagine."

She shook her head to clear it, red hair appearing deep purple in the light. "We're barely skimming the upper edge of Nar-Voth." Brushing her hand across the map's face showed several different images. Finding the best view, she expanded it fully and held the image up. "Look—Cyon's marked a portal that takes us deeper and darker, maybe into all the forgotten wonders you wanted to find."

Valen pinched the writhing white worm between his fingers until it burst. It left a greasy, glowing smear as he wiped his hand on his pants, "There's nothing wonderful down here."

Valen groaned but couldn't move. He opened his eyes. The dim fluorescent patch on his pants was still glowing faintly. With its light his half-elven eyes could see enough to discern that he was bound, gagged, and on his back. Imarra's form was an arm's length away, still crumpled as she had fallen. He couldn't tell if she was breathing.

He turned back and looked up—directly into two orbs that glowed softly in the dark. *What a lovely indigo.* But the eyes—*drow eyes*—were blank, vacant. Valen peered closer and then jerked his head back, hitting hard rock as he saw a slug-like creature embedded in the drow. Dried blood surrounded the wounds where two long ebony spikes pierced the nape of the drow's neck. The creature's oily, translucent body pulsed and surged like a beating heart.



Valen felt nauseous. Thin filament-like tendrils lifted off the slug's body. Sensing Valen, they extended towards his face, undulating as if in water. They brushed his cheek, light as spider silk. Suddenly, there was excruciating pain and he felt his flesh burning. Valen tried to scream but the creature had paralyzed him. Tears ran from his eyes and his body convulsed.

The sensation ceased, the infected drow left, and another took its place. Valen's vision was blurry, the light was poor, but he didn't see anything on this one's neck. *Thank the Gods, at least this one is not—*

Valen shrieked into the ragged gag as the face split along invisible seams, the purple eyes drifting up and apart, fading as they moved. The nose flattened into smooth flesh, and the lower jaw split into two separate sections, two rows of what had been teeth were now white ridges along the backs of two broad tentacles. Within the mass of the five undulating arms a circle of razor-like teeth pulled back to reveal a parrot-like beak. At the base of each of the five segments dark pores appeared. Valen thought they were eyes. Finally, a long, tube-like tongue with a sharp piercing point flicked out of the bird-beaked mouth and sampled the air between them.

The thing leaned down, five tentacle-arms twined through Valen's hair, pulling his head towards the maw and its lashing tongue. Valen screamed, sucked breath through the filthy rag, and screamed again.

Cyon removed his blades from what passed for the Verrtuk's neck and pulled the dead abomination off of Valen.

"I believe you've soiled yourself."

Valen jerked away, slowly regaining his senses. He found Cyon's face hovering over his own just as the *thing* had done earlier.

"Please, don't stand there," Valen croaked. His throat was raw from screaming, his head was pounding. *Not a dream then.* Valen squinted at Cyon. His companion's face was covered in numerous wounds—some freshly healed others still raw. There was a bloodied patch over his left eye.

Cyon sheathed his swords and dusted off his armor. It was black with hints of deep purple. Darkmantle hide and spider silk formed an intricate spiraling web across his chest, while demonic faces leered over each shoulder. Two drow quickblades hung at his hips.

"I hate this place," Valen closed his eyes tight, wishing his lids could keep the horrors of the Darklands at bay. Instead, he remembered their battle and suddenly sat bolt upright, eyes wide as he looked for—

"Imarra?" Cyon asked. Valen nodded anxiously. Cyon pointed to where several darkly robed figures sat around the fallen elf's still form. "We're seeing if Calistria will send her back to us. Some still worship her, perhaps she will listen."

He helped Valen to his feet, "Let me introduce you to Rizgar, son of Kurgrik. These are friends of his. He's sending us on a joyous little task to find—no—to survive long enough to find the Lorekeeper."

"Lorekeeper? What of the Starchild? What are these things?"

"Verrtuk." Cyon spat on the ground after saying the name, "I'd hoped to use Mother's assets and influence to organize something better than—" he looked around, "—this ... but ... if the aboleth are using ancient Azlanti aberrations to snatch psychics from the surface for purposes both foul and unknown then we must move swiftly before the Child is lost forever."

Valen blanched slightly, "Aboleth?!"

"Almost certainly." Cyon motioned Rizgar over. "Rizgar says the Lorekeeper will put all the pieces together for us—for a price. We just have to live long enough to get to him, negotiate a deal, survive the negotiations, discover a way to eradicate the *Verrtuk*—kill an aboleth—save the world, save the Child ... Imarra ... then go back home, find my eye, rescue a Duergar, murder my sister ... " Valen opened his mouth, "Half-sister." Valen looked about to protest, but Cyon shook his head, "It's fine: she deserves it."

Cyon and Valen leapt through the portal just as the pulsing energy dissipated and the stone gate slammed shut behind them. Glowing purple runes within the portal's frame flared then went dark.

"Can the Verr-things use that too?" Valen asked.

"Probably." Cyon shrugged and pointed ahead. Before them stretched a Vault so large they couldn't see the sides or whatever passed for a ceiling. A pallid white sphere that resembled the sun shone overhead, but it neither moved nor radiated heat. The terrain was a trackless desert of ebony sand that felt like silt to the touch but was as solid as rock when trod upon.

In the center of it all was a massive building with flying buttresses, arched windows, and thousands of gargoyles ringing the structure at every floor—countless floors. Shifting focus from the Library to the desert forced the realization that the two couldn't exist in the same space at the same time.

Valen pulled out his journal, hands trembling with excitement, "I've got to sketch this."

"No." Cyon took Valen's journal away, grabbed his elbow, and began walking, "Remember why we're here."

"But, Cyon, this is amaz—"

In a flash of light, they were *shifted* forward until they stood ten paces from the massive doors.

"—ing."

Colossal stones rumbled apart as they approached, more light swept over them, and they now found themselves deep within an immense library, stacked from floor to ceiling with tomes, scrolls, crystals, and all manner of information in every form ever collected, imagined, or devised by any intelligent race of Golarion.

Cyon paused, turning to look Valen in the eyes, "Whatever you're expecting, it won't be anything you could possibly imagine. Keep your hands off your weapons. I'll carry your journal. Keep your mouth shut. I will do the talking."

Something massive shifted its weight, detached from the upper levels and plummeted down to land with an earth-shaking impact that nearly knocked the two of them off their feet. Cyon caught his balance and stabilized Valen as well. He felt something huge loom up behind him, impossibly close. He smiled flatly, "It's behind me, isn't it?"

Valen nodded.

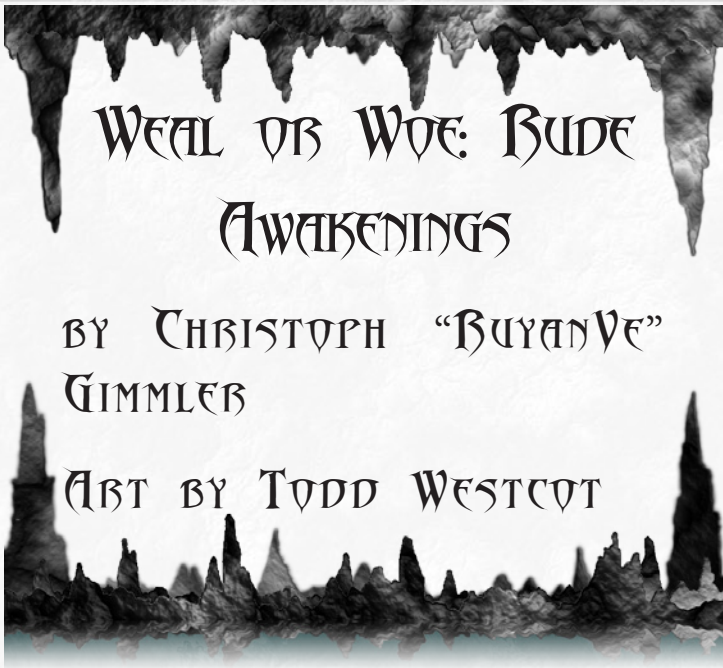
Cyon began to turn when a piercing white light engulfed the two adventurers. It lifted them into the air and held them in a radiance so intense that Cyon could see the outlines of the bones beneath his flesh. It burned into their consciousness and began illuminating images in their minds. Cyon felt like he was pulled from his body, and was staring down at a forest catching fire in a thousand different places at once. The Lorekeeper pulled his memories out in a turbulent surge that overwhelmed him and then it dropped them both onto the black stone floor.

Cyon tried to push himself up, but his body wouldn't respond. More images assaulted his mind, but this was an influx of dark places, deep in Orv, places from before the Star Stone fell, maybe even before Azlant existed. Places he'd never seen, never been, yet somehow *knew*.

The image of the girl—the "*Starchild*"—drifted in and out of otherwise alien scenes, and Cyon *knew* that her recurrence was not by accident. She was integral to events both past and future, and the fate of the world was twined with hers.

A dark gate loomed into view, carved of solid obsidian, inscribed with flickering green runes of ancient origin. The flood of images stopped, the library vanished, and Cyon felt black sands beneath his cheek. He turned his head towards Valen.

"I know where she is." ✖



WEAL OR WOE: BUDE AWAKENINGS

BY CHRISTOPH "BUYANVE"
GIMMLER

ART BY TODD WESTCOT

Weal: Grainesh the Seeker

Grainesh is a living legend among his people, almost as famous as far-away Gakenbode, but far more real. Nobody has hunted farther up (reaching Golarion's surface) or farther down (all the way to Orv) than him, nor fought more monsters and braved more perils than this legendary figure of the mongrelmen. Befitting and further fueling his status, Grainesh is a giant by the standards of most humanoid races. Standing 7 feet tall, the mingling of his forebears with giants is clearly visible. He has deep-lying eyes—one almond-shaped, one large as a horse's—a tusked mouth, and gnawed-at ears. His face is otherwise dominated by a rough-cut beard of reddish hair. One of his feet ends in a cloven hoof, while the other looks like a paw and has retractable claws.

Grainesh recently stumbled upon strange, seemingly abandoned ruins constructed of a kind of stone unknown to him (serpentstone, see gazetteer on Ilmurea in AP #41).

Believing he had discovered a stronghold of his ancestors, he was overwhelmed with disgust when he reached a circular room, within which eight snake-headed humanoids covered in scales awaited him. Upon closer inspection, he found them to be lying motionless in transparent sarcophagi as if sleeping.

He quickly set to killing these abominations, but the monstrous humanoids began to wake, trying to escape what would soon become their biers. Before he could finish his grisly work, one of the snake people emerged from its receptacle and forced him to retreat.

Adventure Hooks

- The PCs are searching for a guide through the Darklands.
- Having wronged the mongrelmen, the PCs are brought before their leader.
- Having been defeated at the hands of serpentfolk, the PCs are looking for aid.

Boon

If the PCs offer their help, Grainesh offers the PCs a safe haven to recuperate in return. In addition, he will give the PCs a map of the surrounding area, granting a +4 bonus on Knowledge (dungeoneering), Knowledge (geography), and Survival checks (size of

area is up to GM discretion). Should they successfully help him destroy the serpentfolk, Grainesh offers a large portion of the loot in exchange for the right to claim the ruins as safe haven for his tribe.

GRAINESH

CR 11

XP 12,800

Male mongrelman druid (cave druid) 11 (*Pathfinder Bestiary 2*, *Advanced Player's Guide*)

N Medium monstrous humanoid

Init +6; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Perception +16

DEFENSE

AC 22, touch 13, flat-footed 20 (+7 armor, +1 deflection, +2 Dex, +2 natural)

hp 112 (2d10+11d8+52)

Fort +12, **Ref** +10, **Will** +17; +2 vs. exceptional, supernatural, and spell-like abilities of oozes and aberrations

Immune poison; **Resist** fire 10

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee masterwork quarterstaff +12/+7 (1d6+1) or slam +11 (1d4+1)

Ranged sling +12 (1d4+1)

Special Attacks wildshape 4/day

Domain Spell-Like Abilities (CL 11th; concentration +16)
8/day—fire bolt

Druid Spells Prepared (CL 11th; concentration +16)

6th—*fire seeds*^D, *wall of stone*

5th—*baleful polymorph* (DC 20), *deathward*, *fire shield*^D, *stoneskin*

4th—*ball lightning* (DC 19), *cure serious wounds*, *dispel magic*, *spike stones* (DC 19) *wall of fire*^D

3rd—*burrow*^{UM}, *fireball*^P (DC 18), *shape stone*

2nd—*barkskin*, *cat's grace*, *produce flame*^D, *resist energy*, *soften earth and stone* (DC 17), *tar ball* (DC 17)

1st—*burning hands*^D, *cure light wounds*, *faerie fire* (DC 16), *longstrider*, *magic stone*, *obscuring mist*, *shillelagh*

0 (at will)—*create water*, *detect magic*, *guidance*, *know direction*

Domain Fire

TACTICS

Before Combat Grainesh casts *ironwood* three times a month on his breastplate to make it a +1 *ironwood breastplate*. His quarterstaff holds *summon nature's ally VI* (via *spellstaff*) which he uses to summon a huge fire elemental to his side. He casts *longstrider* every morning. If he has the opportunity, he also casts *cat's grace*, *barkskin*, *resist energy* (cold) and *stoneskin* before combat.

During Combat Grainesh starts combat summoning a huge fire elemental via *spellstaff*. Next round, he casts *wall of fire*, followed by *spike stone*, *tar ball*, and *ball lightning* to gain control of the battle field.

Morale Should he lose more than 70 hp, Grainesh retreats, wildshaping into an air elemental. After trying to reach his tribe he flees the general area with them to regroup and recover.

Base Statistics Without *longstrider* cast, Grainesh's statistics are **Speed** 20 ft.

STATISTICS

Str 12, **Dex** 15, **Con** 17, **Int** 12, **Wis** 20, **Cha** 12



Todd Westcot 11

Base Atk +10; **CMB** +11; **CMD** 23

Feats Augment Summoning, Combat Casting, Improved Initiative, Natural Spell, Spell Focus (Conjuration), Skill Focus (Stealth), Toughness

Skills Climb +6, Diplomacy +7, Handle Animal +10, Heal +10, Knowledge (arcana) +5, Knowledge (dungeoneering) +12, Knowledge (nature) +12, Perception +16, Sleight of Hand +10, Spellcraft +11, Stealth +16, Survival +16, Swim +6

Languages Aklo, Common, Undercommon

SQ cavesense, lightfoot, nature bond (Fire domain), sound mimicry (voices), tunnelrunner, wild empathy +11

Combat Gear *potion of cure medium wounds* (3), *wand of ice storm* (4 charges) **Other Gear** mwk quarterstaff, +1 ironwood breastplate, brooch of shielding, cloak of resistance +2, headband of inspired wisdom +2, belt of incredible dexterity +2, ring of protection +1, druid's vestments, healer's kit, 93 gp

Woe: Slavvok the Silent

Slavvok's dream had been tranquil and fulfilling as always, until suddenly, his dream world was invaded by a stream of horrible images and sounds: his brethren sleeping alongside him, writhing in agony and screaming for their lives. Slavvok willed himself to wakefulness only to see his brother and sister mages horribly slaughtered. What he witnessed was beyond imagining. A savage brute, taller than any he had ever seen, prying open the sarcophagi in their once magically-sealed vault and cutting their throats before proceeding to the next receptacle. While his thoughts were invaded by fear and confusion, his mind raced and he rose from his stupor and prepared for battle, to come to his brethren's side and end their struggle—by his own hands if need be!

Adventure Hooks

- The PCs are in desperate need of information rumored to be held in a serpentfolk library.
- The PCs need magical aid.
- The PCs are trying to negotiate for safe passage through the ruins.

Drawback

The information that "overlanders" have interacted with one of the serpentfolk in a cooperative way and being free of will all the while spreads faster than wildfire in the Darklands, marking the PCs as enemies of all other folk.

SLAVVOK CR 12

XP 19,200

Male serpentfolk necromancer 8 (*Pathfinder Bestiary 2*)

NE Medium monstrous humanoid

Init +10; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., scent; Perception +10

DEFENSE

AC 23, touch 16, flat-footed 17 (+4 armor, +6 Dex, +3 natural)

hp 133 (5d10+8d6+65)

Fort +9, **Ref** +12, **Will** +14

Immune mind-affecting effects, paralysis, poison; **SR** 23

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee +1 dagger +16/+11 (1d4/19–20), bite +10 (1d6–1 plus poison)

Special Attacks channel negative energy (DC 16, 11/day)

Serpentfolk Spell-Like Abilities (CL 12th; concentration +14)

At will—*disguise self* (humanoid form only, DC 13), *ventriloquism*

1/day—*blur*, *dominate person* (DC 17), *major image* (DC 15), *mirror image*, *suggestion* (DC 15)

Arcane School Spell-Like Abilities (CL 8th, concentration +15)

11/day—grave touch (4 rounds)

Necromancer Spells Prepared (CL 8th; concentration +16)

4th—*acid pit*^{APG} (DC 22), *animate dead*, *dimension door*, *enervation*, *fear* (DC 23)

3rd—*blink*, *dispel magic*, *fireball* (DC 21), *fly*, *ray of exhaustion* (DC 22), *vampiric touch*

2nd—*blindness/deafness* (DC 21), *false life*, *resist energy*, *see invisibility*, *scorching ray*, *spectral hand*

1st—*burning hands* (DC 19), *cause fear* (DC 20), *expeditious retreat*, *feather fall*, *mage armor*, *magic missile* (x2)

0 (at will)—*bleed* (DC 19), *detect magic*, *mending*, *read magic*

Opposition Schools enchantment, illusion

TACTICS

Before Combat Slavvok casts *mage armor* and *false life* every morning. He has animated as many of his fallen brethren as possible via *animate dead*.

During Combat Slavvok lets his animated zombies handle melee combat. He targets fighter-types with *dominate person*, followed by *suggestion* to dissuade the rest of his opponents from attacking. Afterwards, he casts *blink*, *blur*, and *mirror image* as needed and combats his enemies with offensive spells.

Morale Slavvok retreats deeper into the ruins using *dimension door* before the last of his zombies is destroyed or he has lost more than 30 hp.

Base Statistics Without *false life* and *mage armor* cast, Slavvok's statistics are **AC** 19, touch 16, flat-footed 13; **hp** 120.

STATISTICS

Str 8, **Dex** 23, **Con** 19, **Int** 26, **Wis** 19, **Cha** 14

Base Atk +9; **CMB** +8; **CMD** 24

Feats Combat Casting, Command Undead, Extend Spell, Great Fortitude, Improved Initiative, Scribe Scroll, Silent Spell, Weapon Finesse, Spell Focus (necromancy), Spell Mastery

Skills Acrobatics +13, Appraise +17, Disguise +9, Escape Artist +21, Fly +15, Intimidate +12, Knowledge (arcana) +24, Knowledge (engineering) +16, Knowledge (history) +19, Knowledge (local) +16, Knowledge (nature) +16, Knowledge (planes) +17, Knowledge (religion) +16, Perception +20, Sense Motive +16, Spellcraft +22, Stealth +14, Use Magic Device +15

Languages Aklo, Common, Draconic, Undercommon; telepathy 100 ft.

SQ arcane bond (dagger), life sight (10 feet, 8 rounds/day)

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Poison (Ex) Bite—injury; *save* Fort DC 20; *frequency* 1/round for 6 rounds; *effect* 1d2 Str; *cure* 2 saves. The save DC is Constitution-based.

Combat Gear *potion of cure serious wounds*, *robe of bones*

Other Gear +1 dagger, cloak of resistance +2, headband of vast intelligence +2 (Perception), spellbook, onyx gems (worth 420 gp), 425 gp ☒☒



GOLABION GAZETTEER: TOURISM IN HAGEGRAF

BY LIAM "TWODEE" ALLMAN

ART BY MICHAEL JAECKS

The fortress city of Hagegraf is known throughout the Darklands as the cruel capital of the gray dwarves. Toil-obsessed crafters, the gray dwarves supply the Darklands with arms and armor to fund their escalating cold war with their cousins above.

The legendary craftsmanship of the dwarves is apparent among the duergar and the city is a marvel to behold. Hagegraf's austere beauty reminds observers that the builders' first priority was defense. Nonetheless, the duergar's reliance on short-lived but plentiful slaves frees the artisan and merchant classes to focus on the complex projects that have earned Hagegraf begrudging respect as a majestic and wondrous, if grim and imposing, metropolis.

Though the most famous of the city's grand architectural projects is the Akrizoth Horologe—the magnificent clock tower that tracks both the hours of the day and the output of Droskar's forges—pilgrims from across the Darklands and even some travelers from the surface visit Hagegraf to view its many other marvels.

Droskar's Mouth

Droskar's Mouth is a titanic portcullis-like contraption that functions as the city's main gate. It is the first wonder that tourists see upon entering the city. Controlled by two colossal engines powered by bound elementals, the gate can be raised and lowered with great speed. An especially skilled operator, such as the local guard captain, **Grignar Byfurth** (LE male duergar fighter 5/rogue 3), can even manipulate the sections of the gate to create defensive barricades and platforms.

Grignur's jovial nature sets him apart from his kin, but experienced travelers and merchants know exactly why he's so friendly: he often "forgets" to warn particularly skilled or remarkable travelers about various taxes and obscure laws. He arrests violators for the slightest infractions and carts them off to the slave market, making him one of the richest civil servants in Hagegraf.

Coward's Dishonor

This monument in the artisans' district represents the dwarven virtue *gladdringgar*, or delving. Duergar see themselves as the deepest-dwelling and hardest-working dwarves and, therefore, as representative of the best of dwarven culture.

The monument depicts a duergar, rendered in dark iron descending a set of rough-hewn stairs with axe drawn. A second dwarf, rendered in bronze but plated in tin, flees up the stairs behind him, arms askew



and face contorted in a caricature of fear.

Art historians have noted that, over the course of the last thousand years, the iron duergar has descended two steps from where it stood at the creation of the statue, although no one claims to have seen it move. A small community of conspiracy theorists has grown up around the monument, with a range of theories involving slow-moving constructs, metaphysical connections to the rift between the duergar and their surface kin, or even magical vandalism. The duergar themselves are too busy working to pay heed to such nonsense and leave the theorizing to other races.

The Endless Foundry

Kept by proud sibling forgemasters **Herewuld and Bethel Kryfe** (LE male duergar cleric of Droskar 8 and LE female duergar fighter 9) and manned by dozens of slaves, the Endless Foundry is an arms factory known for one incredible feat: when its spinning mechanisms are synchronized with the Akrizoth Horologe and fed the proper reagents, the Foundry can rapidly create simple magical arms and armor for a fraction of the usual price.

Although these mass-produced items are flawed and cannot be improved upon past the initial "imprinting," the Kryfes' enterprise keeps Hagegraf's armies well supplied with magical arms and armor. The siblings funnel most of their profits into their own personal projects, primarily researching more advanced magical arms and armor for themselves and their more elite clientele.

SIDE TREK: THE MACHINE FORGE OF DROSKAR

Backstory

The Machine Forge of Droskar is a hastily erected duergar field factory based on the Endless Foundry in Hagegraf. However, its short-tempered overseer, Orlege Thragstus, made a few mistakes in the exacting construction of the engine and ended up creating huge quantities of *+1 weapons* that malfunction and become *-1 weapons* with the slightest magical influx.

Not one to waste effort, Orlege began anonymously shipping the weapons to the surface and other Darklands rivals, making a hefty profit and blissfully ignoring the ensuing chaos.

The Forge fills a large cave, with a circuitous assembly line and various machines that also function as mechanical traps. Orlege is a cleric of Droskar and has created skeletons to operate the machines, instead of relying on slaves he would have to feed. In combat, Orlege channels negative energy while the skeletons attempt to maneuver PCs into the assembly line's many traps.

Plot Hooks

Dwarf patrols beneath the Mindspin Mountains are suddenly dealing with derro and orc attackers armed with magic weapons. The distribution of the weapons suggests that the source is located in a nearby cave.

The PCs gain possession of a distinctly branded *+1 weapon* in the Darklands. However, the weapon later "malfunctions" and becomes a cursed item. The PCs continue to find other weapons and armor in the same mold, some of which have already backfired on their hapless wielders.

Potential Resolutions

Storming the factory and defeating Orlege is fairly straightforward. However, after the forge is shut down, the PCs must find and dispose of the malfunctioning magic weapons that Orlege dumped into the Darklands and beyond, possibly involving other Darklands powers in the search, lest a shipment of the weapons fall into the wrong hands.

The Blackened Bellows

High in the nobles' district, the Blackened Bellows is a music hall run by the eccentric (by duergar standards) **Ashturne Gurst** (NE male duergar wizard 10).

Gurst's claim to fame is the massive pipe organ, which takes up much of the space within the hall. The organ possesses alternating sets of pipes crafted from fire- and frost-forged dwarven steel, causing the tone of the pipes to change at different temperatures. This quality is best heard when the pipes' temperature ranges, so Gurst keeps a small cadre of apprentices (mostly wizards, rather than frivolous bards) to magically heat and cool parts of the machine for particularly elaborate performances.

King Kurindey Orgukagen himself is known to frequent the Bellows, even sponsoring special concerts when he needs to publicly dispose of a political enemy. It is said that the King's

victims' screams can echo musically across the whole Hagegraf caldera as the pipes emit the foul black smoke for which the Bellows are named.

The Seven Patriarchs

Duergar know that the ale at The Seven Patriarchs brewhouse is the best in the city. The "best" ale by duergar standards, of course, means that the brewing process consists of making the same ale over and over to exacting specificity with as little variance as possible. Outsiders are likely to find the ale bland and heavy, duergar connoisseurs swear that they can taste the effort that went into making the latest season exactly the same as the last.

Brewmaster **Rikkeh Thord** (LE female duergar monk [drunken master] 7) primarily keeps duergar debtors as slaves in the tavern itself, but the brewery below houses her most valuable purchase, a rag-swathed mystery who calls himself **Hoit** (CN dark stalker rogue 2). Hoit seems to have contacts with other dark creepers in the area, and Thord benefits from their "special skills." She knows the dark folk's propensity for violence and poisoning, so she keeps Hoit happy by allowing him to indulge his penchant for thievery in the tavern knowing there is risk in allowing a thief to steal from her customers. For the time being, though, Hoit seems content to serve as the brewmaster's faithful slave.

King's Ransom Auction House

Named after a tale in which an ancient King of Highhelm was sold into slavery (though no record of such an event has ever been found), the King's Ransom Auction House is the largest and most prosperous slave market in Hagegraf. Situated near the center of the merchants' quarter, it looks like a temple. Pillars and buttresses support its massive vaulted ceiling.

Slaves are sorted into a set of categories based on the craft or labor they are most suited for. A legion of inspectors and bureaucrats runs the sorting process, while the voices of numerous auctioneers echo through the halls at all hours. Most auctions take place on the stages assigned to specific slave categories. A large stage in the very center of the auction house is rarely used, an unfurling stockade and set of manacles intended for very large creatures is set beneath it. These slaves are good for spectacle but typically make unwise purchases.

HAGEGRAF

LE metropolis

Corruption +7; **Crime** +2; **Economy** +6; **Law** +7; **Lore** +4;
Society +2

Qualities pious (Droskar), prosperous, racially intolerant (surface-dwellers, especially dwarves), tourist attraction (monuments)

Danger +10

DEMOGRAPHICS

Government overlord

Population 32,800 (25,300 duergar; 4,000 slaves of assorted races; 1,640 half-orcs; 984 dark folk; 876 other races)

RULER

Kurindey Orgukagen, King of Hagegraf (LE male duergar fighter 4/cleric of Droskar 14)

MARKETPLACE

Base Value 24,000 gp; **Purchase Limit** 100,000 gp;

Spellcasting 9th

Minor Items all available; **Medium Items** 4d4; **Major Items** 3d4 ✖



HERO'S HOARD: MAGIC OF THE GREATER HOUSES OF ZIRNAKAYNIN

BY YANICK "METHVEZEM"
MOBEAU

ART BY CARLOS "CELUBIAN"
TORREBLANCA



The drow of Zirnakaynin are renowned for their cunning and cruel magic items. While each of the following items is followed by the name of the greater drow noble house that first crafted it, they are by no means still used only by that house. Centuries of internecine wars and spying amongst the drow has resulted in these items being stolen or created by rivals for their own use.

CENTIPEDE ARMOR (HOUSE DOLOUR)

Aura moderate transmutation; **CL** 7th
Slot armor; **Price** 12,000 gp; **Weight** 25 lb.

DESCRIPTION

This +2 *agile breastplate (Ultimate Equipment)* is crafted from the bright, red-tinged chitin of the sanguine centipede, an ogre-sized vermin plaguing the outreaches of Zirnakaynin's southern fungus farms. Once worn, the armor fuses with the skin of the wearer, elongating and stretching the wearer's body to match the narrow areas he is navigating.

In effect, the wearer does not need to make Escape Artist checks to squeeze through tight spaces. The wearer still cannot squeeze through a space smaller than his head.

The wearer gains a +5 bonus to his Combat Maneuver Defense against combat maneuvers made to escape a grapple and on Escape Artist checks. The armor's armor check penalty does not apply to the wearer's Escape Artist checks.

CONSTRUCTION

Requirements Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *vermin shape I (Ultimate Magic)*; **Cost** 6,000 gp



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CIRCLET OF ACUTE MIND (HOUSE VEXIDYRE)

Aura faint transmutation; **CL** 3rd
Slot head; **Price** 9,900 gp; **Weight** —

DESCRIPTION

This finely crafted circlet bears the insignia of the crafter's noble house. It is often used by drow delegates to negotiations with rival houses. The wearer gains a +5 competence bonus on Bluff, Diplomacy, and Sense Motive checks made in non-combat situations.

Once per day, as an immediate action, after the wearer is subject to an enchantment spell, she can reroll her save. The wearer must choose to reroll before the result of the original roll is known. She must take the result of the reroll, even if it is worse than the original roll.

CONSTRUCTION

Requirements Craft Wondrous Item, *eagle's splendor, owl's wisdom*; **Cost** 4,950 gp

CRYSTAL OF VISIONS (HOUSE VONNARC)

Aura strong divination; **CL** 15th
Slot none; **Price** 22,000 gp; **Weight** 5 lb.

DESCRIPTION

This ornately sculpted piece of clear crystal features a series of eyes all-around its faces. From these crystalline eyes emanates a pulsing purple light.

The possessor of the *crystal of visions* can swap any prepared divination spell for another divination spell of the same or lower level.

In addition, when used as a focus for casting *prying eyes* or *greater prying eyes*, the user's caster level is considered to be 4 higher regarding all effects of these spells related to caster level. Also, the caster can choose to make up to half the eyes invisible.

CONSTRUCTION

Requirements Craft Wondrous Item, *greater prying eyes*, creator must be a diviner; **Cost** 11,000 gp

MATRIARCH'S CARESS (ALL HOUSES)

Aura faint necromancy; **CL** 5th
Slot none; **Price** 20,202 gp; **Weight** 2 lb.

DESCRIPTION

This whip is made of tough, coarse hair harvested from bound demons and braided with specially crafted strands of iron worked without heat, from the ancient art of drow coldwarping. Each house uses hair from demons known to serve their demonic patron. For example, House Azrinae make use of marilith hair, demons known to serve their demon lord Abraxas. Any male drow found in possession of one of these weapons is certain to serve as test subjects for the fleshpits.

This +2 *cruel (Ultimate Equipment) whip* deals lethal damage and its effect are not limited by the armor worn or the natural armor of the target. In addition, if the user hits, she can, as a swift action, make an Intimidate check to demoralize the target with a circumstance bonus equal to the damage dealt by the hit.

CONSTRUCTION

Requirements Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *cause fear, death knell*; **Cost** 10,101 gp

TASKMASTER'S COLLAR (HOUSE RASIVREIN)

Aura strong enchantment; **CL** 11th
Slot neck; **Price** 39,600 gp (does not include *slave's collars*; see below); **Weight** 1 lb.

DESCRIPTION

Each *taskmaster's collar* is a magically-reinforced band of gold covered with arcane markings and with a bright violet gem set in its front.

The wearer can affect creatures wearing *slave's collars* with different effects, provided they are within 100 feet of the *taskmaster's collar*. All of these effects are mind-affecting. The wearer chooses which collared individuals to effect, anywhere from a single individual to all of them, and can likewise dismiss the effect on any individuals, as a free action. A dismissed effect causes the collared creature to immediately suffer the penalties that were offset by the worn *slave's collar*.

Once per day, as a standard action, the wearer can use an effect similar to the *suggestion* spell that affects the wearers of the linked collars (Will DC 19). This is a language-dependent effect.

When the wearer of a *laborer's slave collar* is within range, the collared creature gains a +4 morale bonus on Constitution checks required for extended exertion and never becomes fatigued from taking nonlethal damage.

When the wearer of a *warrior's slave collar* is within range, the collared creature continues to work or fight while disabled or dying, without suffering the penalties of those conditions until dead.

Typically, a *taskmaster's collar* has ten *slave's collars* keyed to it, which can be a mix of the two available types.

CONSTRUCTION

Requirements Craft Wondrous Item, *mass bear's endurance*, *mass suggestion*; **Cost** 19,800 gp (does not include *slave's collars*; see below).

SLAVE'S COLLAR, LABORER'S (HOUSE RASIVREIN)

Aura moderate enchantment; **CL** 11th
Slot neck; **Price** 100 gp; **Weight** 1 lb.

DESCRIPTION

Each *laborer slave's collar* is linked to a *taskmaster's collar*. Each is a magically-reinforced band of copper covered with arcane markings.

When put on a humanoid or monstrous humanoid, it automatically resizes itself to fit its wearer. It cannot be removed except by the wearer of the corresponding *taskmaster's collar* or if targeted by *remove curse* or similar magic.

CONSTRUCTION

Requirements Craft Wondrous Item, *bestow curse*; **Cost** 50 gp

SLAVE'S COLLAR, WARRIOR'S (HOUSE RASIVREIN)

Aura moderate enchantment; **CL** 11th
Slot neck; **Price** 500 gp; **Weight** 1 lb.

DESCRIPTION

Each *warrior slave's collar* is linked to a *taskmaster's collar*.

Each is a magically-reinforced band of iron covered with arcane markings.

When put on a humanoid or monstrous humanoid, it automatically resizes itself to fit its wearer. It cannot be removed except by the wearer of the corresponding *taskmaster's collar* or if targeted by *remove curse* or similar magic.

CONSTRUCTION

Requirements Craft Wondrous Item, *bestow curse*; **Cost** 250 gp

TEARS OF LIFE AND DEATH (HOUSE TRACINOA)

Aura moderate conjuration and necromancy; **CL** 7th
Slot neck; **Price** 48,800 gp; **Weight** 1 lb.

DESCRIPTION

This necklace is a coldwarped fusion of solid mercury and adamantine, with a string of teardrop-shaped pale blue gems incorporated in the front. The waterbearers of House Tracinoa make good on their promises or threats by using those necklaces.

The wearer of the necklace gains a +4 resistance bonus on saves against poison.

The *tears of life and death* can be used for additional effects. Once per day, the wearer can foul up to 10 gallons of water within 10 feet (treat as arsenic when ingested), or use *poison* (Fort DC 16) by making a ranged touch attack upon a living creature within 50 feet. Also, the wearer can use *neutralize poison* 3 times per day.

CONSTRUCTION

Requirements Craft Wondrous Item, *neutralize poison*, *poison*; **Cost** 24,400 gp

UMBRAL TOME (HOUSE AZRINAE)

Aura moderate illusion (shadow); **CL** 6th
Slot none; **Price** 11,000 gp; **Weight** 5 lb.

DESCRIPTION

Dry, black mist constantly rises from the covers of this large, iron-bound book. Scribed inside are various texts and theories concerning the Plane of Shadows.

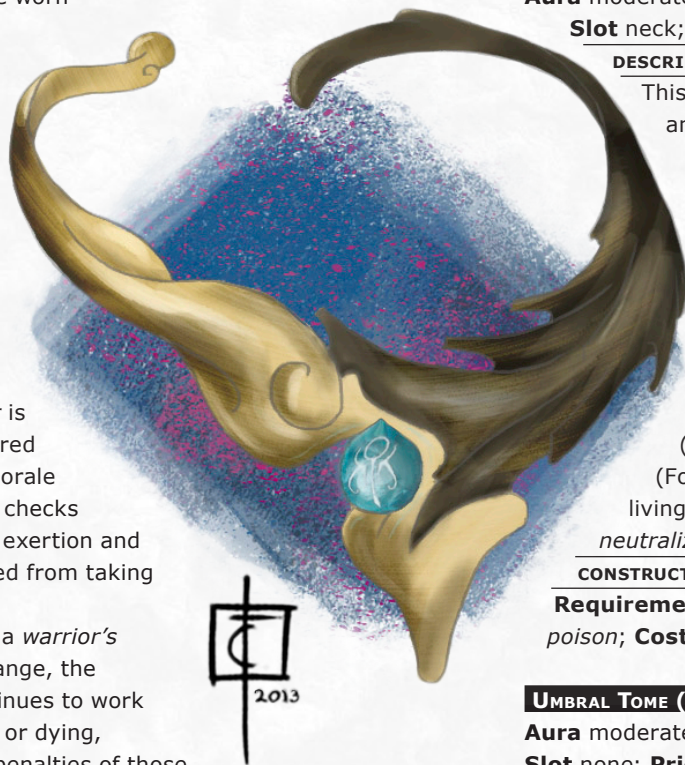
The tome acts as a focus for casting certain spells related to the shadow subschool. When opened and used with the spells *greater shadow conjuration*, *greater shadow evocation*, *shades*, *shadow conjuration* or *shadow evocation*, the potency of the spell is one-fifth (+20%) stronger than normal for the duration of the spell. If the book is closed, the potency immediately reduces to its normal value.

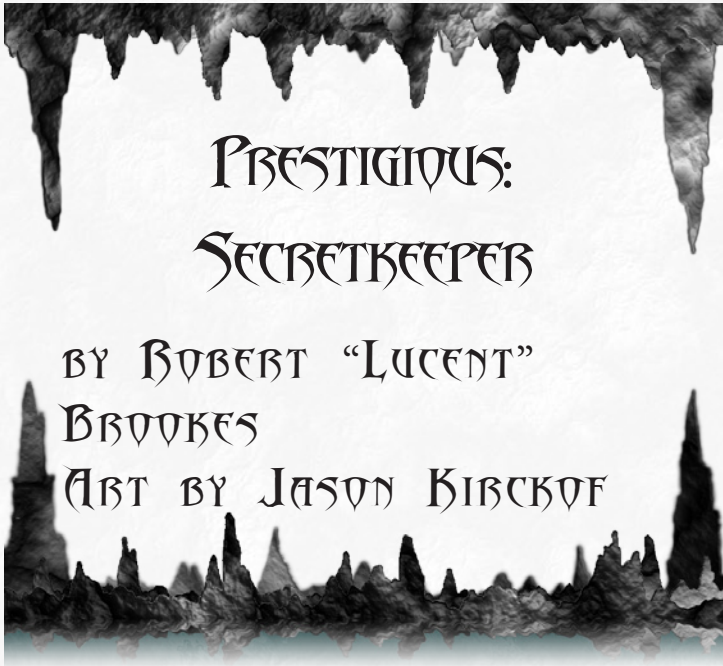
The book can also be used as a focus when casting a *summon monster* spell. Any creature summoned gains the shadow simple template (*Advanced Races Guide*) instead of the celestial or fiendish template and remains until the duration of the spell ends or the book is closed, whichever is shorter.

Once the book has been closed, a spell must be cast anew to benefit from being focused by the *umbral tome*.

CONSTRUCTION

Requirements Craft Wondrous Item, creator must know at least three spells from the shadow subschool; **Cost** 5,500 gp ✕





PRESTIGIOUS: SECRETKEEPER

BY ROBERT "LUCENT"
BROOKES
ART BY JASON KIRCKOF

As special servants of Norgorber, secretkeepers are masters of both forbidden knowledge and the methods of maintaining those secrets in the face of inquisition. Secretkeepers represent the elite among Norgorber's followers, revering his aspect as the Reaper of Reputation. These spies and assassins come from nearly all walks of life, utilizing knowledge gleaned from centuries of work in Norgorber's name to harvest information from all corners of the world.

Some secretkeepers serve for selfish reasons, utilizing their abilities to gain power and knowledge for themselves, while others use their abilities to keep dangerous information out of the hands of the common man, where it could do damage, and to preserve this knowledge for a time when they believe that the world is ready to receive it.

Role: Secretkeepers are often loners, but by necessity or circumstance may find themselves in the company of adventuring groups in order to achieve their goals. Few ever reveal their true identity or intentions, preferring to operate behind many masks like their patron Norgorber. Secretkeepers excel at stealth and infiltration and often serve as advance scouts or information gatherers in groups, but their unique and broadly-chosen abilities allow them to adapt to fill many roles, depending on the forbidden knowledge they employ.

Alignment: Since all secretkeepers revere the god Norgorber in his aspect as the Reaper of Reputation, they tend to follow one of the four alignments common to followers of Norgorber. Secretkeepers tend toward lawful, rather than chaotic, alignments

due to the nature of their work.

Hit Die: d8.

Requirements

To qualify to become a secretkeeper, a character must fulfill the following criteria.

Alignment: Neutral or any evil.

Skills: Disguise 5 ranks, Linguistics 3 ranks, Stealth 2 ranks.

Religion: Must worship Norgorber.

Special: Must undergo the contract ritual (see below).

Class Skills

The secretkeeper's class skills are Bluff (Cha), Climb (Str), Diplomacy (Cha), Disable Device (Int), Disguise (Cha), Escape Artist (Dex), Intimidate (Cha), Knowledge (arcana) (Int), Knowledge (history) (Int), Knowledge (religion) (Int), Linguistics (Int), Perception (Wis), Sense Motive (Wis), Sleight of Hand (Dex), Stealth (Dex), and Use Magic Device (Cha).

Skill Ranks per Level: 6 + Int modifier.

Class Features

All of the following are class features of the secretkeeper prestige class.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: Secretkeepers are proficient with all simple weapons and light armor but not with shields.

Contract (Su): A secretkeeper of Norgorber must undergo a ritual of binding service to the Reaper of Reputation, in which he swears to die before revealing his secrets under duress or coercion. The terms of the contract are engraved into a two-inch long spike. At the climax of the ritual, a cleric of Norgorber places the spike on the secretkeeper's chest and pounds it into his breastbone.

Once the contract is made, the secretkeeper gains the effects of a constant *nondetection* spell at a caster level equal to his secretkeeper class level. He is considered to have cast the *nondetection* on himself for purposes of the DC to penetrate the effect. Furthermore, any time the secretkeeper's *nondetection* is penetrated, he may take 2 points of Constitution damage as an immediate action to negate the intruding spell's effect.

A secretkeeper whose Constitution score is reduced to 0 by this effect dies. If a secretkeeper dies in this fashion and successfully saves against a *speak with dead* spell, his corpse crumbles to dust, and he cannot be raised from the dead by any magic short of a *miracle* or *wish*.

Arcana Obscura (Sp): At 1st level, a secretkeeper gains the ability to use *magic aura*, *erase*, and *detect thoughts* as spell-like abilities with a caster level equal to his secretkeeper class level. He may use these spell-like abilities in any combination a total number of times per day equal to 3 + the secretkeeper's Int mod.

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1st	+0	+0	+1	+0	Arcana obscura, contract
2nd	+1	+1	+1	+1	Forbidden knowledge
3rd	+2	+1	+2	+1	Moment of amnesia 1/day
4th	+3	+1	+2	+1	Forbidden knowledge
5th	+3	+2	+3	+2	Imperception 1/day
6th	+4	+2	+3	+2	Forbidden knowledge
7th	+5	+2	+4	+2	Greater arcana obscura
8th	+6	+3	+4	+3	Forbidden knowledge, moment of amnesia 2/day
9th	+6	+3	+5	+3	Modify memory
10th	+7	+3	+5	+3	Forbidden knowledge, hidden truth, imperception 2/day

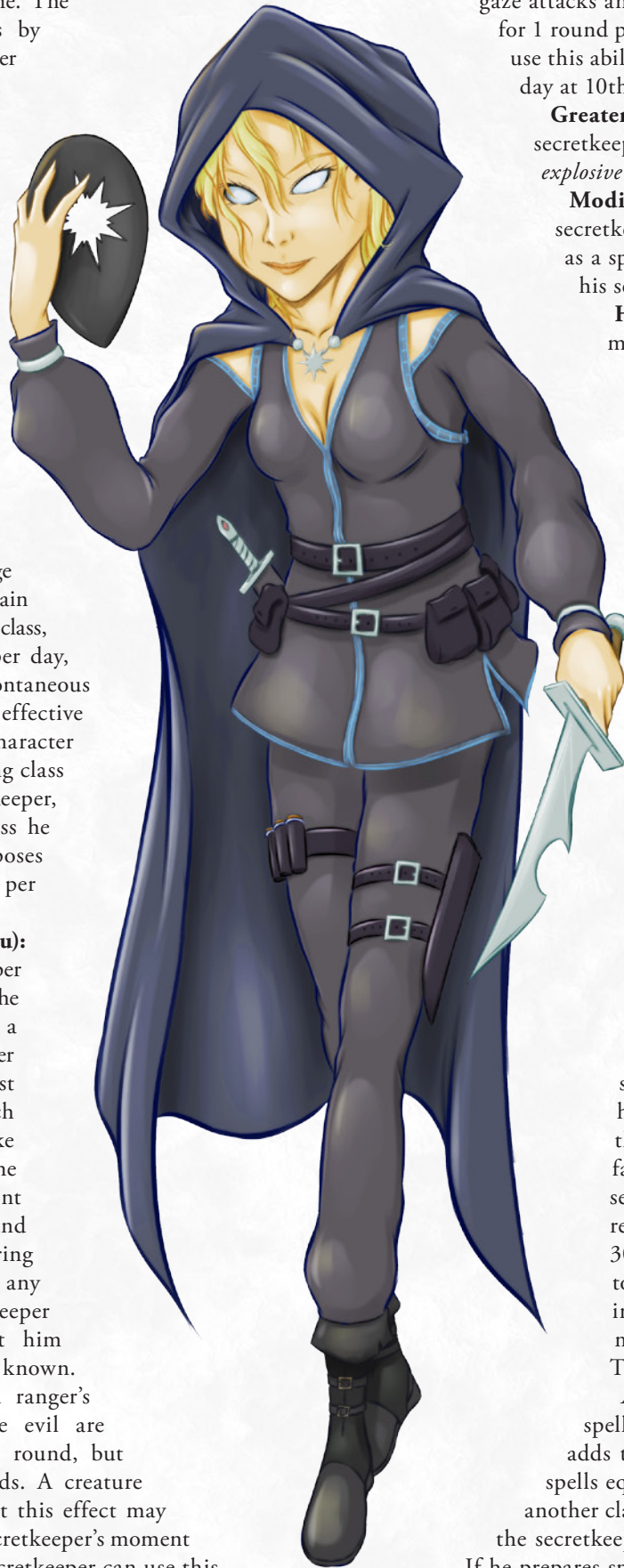
Forbidden Knowledge: At 2nd level and every two levels thereafter, a secretkeeper may choose one of the three following abilities:

Sneak Attack: This is exactly like the rogue ability of the same name. The extra damage dealt increases by +1d6 every time the secretkeeper chooses this ability. If a secretkeeper gets a sneak attack bonus from another source, the bonuses on damage stack.

Bonus Feat: The secretkeeper gains a bonus feat. These bonus feats must be selected from those listed as Combat Feats.

Spellcasting: Whenever this ability is taken, the secretkeeper gains new spells per day as if he had also gained a level in a spellcasting class to which he belonged before adding the prestige class. He does not, however, gain other benefits granted by that class, except for additional spells per day, spells known (if he is a spontaneous spellcaster), and an increased effective level of spellcasting. If a character had more than one spellcasting class before becoming a secretkeeper, he must decide to which class he adds the new level for purposes of determining spells per day.

Moment of Amnesia (Su): At 3rd level, the secretkeeper can temporarily scramble the memories of a target. As a standard action, the secretkeeper may make a touch attack against a target. On a successful touch attack, the target must make a Will save (DC 10 + the secretkeeper's class level + his Int modifier) or become dazed and flat-footed for 1 round. During this time the target forgets any prior contact with the secretkeeper and any information about him that he may have previously known. Targeted abilities such as a ranger's quarry or a paladin's smite evil are temporarily negated for this round, but reinstate when the effect ends. A creature that successfully saves against this effect may not be affected by the same secretkeeper's moment of amnesia for 24 hours. A secretkeeper can use this ability once per day at 3rd level, and twice per day at 8th



level. This is a mind-affecting effect.

Imperception (Su): At 5th level, as a swift action the secretkeeper becomes difficult to see when being directly viewed, existing only in peripheral vision. The secretkeeper gains immunity to gaze attacks and partial concealment (20% miss chance) for 1 round per secretkeeper level. The secretkeeper can use this ability once per day at 5th level, and twice per day at 10th.

Greater Arcana Obscura (Sp): At 7th level, the secretkeeper adds *secret page*, *sepia snake sigil*, and *explosive runes* to his list of spell-like abilities.

Modify Memory (Sp): At 9th level, a secretkeeper can use *modify memory* once per day as a spell-like ability with a caster level equal to his secretkeeper class level.

Hidden Truth: At 10th level, a secretkeeper may choose one of the abilities below, representing the completion of his training:

Absentia: Creatures within 5 ft. of the secretkeeper subconsciously ignore him. They are always treated as flat-footed to the secretkeeper and are not considered to be directly observing the secretkeeper for purposes of the Stealth skill. This effect lasts until the secretkeeper makes a successful attack or is no longer within 5 ft. of the target, but resumes again at the start of the secretkeeper's next turn. This is a mind-affecting effect.

Mind Heist: A secretkeeper may telepathically share in the knowledge of a single target within 30 feet as a standard action. The target can resist with a successful Will save (DC 10 + the secretkeeper's level + Int modifier). Choose either a skill or a combat feat that the target possesses. If a skill is chosen, the secretkeeper may use that skill with the target's ranks. If a feat is chosen, the secretkeeper may use that feat as if it were his own. A secretkeeper need not meet the prerequisites of a feat used in this fashion. This effect lasts for 1 minute per secretkeeper level. If the target is killed, rendered unconscious, or moves more than 30 feet away, the secretkeeper loses access to this skill or feat and the effect ends immediately. A secretkeeper can have no more than one stolen skill or feat at a time. This is a mind-affecting effect.

Apocrypha: The secretkeeper chooses one spellcasting class in which he has levels. He adds to his spell list for that class a number of spells equal to his Intelligence bonus chosen from another class's spell list. If he is a spontaneous caster, the secretkeeper adds these spells to his spells known. If he prepares spells from a spellbook or familiar, he adds these spells at no cost. ✕

NATURAL ENTRANCES TO THE DARKLANDS

BY MATT "ENDEBBIN"

RUPPRECHT

ART BY TANAGORN "DEX"

PRATEEPSUKJIT

Not every entrance to the Darklands lies within an ancient tomb or dungeon deep. Many natural paths exist for those foolhardy enough to seek them out or unlucky enough to stumble upon them by accident.

Limestone caves with surface entrances created by ancient rivers draining through porous bedrock are found throughout Golarion in ravines, gorges and canyons. These caves are characterized by impressive formations of stalagmites and stalactites. Because the caves offer natural shelter, creatures such as goblins, kobolds, ogres and cave fishers frequently take up residence in them.

The Chalk Cliffs and the Fogwall Cliffs near Magnimar have many limestone caves that are occupied by smugglers, harpies and giant seabirds. Many authorities send troops to guard cave entrances or collapse those with deeper connections to the Darklands in order to protect the local populace. However, some unwise individuals use these entrances to trade illegal substances and slaves with the denizens of the Darklands' upper region of Nar-Voth.

Sinkholes are one of the most dramatic natural features that can allow direct access to Nar-Voth. In extreme cases, sinkholes can descend to the upper reaches of Sekamina. Sinkholes are formed by a variety of mechanisms and can be found in a variety of locations, ranging from the lagoons of the Shackles to the highlands of Casmaron. Some sinkholes are ancient geographic features, while others can appear overnight due to earthquakes, torrential rain, or the collapse of underground caverns.

Called many different names, the largest sinkholes, some wider than 300 feet, are vertical shafts descending into the earth. The deepest can drop more than 2,500 feet. The walls of these great sinkholes often sustain multiple layers of ecosystems. The Ramgigan sinkhole of southern Thuvia is 400 feet across, descends for nearly 2,000 feet and is populated by a colony of strix and numerous species of birds.

The strix have built a city of nests hanging from the walls of the sinkhole and trade with a colony of mongrelmen deeper down, where the light from above is but a distant disc. Darkmantle-infested caves near the bottom of the sinkhole provide access to

Nar-Voth, and allow the mongrelmen to trade in hallucinogenic mushrooms and sightless cave fish, which the strix consider a delicacy.

Cenotes are a geological feature common to the Inner Sea region. They are bell-shaped, water-filled sinkholes formed from limestone and often appear in clusters. Cenotes are frequently connected to Nar-Voth via tunnels and cave complexes.

Each cenote has a relatively small surface opening compared to its floor, which is often concealed by jungle or forest vegetation. Surface humanoids and wild animals regularly occupy cenotes, while connected tunnels can be home to mongrelmen and dark folk. The Whisperwood in Cheliax contains many such sinkholes, including the Verdant Caves, a complex of five interconnected cenotes occupied by a vast colony of vegepygmies.

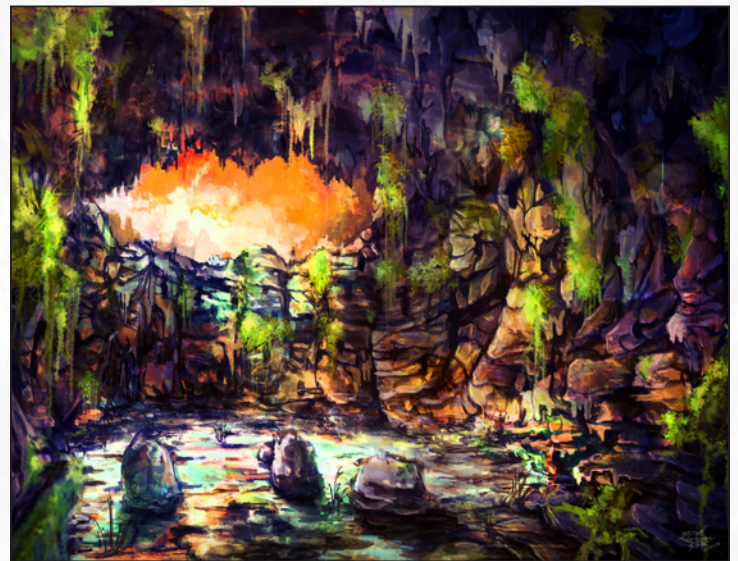
Recently, a tribe of troglodytes led by a brutish mutant chieftain named Borassk, arrived through tunnels connected to Nar-Voth and began to subjugate and abuse the peaceful vegepygmies. At present, three of the cenote colonies are under troglodyte rule while the remaining two fight for their survival.

Many entrances to the Darklands are flooded. While this poses a problem for surface dwellers, water-breathing Darklands creatures such as aboleth, giant cave-dwelling crustaceans, and albino sahuagin frequently use them to access the surface world.

The islands of the Shackles contain many blue holes—deep underwater shafts found in shallow lagoons. Named for their deep blue color, blue holes are vertical tunnels, some descending as much as 4,000 feet, that frequently connect to Darkland lakes and seas through vast underground cave systems.

Keelhaul Bay, on the northeastern side of Shark Island, contains the Great Blue Eye, one of the largest blue holes on Golarion. This region of the island is often beset by albino sahuagin searching for some unknown artifact. The sahuagin appear to be under some kind of enchantment and kill anyone who crosses their path.

The most dangerous of the natural entrances to the Darklands are the lava tubes. These tunnels are formed by the movement of lava beneath a hardened crust. Lava tubes can run for hundreds of feet and form a labyrinth leading into the depths of Golarion. The tunnels can make for smoother travel, but they are often home to mephits, elementals, magma spiders, and imps. In addition, dangers such as poisonous gas, collapsing floors and ceilings, and fresh eruptions of lava make these tunnels a risky way to enter Nar-Voth. ✖



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THREE SECRETS OF SEKAMINA

BY WILL COOPER
ART BY TANAGORN "DEX"
PRATEEPSUKJIT



Nestled between the natural caves of Nar-Voth and the otherworldly Vaults of Orv, Sekamina has witnessed millennia of trade, war and migration. Many dark powers have arisen, created strongholds guarding their treasures, and faded into obscurity. Here are three such secrets, waiting for the bravest of explorers to uncover them.

The Passage of Stars (CR 14+)

The Passage of Stars was created during the long Quest for the Sky. Dwarves polished the stone of this 500-foot-long passage to a mirror-smooth finish. The floor is as slick as ice. A concealed door in a minor tunnel near Harrowspire provides entrance to The Passage. Constellations of tiny lights glimmer on the 20-foot-high ceiling, endlessly reflected in the dark mirrors of the walls and floor. These beautiful lights are the feeding lures of a specialized glowworm. Each light trails a nearly invisible tendril (similar to a cave fisher's filament) that holds prey fast until starvation and putrefaction set in. Every 100 feet of travel along the Passage requires a DC 15 Acrobatics check to avoid the tendrils. At the far end, the ancient dwarves carved symbols of *repel metal or stone* (CL 15th, DC 33 to detect and disable, automatic reset). Affected PCs slide uncontrollably on the smooth floor and require a DC 25 Climb or Acrobatics check to stop—unless caught by a glowworm tendril first.

At the end of the Passage of Stars lies the Diamond Forge, abandoned when the nearby tunnels were overrun by orcs. This dwarven relic grants a +10 competence bonus on checks to Craft Magic Arms and Armor. Stacks of raw mithral and half-finished dwarven weapons surround the forge and an unused *dwarven thrower* rests on the anvil itself.

The Mindrot Maze (CR 11+)

Constructed over centuries by a paranoid svirfneblin illusionist, the location of the Mindrot Maze is known to few denizens of Dwimovel. The deep gnomes learned, after bitter experience, that whatever treasures it contains are not worth the risks of navigating the maze. The maze's cramped, winding tunnels, all identical, require a Medium creature to stoop and squeeze through the passageways. Illusory walls and patches of *deeper darkness* mask

many of the tunnel branches, and real spiked pits are liberally mixed with *phantom trap* spells. The illusory walls constantly shift, making maps unreliable, while a constant *nondetection* effect frustrates most magical maps and direction finding spells. Making progress towards the center of the maze requires a DC 20 Int check or a DC 30 Survival check for every hour of exploration, with four consecutive successes required to reach the center. Each hour spent in the maze, explorers encounter one or more of *phantasmal killer*, *feeblemind*, or *greater dispel magic* (CL 15th). Worse, each hour explorers must make a DC 20 Will save or suffer 1d2 points of damage to Intelligence, Wisdom, and Charisma as they absorb the creator's paranoia and violent delusions in the tight claustrophobic environment.

The center of the maze reveals a plain wooden shack with the skeleton of a svirfneblin clutching its greatest treasures; a *staff of hungry shadows*, a *bag of shadow clouds*, and a grimoire bound in drow skin stitched with silver wire. The *darkblight grimoire* contains all illusion and enchantment spells between levels 1 to 3, and 35 pages of illusion and enchantment spells of levels 4 to 7, plus *shades*.

The Caustic Maw (CR 8+)

Rough stalactites descend like jagged teeth in this cavern in the Flume Warrens. The ceiling drips a steady patter of an acidic ichor created by nearby volcanic activity. The stained and pitted floor is rotten with gurgling fist-sized holes, creating difficult terrain throughout the cavern. The acid reacts with minerals in the stone causing frequent minor eruptions as trapped gasses build up. Each turn, every creature in the Caustic Maw has a 1 in 6 chance of being affected by an acidic geyser, taking 4d6 acid damage, a DC 18 Reflex save halves this damage. The Maw is home to many giant ochre jellies (an ochre jelly with the advanced and giant simple templates plus immunity to acid), posing as pools of tainted water until they suddenly rear up to attack.

In the center of the Caustic Maw sits a 6-foot adamantine cube, unmarred despite centuries of exposure to heat, acid, and fumes. A single line of ancient Terran runes on the top surface reveals an activation phrase. The cube opens when activated, revealing a gateway to the Crystal Womb in the depths of Orv; the source of the most valuable gems in all the Darklands. ✕✕



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THE UPS AND DOWNS OF SHOW BUSINESS

BY KALYNA "LIGHTSPRITE"

CONRAD

ART BY ALEX

"CANADA GUY" MOORE



It was nearly time. Somewhere above a raucous, bloodthirsty Shadow Phoenix Tournament crowd devoured the carnage which defined this pale mockery of Tian Xia's most honored festival: Goka's Ruby Phoenix Tournament. Devoured and waited... for me.

But in my cell it was still and quiet, just as I liked it before the fight.

I'd been a popular oddity in Deepmarket for decades now; a lone drow who'd wandered very far from home—straight into the clutches of a ratman patrol. Most humiliating.

The patrol thugs had brought me to their master, Bokanit the Wealthy, Grand Marshal of the Tournament, who'd offered me a simple choice: die in his filthy prison or take my chances in the arena. I chose to fight. He'd expected me to be nothing more than fodder; meat before his champion's blade, but I'd surprised him... surprised them all.

Not only had I survived, I'd killed his pathetic champion and claimed my prize: a golden mask imbued with the power to see an opponent's weaknesses. As an added bonus, I won a lifetime of captivity, cold meals, assassination attempts, and mating with the occasional frightened slave girl pushed into my cell.

I spent the ten long years between each tournament honing my skills while Bokanit sold tickets to view nearly every aspect of my life. Two copper to see me train, three gold to watch me kill some hapless fool—usually a petty criminal—and four copper apiece for parents to drag swarms of their young past my cell and ogle me while I rested.

Sometimes it was all I could do not to rip the falchion off the wall across from my cell and murder every last stinking rat between me and my freedom. I'd even tried it—once. Bokanit's guards had put a quick end to that. They'd trussed me up and dragged me out into the square, where they tied me to a post and proceeded to beat me to death in front of a jeering crowd. Bokanit had been kind enough to pay for a costly resurrection spell and I woke up hours later, back in my cell and lying in a pile of filth.

Not an experience I cared to repeat.

A thundering roar rose and fell over my head. Well, well, someone interesting must have died. Too bad; one less creature I had the pleasure of fighting.

I'd always liked fighting. It was simple. And there was a certain freedom in the dance of death; a transcendent artistry that separated the gifted takers of life, such as myself, from the sword-wielding cattle trotted in front of my blade.

The heavy door at the end of the hall groaned open and a shaft of light speared the darkness. I looked up, admiring my blade where it hung just out of my reach—a constant, mocking reminder of my freedom.

"Daydreaming again, dark one?"

I dropped my attention to the stumpy, pot-bellied ratman grinning through the door of my cell and offered him a thin smile, "Hello again, Nikkr, always a pleasure."

Nikkr the Jailer's whiskers twitched and he smoothed a hand down his greasy, bottle green coat, "Now, now, no need to be sarcastic, friend."

I stood and stretched, lording my superior height over him, "No sarcasm intended, friend. I truly am glad to see you. It must be nearly my turn."

He chittered softly and pulled an enormous ring of keys out of I know not where, slowly flipping through them till he found the one he wanted.

"Hmm yes... nearly time. Bokanit has a nice surprise for you today. Mm-hmm, mm-hmm."

I stepped through the open door and sighed wearily, "Oh? How many humans does he have me fighting this time?"

"Not humans," Nikkr replied, ears twitching as he lifted my falchion off the wall, "Something else... something new."

Now that caught my attention. I took the weapon from him, savoring its perfect balance for a moment before sheathing it at my side and frowning down at the rat, "Is it a monster of some kind then?"

The little dirtwad grinned, quick and sharp, "Oh no, no tells... But it's good ... Mm-hmm, mm-hmm."

He handed me my helm and mask. Blank eyes gazed back at me from a golden face locked in the throes of compassion; a single tear hanging, forever frozen, on the right cheek. Fitting really, both as a lament of my captivity and as a surrogate for the remorse I never felt.

"Come, come, no dawdling now." Nikkr chittered, leading the way back down the hall.

We stopped under the arch of my personal entrance to the arena, the now-familiar scent of blood and dust rushing into my lungs, filling my body with the singing hum of adrenaline.

It was finally time.

A hush fell over the crowd as the magically enhanced voice of the Master of Ceremonies rang out, "Ladies and gentlerats, it is my supreme honour to give you what you've all been waiting for ... Lynithor the Great and Strange, Bringer of Death and Defiler of All That Is Good!"

Hmm ... new title. Apparently my old friend Bokanit had ramped up the ticket price for this one. I stepped out to a raucous symphony of cheers and crossed the dirt, neatly stepping over the severed limbs and still corpses of humans, rats, and various other creatures. I stopped before the dais on which the mayor, my owner, and other dignitaries sat, drawing my sword and bowing. The rats accepted my salute with a nod and I turned, raising my arms to the crowd before donning my mask.

A thunderous roar answered my gesture and sheer pleasure rushed



I felt a tickle on my left cheek as the mask drew its toll; a single tear of blood which took with it an insignificant portion of my strength.

Surprised by my blow, the thing threw back its hood and looked up. I stared down in shock. They'd captured a gnome?

I withdrew my blade and the little man smiled at me, his amber eyes glinting as he pushed his good hand through his emerald hair.

"Well, that was terribly rude, young drow. I was hired merely to knock you unconscious and embarrass you a little, but now I'm afraid I may have to kill you."

His fingers went to his throat, curling around something small and round. It glowed as he touched it and he darted two feet to the left quicker than I could blink.

I pulled back, baffled by his calm, sputtering "Hired? By whom?"

The gnome's honey gaze snapped up over my shoulder to where Bokanit sat as he chuckled, "Who do you think?"

Rage and betrayal blinded me and I raised my blade, piercing the little man neatly through the pulsing red glow of his heart. I did not feel the telltale pop of metal piercing flesh, but another tear trickled out from beneath my mask, suggesting that my hit was true.

Only, the gnome did not go down. In fact, if I didn't know better, I'd swear I'd missed.

The little man grinned wider, "Now that one I'll be taking out of your hide."

He lifted a hand and a green flash exploded in my face. The crowd went wild.

When the light faded he was hovering above me, fists and feet flying with lightning precision. I blinked at the lingering blindness and got my sword up, struggling to fend off the flurry of his attacks and land a few of my own. Each hit I scored cost another bloody tear, draining more of my strength than I'd ever spent while my opponent fought on, seemingly unaffected.

It wasn't long before I could feel my strength failing in earnest. Another few thrusts of my blade and my knees buckled. I fell back in the dirt, the gnome sailing from somewhere to my right to land hard on my chest as he kicked the falchion from my slack fingers.

He pushed my mask up and I felt the chill of air kissing the blood on my cheeks.

"But... how?" I managed.

He snorted, touching the glowing orb at his throat, "You're not the only one who gets to have shiny things."

He grabbed my chin in his free hand and raised his fist. In the distance I heard the crowd roar as he laughed, "Give my regards to the afterlife."

His swing was a lethal work of art. My world dimmed, flickered and went dark. Ah, so this was what it felt like to die in combat. Interesting. ✕✕

"Well, that was terribly rude, young drow. I was hired merely to knock you unconscious and embarrass you a little, but now I'm afraid I may have to kill you."

through me. The huge door at the far end of the arena swung open, admitting a single, tiny hooded figure. Stunned silence blanketed the crowd. I blinked at the creature, waiting for anything to happen.

Nothing did.

Someone above snorted and a wave of laughter rippled through the spectators. I was inclined to agree.

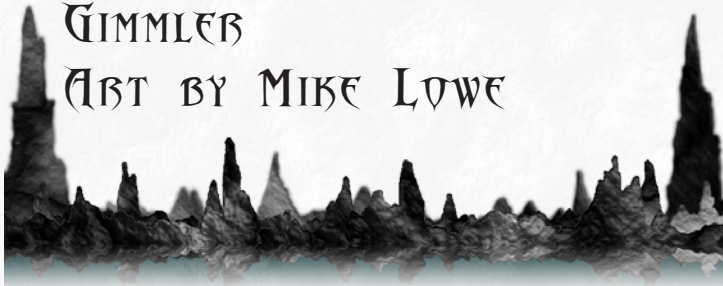
Nevertheless, I gripped my falchion firmly in both hands and advanced, the mask already highlighting several vital points in the creature's anatomy. Oh, this was going to be too easy.

The thing looked down, meticulously brushing dust off its robes. I took advantage of the opportunity and charged, spearing the critter high through the right shoulder, just enough to wound but not kill. After all, I didn't want to end this too fast... the crowd had paid for their tickets and they deserved a show.



MAGIC, POISON, AND MADNESS

BY ANDREW "LOCKE1520"
MARLOWE AND
CHRISTOPH "BUYANVE"
GIMMLER
ART BY MIKE LOWE



Far more adventurers and explorers enter the Darklands than ever come out of them, but the few who do return bring with them strange, and often dangerous, things. Though reality-warping artifacts and weapons crafted by fell powers fill many stories of the Darklands' treasures, it is what returning adventurers carry in their minds—or in their blood—that may prove to be the greatest threat. Whether that threat is to their enemies or to themselves is a question that each must answer for himself.

Malefic Arcanist (Wizard Archetype)

While many people revile poisoners, malefic arcanists recognize poisons are a potent tool, adding toxic effects to their formidable arsenal of spells. Across most of the Inner Sea, malefic arcanists typically keep their abilities quiet. However, there are several places where malefic arcanists can be easily found. In the River Kingdoms, they are likely to be members of the Daggermark Poisoners' Guild or guild trained. In the dusty heat of Katapesh, some are known to sell their unique services from market stalls. And, in the treacherous pirate isles known as the Shackles, several malefic arcanists have openly joined pirate crews.

However, none embrace this shadowy art like the drow. Far below the surface of Golarion, dark-elf malefic arcanists wield terrible poisons from the dangerous flora and fauna found only in the Darklands. Armed with these toxins, drow malefic arcanists are a terrifying threat.

Poison Use (Ex): At 1st level, a malefic arcanist is skilled in the use of poison and never accidentally poisons himself when using or applying poison. This ability replaces Scribe Scroll.

Toxic Admixture (Su): At 1st level, the malefic arcanist can augment his spells by adding poison components. When preparing spells he may add a dose of poison to the material components of a spell. This functions like the Sickening Spell feat (*Advanced Player's Guide*), except a spell prepared with toxic admixture only takes up a spell slot one higher than the spell's actual level and requires a dose of poison as an additional material component that is destroyed in the casting. Eschew Materials does not allow the caster to bypass this special requirement. Toxic admixture replaces the 1st level ability with uses per day granted by your arcane school.

THREE NEW DARKLANDS POISONS

Drowstone Blight

This faintly luminescent poison derives its name from drowstone (caphorite) and blightburn (*Into the Darklands*), stones common to the Darklands, shavings of which are suspended in a mixture as the poison ages.

DROWSTONE BLIGHT

Type poison, contact; **Save** Fortitude DC 16

Frequency 1/round for 5 rounds

Effect 1d3 Con damage and 1d2 Str damage; **Cure** 2 saves

Cost 2,500 gp

Ghost Mold Powder

This powdered poison is composed primarily of the spores of the dangerous ghost mold (*Into the Darklands*). It causes horrifying hallucinations.

GHOST MOLD POWDER

Type poison, inhaled; **Save** Fortitude DC 12

Frequency 1/round for 3 rounds

Effect 1d2 Wis damage and confusion for 1 round;

Cure 1 save

Cost 75 gp

Rot Grub Paste

This poison is crafted by rendering down a swarm of rot grubs (*GameMastery Guide*) for its toxins. Sometimes rot grub eggs survive the alchemical process, making infestation a serious risk for any who survive the initial poisoning.

ROT GRUB PASTE

Type poison, injury; **Save** Fortitude DC 14

Onset 5 minutes; **Frequency** 1/minute for 5 minutes

Effect 1d2 Str damage; **Cure** 1 save

Special The first time the target fails two saves in a row he becomes infested with 1d8-3 grubs in 1d3 days

Cost 300 gp

Improved Toxic Admixture (Su): At 5th level, the malefic arcanist's mastery of toxic admixture becomes more pronounced. The malefic arcanist is able to weave the deteriorating energies of poisons into his spells such that his targets now suffer the effects of being poisoned by the component poison as long as they are also within 100 feet of the caster.

If the spell allows a saving throw, a successful save also negates the poison's effects. If the spell does not allow a save, the target may still make a Fortitude save to negate the poison's effects, with a save DC equal to that of the caster's spell or the poison used, whichever is lower. Any subsequent saves have the same DC. The poison effects are only added to the spell's damage once. In the case of an area effect, such as a *fireball*, every target damaged by the spell is susceptible to the poison's effects, but a spell that deals damage to multiple targets separately, such as *magic missile*, only affects a single target chosen by the caster, while other targets are sickened, as per toxic admixture.

A spell enhanced with improved toxic admixture takes up a spell slot two levels higher than the spell's actual level and requires two doses of the same poison as additional material components, which are

destroyed upon casting the spell. The poison used must be of the contact, inhaled, or injury type and must have been crafted by the caster himself. The Eschew Materials feat does not allow the caster to bypass this special requirement. Improved toxic admixture replaces the 5th-level bonus feat.

Derro Bloodline

Your ancestry reaches back to a race of sadists and madmen dwelling deep below major settlements all over Golarion. Whether your forebears were once abducted by derro or entered willingly into a relationship for gifts offered is unknown to you, and long lost in the past. Every day you are drawn toward madness as your heritage erodes your sanity.

Class Skill: Stealth

Bonus Spells: lesser confusion (3rd), dust of twilight^{APG} (5th), deeper darkness (7th), confusion (9th), nightmare (11th), vengeful outrage^{APG} (13th), insanity (15th), euphoric tranquility^{APG} (17th), weird (19th).

Bonus Feats: Deceitful, Exotic Weapon Proficiency, Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes, Silent Spell, Stealthy, Still Spell, Weapon Finesse.

Bloodline Arcana: You gain the derro subtype in addition to any other subtype you might have. You count as both your original race and as a humanoid (derro) for any effects related to race, including traits, feats, how spells and magic items affect you, and so on.

Whenever you cast a spell of the compulsion subschool, increase the spell's DC by +2.

Bloodline Powers: Your ancestry calls to you. As your powers grow you begin to understand the gift madness really represents.

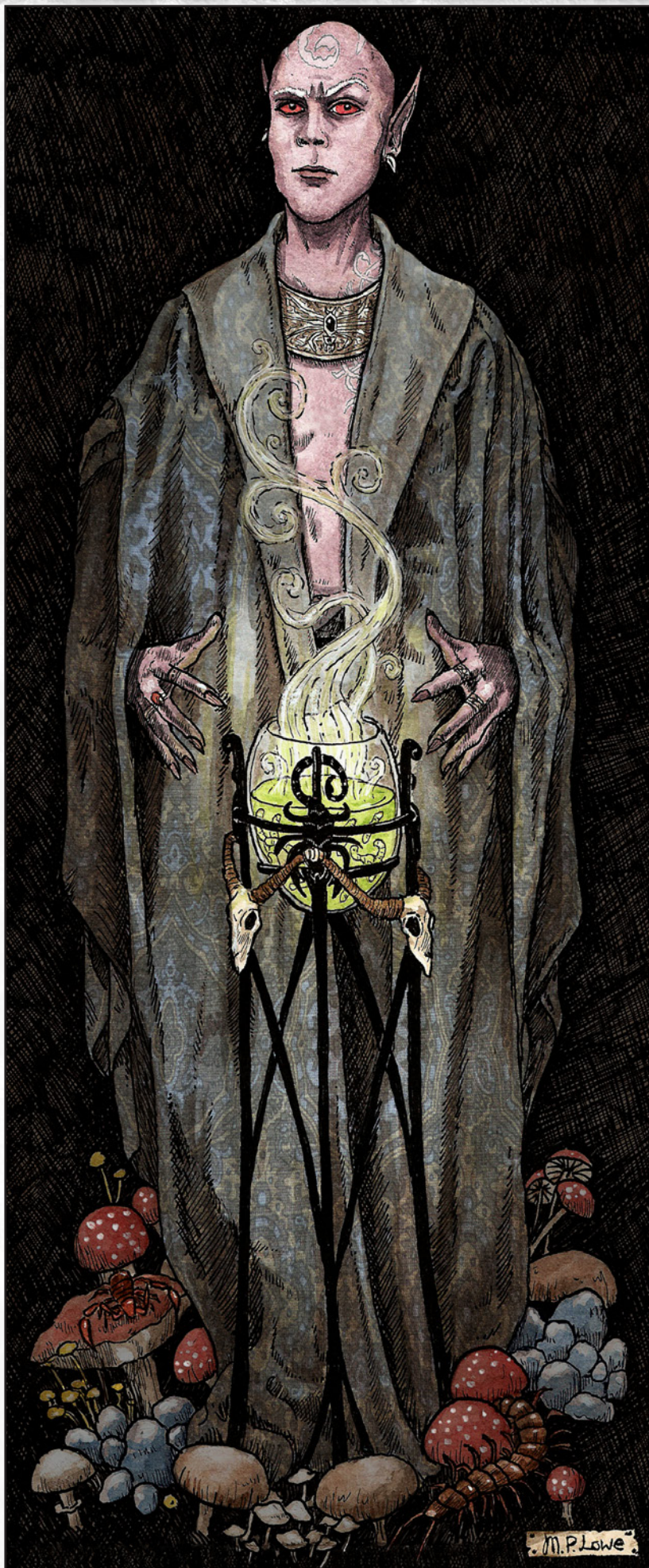
Mad Touch (Sp): You can touch a creature as a standard action, causing it to become confused for 1 round. You can use this ability a number of times per day equal to 3 + your Charisma modifier.

Mad Resilience (Ex): Starting at 3rd level, you receive a +1 bonus on Will saves. This bonus increases by 1 for every 5 levels you possess (up to a maximum of your Charisma modifier). At 9th level you become immune to insanity and confusion effects.

Mad Man's Charisma (Ex): At 9th level, you gain a +4 bonus to Charisma and a -2 penalty to Wisdom. These increases stack and are gained as if through level advancement. In addition, you gain spell resistance equal to 11 + your class level.

Change Shape (Sp): At 15th level, you can change your shape into a Small or Medium humanoid form. This ability acts like alter self, except that you gain a +2 bonus to Charisma when choosing a Small humanoid form and a +2 bonus to Wisdom when choosing a Medium humanoid form. You may remain in your chosen form for up to 10 minutes per character level per day. This duration does not need to be consecutive, but it must be used in 1 minute increments.

Madness Embraced (Su): At 20th level, you fully realize your dark ancestry. Your natural form changes to resemble that of a derro. Your body becomes lanky, pale and wiry, with ivory hair and rough skin. Your hands feature only four digits. Your eyes turn completely white and you gain darkvision 60 ft. This does not affect your ability to cast spells. You can use change shape or other polymorph effects to assume your original form. You gain an additional +2 bonus to Charisma and -2 penalty to Wisdom. These increases stack and are gained as if through level advancement. ✖





HERO'S HOARD:

MAGIC ITEMS FROM THE DARKLANDS

BY FRANK "GM_SOLSPIRAL" GOBI AND CHRISTOPH "BUYANVE" GIMMLER

ART BY CARLOS "CELUBIAN" TORREBLANCA



The Darklands hold as many secrets as they do treasures. Between the bizarre creations of Darkland natives, and the magic tools necessary to find comfort in an alien environment, any item found in the subterranean world flabbergasts surface dwellers.

Presented below are new magic items used to navigate and survive the underground environs of the Darklands.

ARCANE COMPASS

Aura faint divination; **CL** 5th
Slot none; **Price** 3,000 gp; **Weight** 1 lb.;

DESCRIPTION

Attached to a sturdy chain meant to be clipped to a belt, this silver compass casts light as a torch when opened. On command, it can leave an arcane mark on any surface touched. The compass points in the direction of the last arcane mark it made. This provides a +5 bonus on Survival checks to back track if lost.

CONSTRUCTION

Requirements Craft Wondrous Item, *arcane mark*, *light*, *locate object*; **Cost** 1,500 gp

CLOAK OF THE UNDERWARDEN

Aura moderate alteration/transmutation; **CL** 7th
Slot shoulders; **Price** 13,500 gp; **Weight** 5 lbs.

DESCRIPTION

Composed of woven moss, molds, and fungi, this cloak has a grey-green color and an earthy musk. The wearer is immune to the scent ability.

Once per day, as a move action, the wearer can release a sticky cloud of bioluminescent spores that covers a 30' radius that lasts for 7 rounds, affecting creatures as *glitterdust*. For the duration of the spore cloud, the wearer loses immunity to the scent ability. If the cloak is damaged but not destroyed, the living moss grows and repairs itself at a rate of 1 hit point per day.

CONSTRUCTION

Requirements Craft Wondrous Item, *glitterdust*, *pass without trace*, creator must have 5 ranks in the Stealth skill; **Cost** 6,750 gp

FILTERSHROOM MASK

Aura faint abjuration; **CL** 2nd
Slot head; **Price** 200 gp; **Weight** 1 lbs.

DESCRIPTION

This mask is made from cap and gills of a filtershroom, which has the unique ability to absorb airborne toxins to make itself poisonous. The mask provides a +10 bonus to Fortitude saves to resist poisonous gasses.

Rumors persist of a greater filtershroom mask that allows its wearer to release poisonous gases as a breath weapon.

CONSTRUCTION

Requirements Craft Wondrous Item, *resistance*, creator must have 2 ranks in the Knowledge (nature) skill; **Cost** 100 gp



PIT STOMPERS

Aura mild faint conjuration; **CL** 3rd
Slot feet; **Price** 6,000 gp; **Weight** 5 lbs.



DESCRIPTION

Pit stompers are typically gray, leather, hobnailed boots. Three times per day, the wearer may stomp and say the command word as a swift action to cast *create pit* in an adjacent square.

CONSTRUCTION

Requirements Craft Wondrous Item, *create pit*; **Cost** 3,000 gp

SHIELD OF MU

Aura strong abjuration; **CL** 20th

Slot shield; **Price** 101,000 gp; **Weight** 8 lbs.

DESCRIPTION

A bark-like splinter, fallen off of from a Mu Spore illuminating the Orvian vault known as the Midnight Mountains, was used to craft this shield. A copper shield boss made of copper, featuring a reinforced rim of the same material, adorns its reverse teardrop shape.

This heavy wooden shield has a +4 enhancement bonus and gives off light equivalent to a torch. It grants SR 19 and acid resistance 20 to its wielder. Once per day as a free action, the shield of Mu can release a cloud of burrowing spores in a 30-foot cone. The spores deal 5d8 points of damage to all creatures and wooden structures in the area (DC 25 Reflex save for half), or half damage to any creatures that make a DC 25 Reflex save. Plants and plant creatures are immune to this effect.

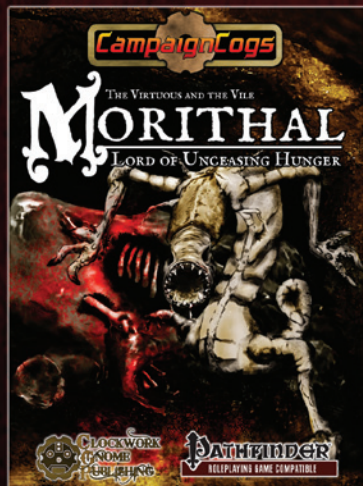
The shield of Mu's armor check penalty is +0 and its wielder suffers an increased spell failure chance of +30%. The shield is considered a light heavy wooden shield for all other purposes.

CONSTRUCTION

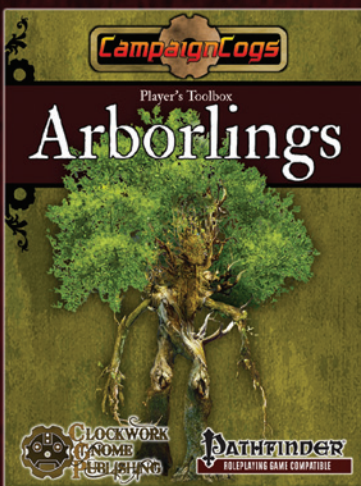
Requirements Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *resist energy*, creator must have 10 ranks in the Knowledge (nature) skill; **Cost** 50,500 gp ✖

LEARN TO FEAR THE DARKNESS BELOW

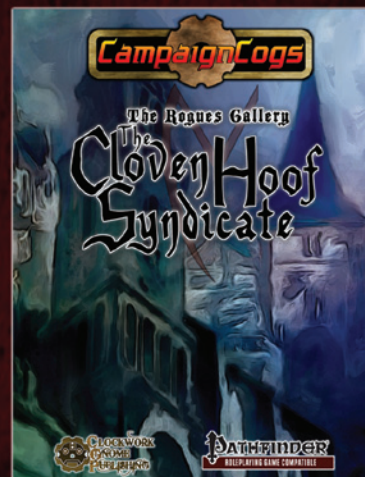
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TRANSFORMATIONS OF FAITH

BY MORGAN

“OCEANSHIELDWOLF”

BOEHBINGER

ART BY STEPHEN WOOD



While the flesh may fade and the mind wander, true faith overcomes all constraints. Sometimes our transformations leave us little changed. Our essence remains constant.

Weal: Elosha Stargleam

When her adherents can no longer see the sun, Sarenrae’s light grants them succor. For Elosha Stargleam, held captive and transformed by drow fleshwarper, faith in the Dawnflower was her only comfort through centuries of darkness and pain.

Elosha’s mind and body were both warped by her ordeal, but her dedication to destroying agents of darkness is unwavering. Subjected to fleshwarping that replaced her hands with rude talons, she turns those weapons against any who do evil in the benighted world beneath Golarion’s surface. Elosha takes the glory of her goddess into a place that would not otherwise see her light.

Elosha appears as a grotesquely muscled elven female with mutated, talon-like fingers. Though she is deformed, she still carries traces of her elven elegance and a noble mien.

Adventure Hooks

- Adventurers in the Darklands meet Elosha, who has recently escaped and seeks an escort to the surface to once again see the sun.
- Elosha appears during a fight against drow. After helping them, she offers to join the PCs, telling them she knows of an ancient, semi-collapsed fleshcrafting facility that must be destroyed.
- Elosha has gathered followers of Sarenrae in a fortified redoubt in Nar-Voth, where the PCs can find aid.



Boon

Although a tortured soul, Elosha is unfailingly loyal. If the PCs show proper respect for Sarenrae and take care not to offend Elosha over her faith or her transformed condition, she will help them in any task.

ELOSHA STARGLEAM

CR 4

XP 1,200

Female fleshwarped elf paladin of Sarenrae 4

LG Medium humanoid (elf)

Init +0; **Senses** low-light vision; Perception +1

Aura courage (10 ft.)

DEFENSE

AC 21, touch 10, flat-footed 21 (+9 armor, +2 shield)

hp 34 (4d10+8)

Fort +9, **Ref** +4, **Will** +6; +2 vs. enchantments

Immune disease, fear, sleep

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft.

Melee cold iron longsword +12 (1d8+6/19–20) or 2 talons +10 (1d4+6)

Ranged longbow +4 (1d8/×3)

Special Attacks channel positive energy (DC 15, 2d6), smite evil 2/day (+3 attack and AC, +4 damage)

Paladin Spell-Like Abilities (CL 4th; concentration +7)

At will—*detect evil*

Paladin Spells Prepared (CL 1st; concentration +4)

1st—*divine favor*

TACTICS

Before Combat Calling on Sarenrae to aid her, Elosha casts *divine favor*.

During Combat Elosha focuses vengeful rage on any drow in combat, and prefers to focus her smite ability on dark elves. She will begin an assault with ranged attacks, before closing to melee. Elosha’s reduced mental faculties limit her tactical thinking, especially related to her channel energy ability; she will often use her bursts of positive energy before the maximum amount of targets are within range.

Morale Elosha will withdraw from combat when necessary, unless she is fighting drow. In that case, she fights to the death.

Base Statistics Without *divine favor*, Elosha’s statistics are **Melee** cold iron longsword +11 (1d8+5/19–20) or 2 talons +9 (1d4+5); **Ranged** longbow +4 (1d8/×3)

STATISTICS

Str 20, **Dex** 10, **Con** 14, **Int** 6, **Wis** 9, **Cha** 16

Base Atk +4; **CMB** +9; **CMD** +19

Feats Skill Focus (Sense Motive), Weapon Focus (longsword)

Skills Climb +1, Diplomacy +8, Knowledge (religion) +5, Sense Motive +7; **Racial modifiers** +4 Climb

Languages Common, Elven

SQ aura, code of conduct, divine grace, elven magic, lay on hands (2d6, 5/day), mercies (shaken), weapon familiarity

Combat Gear cold iron longsword, full-plate, heavy steel shield, holy water (4), longbow with 40 cold iron arrows; **Other Gear** masterwork backpack, elven trail rations (14), platinum holy symbol (Sarenrae), 166 gp

Woe: Kryskith Vilbyss

When a noble drow is born to commoners, rather than noble kin, the child needs ruthless cunning and luck to survive the deadly intricacies

of drow society. Kryskith had enough of both to do far more than survive in the city of Far Parathra. Kryskith's reputation for malice eventually gained the attention of a Lamashtu-worshipping fleshwarper sect who recognized the value of recruiting a noble drow who had no ties to any of the noble houses.

When the ruling house of Far Parathra launched a pogrom against Lamashtu's worshippers, Kryskith and the fleshwarper fled to a laboratory-shrine in Kuvhoshik. Many years later, a massive earthquake destroyed the shrine, killing many cultists, including Kryskith.

Centuries passed before Haagenti, demon lord of alchemy and transformation, chose to raise Kryskith as a zombie lord. Now, dedicated to his new patron, Kryskith hunts for both drow fleshwarper and his surface-world cousins, seeking to resume the work of his long-dead cult—the transformation of surface elves into hideous monstrosities.

Clad in tattered robes and archaic armor and wielding a gruesome scimitar, Kryskith wears a feral rictus grin that combines with his cold piercing eyes to create a truly malevolent visage.

Adventure Hooks

- Elves begin disappearing from a surface settlement. The PCs must investigate, following Darklands slavers into Nar-Voth, where they find Kryskith's lair.
- While exploring or passing through Kuvhoshik, the PCs hear rumors of a lost drow fleshwarping facility and the creatures that dwell there.
- The PCs encounter undead fleshwarped abominations in the Darklands. Closer inspection reveals they were once elves and that they bear marks of the Formweavers, a long-dead fleshwarping cult of Lamashtu.

Drawback

Kryskith will be interested in any contact between elven PCs—especially females—and his agents. PCs who interfere with his plans will draw his ire. He will use his considerable resources to capture them and bring them to his shrine for use in his experiments.

KRYSKITH VILBYSS, "THE FORMWEAVER" CR 6

XP 2,400

Male zombie lord noble drow magus 2/cleric 2 (Haagenti)

CE Medium undead

Init +3; **Senses** darkvision 120 ft., low-light vision; Perception +3

Aura evil

DEFENSE

AC 20, touch 14, flat-footed 16 (+4 armor, +3 Dex, +2 natural, +1 dodge)

hp 50 (2d8+2d8+2d8+20)

Fort +8, **Ref** +3 **Will** +12; +2 vs. enchantments, +4 vs. channeled energy

Defensive Abilities channel resistance +4; **DR** 5/slashing;

Immune sleep, undead traits; **SR** 17

Weaknesses light blindness

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee +1 *scimitar* +6 (1d6+3/18–20)

Melee slam +5 (1d6+3)



Ranged hand crossbow +6 (1d4/19–20)

Special Attacks channel negative energy (5/day, DC 13), ferocious strike (+1 dmg, 6/day), poison (drow), spellstrike

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 6th, concentration +5)

Constant—*detect magic*

At will—*dancing lights, deeper darkness, faerie fire, feather fall, levitate*

1/day—*divine favor, dispel magic, suggestion* (DC 15)

Domain Spell-like Abilities (CL 2nd, concentration +5)

6/day—*touch of chaos*

Cleric Spells Prepared (CL 2nd, concentration +5)

1st (2+1)—*bane, cause fear* (DC 14), *command* (DC 14), *protection from law*^P

0 (at will)—*bleed* (DC 13), *detect magic, guidance, resistance*

Magus Spells Prepared (CL 2nd, concentration +5)

1st (2)—*burning hands* (DC 14),

corrosive touch^{UM}, *magic missile*

0 (at will)—*acid splash* (DC 13), *daze*

(DC 13), *flare* (DC 13), *mage hand*

Domains Chaos, Ferocity^{APG}

TACTICS

Before Combat Kryskith prepares for combat by using *levitate* and *divine favor* to buff himself, he then casts *deeper darkness* and *bane* before opponents close.

During Combat Kryskith casts *command* to force enemies to drop their weapons, and targets spellcasters with *magic missile*. He uses *dispel magic* against foes benefiting from spells or items.

In melee, he relies on mobility and stealth to get into a strategic position, and will use his scimitar and *corrosive touch* in a spellstrike to take out a particularly powerful combatant. Kryskith prefers to use his ability to channel negative energy to heal himself and his undead minions, rather than harm his enemies.

Morale Kryskith sees his survival as central to Haagenti's plans. He flees if reduced to 10 hp or less.

STATISTICS

Str 15, **Dex** 16, **Con** —, **Int** 17, **Wis** 17, **Cha** 15

Base Atk +3; **CMB** +5; **CMD** 19

Feats Dodge, Mobility, Toughness, Weapon Focus (falchion)

Skills Intimidate +9, Knowledge (arcana) +12, Knowledge (religion) +12, Sense Motive +10 Spellcraft +12, Stealth +8, Use Magic Device +9

Languages Common, Dragon, Elven, Orc, Undercommon

SQ arcane pool, aura, poison use, spell combat, spontaneous casting

Combat Gear +1 *scimitar*, chain shirt, drow poison (2 doses), unholy water (2), *wand of inflict light wounds* (CL 2nd, 25 charges); **Other Gear** silver unholy symbol, magus spellbook (all prepared spells plus all 0-level spells, *adjuring step, hydraulic push, shocking grasp, and vanish*), 75 gp

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Ferocious Strike (Su): Whenever Kryskith makes a melee attack, he can designate that attack as a ferocious strike. If the attack hits, it deals additional damage equal to 1/2 his cleric level (minimum +1). Kryskith can use this ability a number of times per day equal to 3 + his Wisdom modifier (6). ✖



FRACTURED FANE OF THE FLESHWARPERS: A SIDE-TREK ADVENTURE

BY MORGAN
"OCEANSHIELDWOLF"
BOEHBINGER



MAP BY ALEX
"CANADA GUY" MOORE

Sometimes, the earth itself will move to stop a great evil. But, alas, neither the heaviest stones nor even death are enough to contain the vileness that shapes the hearts of the drow.

Adventure Background

In a mostly-forgotten network of tunnels in troglodyte-held Kuvhoshik lies a sundered and forsaken shrine to the might and mystery of fleshwarping. A band of derro raiders recently discovered the shrine's upper areas, which still hold secrets and dangers, but the inner chambers house a growing threat.

A deep chasm, guarded by a flight of cave harpies who nest there, separates the upper chambers from the shattered portal that leads to the inner shrine. Within the shrine proper lie the remains of an ancient fleshwarper sect: the reanimated drow noble Kryskith Viblyss, his undead servitors, and his "treasure", the elven paladin, Elosha Stargleam.

The Formweavers' Shrine

In ages past, a rogue sect of fleshwarpers dedicated to the demon goddess Lamashtu escaped a pogrom in Far Parathra and established a laboratory in Kuvhoshik. Here, far from critical and prying eyes, Lamashtu's followers were free to indulge their intense fascination with the fleshwarping of surface elves.

For three centuries, the Formweavers refined their techniques for applying bestial attributes to graceful elven physiology, creating ever more monstrous perversions. Sometimes failed experiments were released to wander the troglodyte warrens, which gave rise to tribal myths and legends among the primitive reptilian humanoids.

Then, a massive earthquake rocked the Darklands, destroying the Formweavers' complex and tearing a massive rift in the earth. The sundering of the fane separated the upper levels from the shrine and other facilities below, trapping the few survivors, who eventually succumbed to madness and starvation. The surviving drow above abandoned the

place and scattered throughout the Darklands, taking their secrets with them.

Over the long centuries since, the Fleshweavers and their hidden redoubt faded into obscure legend.

Although many Darklands creatures have made the fane their home in the ages since the earthquake put an end to the Fleshweavers' work, the lower levels remained untouched. Untouched, but not forgotten. One entity, in particular, showed interest in the fane. The demon lord Haagenti, Lord of Transformation, began channeling his power into the fane and planned for a day when the fleshwarping vats would once again give birth to horrific creations.

Discovery!

Recently, a band of derro stumbled upon the entrance to the shrine, and made a cursory exploration of the upper and mid-levels. After calamitous encounters with some of the fane's current residents, the diminutive tomb-raiders have regrouped to consider their next move.

Sensing the presence of intruders, Haagenti chose to act quickly and poured more of his power into the fane. Seeking out the few bodies that were whole enough to serve him, he awakened Kryskith as a zombie lord, and then raised others as festrogs. He also raised several of the fleshwarped monstrosities, which Kryskith now calls his "fellclaws."

Although he has forsaken Lamashtu, Kryskith's devotion to his new demonic patron grants him power that will grow as he works to rebuild the laboratory. Lacking sufficient knowledge, himself, he plans to send some of his fellclaws into the Darklands to find new fleshwarpers, alchemists and spellcasters while he works to develop his own skills as best he can.

Adventure Summary

Drawn to the area by legends or for some other reason, the PCs discover the shrine and encounter resistance from the crafty derro and their pet mimic before exploring the upper and middle levels.

After making their way past the chasm, which a clan of cave harpies has claimed as a roost and hunting ground, the PCs pass through the portal to the fane on the far side. They make their way to the lower level and enter the fane, where they face first Kryskith's fleshwarped servitors, then must defeat Haagenti's undead servant in a final encounter with Kryskith. The PCs also have the opportunity to free Elosha Stargleam from her alchemical prison and bring an end to the

ADVANCEMENT TRACK

Characters should be 4th level at the start of the adventure.

NEED FLESHWARPING HOOKS?

- The PCs encounter a tribe of troglodytes who worship beings they call Ma-vesh'gk, "The Formweavers". Investigation reveals the location of the fane.
- A derro captured by the PCs tells of her clan's discovery of a hidden complex deep in the tunnels in Kuvhoshik.
- After defeating a band of slavers, the PCs discover a missive that details the location of a rumored and ancient facility that once exclusively traded in elven subjects in troglodyte-held Kuvhoshik.

25 strength check.

The cage's locked gate is DC 20 to unlock and has a hardness of 15 and 40 hp. The cage bars have a hardness of 10 and 60 hp.

GRASVEK AND KHIRRT **CR 3**

XP 800 EACH
 Derro (*Pathfinder Bestiary*)
hp 25 each

TACTICS

Before Combat If alerted by combat in area 1, Grasvek will cast *darkness*, and both will ready flasks of alchemist's fire. After tossing the flasks through the doorway, the derro pull the rope causing the chest to fall against the doors. Grasvek will run to alert the derro in area 6, while Khirrt locks himself in the cage and retreats into the holding pen. He will pepper PCs with sound burst and poisoned bolts from area 3.

During Combat In melee, the derro attempt to flank opponents and make sneak attacks with their aklys.

Morale If reduced to 5 hps, the derro flee the shrine.

Development: Once alerted by Grasvek, the rest of the derro squad arrives in 8 rounds. The arriving derro will strike with alchemist's fire before using their poisoned bolts and spell-like abilities.

Treasure: In addition to the normal gear, each derro carries a pair of smoked goggles (*Advanced Players Guide*) and five silvered bolts. Grasvek wears a silver brooch worth 35 gp. Khirrt carries a *potion of cure medium wounds*.

3. Holding Pen

The doors to this room have wide, barred openings for viewing the room beyond. Heavy iron chains, sized for large creatures, hang from rings mounted at regular intervals on the walls.

This chamber once housed the larger creatures that the Formweavers used for their experiments. It is currently empty, though the derro Khirrt may retreat to this room and attack from just inside the doors.

4. Holding Cells.

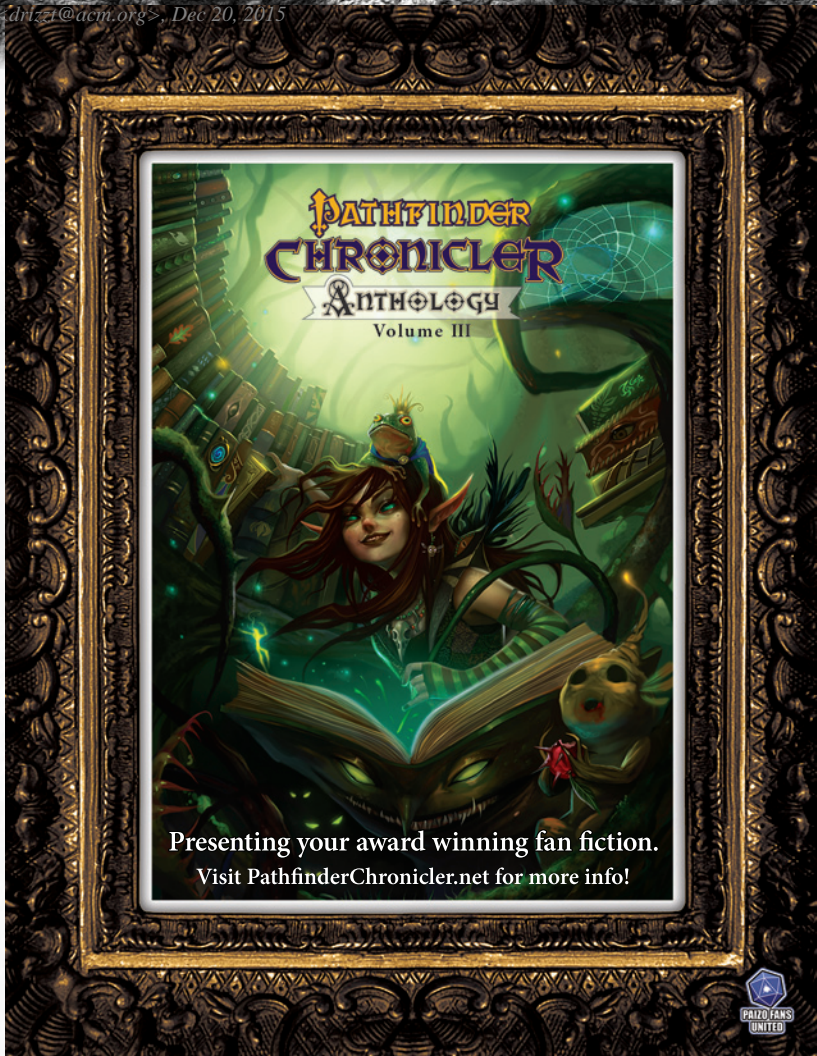
A small, overturned table and tool rack sit on the floor before three open doors, each leading to a small, empty cell.

The derro have thoroughly cleared this area, which once held the Fleshweavers' smaller test subjects.

5. Hall of Devotion.

A broad central stairway descends to the floor of this rough-hewn chamber. Two narrower staircases snake around to either side, hugging the walls. Large statues stand on either side of the central staircase. They are carved of dark red and black rock into the shape of multiple twisted, deformed and grotesque organisms braided in a coiling column, mouths open in mute screams. The statues reach upward in supplication or praise forming an arch with a snarling, three-eyed hyena's head at its pinnacle.

The statue is still the focal point of this grand entrance. Its dark magnificence was meant to inspire the Fleshweavers and overawe their test subjects. When Haagenti's power flooded the fane to raise Kryskith in undeath, it mingled with the lingering dread of the fleshwarper's many victims, creating a haunt that strikes out against non-believers.



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MOTHER OF MONSTERS **CR 5**

XP 1600
 CE haunt (5' by 5')

Caster level 7th

Notice Perception DC 20 (to hear faint moans)

hp 10; **Trigger** proximity; **Reset** 1 day

Effect If anyone moves down the middle staircase, the statue writhes and shakes. The faces moan, blood runs to the floor in rivulets, and 1d3 dretches appear (as per *summon monster IV*).

Destruction Breaking the statue will destroy the haunt; the statue has a hardness of 15 and 50 hp. Alternatively, it can be destroyed by washing it with *holy water* or by touching the statue with an unholy symbol of Haagenti.

Treasure: A DC 25 Perception check will reveal a *dusty rose prism ioun stone* hidden in the hyena's mouth.

Shrine: Middle Level

6. Cells (CR 5)

The floor here is damp and cold. The room is divided into a main sitting area with a functional wooden table and benches, and four simple cells containing rotted wooden cot-frames.

This was once the living quarters for the shrine's acolytes.

Creatures: The three surviving members of the derro squad hide here, planning their next move. They still desire to press onward toward the fane, but have no idea how to get past the harpies, until the PCs arrive.

KAARV, GENKI, AND BOSTA CR 3

XP 800 EACH

Derro (3) (*Pathfinder Bestiary*)

hp 25 each

TACTICS

Before Combat If alerted to the PCs presence, Kaarv will cast *darkness*, and all three will ready flasks of alchemist's fire.

During Combat After tossing the flasks, the derro will attack first with spell-like abilities, then fire their poisoned bolts or attack with their aklys.

Morale If reduced to 5 hp, the derro flee the shrine.

Development: If alerted to the PCs' presence at the entrance to the shrine, the derro abandon this position, hoping to hide until the PCs encounter the harpies, then attack the victors if they appear weakened by the battle. If they are caught by surprise, the derro will still retreat to area 6 and try to get the PCs into a fight with the harpies before escaping.

Treasure: In addition to the normal gear, each derro carries a pair of smoked goggles and a flask of *alchemist's fire*. Kaarv wears an intricately carved wooden ring worth 5 sp. Genki carries a masterwork bandolier (*Ultimate Equipment*), and Bosta, a poison pill ring (*Advanced Player's Guide*).

7. Sundered Hall (CR 6)

What was once a simple, square room has been elongated and split by a massive chasm running from east to west, cracking both floor and ceiling. A faint susurrus fills the chamber, hinting at airflow or running water nearby. On the far side of the chasm a pile of rubble obscures a large door carved in a fashion similar to the main doors of this place.

Near the closest edge of the rift lie three corpses, one of which is a small, grey-skinned humanoid.

The humanoid corpse is that of a female derro. A DC 18 knowledge (dungeoneering) check will identify the other two corpses as blindheims—the dead derro's pets. The derro's head is missing, while the blindheims' hide and jaws have been removed.

The chasm descends into inky blackness. It is hundreds of feet deep and of nearly constant width. Climbing down into it and then back up the other side would be very difficult (Climb DC 30) and time-consuming and might expose the PCs to dangerous creatures, while leaving them vulnerable. Therefore, they will need to assemble a bridge or develop some other means to reach the other side.

On the north side of the chamber lies the portal to the Fane, stuck closed by a rock fall (DC 28 to open, Hardness 10, 60 hp). None of Kryskith's minions have been able to open

FELLCLAW

Armored plates meld with this creature's rotting flesh. Bearing wide claws, reminiscent of gauntlets, the horror of their appearance is enhanced by the weirdly ethereal grace of the beautiful elves from which they were crafted.

FELLCLAW**CR 3**

XP 600

Fleshwarped Elven Zombie Lord

NE Medium undead (augmented humanoid, elf)

Init +0; **Senses** darkvision 60ft; Perception +0**DEFENSE****AC** 18, touch 18, flat-footed 17 (+7 natural, +1 dex)**hp** 16 (3d8+3)**Fort** +1, **Ref** +2, **Will** +1**DR** 5/slashing; **Immune** undead traits**OFFENSE****Speed** 20 ft.**Melee** 2 claws +4 (1d6 +2)**Special Attacks** rend (2 claws, 1d6 +4)**STATISTICS****Str** 14 **Dex** 12 **Con** – **Int** – **Wis** 6 **Cha** 10**Base Atk** +2; **CMB** +4 ; **CMD** 15**Feats** Toughness**SQ** formation frenzy**SPECIAL ABILITIES**

Formation Frenzy: If more than one fellclaw flanks an opponent each fellclaw receives a -1 morale penalty to attack but receives a +2 morale bonus to damage.

it as yet.

Creatures: High in the chasm above hides a rock shelf—the bone-strewn eyrie of a small cast of cave harpies. The vicious raptor-women made this area their hunting ground, feasting upon small Darklands vermin and the occasional troglodyte that wandered into connecting catacombs.

CAVE HARPIES (4) CR 2

XP 600 EACH

hp 13 each (see pg. 74)

TACTICS

Before Combat When they detect the PCs, the cave harpies will rush to defend their territory, gaining a +5 morale bonus to Fly checks.

During Combat Three of the cave harpies will use their focused *sickening scream*; the last will attempt to catch as many of the PCs in a cone burst. The harpies will focus their assault on any PC using sound-based attacks.

Morale If two or more cave harpies are slain, the rest will flee, jumping off the rift edge and using their glide ability to drop to the bottom of the fissure.

Treasure: One of the harpies wears a wand of *inflict moderate wounds* (caster level 3rd, 12 charges left) as an ornament on a string around her neck. If the PCs can reach their eyrie, they can find two valuable items among the litter of bones and hide: a pair of goggles with completely black lenses, formerly belonging to the derro leader—treat as a *blind man's fold* (*Ultimate Equipment*) and a masterwork kukri.

The Fane**8. Shrine Guardian (CR 3)**

This unadorned antechamber once served as a guardpost for a sleepless sentinel.

Creature: A necrophidius lies in wait in this corridor, keeping eternal watch.

NECROPHIDIUS**CR 3**

XP 800

hp 36 (*Pathfinder Bestiary 2*)**TACTICS**

During Combat The necrophidius begins combat with its *dance of death*, then attacks with its paralytic bite, focusing on one arcane caster or lightly armored foe, until it is immobilized or dead.

Morale The necrophidius fights until it is destroyed.

Development: A DC 20 Heal check reveals that the skull and bones of this necrophidius were taken from several female elves. The festrogs on guard in area 9 will be alerted by combat and prepare a surprise for the PCs.

9. Preparation Chamber (CR 5)

Rotted tapestries hang on the walls, here, between faintly visible frescoes of stylized skulls and contorted anatomies. Piles of bones, shredded clothing, and other detritus litter the floor. A collapsed tunnel or hallway lies to the west. A non-descript door stands in the east wall.

In this once-opulent preparation chamber, Lamashtu's acolytes and adherents used to ready themselves before entering the fane.

Creatures: During the earthquake long ago, elven captives of the fleshwarper were trapped here and turned to cannibalism before perishing. Now risen as festrogs, the wretches have made this place their lair.

FESTROG (5) **CR 1**

XP 400 EACH

hp 12 each (*Pathfinder Bestiary 3*)

TACTICS

Before Combat If alerted by combat in area 8, the festrogs prepare an ambush. Three festrogs will hide among rubble in the western hall, while two festrogs remain near the eastern door, attempting to lure enemies to their position. Two rounds after the PCs engage with the two eastern festrogs, the other three burst out of the rubble to surprise and flank the PCs.

Morale The festrogs fight to the death

10. The Fleshwarper's Fane (CR 6)

This large domed, airy chamber lies in ruins. Stone furniture, broken statues, and rocks fallen from the roof mar what was once a grand chamber. The northeastern corner has completely collapsed. The southeast corner is crumbling and looks particularly unsafe. The chamber walls that remain are carved in bas-relief: grinning monsters and abominations mingle to form a disgusting whole in which the theme of reproduction is darkly repeated. Likewise, the statues depict deformed and mutated female figures joining with or cradling hideous aberrations.

This chamber, once dedicated to Lamashtu, celebrated the ultimate expression of the Formweavers art: the creation of fleshwarped elves. The greatest of the Formweavers' achievement were the scaleclaws, twisted parodies of their former graceful forms, given claws and flesh impregnated with armor plates. These creatures were strong and loyal to their masters with inbuilt pack frenzy. These grotesque servitors died with the collapse of the shrine, but they did not remain dead.

Creatures: Three undead scaleclaws—fellclaws, as Kryskith now calls them—hide among the rubble, waiting to ambush intruders.

FELLCLAWS (3) **CR 3**

XP 800 EACH

hp 36 each (see sidebar)

TACTICS

During Combat The fellclaws seek to flank one foe at a time,

taking advantage of their formation frenzy.

Morale The fellclaws fight until destroyed.

Treasure: Elosha Stargleam's gear is bundled in a pile near the southeast corner (see area 11).

11. The Sanctum (CR 7)

The air in this room is close, warm and humid, like a living creature's breath. Rhythmic wheezes and sighs emanate from a collection of vats, tubes and tubs that clutter the room. Much of the equipment—evidently the paraphernalia of some dark science—is damaged or shows signs of great age. One glass case thrums and glows from within. Inside, a vaguely humanoid shape floats in thick, syrupy liquid, wrapped in a caul or cloth, its face fitted with a breathing apparatus.

Creatures: Kryskith knows the adventurers are in the fane and waits for them here with two remaining fellclaws, protecting his final "treasure." The fleshwarped elven paladin, Elosha Stargleam, hibernates in a toxic fleshwarping-nutrient bath. Kryskith had her vat moved from the fane into the high priest's sanctum. The case is fragile and the mixture inside is dangerous.

KRYSKITH **CR 5**

XP 1600

hp 36 (see pg.41)

Morale If reduced to 10 or fewer hp, Kryskith will sunder Elosha's container.

FELLCLAWS (2) **CR 3**

XP 800 EACH

hp 36 each (see sidebar)

Development: If reduced to 10 or fewer hp, Kryskith will reluctantly sunder Elosha's glass case, releasing the reagents and fleshwarping goo to spill out in a 20-foot radius area. Creatures in that area are doused with the liquid and take 1d6 acid damage per round for three rounds or until they wash it off with water, oil or *holy water*. (Elosha is protected by her fleshwarp caul and will not be harmed by the acid. She will be groggy and unable to act for a few hours.)

Treasure: In addition to Kryskith's gear (see Kryskith's *Weal* or *Woe* entry on pg. 41, there are other items of value here.

A book containing the history of the Shrine, written in Undercommon, sits open on a dusty lectern by the west wall, with a *keen adamantium dagger* lying on it as a paperweight. Hidden in the sheaves of the tome are a scroll of *fog cloud* and *whispering wind* (Caster level 3rd). A *ring of sustenance* is tied to the bookmark.

The fleshwarping equipment is mostly in poor condition, but *could* be moved with great care. As a complete set, it is worth at least 5,000 gp to the right buyer. Three smaller modular pieces are easier to move, weighing about 100 lbs and worth 500 gp each.

Concluding the Adventure

With Kryskith defeated, the PCs can either sell the fleshwarping apparatus or finish the work the earthquake began long ago and destroy it. If they demolish the lab and rescue Elosha, award the PCs an additional story award of 500 xp. Once she recovers, the fleshwarped paladin will remain a faithful and useful ally, even after she leaves the Darklands and once again feels the sunlight, Sarenrae's blessing, upon her skin. ✖

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A WARNING

BY MIKE "SNAKEVILSAGE"

WALLACE

ART BY DAVE MALLON

My name is Magdera Kingsilver. My companions were Andros Ferdrel of Andoran, the elf Marthiel, and the gnome Nebbit Suncounter.

Together we served the Pathfinder Society. Now, I am the only one left. I leave this journal as a warning. They are watching. Heed my words: do not sleep. Do not put out your light. Learn from my tale and flee this place.

We came here from Numeria, test subjects of an archmage who called himself the Precursor. He revealed to us an artifact—a mystic archway of strange metal warped into muscle-like coils. Through it we saw distant lands, and he offered us great wealth to journey to these places, but we needed no such incentive. The opportunity to explore unknown lands was alluring enough.

But when we approached the gateway, something went wrong. An unknown sorcery attacked us, seeping out of the Gateway. We were blinded by a brilliant flash.

When we recovered, we could see neither the portal nor the Precursor.

It was pitch black.

Nebbit came to his senses first, summoning his hovering lights before deducing that we were deep within the Darklands, specifically in Sekamina. We had supplied ourselves for a journey into the unknown, however, so we felt prepared to face the daunting trek back to the surface.

The first thing we noticed was the heavy silence. Sound does not carry in caves the way it does aboveground.



Everything is muted, muffled like a hand over one's mouth. We suspected that creatures in the Darklands hunted by sound and heat, and endeavored to be stealthy, but this only grated further on our nerves. At times, I could hear my own heartbeat. The endless *thump-thump-thump* threatened to make me scream.

After nearly two days of walking, we discovered a network of arched, man-made corridors. Nebbit theorized they were once part of a city but had been abandoned for some time. As we drew closer we noticed row upon row of statues lining every hall.

The sculptures unnerved us. They appeared humanoid in form, smiling and joyous, but there was an edge to their grins that felt unnatural. Even in the weak light of our torches, they seemed to watch us. Nevertheless, Andros insisted it was as safe a place as any to camp in the Darklands and bade us to sleep, with Marthiel promising to watch over us.

When we awoke, she was gone.

We searched for hours, but Marthiel had been taken without a trace, leaving her pack and her spellbooks behind. Grief-stricken, we endeavored to go on, but the corridors seemed to continue endlessly. Nebbit grew even more nervous. He complained several times that he felt someone was following us. He swore he could hear scratching that mirrored our footsteps. The rest of us noticed nothing.

Finally we decided to rest. Andros felt guilty for Marthiel's loss, and promised to take the first watch. I tried to fight my own exhaustion, but soon succumbed to sleep. When I opened my eyes, Andros, too, had vanished.

His pack sat where he had left it. He left no sign. No scream. Not even a footprint.

Nebbit swore something was hunting us. I begged him to put this place behind us, but he was beyond reason. He wanted to confront our stalker. I told him I had still heard nothing, and he flew at me in a rage.

We fought—a struggle born of fear and confusion. When it ended, Nebbit lay dead at my feet. My heart broke and I fell to my knees, crying into my bloodstained hands.

When I looked up, his body was gone.

In his place was a statue; like the others, but small. Gnome-sized. It smiled at me too. Screaming, I hurled my sunrod at it, and the light went out.

In that darkness, I finally heard it. The scratching. Not the footfalls of drow or the claws of wicked monsters, but the grating of stone on stone. Trembling, I struck my final sunrod.

The statues stood around me, hundreds of them filling the corridor. The gnome-sized statue loomed over me, smiling.

I'm leaving this journal here. I hope they don't take it. I hope someone finds it and brings it to the Cathedral of Andoran.

Please, please, please, don't sleep.

Don't turn out your light.

That's what they wait for.

They want you.

They want me.

They want me to fall asleep.

I will stay awake. I will.

They smile.

Always smiling.

They smile...

but...

I think...

...they want to scream. ❦

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GOLABION GAZETTEER: FILARYNATH

BY SCOTT "ABERZOMBIE"

ABERZOMBIE

ART BY MIKE LOWE

MAP BY CARLOS

"CELUBIAN" TORREBLANCA



The ancient ruins of Filarynath date back to just after Earthfall. Once a temporary refuge for elves fleeing the horror and devastation brought about by the aboleth, today the cavern serves as the battleground for two warring tribes, as well as home to other monstrous beings.

Prior to the cataclysm, many elves fled to Sovyrian. Many more, however, stayed behind, and when the cataclysm struck, they fled deep into the earth. Beneath what is today the nation of Druma, some of these elven refugees established a settlement they came to call Filarynath. Their new home proved to be short-lived, as hardship, starvation, and the depredations of other denizens drove the elves out of Filarynath and ever deeper toward their destiny in the Darklands.

Now, centuries later, Filarynath is a much different realm than when the elves abandoned it. Though most are crumbling, the remains of the settlement's buildings (constructed with powerful magic) still stand. A tribe of mongrelmen has made the primary ruins their home for decades. They are currently at war with invading newcomers, a tribe of vicious gargoyles who have taken up residence in another elven structure – a stalactite fortress the winged raiders have come to call Xoveron's Horn, after their demonic patron.

Overview

The ruins of Filarynath rest within a small cavern in Nar-Voth, deep under the merchant realm of Druma in central Avistan. A single, large tunnel leads into the cavern from the south, guarded from just within by the remains of a small fortress. Throughout the entirety of the ruins, stands of large yellow mushrooms sprout up from the ground. These mushrooms, which are quite edible and suitable for the brewing of various potions, form the mainstay of the mongrelmen's diet.

From a large crack in the southwest corner

of the cavern flows a small river, and just to the north sits a strangely smooth oval-shaped mound. The large central portion of the crag is bisected by the river, around which sit the ruins of Greater Filarynath, the central elven settlement. The river flows northeast and then forks: one part exiting the cavern through another crack, the other part flowing into a large side cave where the remnants of a settlement known as Lesser Filarynath can be found. In the northeast corner, just past a forest of the giant mushrooms, the gargoyle fortress of Xoveron's Horn hangs from the ceiling like a massive, bloody fang.

A. The Entry Fortress

A trio of ruined towers and collapsed walls is all that remains of this fort, once used to guard the cavern's entry tunnel. None of the towers rises more than 10 feet. The upper levels fell or were knocked down long ago. A small group of mongrelmen inhabits this area, keeping a careful eye on the tunnel and ready to send warning via trained vermin message-carriers to their brethren in the main ruins.

B. Lower Filarynath

Near the center of the cavern, built along the banks of the small river flowing in from the southwest, stand the remains of the larger part of the old elven settlement. When the mongrelmen first explored the area, they discovered records dating back to Filarynath's early days. The record contained the name the elves had given their temporary home, which the mongrelmen adopted for their tribe. The magic used to build the ruined structures has allowed many of the stone and magically strengthened wood buildings to withstand the centuries remarkably well, with mostly intact walls and even an occasional intact roof. Very few doors remain intact, however, and the interiors have seen better days.

The mongrelmen of the Filarynath Tribe concentrate themselves in and around the center of Lower Filarynath, where the river runs past a small plaza. The tribe is descended from slaves of Nar-Voth duergar freed long ago. A courageous dwarven paladin of the Empyrean Lord Arshea, followed visions from his divine mistress to one of the ancient dwarf cities, and found the city converted to a duergar slave pen. He rescued hundreds of slaves and led them here to safety and helped settle the group before returning to the slave pens to free more captives. He never returned.



Fish from the river and mushrooms from the cave comprise the greater part of the mongrelmen's diet, with the occasional roasted vermin thrown in for good measure. They have fortified several of the buildings against the gargoyles of Xoveron's Horn, and bow-wielding guards are stationed on several intact rooftops. Just off the central plaza, in the largest standing building, the mongrelmen have established a shrine to Arshea, the tribe's divine patron, chosen to honor their dwarven savior. They are led by high-priest Ornrov (NG Mongrelman Cleric of Arshea 5).

C. The Grand Tomb

During the course of the elves' time in Filarynath there were, of course, deaths. The elves sculpted this smooth, oval mound and carved numerous chambers and tunnels within to house the remains of their fallen. They also raised fell guardians from some of these dead—terrible tomb wights whose only task is to safeguard the peaceful rest of their fellow elves. These wights, bound by powerful wards to never leave the tomb, still exist to this day, ready to ensure any tomb robbers join those they had hoped to plunder.

D. The Mushroom Forest

Occupying the entire northwest section of the cavern, this mushroom forest is home to all manner of vermin, rats, snakes, and other small animals. The mongrelmen once openly hunted and harvested here, but are more cautious, now. The gargoyles often send patrols (or sometimes lone hunters) into the forest to wait in ambush.

E. Xoveron's Horn

Hanging above the northwest edge of the Mushroom Forest, the massive stalactite fortress of Xoveron's Horn commands an excellent view of much of the cavern, including Lower Filarynath. Once the home of a powerful elven wizard, it has hosted many creatures over the passing millennia. Currently, it serves as both home and temple for a tribe of gargoyles calling themselves the Blood Flyers. They are led by their high priest, a four-armed brute named Zrag (CE Cleric of Xoveron 4). The demonic priest and his followers were running to escape more powerful foe when they discovered the cavern. Zrag immediately took the discovery as a sign that he and his minions were meant to claim the ruins in the name of The Horned Prince.

Measuring nearly 100 feet across where it meets the ceiling, the stalactite hangs down sixty feet before tapering to a jagged point some 20

feet wide. Near this lower tip, a dark archway opens in the stone. This is the only entrance to the chambers within. Within the formation, circular shafts connect three levels of rooms and halls. The shafts once held enchantments that allowed occupants to fly from level to level, but that magic has weakened and sometimes fails. More than one explorer has fallen to his death when the levitation effect sputtered out between rooms. The exterior of the stalactite is colored a dull red in many spots, because the gargoyles paint the stone with the blood of their victims.

F. High Filarynath

This smaller part of the old settlement lies in a side cave to the northeast. Built around a small artificial lake created long ago by the elves, this area contained the homes of high-ranking and wealthy elf families. Constructed with the same powerful magic as Lower Filarynath, this area has similarly withstood the ravages of time, but not quite as well. Over the decades since their arrival several mongrelfolk have disappeared while exploring the area. As a result the tribe considers it cursed and avoids it. Mostly concerned with hunting the mongrelmen, the gargoyles likewise avoid this place, which suits the actual resident well.

Ssurzan the Bone is an undead dark naga (LE Dark Naga Skeletal Magus) who has called the ruins home for nearly a century. While still alive, he discovered the cavern and began to plunder it for whatever magical knowledge remained. Within one of the mansions here in High Filarynath, Ssurzan uncovered a hidden cache of lore, both magical and mundane. Unfortunately, the naga also triggered a powerful necromantic trap, one that slew him and raised him again in his current undead form. In the years since, the deathless naga has jealously guarded his treasure from all intruders, never quite realizing that his transformation also included a *geas* that forced him into the role of guardian.

Initially, the arrival of the mongrelmen filled Ssurzan with some trepidation, but he soon realized the superstitious creatures would gladly stay away from his own small domain if given the proper incentives. He has become more concerned with the recent arrival of the gargoyles, seeing in them a more aggressive and capable opponent. He has already slain two of the winged invaders, using the very knowledge he guards to raise them again as zombie minions. ✖





COUNCIL OF NIGHT:

COUNCIL OF THIEVES AS AN ALL-DROW CAMPAIGN

BY GABY MCBRIDE

ART BY TYLER CLARK



Paizo has never published a drow-focused adventure path set entirely in the Darklands. But let me suggest with a little work that “Council of Thieves” could easily be converted into one.

Warning: Spoilers ahead!

In the common tongue the city is called West Throne, but in the drow tongue its proper name is Zaeryth-Tyr (pronounced Zair-eth-TIRE). The map of Westcrown does not depict a surface city. It shows a great cavernous vault containing a dark elven metropolis set on the edge of a sunless sea. And Council of Thieves is not an adventure path about a saving a city. It is a campaign about two drow noble houses fighting for control of this majestic city of darkness.

Bastards of Erebus

The noble House of Thrune conquered a great drow empire. They moved their capitol from Zaeryth-Tyr to another distant underground city (perhaps Zirnakaynin), leaving behind a puppet government in the hands of House Zaeryth (from which the city gets its name). Thrune’s installment of a weaker house created a political vacuum that still remains.

Janiven is a wicked drow ranger of noble birth who serves the priestess, Arael. Arael is intent on building a new noble house to seize control of the city. The “hell knights” who hunt Janiven are actually servants of House Zaeryth. As our villains gather in their hideout in the sewers, the PCs are not joining the Children of Westcrown, but a drow conspiracy known as the House of Arael.

But even in the conspiracy’s infancy there is disaster! Arael herself has been captured. Arael naturally knows everything about the conspiracy (including Janiven’s contact with the PCs) and is being transported by caravan to a Zaeryth stronghold. The PCs must free Arael or silence her to save the conspiracy from eradication. If she is rescued, Arael reveals the location of the conspiracy’s first target: the stronghold of The Bastards, a gang seeking to join with the fledgling noble house of Drovenge in a bid to control the city.

The Six-Fold Trial

The struggle for control of Zaeryth-Tyr continues. By now, it is clear that the PCs are not the only faction seeking the prize. Janiven or Arael introduce the PCs to Ailyn, a female drow adventurer and noble. Ailyn is the last surviving member of a banned magical collegium in Zaeryth-Tyr. Within the collegium’s sealed headquarters are great treasures and the source of the shadow beasts that plague the drow city. She seeks allies to help her raid the college. But to do that, they need a key that is kept by the House of Zaeryth inside a magical container known as the Thrunian Crux. She has a plan to infiltrate the House and wreak havoc upon the Zaeryth both as vengeance for destroying the collegium and to recover its treasures. In particular, she seeks a potent magical rapier, named Whisperlash.

The events involving the Nightshade Theater need very little adaptation. What could be more fitting for chaotic evil, decadent drow society than a “murder play”? Simply replace the cast with drow performing for the pleasure of the decadent Zaerythian nobility.

At the end of a successful performance, the PCs are invited to a drow conclave housed by the head of House Zaeryth—Lord Aberian Zaeryth himself. Unusual for drow, the House of Thrune has always been oriented more toward devils than demons, and this shows throughout the manor. The PCs must infiltrate the party and recover the Thrunian Crux from beneath their hosts’ very noses.

What Lies in Dust

With the claiming of the Thrunian Crux (identical to the Chelish Crux), the PCs can now raid the College of Delvehaven. Little needs changing here. The PCs have another chance to meet Chammany Drovenge in passing (who should be converted into a drow noble). Vahnwynne should be made into a drow vampire as opposed to elven. But overall the adventure still works.

The PCs can go to the devildrome and commune with the shade of Ghaelfin, the last headmaster of the magical collegium. They can investigate the Massacre House and the Wave Door before they raid Delvehaven. Delvehaven needs only a slight reskinning to transform it into a sealed college of magical study. The PCs recover the Morrowfall (an item dangerous to the drow as it constantly emits blinding daylight). They can reward Ailyn with Whisperlash, making an ally, or betray her and keep the fine blade.

The Infernal Syndrome

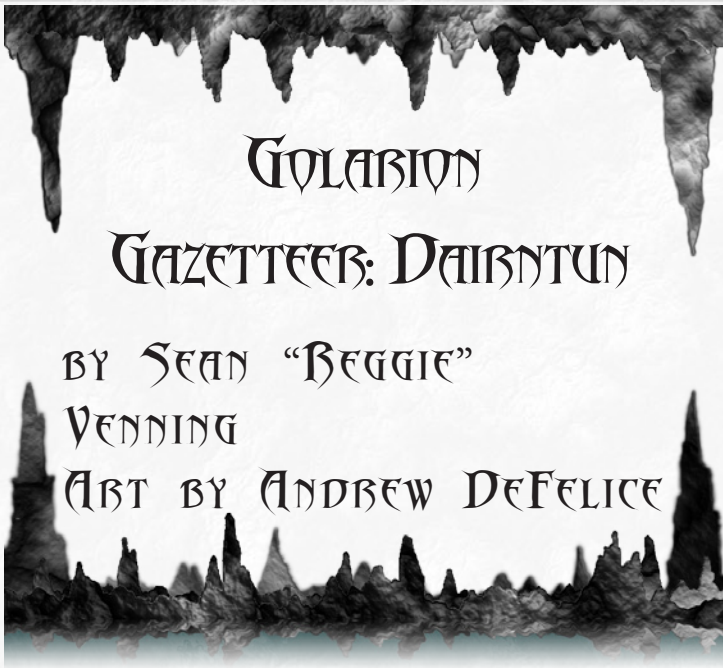
This is the adventure where the PCs get to dispense with the Thrune puppets once and for all and see the city thrown into chaos. They can banish the current rulers and dispatch their devilish allies, clearing the way for their own rise.

The adventure begins the same—with an explosion. The PCs even encounter a disheveled and wounded Lord Aberian Zaeryth in the streets of Zaeryth-Tyr. His House is broken and his allies have fled. He is desperate to escape the city and tries to trade valuable information for his escape. Will the PCs be merciful and let him? It seems unlikely.

Regardless, the PCs now know if they don’t act fast, a pit fiend will escape and likely rampage through their city and perhaps even become its master. After that, the adventure proceeds much as written. Aberten Vittershins is actually a wicked deep gnome in service to House Drovenge. At this adventure’s end the PCs have gained their first great victory over their true enemies.

Mother of Flies

Instead of seeking him out, the PCs find the low-born drow criminal Javaryn Alyth (i.e. Jarvis Alebrecht converted into a dark elf) on their



GOLARION

GAZETTEER: DAIRNTUN

BY SEAN "BEGGIE"
VENNING

ART BY ANDREW DEFELICE

Tarrent watched Derken speaking with the glass-eyed fish-man in its own tongue, as the river's dark waters flowed by them. After several minutes of terse conversation, Derken turned back to Tarrent.

"We should be ok," he said hesitantly. "Dairntun is around the next bend, and Glg'Oogle says that if we stay in the Glow, we should be able to get some accommodation and rest before heading on to Sverspume. Provided we can afford the 'exit tax'."

Tarrent shook his head as their raft drifted into a large cavern. Up ahead, he could see the faint silhouette of buildings along the right-hand banks. As they approached, he could also make out the forms of armored duergar standing along the docks, waiting for them to arrive.

"Welcome to Down Town," he muttered under his breath.

Located approximately 150 miles north of Telderist, the deceptively small Sekaminan town of Dairntun is located between two major tunnels on the eastern shore of an underground river that empties into Lake Nirthran. Built at the base of a series of cascades, the township sits in the center of a major crossroads for trade through the Darklands.

HISTORY

Long ago, a small group of duergar who had turned from the teachings of Droskar to worship Mephistopheles fled Nar-Voth to avoid execution for blasphemy. The outcasts discovered a prime location to construct a portage tunnel that aided river travel between Sverspume and Telderist. Dairntun took shape from visions provided to the prophet Dargneir by the Merchant of Souls. Excavating a direct route between the primary tunnels to the east and west of their camp, they created a major hub for regional trade.

The duergar founders established strict control of travel through the area and encouraged merchants to enter into long-term contracts with them. Those who refused faced heavy tolls and bureaucratic delays that slowed transport and reduced profits. No matter what choice the merchants' made, Dairntun made money.

The drow of House Dolour, seeing the chance to increase their

standing in Telderist, quickly took advantage of the greatly improved river access to bring more slaves from Sverspume to their holdings on the shores of Lake Nirthan. They negotiated their first contract with the duergar before the portage had even been completed. Not trusting the duergar in the slightest, the drow then constructed their own docks in Dairntun to ensure swift and discrete movement of their cargo.

Shortly thereafter, dark folk, ghouls, and skum established their own enclaves in the cavern, creating the mixed township of Dairntun, which means "the crossing" in the duergar tongue. Ostensibly ruled by a duergar inquisitor known as the "Freightmaster," the town's strategic location has made it a place of intrigue, with the true power thought to be held by a secret ruling group comprised of representatives from the duergar, drow, dark folk, and ghouls. No one group is able to exert more influence than the others combined will allow, leading to an appearance of coexistence, while in the omnipresent shadows, the town is a hotbed of plots and assassinations.

THE TOWN

Travelers wishing to pass through Dairntun are allowed entry to the town by the iron-clad duergar guards for the simple fee of 1gp per sentient. However, visitors to the city would do well to come prepared with additional gold, as there is an exit tax of 20gp per sentient and 1gp per slave. Failure to pay is punished with incarceration and forfeiture of all possessions. Those who lack items of worth are put up for auction at the next slave market. Certain citizens have made a business of robbing travellers only to buy them at auction later.

Dairntun is divided into four unequal quarters by the twin roads that bisect the town—one running from the portage tunnel in the northern cavern wall to the docks and the toll road running between the eastern cavern entrance and the ferry that takes passengers to the western tunnel. The crossroads market is a place to find nearly anything a buyer might want, from slaves to ancient scrolls. Members of many races come here from far and wide to seek out specific items. Looming over this central open area is the temple to Mephistopheles, its highest towers lost in the darkness of the cavern above.

The quarter known as the Screams houses the town's sizeable drow population. It hosts a temple to Andirifkhu as the keystone of the drow enclave. The sounds ringing out from the temple at all hours are the source of this area's name.

South of the Screams is a towering edifice known to the locals as the Library. Home to a pack of about thirty ghouls, this grand building boasts one of the largest collections of writings in Sekamina. For a price, the residents can search the Library's

extensive records for the answer to almost any question. Potential clients should be aware, however, that the price demanded isn't always in gold, as the residents of the Library have a long-standing, mutually beneficial agreement with the drow of the Screams.

Along the southern bank of the river lies the skum enclave of Shhlk. The fishmen here hire themselves out as pilots, guiding rafts and barges both up and downstream for a price. Ruled by a chieftain of great foresight, representatives of Shhlk attend all slave auctions, bidding highly on human females when they are available. In the



center of their enclave is a large building, which the skum call Shg Lhs'k, "the Nest". It is to here that they bring their slaves, none of whom are ever permitted to leave.

Immediately to the south of the eastern entrance to Dairntun, and edging onto the market, lies the section known as "the Glow." This area is provided with enough dim lighting to enable uplanders to operate, although it is made quite clear that if they visit any other area in Dairntun they are responsible for their own safety. Adventurers looking for accommodation within the Glow can always find a room in the Crying Kobold inn, run by the "Mayor" of the Glow, Dorvir. An affable half-orc bard, Dorvir works to gain the trust of those passing through, mainly so he can report on them to the Freightmaster. Many of the establishments here are run by uplanders who could not afford to leave and had to earn their exit tax, eventually deciding to stay rather than risk the dangers of the tunnels.

The darkfolk of Dairntun make their homes as far from the Glow as they can. Their section of the town is located at the southern end of the cavern, beyond Shhik. Here, dark creepers scurry about on mysterious errands for the ruling triumvirate of dark stalkers. Every few months, one of the dark stalkers leaves Dairntun with a gang of dark creepers, only to return weeks later, often with far fewer numbers than when they left.

The last group to be found in Dairntun is also the most disturbing. A group of seugathi reside in the south-eastern corner of the town, in a semi-dilapidated house, known as "The Pit". No one is sure if this is the same group that has been residing here all along, or an ongoing series of look-alikes, but for almost as long as Dairntun has existed the seugathi have been here. Individuals move in and out of the town at odd intervals, quietly going about their secret tasks, presumably at the behest of their neothelid masters. Few can stay near their residence for long, except for a small group of derro that have been known to visit

them from time to time, although no one knows precisely why.

Possible plot hooks:

- The PCs must travel to Dairntun to rescue the wayward heir of a surface noble, held captive in a caravan bound for the slave markets of Sverplume.
- Ghouls at the Library have information leading to a lost artifact of great power, but can the PCs meet their fee?
- Fleeing from captivity by the drow in Telderist, the PCs have information of great interest to the other races of Sekamina, but who can they trust with the dark elves in close pursuit?
- The PCs have been hired to drive a wedge between the various factions within Dairntun. Can it be done? And who really stands to profit?

DAIRNTUN

LE small town

Corruption +3; Crime +3; Economy +3; Law -6; Lore +0;

Society +0

Qualities notorious, strategic location

Danger +10

DEMOGRAPHICS

Government secret syndicate

Population 1,550 (1000 duergar; 200 drow; 150 skum; 50 dark folk; 30 ghouls; 5 seugathi; 115 others)

Notable NPCs

The Freightmaster (LE male duergar inquisitor 10)

Dorvir, 'Mayor' of The Glow (LN male half-orc bard 5)

MARKETPLACE

Base Value 1,400 gp; **Purchase Limit** 7,500 gp; **Spellcasting** 4th

Minor Items 3d4; **Medium Items** 1d6; **Major Items** - ❌

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DARKLAND DEALINGS

BY JESSICA CARSON

ART BY SILVIA

“CRESCENTMOON” GONZALEZ

The scent of fresh blood mingled with the acrid smell of burnt powder. Glowing quartz sconces lined the cavern walls above each of five tables littered with colored vials.

Tirna ran her hands through her brown curls and focused on Relthar’s slow and steady breathing. He and Marcus remained frozen by Zilant’s poison—Relthar upright, Marcus kneeling, one hand in his haversack the other hand on the ground next to the body of Zilant’s servant.

Shifting painfully in the deep-cut granite chair, Tirna studied Zilant, searching for the slightest insight into his true intentions. Seated across from her, the drow’s silver eyes tracked her movements. The specks of blood dotting his spiked white hair added to his menace. Tirna understood that their unspoken truce and her current respite were both temporary.

“Mother always warned me, never trust a traveling Varisian,” she finally said. “If I’d listened, maybe you wouldn’t have ruined my favorite jacket.”

“Nor would you have slain my favorite servant. He will be difficult to replace.” Zilant’s voice reminded Tirna of the twilight sky—dark with a red undertone.

“Then we can agree we’d both be better off if I’d listened to her.”

His lips pulled back into a toothy grin—like moonlight breaking across his midnight-colored skin. “I find listening to most females leads to nothing but trouble.”

Tirna chuckled despite the pain. She felt the wound along her midriff reopen, and a warm trickle ran down her side. Ignoring her discomfort, she watched the trail of blood drip down Zilant’s arm. Under other circumstances she might have enjoyed this game; instead she swallowed the lump building in her throat. It seemed like a bad tavern joke—two Varisians and a half-elf walk into Nar-Voth. Getting out would have been difficult even if all three had been able to fight.

“Are you wondering why you still breathe, *jenanquestrok*?”

“My obvious charm notwithstanding? You’re either in need of good conversation, or I’m more valuable alive,” she flippantly answered.

“Typical outlander, not knowing your place—you have no more value than the dirt beneath my feet.”

“Maybe not. But we each lack the strength to kill the other and my companions clearly aren’t going anywhere. So, here we sit. And chat. Perhaps you’re hoping for reinforcements? I wouldn’t. They’re

not likely to venture so far from Sekamina.”

Twirling his dagger in his left hand, Zilant adjusted the remains of his jerkin. She watched his nimble physique strain against the silk waistcoat. His speed rivaled her own. She hadn’t seen his dagger until it slid from his sleeve and sliced into Marcus and Relthar.

“Few outsiders survive long enough to enjoy my company. Consider yourself lucky, *jenanquestrok*.”

“Every moment I’m alive.” She leaned forward, testing her leg. The gash no longer bled, but the numbness remained. “I thought I had you when I knocked your rapier away. That was a nice trick with the blade. I’ll have to remember that.”

“Only a fool relies on a single weapon,” he replied, pushing the dagger’s point against his shoulder.

“I understand. I’m more than just blue eyes and charm.” Tirna glanced sideways, but still no movement. She sighed. “Nice laboratory.”

“I prefer *sanctuary*, and you are stalling.”

“Didn’t think I was hiding it.”

Raising an eyebrow, Zilant nodded. “Direct. How refreshing. Allow me to return the favor: my poisons don’t wear off. They *will* need my antitoxin.”

“And that patrol we caught wandering the paths above your *sanctuary* is more likely to meet your servant in Pharama’s line than they are to assist you.”

Zilant sat up. “Clever *jenanquestrok*. I understand why Marcus wanted to keep you for himself.”

“Meaning?”

“Unlike many of my kind, I find motivating outlanders to work against their own carries a delicious irony. I never *hired* your traveling Varisian to retrieve the book from Celwynvian. In exchange for my weakened poisons, he brings me a variety of new *anaquestra*—slave stock—for experimentation. Your large friend was promised to me as partial payment.”

“He thought I’d just leave Relthar?”

Rising slowly, the drow shuffled towards a table leaving a thin trail of scarlet. He picked up a golden vial.

“To outlanders *poison* means only death and paralysis. The art of crafting a true poison, something that exercises a corrupting force, is more than just fashioning a deadly toxin. The best among us can create an elixir that steals the voice or the sight. Or construct a tonic that adulterates the very essence of a person, making them more pliable and agreeable. Given enough doses, a sentient creature will begin to think it is their greatest desire to stay with their master, complying to his every whim with fervor. And in this endeavor, I am the greatest among my kind.”

Pushing off the chair, her fingers tensed into claws as pain ripped through her leg. Her stomach churned but she forced herself forward, each heartbeat pounding in time with her steps until she was within an inch of Marcus.

“Then why did Marcus attack you when we returned?”

Zilant flashed the dagger that had bloodied her earlier: gold-edged with thin ribbons of garnets adorning the flame shaped blade. “Marcus proposed a new deal: you for the dagger. I refused. I did not see your worth.”

Tirna nodded, “And then he decided that killing you would net him the dagger, the poisons, and two willing slaves. He always had a weakness for dangerous, pretty things. Why tell me this?”

“Understanding, *jenanquestrok*.” Smiling, Zilant tossed her the phial. “Antidote. Free your friend but know it makes little difference. It must sting being betrayed by one you trusted.”

Ignoring the pain in her knee, Tirna stalked around Marcus, running her hand over his chain armor. “I bought this for him in

Magnimar. Wasting good coin stings. Cold ale and a soft touch can heal a broken heart, but you can't fix this as easily. Treachery mustn't go unpunished."

Tirna looked up at Zilant, "May I have the dagger?"

Reluctantly, the drow handed her the blade. Light, yet balanced. She flourished it with grace. "You made a poor choice, Marcus. I'm worth at least two of these."

Leaning in, she kissed Marcus' cheek before slowly slicing an "x" where her lips had pressed.

Satisfied, she turned to Relthar. Patting his face, she forced the antitoxin down his throat, before slipping the blade behind her belt. "I'm weary of this game. How do you see this ending?"

Zilant leaned back against the table. "Failure is intolerable. I want the tome, then I will decide whether you and the others are worth killing, selling, or using. Your friend will be of no immediate use; my toxins leave the body ravaged."

Tirna clenched her jaw. "Let's see what we can do about your book."

Kneeling, she unclasped the large haversack hanging from Marcus' side. Her slender fingers followed his stiff-frozen extremities until they lit upon a tiny corked bottle just out of his grasp. As she stood, she concealed it in the hidden pocket sewn into her jacket's lining, then produced a green leather-bound book with her other hand.

"As promised, your hard-won copy of the largest tome in the grand library ruins of Celwynvian. May I attend to my friend until you decide our fates?"

Extending his hand, Zilant stepped over his servant's corpse. He opened the book on Marcus' back, examining the pages. "I am glad you understand your place."

Bending forward, lips brushing Marcus' ear, she hissed, "Poor Marcus, the

drow's not the most dangerous creature down here."

Behind them, Relthar sank to the floor with a thud. Tirna hobbled to him.

"Relth, say something—anything." Concern flooded her voice.

"Next time...I choose the place we almost die."

She hugged him before gently slapping his face. "You worried me."

Relthar weakly nodded, his ashy blonde hair sweeping the top of his bare shoulders.

"Sorry...about Marcus."

"You heard? Of course you heard; damned pointed ears hear everything."

He leaned hard against the wall. "We aren't going to walk out of here."

"Who said *walk*." Tirna's voice dropped to a whisper.

Pulling the small glass vial she'd lifted from her hidden pocket, she shook the three colored glass beads inside.

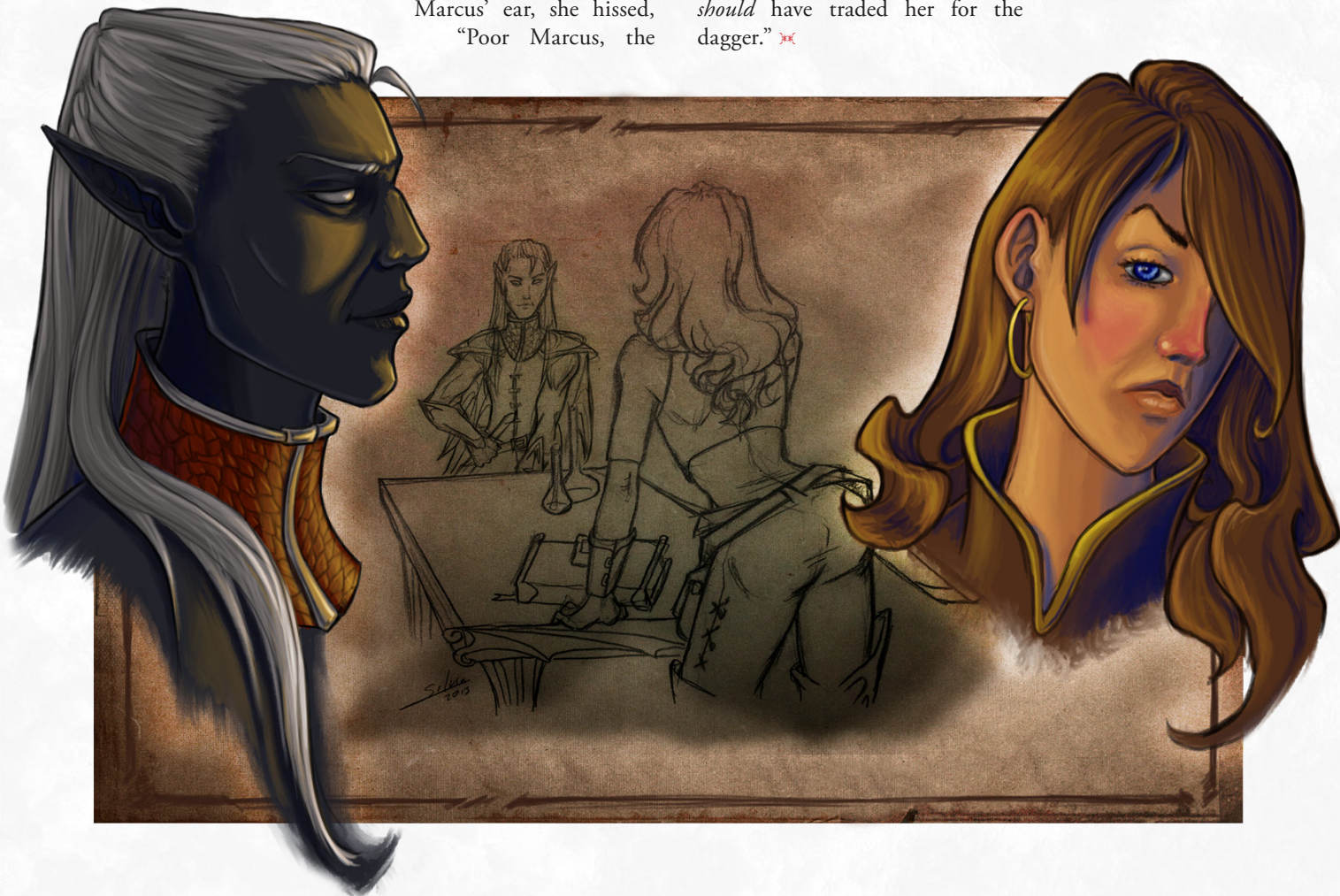
"Marcus' escape beads. So you figured out where he had the teleport spell's keyed to?"

"No, but it's not here." She handed one sphere over, then rose.

"Zilant, while I appreciate your offer of death or servitude, please accept my counter: Relthar and I are leaving. But keep Marcus as my gift to use however you please—preferably in the most debased way possible. He knows there are three of these beads and I could easily take him with us. Let him remember that. Until we meet again. May the sun never burn you."

The pair each crushed their glass beads, and pale light enveloped them. Tirna couldn't help but notice the grin of approval on the drow's face as he faded away.

Zilant looked at Marcus "Perhaps I *should* have traded her for the dagger." ✕



WEAL OR WOE: CHIAROSCURO

BY DAVID "HILL GIANT"

SCHWARTZ

ART BY FRANK "BULOZ"

HESSEFORT

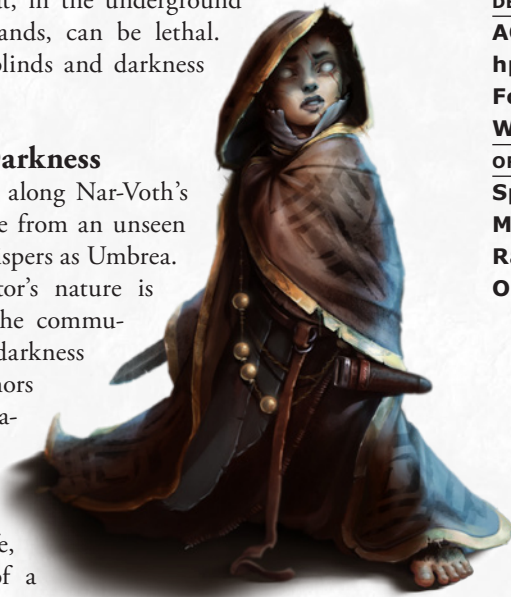
Surface dwellers associate light with goodness and darkness with evil, associations that, in the underground realm of the Darklands, can be lethal. In the Darklands, light blinds and darkness protects.

Weal: Truth in the Darkness

Good travelers in trouble along Nar-Voth's Long Walk find assistance from an unseen oracle known through whispers as Umbrea. This mysterious benefactor's nature is a matter of debate, for she communicates only in absolute darkness and flees from light. Rumors tell that beneath the oracle's concealing robes is a scarred and nearly blind halfling.

In her previous life, Umbrea was the slave of a cruel Chelaxian master who punished her every misstep with diabolic fire. Her only respite came when she hid away in the dark closets of her master's estate. Yet even then she feared what would come when he inevitably found her. On one occasion, her master's pyromania half-blinded Umbrea, but opened her eyes to greater things. Alone in the dark afterward, she received a vision of Benorus, the Angel of Lightless Chambers. The empyreal lord spoke soothing words to Umbrea, and directed her to caverns hidden beneath the mansion. That night, Umbrea escaped from her enslavement, following the tunnels down into the Darklands.

Now Umbrea uses the powers given to her by Benorus to help those in need. She provides safe passages through Nar-Voth to escaping slaves both from the surface above and Sekamina below. She also gives aid to explorers in the Darklands, as long as they seek the treasures of the earth for good purposes and not for selfish ends.



Adventure Hooks

- Lost in the Darklands, low on food, and deprived of light, the PCs receive unexpected help from a mysterious voice in the darkness.
- The PCs track a slave trading operation to caves leading down to the Darklands, where the slavers sell their captives to evil underground humanoids (perhaps drow or duergar). The PCs find an unexpected ally in an unseen oracle who dwells nearby.
- Before descending deeper into the Darklands, the PCs are advised to seek the counsel of the oracle Umbrea. However, in order to gain an audience with the seer, they must travel for a distance in complete darkness.

Boon

If the PCs earn Umbrea's respect—by helping free slaves or by defeating a monster that threatened the oracle—she offers to cast *divination* for them in exchange for a suitable offering to Benorus (i.e. the cost of the spell's material component).

UMBREA

CR 7

XP 3,200

Female halfling oracle 8 (*Advanced Player's Guide* 42)

NG Small humanoid (halfling)

Init +2; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +15

DEFENSE

AC 18, touch 14, flat-footed 15 (+4 armor, +3 Dex, +1 size)

hp 47 (8d8+8)

Fort +5, **Ref** +6, **Will** +9; +2 vs. fear

Weakness oracle's curse (clouded vision)

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft.

Melee mwk dagger +6 (1d3–2/19–20)

Ranged rock +11 (2d3–2)

Oracle Spells Known (CL 8th; concentration +12)

4th (4/day)—*cure critical wounds*, *divination*, *wall of stone*

3rd (6/day)—*cure serious wounds*, *dispel magic*, *meld into stone*, *remove curse*

2nd (7/day)—*augury*, *cure moderate wounds*, *lesser restoration*, *stone call*^{APG}, *zone of truth* (DC 16)

1st (7/day)—*cure light wounds*, *detect evil*, *divine favor*, *magic stone*, *remove fear*, *sanctuary* (DC 15), *shield of faith*

0 (at will)—*create water*, *detect magic*, *guidance*, *mending*, *purify food and drink*, *read magic*, *resistance*, *stabilize*

Mystery stone

TACTICS

Before Combat If combat is unavoidable, Umbrea casts *shield of faith* and *divine favor*.

During Combat Umbrea prefers to aid allies, casting *cure* spells and using *dispel magic* to counter enemy spellcasters. She attacks with thrown rocks enhanced with *magic stone* or mighty pebble.

Morale Umbrea will not flee if innocents are endangered.

Otherwise, she flees if wounded, or threatened with fire, taking advantage of earth glide or *wall of stone* to cut off pursuit.

STATISTICS

Str 6, **Dex** 16, **Con** 10, **Int** 12, **Wis** 14, **Cha** 18

Base Atk +6; **CMB** +3; **CMD** 16

Feats Brew Potion, Great Fortitude, Skill Focus (Knowledge [dungeoneering]), Toughness

Skills Acrobatics +11, Climb +9, Diplomacy +15,

Knowledge (dungeoneering) +12, Linguistics +4,
Perception +15, Survival +10

Languages Celestial, Common, Halfling, Elven, Terran,
Undercommon

SQ revelations (earth glide, rock throwing, mighty pebble),
weapon familiarity

Combat Gear *potion of cure moderate wounds*, *potion of lesser restoration*; **Other Gear** masterwork dagger, masterwork chain shirt, *dragonbone divination sticks*^{UE}, obsidian amulet (worth 100 gp)

Woe: Lies in the Light

The light at the end of the tunnel is the literal goal of travelers to the Darklands. Yet, in this subterranean realm, light is not always a sign of safety. Like the anglerfish of the deep sea, the will-o'-wisp that calls itself Calios uses light to lure its prey in the depths of the earth.

Calios uses its natural invisibility and *detect thoughts* to spy on potential victims. When it is ready to strike, the will-o'-wisp casts *major image* to create the illusion of a friendly traveler, often a human or dwarf bearing a lantern on pole. Using *misdirection* to conceal its true nature, Calios itself becomes the light source. Speaking through its illusory puppet, Calios offers to guide its victims to their goal, whether a nearby landmark or a safe route to the surface. Instead, it leads them into danger, often a natural trap, but sometimes a ferocious monster. Calios prefers perils such as pits and cave-ins that trap rather than kill, prolonging its victims' suffering and the will-o'-wisp's ability to feed.

Though Calios neither needs nor desires treasure, it understands that humanoids place great importance on such things. The remains of its recent victims can often be found nearby, usually at the bottom of a pit or buried beneath rubble. Depending on its prey's proclivities, Calios might use magic items as bait, whether from a recent victim or counterfeited with *magic aura*.

Adventure Hooks

- Lost in the Darklands, low on food, and deprived of light, the PCs receive unexpected "help" from a mysterious lantern-bearer.
- Investigating disappearances in a mine, the PCs discover a fissure leading into the Darklands and a survivor (in fact Calios's illusion) who offers to help the PCs find the missing miners.
- A tribe of svirfneblin attack the PCs mistaking their lanterns and torches for the will-o'-wisp Calios. When the deep gnomes realize the PCs are flesh and blood, they ask them to help defeat the evil aberration.

Drawback

If the PCs escape from Calios's traps, but fail to kill the will-o'-wisp, it follows them in order to gain vengeance. Calios follows the PCs invisibly and uses illusions and earth magic to cause accidents while

the PCs are spelunking. If the PCs have allies in the Darklands, the will-o'-wisp uses its illusions to discredit the characters and alienate their allies.

CALIOS

CR 9

XP 6,400

Will-o'-wisp sorcerer 7

CE Small aberration (air)

Init +12; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +33

DEFENSE

AC 25, touch 25, flat-footed 16; (+5 deflection, +8 Dex, +1 dodge, +1 size)

hp 80 (9d8+7d6+15)

Fort +6, **Ref** +13, **Will** +16

Defensive Abilities natural invisibility; **Immune** magic

OFFENSE

Speed fly 50 ft. (perfect)

Melee shock +18 touch (2d8 electricity)

Bloodline Spell-Like Abilities (CL 7th;
concentration +12)

7/day—*tremor* (trip, 30 ft., CMB +12)

Sorcerer Spells Known (CL 7th; concentration +12)

3rd (5/day)—*dispel magic*, *major image* (DC 20), *shifting sand*^{APG} (DC 19)

2nd (7/day)—*darkvision*, *detect thoughts* (DC 18),
misdirection (DC 19), *scorching ray*

1st (7/day)—*alarm*, *detect undead*, *expeditious excavation*^{APG}, *grease* (DC 17), *magic aura* (DC 18),
unseen servant

0 (at will)—*bleed* (DC 16), *dancing lights*, *detect magic*,
disrupt undead, *flare* (DC 16), *read magic*, *open/close*
(DC 16)

Bloodline deep earth (*Advanced Player's Guide*)

TACTICS

Before Combat Calios uses *major image* to conceal nearby traps. If its victims have no other sources of light, it extinguishes its own illumination to further confound them.

During Combat Calios uses spells and abilities such as *expeditious excavation*, *grease*, *shifting sand*, and *tremor* to force opponents into pits or cave-ins or to keep entrapped victims from escaping. It reserves *scorching ray* and other damaging attacks for opponents who cannot be contained, as quick deaths are less satisfying to the will-o'-wisp.

Morale Calios flees if reduced to less than half its maximum hit points. It uses natural invisibility and *dancing lights* to cover its escape.

STATISTICS

Str 1, **Dex** 27, **Con** 12, **Int** 19, **Wis** 18, **Cha** 20

Base Atk +9; **CMB** +3; **CMD** 21

Feats Alertness, Blind-Fight, Dodge, Greater Spell Focus (illusion), Improved Initiative, Skill Focus (Perception)^B, Spell Focus (illusion), Weapon Finesse, Weapon Focus (touch)

Skills Acrobatics +27, Bluff +24, Escape Artist +27, Fly +31, Knowledge (dungeoneering) +23, Perception +33, Sense Motive +24, Stealth +31

Languages Aklo, Common, Dwarven, Undercommon

SQ bloodline arcana (DC +1 if Calios and its target are both underground; included above), feed on fear, stonecunning

Treasure +1 *chainmail*, *slaying arrow* (humanoid, elf), masterwork composite shortbow (Str +3), bloodstone (worth 50 gp), 18 gp ✕





TALES OF THE ARCANES ARCHAEOLOGISTS:

BEACONS IN THE DARKLANDS

WRITTEN BY RYAN COSTELLO,
JR.

ART BY BECKY "CORVIDIMUS"
BARNES



Typical archeologists content themselves with sifting through the surface. The Arcane Archaeologists sift through the Darklands for eldritch secrets and magical treasures. When these intrepid arcanists find themselves in an unexplored area of Golarion, they dedicate time to cut through the unforgiving depths below, sustained by spells and wondrous items. The depths of the Darklands might frighten other adventurers, but they entice the Arcane Archeologists.

Formally, the Arcane Archaeologists are: Mazi Verrechia, an Andoren human who taught himself to devour tomes while wielding a torch between his teeth; Ahiyo Kyishi, a Tian elf who sometimes regrets not traveling to the Inner Sea region by way of cavern expanse; Redaluccala "Red" Daipeati, gnome tinkerer always on the lookout for new material he can use in the casting of spells and creation of items; and Leclair Shnag, a half-orc cryptozoologist only too happy to venture to parts of Golarion that do not know to dismiss her intellect because of her race. Together, they protect one another from the threats around every winding corner of the infinite caves, aid in the research of arcana required for surface dwellers to survive deep underground, and provide insight into every oddity they cross paths with in the Darklands.

TWISTED METAMAGIC

Evokers and other casters who enjoy filling battlefields with explosive energy hate the tight Darklands passages in which they are forced to fight. Without a safe stretch of uninterrupted space, casters lack the clearance to safely cast a *fireball*. Without at least a few dozen feet between bends, most of the lethality of a *lightning bolt* is absorbed by rock face. Sympathetic towards their plight, Mazi Verrechia sat down peaceably with arcanists he met underground to learn how they

compensated for their similar spells.

CLUSTERED SPELL (METAMAGIC)

You break up your spell to affect multiple smaller areas.

Benefit: This feat only works on spells that affect a burst, cone, or radius. A cluster spell's area can be broken up into up to three smaller areas, no area of which can be less than a 5 foot square and the sum of all areas cannot exceed the spell's area of effect. All of the spell's other requirements must be met to cast a clustered spell. For example, all areas of a clustered *color spray* must emanate from you and cannot extend beyond 15 feet. A clustered spell uses up a spell slot three levels higher than the spell's actual level.

CURVING SPELL (METAMAGIC)

You can modify your spell mid-trajectory.

Benefit: This feat only works on rays and spells that affect a line. A curving spell turns in an unusual way A curving ray ignores cover. A curving line may make one 45 degree turn, continuing in a straight line from the square in which it turned. A curving spell uses up a spell slot one level higher than the spell's actual level.

IMPROVED CURVING SPELL (METAMAGIC)

Benefit: This feat only works on rays and spells that affect a line. An improved curving spell turns in an exceptionally unusual way. An improved curving ray ignores cover and concealment. A curving line may make up to three 45 degree turns, continuing in a straight line from each square in which it turned. A curving spell uses up a spell slot two levels higher than the spell's actual level.

SUSCEPTIBILITY

The Darklands are dangerous and unpredictable, even to its native inhabitants. For safety's sake, many subterranean creatures, like drow and troglodytes, enslave enemies rather than kill them. However, if for every slave gained, a slaver or scout dies, the scales of balance between natives and hostiles within a community tips dangerously in mutiny's favour. As such, clever slavers rely heavily on mind-affecting magic to capture their slaves. Ahiyo Kyishi learned of a spell that turns allies into enemies and brought her findings to the surface for further study.

DECEPTION RECEPTION

School enchantment [mind-affecting]; **Level** bard 2, sorcerer/wizard 2, witch 2

Casting Time 1 standard action

Components V, S

Range close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)

Effect one or more rays

Duration 1 round/level

Saving Throw see text; **Spell Resistance** yes

The targets of your rays (1 plus 1 for every four levels beyond 3rd) are invisibly tainted to their allies. They gain an aura of deception with a range of 30 feet. Allies of the creature within their aura of deception do not consider the creature an ally for the purpose of their spell effects, and for mind-affecting influences other than the aura of deception, such as suggestion. Additionally, allies of the target must make a Will saving throw or suffer a -2 penalty against mind-affecting effects from sources other than the target.



OOZE MOST VIAL

Under most circumstances, crossing an ooze is a very bad thing. Crawling about like living stomachs, they dissolve and consume everything in their paths. However, in the hands of someone with nimbleness in their fingers and ingenuity in their mind, someone like tinkerer “Red” Daipeati, an ooze is the ingredient that fuels

Slime Vial	Cost
Empty slime vial arrowhead or bolt	1 gp
Empty slime vial bullet	5 gp
Full slime vial arrowhead or bolt	5 gp
Full slime vial bullet	25gp

inventions.

A slime vial is a hollow glass arrowhead, bolt, or bullet with a single-use plunger built for siphoning and containing slime extract. When used as ammunition, a slime vial deals standard damage for ammunition of its type, ignores hardness, and ignores damage reduction related to weapon type (DR/bludgeoning, piercing, or slashing). On a successful critical hit, instead of dealing extra damage, a slime vial deals 1d4 points of Constitution damage.

As a standard action, a character wielding an empty slime vial can perform a special combat maneuver that incurs an attack of opportunity against a living creature of the ooze type to fill the vial. Otherwise, a slime vial can be filled as a move action with slime extracted from a freshly killed ooze, dead no more than 1d4 minutes. The amount of slime that can be extracted from an ooze depends on the size of the ooze.

Size	Extract
Smaller than small	1d4-1 (minimum 0)
Small	1d4-1 (minimum 1)
Medium	1d4
Large	1d4+1
Larger than Large	2d4

There is a 5% chance a character extracting slime, whether from a living or dead ooze, contracts *slimy doom*. Characters with the poison use special ability never risk exposing themselves to slimy doom.

DEGENERATION

Not one to shy away from danger, even Leclair Shnag ran when she encountered a mutated offshoot of a bear the size of an elephant. With a deceptive musculature, a boltursus is more dangerous than a mere oversized bear. Additionally, its bite fogs the mind, and its gaze disintegrates the body. Shnag resorted to trapper tactics to properly study the first boltursus she discovered, where she learned enough to know it was not in her best interest to try capturing another.

Boltursus

With fluorescent eyes,

and a thick, short-haired hide pulled taut over its muscular frame, the presence of this beast is both frightening and sickening.

BOLTURSUS

CR 12

XP 19,200

N Huge magical beast

Init +5; **Senses** darkvision 120 ft., low-light vision; Perception +17

DEFENSE

AC 22, touch 9, flat-footed 21 (+1 Dex, +13 natural, -2 size)

hp 189 (18d10+90)

Fort +16, **Ref** +12, **Will** +10

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft.

Melee 2 claw +27 (1d8+11), bite +27 (2d6+11 plus poison)

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

Special Attacks gaze, poison

STATISTICS

Str 32, **Dex** 13, **Con** 21, **Int** 2, **Wis** 15, **Cha** 10

Base Atk +18; **CMB** +31; **CMD** 42 (46 vs. trip)

Feats Critical Focus, Endurance, Improved Initiative, Improved Iron Will, Iron Will, Lunge, Run, Skill Focus (Perception), Tiring Critical

Skills Climb +19, Perception +17, Swim +22; Racial Modifiers +4 Swim

ECOLOGY

Environment any underground

Organization solitary, pair, or pack (1–2 boltursi and 1–3 dire bears)

Treasure none

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Gaze (Ex) 1d4 Con damage, range 30 feet, Fortitude DC 24 negates. A creature killed by a boltursus' withering gaze turns into a basidiron (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 28*) in 1d4 days. The save DC is Constitution-based.

Poison (Ex) Bite; save Fort DC 24; frequency 1/round for 4 rounds; effect confusion; cure 2 consecutive saves.

Wandering into the Darklands is dangerous, even for ferocious predators used to caves. Boltursi are cave bear descendants, mutated over generations by a diet rich in twilight mushrooms and basidirons. Though tough enough to survive the poisons and hallucinogens of Darklands fungi, the bodies and minds of these wayward bears suffered. Their

salivary glands became tainted with hallucinatory pollen and their eyes developed amber cataracts, absorbing and projecting orange light like a pair of bullseye lanterns. Prolonged exposure to this light reduces a living creature to a basidiron. Despite these mutations, bears regard boltursi as kin. The species interbreed infrequently, resulting in boltursus cubs, typical in every way save for a high likelihood of albinism. Albino boltursi are as welcome in the pack as any other boltursi.

Adult boltursi weigh 3,000 lbs. ✖



THE MUNDANE PERILS OF NAB-VOOTH

BY ALEX "DAVIOT" PUTNAM

ART BY ANDREW DEFELICE

When it comes to fantastic bedtime stories about lightless lakes, vast grottos, giant fungi, twisted elves, and worse, most folk unknowingly speak of Sekamina, or the rarely-seen Orv. In reality, the majority of Darklands explorers spend most of their time spelunking through Nar-Voth, the 'Cold Walk'.

Adventurers used to foraging will be hard-pressed to find provisions. Food is scarce, and what water is present is often made undrinkable by toxic minerals. Aquifers or poor drainage can create sumps, flooded sections in the dips of tunnels. Beyond drowning hazards and murky, stagnant water, sumps seal off chambers, potentially concentrating bad air (*Pathfinder Gamemastery Guide 244*).

Though famous tales of green slime, yellow mold, and brain fungus abound, unless they are cultivated by others, hazardous or magical flora and oozes do not rule the uppermost Darklands. Geology does. The following are examples of perfectly natural dangers adventurers might face.

WHITE SLIME AND ACID CAVES

Most caves are formed by the action of water on stone, but some are created by pockets of acid eating away at the strata. Natural sulfates fuel the growth of white slime, also known as "snottites," which is a mucus-like, acidic film. Brushing up against it can eat holes in clothing or gear; longer contact deals acid damage (1 point per round). The waters of such caves are dangerously acidic and larger chambers possess acidic fumes.

DAMP

A term used by experienced Darklands travelers, "damp" describes a number of hazardous gases found there. Resistance to poison applies to saves against the secondary effects of damp, but not suffocation.

Blackdamp (CR 3): Worse than bad air, blackdamp occurs when nonflammable gases replace breathable air. A DC 15 Survival check

reveals the hazard early; affected areas hold enough air for 1d6+1 rounds before creatures begin to suffocate.

Whitedamp (CR 6): Infamous among miners, whitedamp is a toxic and explosive mix of carbon monoxide and hydrogen sulfide. Whitedamp functions as flammable vapors (*Pathfinder Gamemastery Guide 244*) with saves required every 10 minutes. On a failed save, a character is nauseated and takes 1d6 points of Wisdom damage. When a victim's Wisdom score is reduced to 0 as a result of whitedamp, he begins to suffocate.

Stinkdamp (CR 1 or CR 6): Also known as sewer gas, stinkdamp is found near volcanic vents and sulfur-laden water or formed in smaller quantities by the decay of biological matter. Mild stinkdamp (CR 1) is immediately obvious from its 'rotten egg' smell (DC 5 Perception or Survival to notice) and quickly saturates the nose. Creatures breathing it must make Fortitude saves (DC 15 + 1 per previous check) each hour or become sickened. Once sickened, the DC to detect the gas increases to 25 and the next failed save starts slow suffocation.

Concentrated stinkdamp (CR 6) acts as whitedamp, but victims are exhausted instead of nauseated and, upon taking Wisdom damage, lose their sense of smell until healed.

OUTBURST (CR 2+)

Typically found in coal strata weakened by mining, outbursts involve small explosions gases trapped within rock formations. A DC 20 Knowledge (engineering) or Profession (miner) check can recognize an area prone to outbursts. An outburst creates a small blast of rock that deals 2d6 bludgeoning damage to all creatures within 15 feet (Reflex save DC 15 for half) and may release blackdamp or flammable vapors.

ROCKBURST (CR 4+)

These explosions are caused when rock pillars or similar formations suddenly give way under immense pressure. They propel stone shrapnel in all directions and may cause a cave-in. Duergar have been known to weaken pillars to use rockbursts as traps. A rockburst does 3d6 bludgeoning and 3d6 piercing damage in a 20 ft. radius around a pillar (Reflex save DC 15 for half). Detecting potential rockbursts requires a DC 15 Knowledge(engineering) or Profession(miner) check. Loud cracking sounds often precede a rockburst by 1d6 rounds.

WINDBLASTS (CR 5)

Intense pressure waves can be caused by collapses or rock slides that take place near narrow corridors or tunnels that lack secondary shafts to disperse them. The collapse acts like a piston, forcing the air through the tunnel and creating a non-magical blast of wind that has the same effects as a *gust of wind* spell (DC 20 Fort save negates, no spell resistance).

MOUNTAIN BUMP/MINE BUMP

Bumps are small earth tremors that may coincide with rockbursts or windblasts. Some monsters can feel bumps from great distances and may travel to the source in search of carrion or wounded prey. ✖



PERSONALITIES OF NAB-VOTH:

A WANDERER'S GUIDE

BY LIZ "HEROSBACKPACK"

SMITH

ART BY DANNY

"GWOBETH" KROG

Beware both the strange and the ordinary when you meet them, for in the Darklands all hone their skills for survival. In particular, you may encounter the following:

Meaxie Nightworm (NE female gnome commoner 9): Meaxie's spiky, deep-blue hair bobs with each stride of Peta, a basilisk she rides. Meaxie raised Peta from birth and trained it to close its eyes on command. If asked, Meaxie claims cheerfully that the Darklands provide the perfect place to add to her collection, and displays a motley handful of stones. However, her true collection is comprised of statues created by Peta's gaze and then transported for storage into a twisting cave. There, she organises her victims by species and place of encounter.

Dakogan Bladeburn (LG male half-orc paladin 6): Although determined to clear as much evil from the Darklands as possible, Dakogan is pragmatic enough to pick and choose his battles. His battered armor still bears enough red and silver paint to declare him a follower of Ragathiel and his greatsword is honed to a sharp edge. His manner is curt but civil, his speech terse. He is reluctant to give anything away. He sometimes works with Saketa Nagrem to explore new areas.

Amber Contari (CG female

human bard 4/rogue [rake] 3): Long limbed and hatchet faced, with a talent for mockery and mimicry that causes more problems than it solves, Amber joined the Pathfinders to escape her hometown. Finding that she fit in well and liked the rewards, she stayed. Earning many scars in the pursuit of knowledge and new maps, she is currently engaged in mapping the entrances to and routes within the Darklands.

Saketa Nagrem (N female mongrelman oracle [lore] 6): Roughly resembling an oversized goblin with scarlet scales and a rat-like tail, Saketa prefers books to running around, but finds her fellow Pathfinders frequently drag her back into her native Darkland home as guide, scout or translator. Despite, or perhaps due to her restricted vision, she is as competent without light as with. Her preferred working partners are Dakogan or Amber Contari, but rarely both at once. When all three are together Saketa spends more of her time mediating arguments than getting her work done.

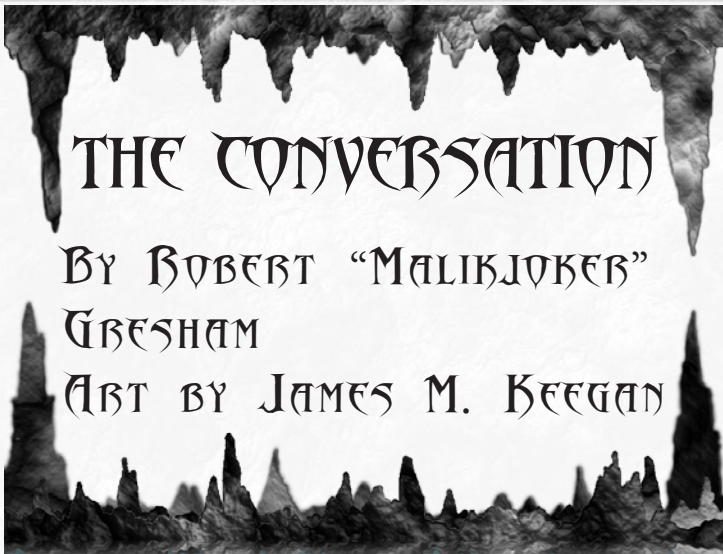
Lakikiav "Lace" Tseetl (NE male aranea): Usually found in half-elf form, Lace carries goods through the Darklands, criss-crossing Irrisen, the Lands of the Linnorm Kings and the Realm of the Mammoth Lords without respect for boundaries or politics. His only interests are profit and surviving long enough to make it, though he cultivates a suave manner and is always happy to talk on other subjects if he thinks it will bring a sale. Many would-be attackers find themselves webbed, bound, and sold or ransomed to the highest bidder.

Tarira Scentstalker (LE female duergar natural wererat ranger 3): In conversation Tarira tends to spit out pithy phrases in place of sentences. Hairless and gray-skinned even in rat form, she spends most of her time tracking down escaped slaves and bringing them back to the slave markets in Sverspume. She has negotiated a general bounty on each head delivered. When times are lean, Tarira will work with Lace. Her contacts in the market ensure a quick turnaround and his skills guarantee a steady stream of "product."

Yficaxx the Scuttler (CE old male drow expert 13): Over many years roaming the caves with his herd of giant spiders, Yficaxx has grown stooped and surly. He still milks his spiders of silk regularly, cleaning it and selling it to be spun and woven in settlements where ordinary silk is unavailable. However, he now milks poison from his spiders too, some for sale, some for the traps he keeps on his personal belongings. He views other creatures as either potential sources of money from trade, or potential food for his herd.

Tchllta (NE female morlock alchemist 10): After she was badly injured in a fall, Tchllta lost the use of her right arm and with it most of her hunting skills. Her clan turned on her and she fled down a twisting crack of a tunnel, escaping with her life, but little more. As she slowly healed, she became convinced that one day she would return to her clan and defeat them all. Tchllta engages in thievery when she thinks she can get away with it. She hunts as much by stealth and trickery as by direct attack. When things go awry she uses her fungal concoctions to offset her injuries. ✕





THE CONVERSATION

BY ROBERT "MALIKJOKER"

GRESHAM

ART BY JAMES M. KEEGAN

“**V**h good, you're awake. I was worried for a moment that you weren't going to pull through.”

The voice is raspy and wet, like stones tumbling down a muddy hill. Looking around, you see you are in a rocky cavern with jagged stalactites bearing down from above like the teeth of a hungry predator. The air is musty and humid and reminds you of rotting lettuce.

Your last memory is descending into the cliff-side tunnels and of the grey skinned dwarves that attacked you. Your ribs still throb from where the largest of the bunch stomped on you while you were face down in the earth. Touching your side you feel warm, sticky fluid seeping through your over-shirt.

“I'm so pleased you survived your capture. So many don't. The duergar can be rough when taking captives. It's been so many years since I've had a guest of your...shall we say... *stature*? I do hope you aren't all dull growls and groans like my last visitor. He didn't speak well, you see, and I yearn for interesting conversation.”

The light in the cavern is a dim green, emanating from several multi-capped fungus patches scattered about the stone floor. The mushroom stalks sway slightly, dancing hypnotically. The source of the voice is difficult to make out, but it seems to come from the center of the chamber. Waist-high stalagmites block most of your view, their rough, long shadows stretching across the walls.

“You can speak, can't you? I'll be so very upset if you can't converse. Those grey-skinned duergar owe me an offering and will suffer dearly if you're nothing more than a boring sack of meat.”

The voice is louder now and closer. The words are urgent. Your eyes are still adjusting to the phosphorescent light when a movement in the center of the chamber causes the shadows to flicker. Something large scrapes

along the floor. Slowly, your eyes focus and make out a thin, ropy tentacle snaking over the stones toward your feet. You try to avoid them but the pain in your knees is too intense. Another thin, pale appendage worms toward you. And then another and another. A scream traps itself in your throat as they wrap themselves around your legs and begin *squeezing*. Hot agony courses through your calves. Finally the scream escapes.

“Ah! It shrieks! But does it speak?”

“Yes!” You hear yourself shout. “I can speak.”

The ugly ropes unwind from your boots and the burning pain subsides. You catch your breath slowly.

“How delightful,” the raspy voice says. “You're from the surface are you not? Tell me about the world beneath the sky.”

The pale tentacles retreat and you see a shape before you shudder. One of the stalagmites begins moving, and through the diffused light you see it's coming towards you.

“The surface world? I don't understand what you mean.” Your words don't come easy and you can feel the sticky wetness at your side spreading.

“The realms of men of course,” the voice nearly screams. “Tell me, do mountainous castles still stand for false kings to cower behind? Do men still ride the backs of beasts as they vainly battle dragons

and demons? Or has something else come to replace and enslave man and rule in the chaotic waste? Tell me. *I must know.*”

“I am free!” You reply more out of habit than anything else. “I am an Eagle Knight of Andoran, a servant of justice and an enemy of tyranny.”

“Oh, a knight,” the stalagmite coos. It moves closer and now you can see it in all its horrific glory. A bulging, blood-shot eye, the size of a melon, sits inside a jagged socket above a crescent shaped maw wide enough to swallow a man whole. Long grey teeth, like spear heads, line its terrible mouth and it spits black bile as it speaks.

“Long ago I devoured a knight,” the creature says. “He proclaimed love for his king until his last breath. Still, for a valorous knight, he didn't say anything interesting. He complained he knew no songs, no tales of glory. He said was no bard. Are you a bard, Knight? What *is* a bard?”

The creature is only a few feet from you and its ropy arms twist intimidatingly on the ground. Its hot, moist breath stings your nostrils and brings tears to your eyes.

“A bard's an entertainer,” you say with difficulty. “A storyteller, dancer and fool.”

“You must be a bard, then, as you're surely a fool. Tell me, fool. How did you come to be here—to be captured my duergar servants?”

“I followed a slaver near the coast. I hoped his lair was in the caves and that I might free any captives. The tunnels are deeper than I thought. I got lost.”

“Lost following a slaver, only to become my slave. Oh, how deliciously ironic! How does it feel to be my prey? To know that soon you'll be torn apart by my teeth and savored



as your flesh slides into my guts?”

“Please...don't...”

The thing laughs—a laugh full of malice.

“Oh, but I will. Tracker of slaves...that sounds tedious. Your death will be a blessed end to your bland existence. You should be thanking me instead of begging for such a life.”

The tendrils snake toward you again. The way they undulate reminds you of earthworms on rain-soaked cobblestones.

“No!” you shout. “It’s not boring at all! I chase pirates across the sea!”

“You mean to tell me you track these slavers over the sea? How exciting! What I wouldn’t give to see the oceans beneath the sky with my own eye!”

The creature smacks its lips, drooling over you.

“What does it smell like, the sea?”

“It smells like...salt...the air is light and clean. It smells like...*living*.”

“The men of the sea, don’t they sing songs? Do you know any of them? Sing now for me, Eagle Knight. Sing as I devour you. Sing as sweetly as your lively sea.”

The creature is mere inches from you now. Black bile dribbles down from its horrific mouth and lands on your legs and chest. The maw opens as wide as your head.

“I won’t sing! Not if you eat me!” Your heart beats furiously, threatening to burst from your chest and your fevered brain desperately tries to find a way to escape. “If you let me live, I’ll sing you the greatest of all songs!”

The thing hovers over you, its veiny, bloodshot eye twitching in its socket. The cat-like pupil thins to a slit.

“But you’re my food, Little Knight, I suppose if you sing me the greatest of all songs I can let you live for a while longer. I could eat just your legs. You can live without legs.”

It retreats only a foot away, its sickly, appendages caressing your thighs lovingly as it waits and *listens*. You scan the chamber for anything that could serve as a weapon to deliver you from the monster, but all you see are the gnawed bones of previous ‘guests’.

“By the Eye of Abendingo, where the maiden dropped her sphere,” you begin off key. The creature’s stony eyelid begins to drop and its fanged maw turns in a scowl.

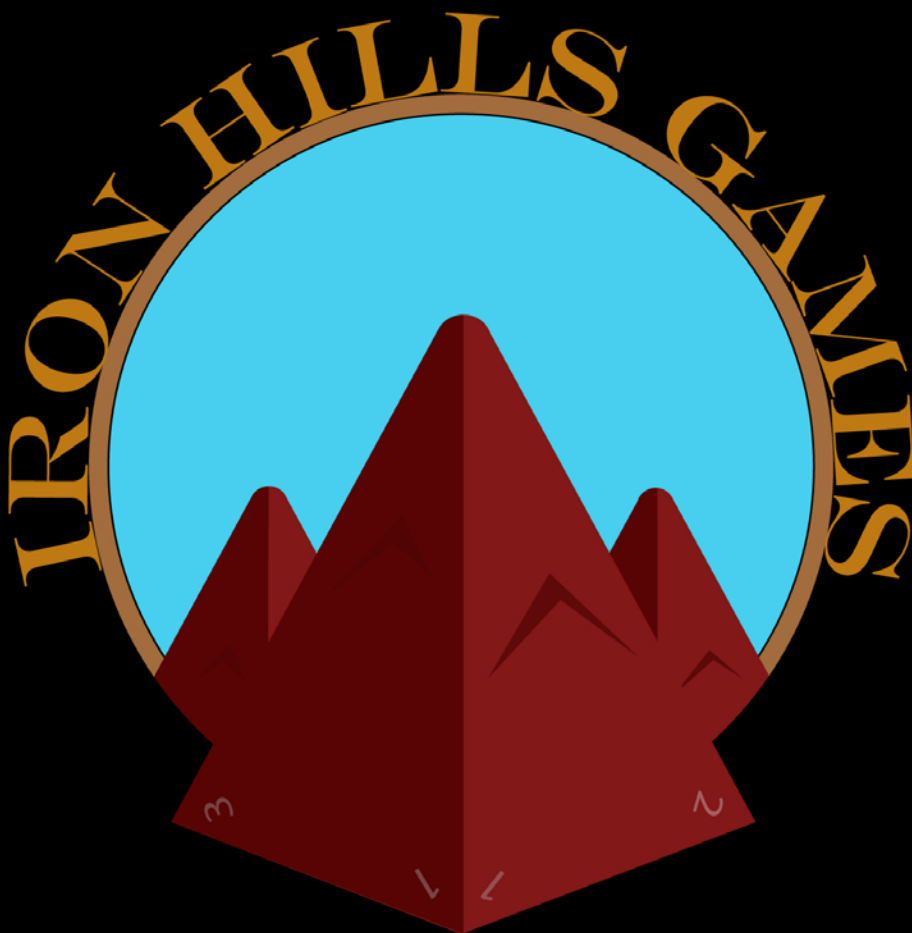
“The crested oceans open, taking star-crossed lovers side by side,” you continue. Your voice—your whole body—shakes uncontrollably as adrenaline courses through the lifeblood in your veins.

The creature bends in. Its fetid mouth almost envelops your head. The putrid saliva drips onto your face as its jagged, spear-teeth poke at your throat. Its pale tentacles tighten around your lower half.

“By Iomedae, no!” From within, you feel the power of the divine, the spark of the goddess in your blood. A blinding light rises in you and explodes outward, filling the chamber. The pain in your side fades, replaced by a renewed vigor. You reach out, grasping a long thigh bone. Your fingers curl around it and you bring it up, slamming it against the thing’s body. You feel Iomedae’s righteous anger in your very soul, and as the bone strikes, the full force of her wrath strikes with it.

Your blow catches the thing off guard, and its ropy arms release your legs. You strike hard with the bone again, hitting the creature’s eye. It pops. Oily milk runs down its face, as it screams loudly and curses in a language you can’t understand. A third and final strike silences the thing. Its worm-like tentacles go still.

You make your way out of the cavern and find a long tunnel. The passage opens to a wider cavern full of stalagmites bathed in murky green light. Ahead of you, you hear voices whispering to each other. They sound rough, like stones tumbling down a muddy hill. ✕



sometimes the treasure
is more dangerous ...

Damnable Things

Rings
Artifacts, vol 1
Weapons (Fall 2013)

there’s something familiar
about those guys ...

The Other Guys

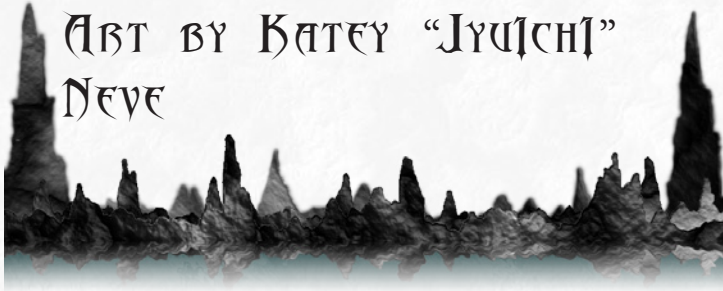
Vol. 1 (Fall 2013)



WORDS FROM MANY BOARDS

THE DARKLANDS

BY CHRISTOPHER
"NEZZEBAL" BOWE &
ELAINE "PHOUKA" BETTS
ART BY KATEY "JYUICHI"
NEVE



Delving the Darklands

by Satesh Sassorum, the Pathfinder Poet from Padiskar

Rocky ruins of many remnant kingdoms
greeted our weather-worn boots and
dusty clothes
as our party of nine
delved deep into the Darklands
below earth's rocky skin.

First were the derro,
with milk-white eyes and
dandelion hair,
whooping and gibbering in
raving tongues,
whirling and twirling their
atlatls and chains.
Two of our group were
stricken down.

Descending down we
encountered the drow,
obsidian elves of cavernous
planes,
their hands wreathed in
fire,
and eyes burning with ire,
three more companions
prepared
for funeral pyre.

Only four of our group remained



when we reached the crumbling
ziggurats of Deep Tolguth
in the rumored region of Orv.

Inside a towering step pyramid,
carved with long-dead languages
and serpentine forms,
caked with moss and niter stains,
the object we sought lay entombed--
a hide-bound book of mighty lore.

We cut our way through waves
of deadly Darklands denizens,
while pursued by shadowed forms
full of needle teeth and pincered feet,
a living maelstrom of fanged appetite.

Before we saw the bright blue
of Golarion's sky
all my brethren were lost
to arrows, flame, and fear--
and with book in hand
only I returned alive.

Dreams Beyond the Night

An Ode to Ilvarandin

I dream beyond the Night,
Beyond the Moon,
Beyond the Sky,
I dream beyond the Stars,
Beyond the Light.

I dream a blessed dream
About a place
I've never been,

I dream fantastic dreams--
Ilvarandin.

A place beneath the Day,
Beneath the Sun,
Beneath the Earth,
I dream the wondrous place
Of my soul's birth.

A peaceful, glorious place
Of untold wealth,
Of untold grace,
A place beside the Sea--
Ilvarandin!

Oh! How I long to be
In that City
Beside the Sea,
The tenebrous domain--
Ilvarandin.

I'll not rest till I find,
Beyond all Space,
Beyond all Time,
The true home of my soul--
Ilvarandin! ❄

SAFE HAVENS IN THE DARKLANDS

BY TAYLOR

“CALEBT GORDAN” HUBLEY

ART BY JESS DOOR

While the Darklands have a reputation for being deadly and dangerous, there are many locations full of peace and beauty. While usually difficult to find, these spots can be well worth the journey to visit. Be warned though, for some of them are fiercely protected, surrounded by deadly monsters and hazards.

THE HALLS OF HISTORY'S VOICE

In a time now forgotten, these halls were built to capture the sounds of the universe. The original purpose is unknown, but the sounds captured are still echoing through the halls. The side effect of their construction is that every sound made in the halls echoes on, clearly at first and then fading into the mix of voices, bells, chants, and music that reverberates throughout.

The monks that live around the halls continue an ancient tradition of chanting current histories and bringing in unique and important sounds, but they do not allow anyone to speak or make noise while visiting the hall. They are also selective about who they allow into the halls, testing them for days before granting permission to enter.

Visitors find a beautiful but alien soundscape and environment inside the halls. Some have reported whispers of divine conversation, and others say they heard the most beautiful and angelic music. Not all the sounds are pleasing however, as a few have claimed to have overheard a god's death cry, a whisper of a dark secret, and the voices of an entire civilization ending in a great calamity. No matter what is heard, the experience is often life-changing and awe-inspiring.

THE CRYSTAL CAVERN OF ISYS

Recently discovered by adventuring dwarves, this cavern is filled with giant crystal formations that light up and sparkle in amazing displays. Even a single torch illuminates whole formations, leading travelers to come from all corners of the Darklands to experiment with different light sources. This is not nearly as miraculous, however, as the calming effect of the light on the mind and soul, which some have come to believe will heal them of fears, stress, and worry.

The crystals range in size from as small as fingers to as tall and massive as redwood trees. Nearly all of them are flawless, with no visible cracks or chips, and have red, yellow, and purple

hues. Some of them are quite transparent, while others have a cloudy nature. The color and shape of the crystal doesn't seem to determine how the light plays through it, which baffles visitors experiencing the lights.

Isys, the first dwarf to open the chamber, still resides near the cavern and has sworn to protect it. This has not been a difficult task, as many who come to take or destroy the crystals stop once in the light and are unable to put up much of a fight for Isys and her guards. Those who have been able to steal crystals have discovered that they don't have the same strange abilities as when they are in the cavern.

THE GOD'S BREATH

The God's Breath is a pit from which blows an intense rushing wind. The wind is so strong that it can keep bodies and large objects aloft. There are several levels of caverns that this pit passes through, eventually exiting out the surface in the center of a small town that goes by the same name.

The pit is many hundreds of feet deep, and the rushing wind comes from different temperature and pressures between the bottom of the pit and the surface. With regular and routine changes in the environment above and below, the speed of the wind coming out of the pit varies. At its weakest it slows down falls to a safe rate, while at its strongest it can sweep grown men from the bottom and toss them nearly a hundred feet above the town.

The nature of the winds mean that the pit is an excellent entrance and exit to the Darklands, and thus attracts both adventurers and Darklands natives alike, causing the town of God's Breath to prosper. Fortunately, the town's well-trained guard and many adventurers keep anything dangerous from coming out of the pit. ✕



WEIRD FUNGI OF THE DARKLANDS

MORE THAN MUSHROOMS TO DELIGHT AND HOBBIFY

BY NICHOLAS "LAVACHILD"
MILASICH
ART BY WILLIAM DODDS

After the strange vegetable pygmies chased off my drow pursuers, I took the opportunity to drink a fungus tonic that rendered me unseen before they returned. I then entered into a faerie-land of fungal gardens tended by the creatures. You might imagine a forest of mushrooms, but I tell you that one cannot begin to envision the menagerie of strange, alien forms that infested that otherworldly cavern. -Koreah Azmeren, Pathfinder Chronicles, Volume 44.

The mushroom forest is a standard trope of the Darklands, and indeed the depths of Nar-Voth and Sekemina host many. However, numberless varieties of fungi dwell deep within Golarion. These species are well known to deep dwellers, who can make untrained Knowledge (dungeoneering) or Knowledge (nature) checks to identify them, but are unfamiliar to visitors from the surface. Generally, outsiders must make be trained in Knowledge (dungeoneering) to identify species and properties of said species, though underground-dwelling druids may use Knowledge (nature), instead. Surface druids can make the checks with a 5-point increase to the check DC due to their unfamiliarity with the Darklands. Products of these fungi can be identified with a Knowledge (local or nature) check, again with a 5-point increase to the DC for those unfamiliar with the Darklands.

Globe of Socothbenoth: These hand-sized spherical puffballs glow faintly red or orange. These non-dangerous fungi are worth 10 gp a pound to most Darklands races. They have a sweet, musky flavor, and can be brewed into beer or a potent deep red liquor known as

puffball cruor. Vegepygmies grow globes of Socothbenoth and smear the fungus' sticky fluids onto their bodies, inducing an altered state (creature gains the staggered condition for 1d4 minutes and wanders about randomly). Due to the vegepygmies' terrible addiction, whole communities of the small plant creatures will render themselves insensate with these puffballs if they discover a large amount.

Noctula's Rod: These six to eight foot pale white stalks are covered with small, deep-blue tubercles. A 15-foot radius cloud of pheromones, irresistible to most creatures, surrounds this fungus. Anyone moving within the radius must make a DC 15 Will save or move forward and rub himself against the fungus. The rubbing removes several of the tubercles, which attach themselves to the victim with a strong glue (DC 19 Str check or 1d4 hours of scraping with a knife to remove). The tubercles are harmless, but if the carrier approaches within 15 feet of another stand of the fungus, the tubercles will explode in a cloud spore, creating a 10 ft. radius effect equal to *fog cloud* that lasts for 1d4 rounds.

Lamashtu's Brood: This strange brown fungus bears the appearance of a little, warped man made of brown fungal material with a round, blank doll's head. It often grows over mass graves, and absorbs pieces of the consciousnesses of those buried below. The animate fungal men tug and pull as if trying to free their limbs from the ground and can be heard muttering, moaning and whispering. Very large homunculi fungi sometimes transform into fungus leshies. Careful listeners can



sometimes learn secrets from the creatures, depending on what they say (roll percentile dice to determine):

d%	Secret
1-20	Forbidden lore too horrible to comprehend: 1d4 wisdom damage and staggered for 1 round, unless the listener succeeds at a DC 15 Will save.
21-40	Childish laughter and nonsense-songs.
41-60	Muttering about everyday life in the area: +2 to Knowledge (dungeoneering) or Knowledge (local) in the area for the next 24 hours.
61-80	Sentient: Characters can ask the fungus questions about the local area, and it will answer. It constantly asks for blood and rotten meat to be massaged into its limbs.
81-00	Fungus sage: The homonculus is a sage in one random area of knowledge, and consultation with the creature adds +5 to Knowledge checks and allows untrained checks to be made.

Spike of Mazmezz (CR 3): This is a tall, elongated, black and green fungus, constantly surrounded by clouds of winged insects attracted by its foul smell. The spike's aroma also attracts certain dark fey, like corrupted sprites. Anyone approaching within 20 feet of the Spike of Mazmezz must make a DC 16 Fortitude save or be nauseated for 1d4 rounds. Corrupted sprites, atomies and grigs often lair in stands of these foul growths, enjoying the fungi's stench and attacking visitors overcome by it. This fungus does have one benefit: if a small amount is dried, it can be made into a pill (DC 15 Craft [alchemy] check) that automatically stabilizes a character reduced below 0 hit points. This effect lasts for 24 hours. This medicine is powerfully narcotic to driders, who greatly prize it.

Ardad's Lily: These tentacled balls atop narrow stalks look surprisingly similar to surface flowers. They rely on insects and faeries to spread their spores and glow in a variety of colors from brilliant white, through pink, green, purple and blue. Many have a faerie-fire effect of multicolored, dancing halos similar to auroras. Several Darklands races raise these fungi for their beauty and trade a glowing powder derived from dried lilies for use as a cosmetic and luminous ink base.

Haagenti's Cup: These large cup-shaped fungi sit atop pale, fleshy stalks. A liquid mixture of fungal emissions and cave water with unpredictable alchemical powers rests within these cups. A DC 20 Knowledge (nature) or Craft (alchemy) check identifies the fluid's power. Failing the check by 5 or more results in a misdiagnosis (the GM should roll secretly to determine the fluid's power).

A Haagenti's Cup holds 1d8+1 doses of liquid, which can be gathered as potions. These potions last 1d4+1 weeks before corrupting into a poison or changing into a random potion. Haagenti's Cups regain their fluid at a rate of 1 dose per week, up to their maximum amount of doses. Intelligent underground dwellers, who frown upon

others stealing their resources, guard Haagenti's Cups with valuable liquids.

Haagenti's Cup fluid powers (roll 1d12):

d12	Effect
1	Drinker is affected by <i>faerie fire</i> for 5 minutes
2	Drinker receives the results of <i>cure light wounds</i> at caster level 3.
3	Drinker is afflicted by <i>blindness/deafness</i> (50% chance of each) if he fails a DC 15 Fortitude save
4	Drinker receives the results of a <i>fly</i> spell for 5 minutes
5	Drinker is poisoned, as if by blue whinnis.
6	Drinker receives the result of a <i>lesser restoration</i> at caster level 5.
7	Drinker is affected by an <i>alter self</i> spell and gains purple skin with blue spots
8	Drinker receives the result of a <i>rage</i> spell cast at caster level 7.
9	Drinker must make a DC 17 Will save or be affected by <i>confusion</i> for 5 rounds
10	Drinker gains the effect of a <i>heroism</i> spell for 1 hour.
11	Drinker gains the effect of an <i>invisibility</i> spell for 2 minutes
12	Drinker must make a DC 15 Will save or be <i>feebleminded</i> for 1d4 hours.

Jubilex's Scion: This fungus appears as a mass of small mushrooms and tiny white threads. When it senses the approach of creatures, it undergoes a defensive transformation. The fungus melts into a bright green slime, which aggressively approaches the enemy. A DC 25 Knowledge (nature or dungeoneering) check reveals that the slime is harmless. Very rarely (1% of the time), the slime is an actual green slime with a move speed of 5 feet.

Shax Pudding: This bizarre growth resembles a white, quivering mound, laced with blood red drops. Ingesting the drops of red liquid grants a +4 alchemical bonus to Bluff checks for 1d4 hours. However, there is a 20% chance that during that time the imbiber will make a full attack on an ally during the next combat or stressful situation. A DC 20 Knowledge (nature or dungeoneering) check reveals the first effect, but it requires a DC 27 check to determine the second effect.

Cyth-V'sugling (CR 1): These fungi are masses of long, white, hairy tendrils, resembling a yeti whose hair has grown wild beyond belief. Anyone coming within 5 feet of this fungus, or touching it, must make a DC 15 Fortitude save or contract a fungal skin disease whereupon patches of this fungus grow painfully from the skin.

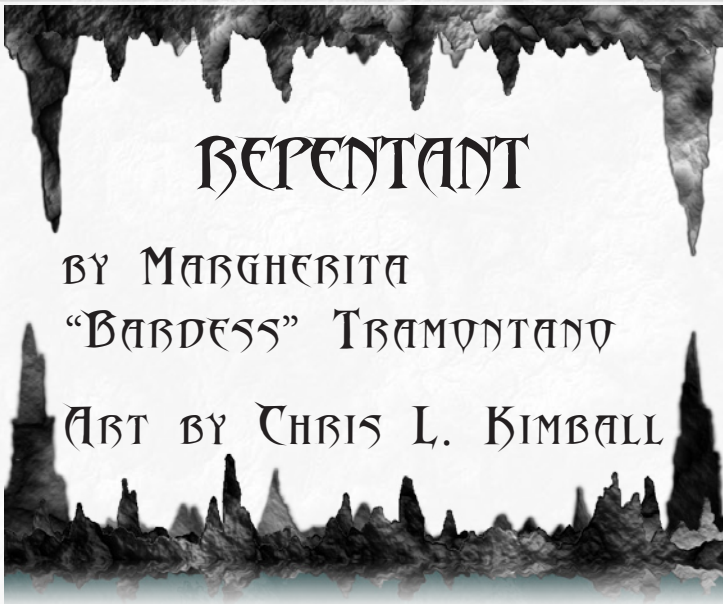
CYTH-V'SUGLING GROWTHS

Type disease, proximity; **Save** Fortitude DC 15

Onset 1 day; **Frequency** 1/day

Effect 1 Con damage, **Cure** 2 saves ✕





REPENTANT

BY MARGHERITA

“BARDESS” TRAMONTANO

ART BY CHRIS L. KIMBALL

They believed, hoped.

They thought to regain daylight. To become whole, with a single shape.

Long had the mongrelmen’s tribe lived in the depths, hiding from more powerful creatures, longing for peace, longing, perhaps, just to be forgotten.

Then their shaman had a vision. It came from an unknown, nameless god. Yet everyone had believed it. They left their village, and followed the shaman on a long, arduous pilgrimage.

Their new home was located in a cave that opened to the surface. It was half below, half above the earth. If they remained there, the mysterious god had said, they would one day become fully human, or elvish, or orcish. It did not matter. Anything was better than an ugly, painful amalgam of different races. The shaman tirelessly preached the truth of it. He had the Scroll.

Everything might have been for nothing. Their new god might have abandoned them. He might have never existed at all.

Still, the mongrelmen believed they were safe in this place. They believed they could live in peace. How naïve.

The ghouls arrived, unnoticed, around twilight.

There were few weapons in the village, mere farming tools. Males and females alike struggled bravely to save their children and themselves, but the undead were too many. The shaman watched the scene from the relative safety of his hut, powerless to help. He was too old, his power too meager. Soon, the village would be destroyed.

Unless...

The wanderer. The pale, lean man he had found unconscious in the sands the day before. A strange, demon-like creature had loomed over him, taking flight as soon as it saw the mongrelman approaching. The shaman had taken him to the hamlet, put him in a bed, despite his fellows’ protests. He had seen the man’s appearance as an omen from the new god. Maybe he had been right. Maybe the stranger was sent to help them.

Minos Bonifar’s burning throat told him he was still alive. Damn. He had hoped it was all finished when he fell in the scorching heat, starving and parched. Bloodless.

Why would a dhampir venture into the deep desert, under the endless, painful sunlight, with so few living beings to feed upon, if not to die? Maybe in death he would have found freedom from the tearing torment that had haunted him for so long, had haunted him since that cursed inquisitor had found his hiding place, cutting through Minos’s undead minions as though they were nothing... and had spared his

life. And made him repent.

“I forbid you to die by your own hand,” the holy hunter said, “until you find a way to atone for the evil you have committed. I’m sure you will.”

Curse him, curse him and his false mercy! All Minos had ever wanted in life was death. Death to purify him from the sin of his blasphemous birth. Death to end his suffering, but not before killing his own vampire father for bringing him into this world, as Minos had killed his mother at his birth. He had been always an outcast, a self-hating, world-hating outcast, in search of revenge and oblivion, even before turning to witchcraft. Even before creating a band of dead thieves to plunder the countryside, even before gaining his a legend, his infamy.

Where did his quasit familiar go? Maybe his patron had finally abandoned him and withdrew it. All the better. The wicked critter’s poisonous tongue had continuously tormented him in the last weeks, about how he had debased himself, how he would never be able to turn his back on evil. It was right. Even Minos didn’t believe he could. He hated what he had been before. He hated what he was now. He hated having to repent, and surely no god could ever forgive him, no matter what the inquisitor said. He knew that his inner conflict, along with the hunger, the solitude, the baking desert sun, had finally driven him crazy. He could hear his own maniacal laughter or spasmodic crying as if they were someone else’s. Better still, he thought. Perhaps he would be able to watch his own death as if though it were someone else’s.

Instead... who had picked him up from the sand and given him water? Who hid him from the sun in a rough bed, in the comforting shadow? What were those annoying noises outside? Why wouldn’t they allow him to let go of his life?

And who did that voice in his head belong to?

Do you want to change?

Who are you?

Do you want to be better than you are now?

What are you saying? I want...

What you really want is to be free from yourself. I desire the same thing. Maybe... we can help each other.

How?

Serve me. Tend to my chosen people. And in exchange, in time... you will have the chance to become something else. Just like me. Now go. Save them.

Minos jerked awake, the thirst for blood burning in his throat. The noises were real.

He jumped to the doorway of a strange hut with inhuman speed, not noticing the frightened old mongrelman leaning on a staff. Minos’s eyes took in the scene outside.

What were these creatures? Whatever their nature, whatever their reasons, they had obviously helped him. The undead, he knew. He also knew that they were too much for the villagers to handle.

Save them, the voice had said.

Save them? How? Throw himself at the ghouls? He could sense that he no longer held power over the undead. He really didn’t care about these poor things. What could he possibly do?

He saw a ghoull pulling a baby’s leg to wrench it from a fallen, crying mother.

Oh, damn. At least dying this way would be better than baking in the sun.

Where was his spear? He snatched it from the hut and ran outside, yelling without words. Without thinking, he raised one pale, long-nailed hand in the air, as if ordering the undead to stop.

The ghouls stared at him, with a questioning look.



And some of them stopped.
What...?

As if heeding a call he had never voiced the hypnotized ghouls turned to face their fellows, and lashed out at them. A shout of wonder and relief came from the fighting mongrelmen.

This was something Minos could never do as a witch. He blinked, just as two undead came at him from the side.

He pierced one with his spear and burned the other with white, healing fire, trying to ignore the searing agony as the positive energy passed through him. Again, Minos raised his mysterious call, and more enemies became allies.

Before long, the last of the ghouls had fallen or fled. The village was saved.

The mongrelmen rushed about the dhampir, praising and thanking him in their squeaky voices. Minos backed away in confusion, protecting himself with his spear.

"You were chosen."

Minos turned to see the shaman looking up at him, with knowing eyes.

"What are you babbling about, Old One?"

"Our god, the Repentant, chose you. Didn't you hear his voice? Didn't he give you his power to rebuke those evil creatures and save us?"

How did this creature know?

"You are his Voice now", the shaman continued. "I am too old and weak to protect my people. Stay with us. Be our witch doctor."

"Why should I do such a thing? I may be crazy but I'm not stupid".

"Because of this." The shaman extended a worn parchment tied with a red string. "This is the Scroll. The Repentant God gave it to me. But I do not have the power to learn the spell it contains: the spell that can purify the blood and make our children whole one day. I suspect that you have the same wish."

Purify the blood? Minos snatched the scroll from the shaman's hands. His expert eyes quickly deciphered the script, and his arm trembled. Yes, this spell could make a halfblood whole! He could see that it was beyond his power to learn. But maybe, in time...

"Stay with us. Tend to the village; pay the debt of your evil deeds by aiding our people. And when you become powerful enough, you will be able to help them and yourself."

The shaman knew many things, indeed. The Repentant God, eh? Perhaps they did have something in common.

The beating of leathery wings behind him announced his quasi's return: a reminder that his path to redemption would not be short, or easy. Minos didn't turn around. "I could stay," he said, grinning, "But my services aren't free."

He looked around and saw enough living beings to provide nourishment forever without having to kill anyone. "Let's say: a few drops of blood, apiece." ✕



BESTIARY

BY MORGAN BOEHRINGER,
CHRIS "BAVENDYF"
CROWE, NICK "PHLOID"
FLOYD, JASON "MIKAZE"
GABBETT, CHRISTOPH
"BUYANVE" GIMMLER,
FRANK "GMSOLSPIRAL"
GOBI, WOJCIECH
"DREJK" GRUCHALA, JEFF
"SHADOWBORN" LEE,
FRASER "FRIEND" NELUND,
MIKE "TAIG" WELHAM

ART BY BECKY
"CORVIDIMUS" BARNES,
ANDREW DEFELICE,
WILLIAM DODDS,
PETER FAIRFAX, NICK
"PHLOID" FLOYD,
SILVIA "CRESCENTMOON"
GONZALEZ, MICHAEL
JAECKS, CHRIS KIMBALL,
JASON KIRCKOF, DANNY
"GWOBETH" KROG, TODD
WESTCOT

BLOOD MAIDEN

Bloodied claws adorn the wing-arms of this dark skinned, white-haired hybrid of a drow and a bat.

BLOOD MAIDEN

CR 8

XP 4,800

CE Medium monstrous humanoid

Init +8; **Senses** bloodsense 60 ft., darkvision 60ft.; Perception +20

DEFENSE

AC 21, touch 15, flat-footed 16 (+1 dodge, +4 Dex, +6 natural)

hp 102 (12d10+36); vampiric healing

Fort +7, **Ref** +12, **Will** +11

DR 5/silver; **Immune** disease; **Resist** cold 10, electricity 10; **SR** 19

Weakness light blindness

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft., climb 20 ft., fly 60 ft. (poor)

Melee 2 claws +15 (1d8+3 plus profuse bleeding), bite +15 (1d4+3 plus siphon blood)

Special Attacks profuse bleeding (1d4), siphon blood (DC 18)

Spell-like Abilities (CL 12th; concentration +14)

At will—dancing lights, darkness, faerie fire

STATISTICS

Str 16, **Dex** 18, **Con** 16, **Int** 11, **Wis** 13, **Cha** 15

Base Atk +12; **CMB** +15; **CMD** 30

Feats Blind-Fight, Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Power Attack

Skills Climb +11, Fly +15, Perception +20, Stealth +23, Survival +16; Racial Modifiers +4 Perception, +4 Stealth

Languages Drow Sign Language, Elven, Undercommon

ECOLOGY

Environment any underground

Organization solitary, pair, or flight (3-12)

Treasure standard

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Bloodsense (Su) A blood maiden can pinpoint the location of living creatures that have blood as though she has blindsense. If the creature is bleeding, this ability works as blindsight.

Profuse Bleeding (Ex) A blood maiden's claws deal 1d4 points of bleed damage. Profuse bleeding stacks with itself and any other effect that deals bleed damage.

Siphon Blood (Su) A blood maiden's bite momentarily accelerates bleeding. If the blood maiden hits with her bite attack against a creature suffering from a bleed effect, the target must immediately make a Fortitude saving throw (DC 18) or take 1 point of Constitution damage. Creatures not suffering from any bleed effects are unaffected. The save DC is Charisma-based.

Vampiric Healing (Su) Blood maidens grow stronger when blood is spilled nearby. When living creatures within 30 feet of a blood maiden suffer bleed damage, she regains hit points equal to the amount of bleed damage. While this ability is in effect, tendrils of thin crimson mist trail from the victim's wounds to the blood maiden's mouth. A blood maiden can suppress or reactivate this ability as a free action.

Blood maidens are vicious and bloodthirsty creatures, combining the worst traits of drow and vampires. They are fleshcrafted drow assassins, guardians, and scouts, with a rising number of blood

maidens going wild and stalking the slums of drow cities and nearby tunnels.

The first blood maiden arose from a botched ritual performed by a drow cultist of Zura, the demon lord of vampires. Instead of turning into a vampire, the ritualist transformed into a living, bloodsucking image of her patron, a hybrid of a humanoid and a bat. Another group of Zura worshipers deliberately copied the imperfect ritual, mistaking its unintended effect for their patron's blessing, but they were unable to repeat it. The truth about the ritual's flawed nature was discovered only after enemies eradicated the cult's cell and let the cultist's notes fall into the hands of a renegade drow wizard. Drawing upon the original design and copying the flaws in its performance, the wizard combined necromancy and demonology to develop a fleshcrafting formula to successfully create more blood maidens.

Since that time, blood maidens, like driders before them, started to breed true, or almost true. There are no known male specimens yet—all subsequent generations of blood maidens have been sired by male drow. Fleshcrafters and other scholars have yet to determine the reasons for this strange development.

Despite their taste for blood and their vampiric healing ability, blood maidens are not restricted to feeding on blood. They can eat raw meat, but blood sustains them to a much greater degree than regular food. Life expectancy of blood maidens remains unknown and will probably remain so for some time. As of yet, blood maidens in the service of their drow masters show no signs of aging.

A blood maiden claw can be used as an additional material component that is consumed in the casting of vampiric touch, allowing the caster to replace any temporary hit points granted by the spell with an equal amount of healing.

Blood Lady (CR +1)

A more powerful form of blood maiden arising from a transformed drow noble, a blood lady has the advanced simple template, all the spell-like abilities of a drow noble, and +1 spell resistance.



CAVE CAMEL

This creature looks like a cross between a goat and a camel, but with gray scales in place of the rough fur of its desert cousins.

CAVE CAMEL

CR 3

XP 800

N Large animal

Init +3; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision, scent; Perception +7

DEFENSE

AC 17, touch 12, flat-footed 14 (+3 Dex, +5 natural, -1 size)

hp 26 (4d8+8)

Fort +6, **Ref** +7, **Will** +3

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft.

Melee bite +6 (1d4+4), 2 hooves +1 (1d6+2)

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

Special Attack spit (+5 ranged touch)

STATISTICS

Str 19, **Dex** 16, **Con** 14, **Int** 2, **Wis** 11, **Cha** 5

Base Atk +3; **CMB** +8; **CMD** 21 (25 vs. trip)

Feats Endurance, Iron Will

Skills Acrobatics +3 (+7 jumping), Perception +7

SQ docile

ECOLOGY

Environment any underground

Organization solitary, pair, or herd (3-10)

Treasure none

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Spit (Ex) Once per hour, a cave camel can regurgitate the contents of its stomach, spitting the foul material at a single target within 10 ft. With a successful ranged touch attack, the target takes 1d6 points of acid damage, and must make a DC 14 Fortitude save or be sickened for 1d4 rounds. The save DC is Constitution-based.

Surefooted (Ex) Cave camels ignore the effects of difficult terrain in rocky terrain or dense rubble.

Favored by the duergar, cave camels are said to be a magical crossbreed of camels, goats, and rhinos. Short legs with goat-like hooves, large black eyes, an obvious hump and thick, rough skin are the key features of this unusual creature. Perhaps the most remarkable feature of these ill-tempered beasts is their ability to eat nearly anything and control their remarkable digestive system enough to spit like a camel. Fully mature cave camels have strongly acidic bile that also contains digestive enzymes which neutralize poisons, allowing them to eat some of the deadlier varieties of mold and fungi that thrive in the Darklands. The spit of a cave camel is valued by alchemists as both an antidote to poison and as an acid.

Cave Camel Companions

Starting Statistics: **Size** Large; **Speed** 40 ft.; **AC** +2 natural armor; **Attack** bite (1d4), 2 hooves (1d6); or spit (ranged touch attack, target is sickened for 1d4 rounds, range 10 feet, once per hour); **Ability Scores** Str 18, Dex 16, Con 14, Int 2, Wis 11, Cha 4; **Special Qualities** darkvision 60 ft., scent.

4th-Level Advancement: **AC** +3 natural armor; **Ability Scores** Str +4, Con +2; **Special Attacks** Spit attack deals 1d6 acid damage as well as causing the sickened condition.

CAVE HARPY

This outlandish and feral creature is caparisoned in a leather harness studded with bone fragments and all manner of tooth, shell and stone trinkets swinging wildly about. Its stubby wings appear unsuitable for more than rudimentary flight, but the fearsome morningstar it carries signals a fulsome desire for violence.



CAVE HARPY CR 2

XP 600

CE Medium monstrous humanoid

Init +2; **Senses** blindsight 60ft; Perception +5

DEFENSE

AC 16, touch 13, flat-footed 13 (+2 armor, +2 Dex, +1 dodge, +1 natural)

hp 13 (2d10+2)

Fort +1, **Ref** +5, **Will** +4

Immune gaze attacks, visual effects, illusions, and attacks relying on sight

Vulnerability sound-based spells and effects

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft., fly 30 ft. (clumsy)

Melee mwk bone morningstar +5 (1d8), 2 talons -1 (1d6+1)

Special Attacks sickening scream

STATISTICS

Str 14, **Dex** 15, **Con** 12, **Int** 7, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 15

Base Atk +2; **CMB** +4; **CMD** 17

Feats Dodge

Skills Bluff +6, Climb +6, Fly -2 (+6 when gliding), Intimidate +6, Perception +5; **Racial Modifiers** +4 Bluff, +8 Fly when gliding

Languages Undercommon

SQ glide

Treasure standard (masterwork bone morningstar, bone studded leather armor, other treasure)

ECOLOGY

Environment underground

Organization solitary, pair or flight (2-12)

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Glide (Ex) Cave harpies are clumsy fliers, but they can use their vestigial

wings to glide. Cave harpies can make a DC 15 Fly check to fall safely from any height without taking falling damage, as if using *feather fall*. When falling safely, a cave harpy may make an additional DC 15 Fly check to glide, moving 5 feet laterally for every 20 feet she falls. Cave harpies gain a +8 Racial bonus to their Fly checks when gliding.

Sickening Scream (Su) As a standard action, a cave harpy can unleash a sickening scream on all targets in a 15-ft. cone. Targeted creatures must make a Fort save (DC 14) or become sickened for 1d4 rounds. Alternatively, instead of a cone-shaped burst, the cave harpy may utter a focused pulse that has the same effect, but targets a single creature within (30 feet) and increases the save DC by 2 (Fort save DC 16) Once a target has succeeded on a save against this ability saves, it cannot be affected by the same cave harpy's sickening scream for 24 hours. This is a sub-sonic effect that targets any corporeal creature, regardless of whether it can actually hear. The save DC is Charisma-based and includes a +1 racial bonus.

Distant relatives of harpies, these feral creatures share their cousins' penchant for murder and mayhem. Possessed of vestigial wings that provide rudimentary flight capability, cave harpies delight in swooping down on their victims from cavern eyries or the heights of ruined underground buildings. Relying on their tough hide and sickening scream, cave harpies fight to the death, punishing foes with their cruel bone morningstars. Cave harpies are masterful crafters of bone and leather items, covering themselves in vile head-dresses made of jawbones and teeth, studded leather armor made of cured skin and spinal column pieces and their morningstars are grotesque amalgams of skulls, fangs, femurs and other bones. Cave harpies share their surface cousins' love of taking their victims' possessions, even body parts.

Cave harpies' adaptations to underground life have left them completely blind, gifting them with an immunity to visual effects but also making them seem alien and eerie—apt to miss visual cues and holding their heads at odd angles to better discern and act upon faint aural, olfactory or other sensory information.



AGATHION, CHIROPTEAL

This dark skinned, small-framed humanoid has leathery wings extending from her thin arms and oversized bat-like ears framing her head.

CHIROPTEAL

CR 5

XP 1,600

NG Small outsider (agathion, extraplanar, good)

Init +4; **Senses** blindsight 60 ft., darkvision 60 ft., detect magic, low-light vision, see invisibility; Perception +12

Aura fear aura (20 ft., DC 16)

DEFENSE

AC 19, touch 16, flat-footed 14 (+4 Dex, +1 dodge, +3 natural, +1 size)

hp 39 (6d10+6)

Fort +3, **Ref** +9, **Will** +8; +4 vs. poison

DR 5/evil or silver; **Immune** electricity, petrification;

Resist cold 10, sonic 10; **SR** 17

Weakness light sensitivity

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft., fly 90 ft. (good)

Melee 2 claws +12 (1d4, attach), bite +11 (1d6 plus 1d6 bleed)

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 6th; concentration +8)

Constant—*detect magic*, see *invisibility*, *speaking with animals*

At will—*aid*, *darkness*, *ear-piercing scream* (DC 13), *ghost sound* (DC 12), *stabilize*

3/day—*blur* (self only), *distressing tone* (DC 14)

1/day—*discordant blast* (DC 16)

STATISTICS

Str 10, **Dex** 19, **Con** 12, **Int** 13, **Wis** 16, **Cha** 15

Base Atk +6; **CMB** +5; **CMD** 20

Feats Dodge, Flyby Attack, Weapon FinesseB, Weapon Focus (claw)

Skills Bluff +11, Diplomacy +11, Fly +19, Knowledge (planes) +10, Perception +12, Sense Motive +12, Stealth +13

Languages Celestial, Draconic, Infernal; *speaking with animals*, truespeech

SQ lay on hands (3d6, 5/day, as a 6th-level paladin)

Environment any underground (Nirvana)

Organization solitary, pair, or colony (5–8)

Treasure standard

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Echo Burst (Su) A chiroptéal can overload her larynx to release a deafening blast of sound in all directions, dealing 5d6 sonic damage and deafening all enemies in a 50 ft.-radius burst. A successful DC 17 Fort save halves the damage and negates the deafness. The save DC is Charisma-based, and includes a +2 racial bonus.

Chiropteals are small, thin-boned humanoids with bat-like features, including leathery wings that grow from their arms, an extended “finger” on each wing, and long, clawed toes. Their human-like faces typically bear smallish features save for slightly larger-than-normal eyes and wide, pointed ears—each one at least half as large as the chiroptéal’s head. While many have faces most humanoids might consider pleasant, some appear surprisingly hideous, most often due to oversized and misshapen noses. They dress simply and lightly, carrying little beyond what can be held close to their bodies to avoid

entangling themselves in flight. When venturing out in daylight, they often rely on smoked goggles to shield their sensitive eyes until they’ve fully acclimated.

Hailing from the darker and deeper regions of the plane of Nirvana, chiropteals are more at home in the Darklands than most of their agathion kin, though they find few like-minded folk there. Deep in the Darklands, they typically roost near trade routes or adopt svirfneblin villages to protect. Closer to the surface, they often take on roles as guardians to keep mortals from venturing into dangerous territory unawares or to keep the dangers of the Darklands contained.

Chiropteals tend to live simply, preferring a diet of fruit and fungi and days spent in communal song in their homes’ protective darkness. However, they readily enjoy the perks of other civilizations, and communities that offer their comforts freely often find themselves with guardians who are loathe to leave a good thing once they’ve found it. Many chiropteals understand that others find their appearance frightening, and as such they can be slow to approach mortal communities on the surface. Instead they work from the shadows as much as possible, making careful introductions to more open-minded folk.

Though they prefer to avoid direct confrontations and employ hit and run tactics, chiropteals also gang up and latch onto larger foes to subdue them. Their anesthetizing bites can

cause enemies to quickly bleed out, though chiropteals typically stabilize those they are forced to fight. Chiropteals’ echolocation abilities give them a knack for mapping out subterranean tunnels and labyrinths also make them valuable allies for those exploring the Darklands or other dark and enclosed spaces. They seldom lead the charge against evil, recognizing their own relative frailty, but offer eager support to bolster sturdier allies.

A typical chiroptéal is 3 feet tall and weighs 40 pounds. They most commonly become bards, clerics, or rogues. A rare few are blind, and these individuals are considered particularly blessed and believed to be attuned with the echoes of creation still bouncing off of planar borders. Such chiropteals often become oracles.

CTHONIC CREEPER

This hulking mass of leafless tangled vines and roots surrounds a cavernous maw. Nearby oozes hurry about, tending to this massive plant’s needs.

CTHONIC CREEPER

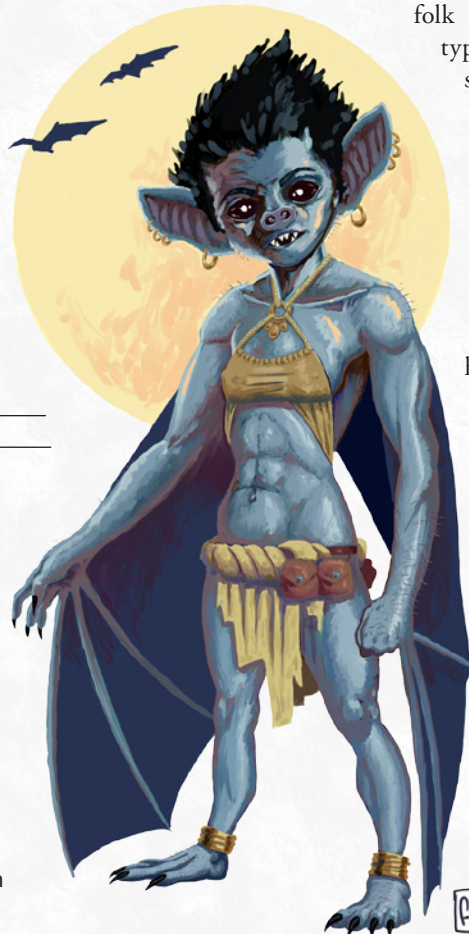
CR 12

XP 19,200

N Huge plant

Init +2; **Senses** low-light vision, tremorsense 30 ft.; Perception +26

Aura ooze-controlling pheromones (100 ft., DC 24)



DEFENSE

AC 26, touch 6, flat-footed 26 (-2 Dex, +20 natural, -2 size)

hp 161 (17d8+85); fast healing 10

Fort +17, **Ref** +5, **Will** +9

Defensive Abilities plant traits; **Immune** acid, plant traits

OFFENSE

Speed 5 ft.

Melee bite +21 (2d6+10 plus grab/19-20), 4 tentacles +18 (1d8+5 plus pull)

Space 15 ft.; **Reach** 15 ft. (25 ft. with tentacles)

Special Attacks fast swallow, pull (tentacle, 10 ft.), swallow whole (5d6 acid damage, AC 20, 16 hp)

STATISTICS

Str 30, **Dex** 7, **Con** 20, **Int** 10, **Wis** 15, **Cha** 15

Base Attack +12; **CMB** +24 (+28 grapple); **CMD** 32 (cannot be tripped)

Feats Ability Focus (ooze-controlling pheromones), Great Fortitude, Improved Initiative, Improved Critical (bite), Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes, Multiattack, Skill Focus (Perception), Weapon Focus (bite)

Skills Knowledge (dungeoneering) +17, Perception +28

Languages Sylvan (understands only)

SQ disgorge, enhance oozes, infest ooze, master of the mindless

ECOLOGY

Environment any underground (the Darklands)

Organization solitary or colony (1 plus 2-6 or more infested oozes of any type)

Treasure standard

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Disgorge (Ex) As a swift action a cthonic creeper can spit up any swallowed victim into an adjacent square.

Enhance Oozes (Ex) Over long periods of time, oozes controlled by a cthonic creeper grow larger and more formidable. Oozes under the influence of the creeper's infestation for one week or more gain both the advanced and giant creature simple templates.

Infest Ooze (Ex) Any ooze touched by a cthonic creeper becomes infested with a symbiotic slime which bonds them. Such oozes must make a DC 22 Fortitude save or fall under the cthonic creeper's control, as if under the effects of *dominate monster*. An ooze that succeed on the save is immune to that cthonic creeper's infest ooze ability for 24 hours. The save DC is Charisma-based, and includes a +2 racial bonus.

Master the Mindless (Ex) A cthonic creeper can use its special abilities to control oozes despite their immunity to mind-affecting effects.

Ooze-Controlling Pheromones (Ex) Though cthonic creepers naturally exude pheromones that draw ooze type creatures to them, once per day, a creeper may exude a greater amount of such pheromones in a 100-foot spread as a standard action. All ooze type creatures in this area must make a DC 22 Fortitude save or become dominated by the cthonic creeper (as per *dominate monster*). Oozes that succeed on the save are

immune to that cthonic creeper's pheromones for 24 hours. The save DC is Charisma-based.

These mostly-immobile plants once dwelled in lush jungles where food was plentiful. However, some long ago environmental disaster forced them into the Darklands. The plants adapted to their new habitat by forming a symbiotic relationship with a strange species of slime mold. The creepers developed the ability to release pheromones

that both lured and pacified oozes. In the passing eons, they learned to forge stronger bonds with the oozes, using them as guards, hunters and a means of spreading their pollen to the distant reaches of the Darklands.

Cthonic creepers often sit at the heart of ooze "colonies" directing them like a queen would its workers. Most are tasked with finding food, returning to the plant and allowing the plant to "eat" them and take a portion of the ooze's nutrients. Some serve as guards and yet others are sent ranging far and wide carrying one creeper's pollen that they might find another and continue the species. Oozes that enter the creature's maw to give it food are infested with a mix of pollen, enzymes and the slime mold that lines the plant's cavernous stomach. Once an ooze becomes the servant of a creeper, no amount of time or distance can break the creeper's hold over it.



DRUEGÖBAS

This nightmarish, centaurian fusion incorporates the body and legs are those of a scaled reptilian monster with the torso of a stocky humanoid. The creature's face bears an unkempt beard and eyes that glow with pale green fire, while its legs end in large claws that gouge deep markings in the rock.

DRUEGÖBAS CR 12

XP 19,200

LE Large aberration

Init +2; **Senses** darkvision 120 ft., tremorsense 60 ft.; Perception +13

DEFENSE

AC 23, touch 11, flat-footed 21 (+2 Dex, +12 natural, -1 size)

hp 123 (13d8+65)

Fort +9, **Ref** +6, **Will** +11; +2 vs. spells

Defensive Abilities caustic blood, stability; **Immune** paralysis, phantasms, poison

Weaknesses light sensitivity

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft., climb 20 ft.

Melee +1 *adamantine thundering light hammer* +16/+11 (1d6+7), bite +10 (1d8+3)

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

Special Attacks forge breath (4d6 fire damage, 40-ft. spread, DC 21)

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 9th; Wisdom based; concentration +12)

STATISTICS

Str 14, Dex 10, Con —, Int 3, Wis 11, Cha 13

Base Atk +3; CMB +5; CMD 15

Feats Ability Focus (ghoul fever), Iron Will, Toughness

Skills Perception +8

Languages Necril

SQ death throes

ECOLOGY

Environment any

Organization solitary, pair or mob (3-12)

Treasure standard

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Death Throes (Su)

A bloated devourer reduced to 0 hit points explodes in a splatter of negative energy-infused goo that deals 3d6 points of damage to adjacent living creatures (DC 13 Will save for half damage) and heals the same amount to adjacent undead creatures. The save DC is Charisma-based.

Disease (Su) Ghoul Fever: Bite—injury;

save Fort DC 15; onset 1 day; frequency 1/day; effect 1d3 Con and 1d3 Dex damage; cure 2 consecutive saves. The save DC is Charisma-based. A humanoid who dies of ghoul fever rises as a ghoul at the next midnight. A humanoid who becomes a ghoul in this way retains none of the abilities it possessed in life. It is not under the control of any other ghouls, but it hungers for the flesh of the living and behaves like a normal ghoul in all respects. A humanoid of 4 Hit Dice or more rises as a ghast.

Rapacious Devouring (Ex) When a bloated devourer performs a *coup de grace* with its bite, the critical multiplier increases to x4.

In rare circumstances, a newly arisen ghoul gorges itself on tainted flesh, especially the corpses of other ghouls, resulting in a terrible transformation. The alchemist-necromancers of the ghoul kingdom of Nemret Noktoria studied this phenomenon and, with experimentation and practice, learned how to feed ghouls necrotic flesh and



alchemical concoctions, forcing them to mutate into a stronger but dumber breed of ghoul to serve as workers, soldiers, and walking reservoirs of negative energy.

GHOUL, GAUNT ASCETIC

A skeletally-thin humanoid with pale skin inscribed with arcane symbols gazes through glowing red eyes. Its mouth is disfigured and lacking teeth.

GAUNT ASCETIC GHOUL

CR 7

XP 3,200

LE Medium Undead

Init +6; Senses darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +18

DEFENSE

AC 20, touch 12, flat-footed 18 (+3 armor, +2 Dex, +5 natural)

hp 85 (9d8+45)

Fort +8, Ref +5, Will +10

Defensive Abilities channel resistance +4; **Immune** undead traits

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee disrupting touch +8 touch (4d8+5 and paralysis)

Special Attacks channel negative energy (10/day, 5d6, DC 19), paralysis (1d4+1 rounds, DC 19)

STATISTICS

Str 14, Dex 14, Con —, Int 15, Wis 19, Cha 21

Base Atk +6; CMB +8; CMD 20

Feats Alertness, Command Undead, Extra Channel, Improved Initiative, Quick Channel^{UM}

Skills Diplomacy +14, Knowledge (religion) +14, Perception +18, Sense Motive +18, Spellcraft +14, Stealth +13

Languages Aklo, Necril, Undercommon

SQ animating touch

ECOLOGY

Environment any land

Organization solitary or pair

Treasure standard (studded leather armor, other treasure)

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Animating Touch (Sp) As a standard action, a gaunt ascetic can expend a single channel energy use to animate a corpse with a touch, raising the body as an uncontrolled zombie or a skeleton with a maximum number of hit dice equal to the ascetic's Hit Dice.

Channel Negative Energy (Su) A gaunt ascetic channels negative energy as an evil cleric of a level equal to its Hit Dice.

Disrupting Touch (Su) A gaunt ascetic's touch deals damage equal to 4d8 points of damage plus the ascetic's Charisma bonus to any creature, living or undead.

Few ghouls can resist the urge to feed. Even fewer are capable of deliberate fasting. But among those rare few, some choose to delve into



the depths of deathless hunger. There they find dark enlightenment, an answer to the very nature of the consuming darkness that animates all undead beings. They learn that appeasing hunger only blinds one to the truth, stopping a ghoul from achieving more. This heretical message, which gaunt ascetics spread among the undying denizens of Nemret Noktoria draws the wrath of the Kabriri priesthood, who hunt ascetics as rebels who challenge the rule of Him Who Gnaws.

LUMIN

This blue, winged worm sheds considerably more light than its size would suggest.

LUMIN CR 1

XP 400

CG Diminutive aberration (fire)

Init +2; **Senses** darkvision 120 ft.; Perception +9

DEFENSE

AC 16, touch 16, flat-footed 14 (+2 Dex, +4 size)

hp 11 (2d8+2)

Fort +1, **Ref** +4, **Will** +3

Immune fire

Weaknesses vulnerable to cold

OFFENSE

Speed 5 ft., fly 30 ft. (good)

Melee fire touch +1 (2d4 fire)

Space 1 ft.; **Reach** 0 ft.

STATISTICS

Str 2, **Dex** 15, **Con** 12, **Int** 8, **Wis** 11, **Cha** 13

Base Atk +1; **CMB** -1; **CMD** 11 (can't be tripped)

Feats Lightning Reflexes

Skills Fly +17, Knowledge (dungeoneering) +4, Perception +9;

Racial Modifiers +4 Perception

Languages Undercommon

SQ luminous, unusual diet

ECOLOGY

Environment any land or underground

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

Treasure none

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Luminous (Su) A lumin naturally sheds light as a torch. A lumin can control the intensity of the light as a swift action, reducing it to the dimness of a candle or even extinguishing it entirely. This light dispels magical darkness of 2nd level or lower.

Unusual Diet (Ex) A lumin does not require food and water like other creatures; however, once per day, it requires exposure to sunlight, light equivalent to daylight or stronger, or 10 points of fire damage (its fire immunity prevents any actual damage). If a lumin does not receive this "food," it suffers from starvation after 3 days. A lumin that takes nonlethal damage from starvation can no longer use its luminous ability.

Phosphorescent vermin are common in the Darklands. But long ago, a colony of phosphorescent worms was exposed to a pocket of exotic radiation, which increased both the intensity of the creatures' illumination and their intelligence and caused them to grow wings. The colony of worms bred true, and the creatures now known as the lumins spread throughout the Darklands. A typical lumin looks like a big firefly, measuring 5 inches in length with a 7-inch wingspan, and weighs 8 ounces.

A Darklands lumin knows about the dangerous creatures where it lives and the places it can find sustenance—usually exposed lava flows

or a forge belonging to an indifferent (or even friendly) creature. Very rarely, a lumin appears above ground and will stay for a time, but some biological lure eventually overcomes its desire to stay there, and it returns to the Darklands.

Lumins have developed a sense of altruism and choose help those unfamiliar with the Darklands to navigate its subterranean passages. They will accompany others and provide light, freeing their temporary companions from wasting their light-giving torches or spells. A lumin will give warning by extinguishing its illumination when a dangerous creature approaches. In return, the creature asks its companions only for magical light or a fire so it can feed.

A 4th-level spellcaster with the Improved Familiar feat can gain a lumin as a familiar.



LUMIN SWARM

Hundreds of wriggling, flying, blue worms comprise this 10-foot-diameter flaming sphere.

LUMIN SWARM CR 6

XP 2,400

CN Diminutive aberration (fire, swarm)

Init +9; **Senses** darkvision 120 ft.; Perception +26

DEFENSE

AC 19, touch 19, flat-footed 14 (+5 Dex, +4 size)

hp 75 (10d8+30)

Fort +5, **Ref** +10, **Will** +10

Defensive Abilities swarm traits; **Immune** fire, weapon damage

Weaknesses vulnerable to cold

OFFENSE

Speed 5 ft., fly 40 ft. (good)

Melee swarm (4d8 fire plus burn and distraction)

Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 0 ft.
Special Attacks burn (2d8, DC 17), distraction (DC 17), radiating heat
Spell-Like Abilities (CL 10th; concentration +11)
 1/day—*scorching ray*

STATISTICS

Str 2, **Dex** 20, **Con** 14, **Int** 10, **Wis** 16, **Cha** 13
Base Atk +7; **CMB** —; **CMD** —
Feats Improved Initiative, Improved Lightning Reflexes, Lightning Reflexes, Skill Focus (Perception), Toughness
Skills Bluff +11, Fly +28, Knowledge (dungeoneering) +13, Perception +26; Racial Modifiers +4 Perception
Languages Undercommon
SQ luminous

ECOLOGY

Environment any subterranean
Organization solitary, pair, or nova (3–6)
Treasure none

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Luminous (Su) A lumin swarm naturally sheds light equal to that provided by a daylight spell. A lumin swarm can control the intensity of the light as a swift action, reducing it to the dimness of a candle or even extinguishing it entirely. This light dispels magical darkness of 3rd level or lower.

Radiating Heat (Ex) A lumin swarm deals direct damage in its space, but it also deals 2d8 points of fire damage each round to creatures or objects within 10 feet (DC 17 Reflex save for half). The save DC is Constitution-based.

A lumin swarm proves the adage about too much of a good thing. When normally helpful lumins gather in large groups for mutual protection, the resulting swarm of creatures becomes quite capricious. Bathed in the mutual glow of other lumins, the swarm’s members need light or fire, but gain a primal hunger for organic matter. To feed, the swarm targets an unwary visitor to the Darklands, using its light to entice its prey to enter dangerous areas, only to dismiss the light when its potential victim reaches a trap or other threat. The swarm then approaches the weakened target and reignites in an attempt to kill and consume its victim. Darklands denizens hate and fear lumin swarms, so they seek to disperse or destroy the creatures they find near their lairs. Once a swarm is dispersed, individual lumins who survive will return to their helpful ways.



MAIRSELATH

A bloated, purplish-black mass descends from the darkness above, flailing long, slimy tentacles before it.

MAIRSELATH **CR 11**
XP 12,800
NE Large aberration

Init +3; **Senses** darkvision 120 ft., low-light vision, scent; Perception +14

DEFENSE

AC 24, touch 8, flat-footed 24 (-1 Dex, +16 natural, -1 size)
hp 142 (15d8+75)
Fort +12, **Ref** +4, **Will** +12
DR 10/piercing or slashing; **Immune** plant traits; **Resist** cold 10, fire 10, sonic 10
Weaknesses vulnerable to electricity

OFFENSE

Speed 10 ft., fly 30 ft. (perfect)
Melee 5 tentacles +18 (1d6+7 plus grab/19-20)
Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft. (15 ft. with tentacles)
Special Attacks disease, engulf (DC 24, rot), pull (tentacle, 5 ft.), spore cloud

STATISTICS

Str 25, **Dex** 8, **Con** 21, **Int** 6, **Wis** 13, **Cha** 10
Base Atk +11; **CMB** +19 (+23 grapple); **CMD** 28 (can't be tripped)
Feats Combat Reflexes, Great Fortitude, Improved Critical, Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Skill Focus (Perception), Skill Focus (Stealth), Weapon Focus (tentacle)
Skills Fly +12, Perception +21, Stealth +19
Languages Undercommon (can't speak); telepathy 60 ft. (mairselaths, myceloids, and purple pox sufferers only)

ECOLOGY

Environment any underground
Organization solitary, pair, or band (3–6)
Treasure incidental

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Disease (Su) **Fleshblight:** inhaled or injury; *save* Fort DC 22; *onset* 1 minute; *frequency* 1/day; *effect* 1d2 Wis and 1d2 Con damage; *cure* 2 consecutive saves. A creature that dies of fleshblight becomes bloated over the course of 24 hours, after which its body bursts open, releasing a juvenile mairselath (use the young creature template). The save DCs are Constitution-based.

Engulf (Ex) Creatures grappled by a mairselath’s tentacles are pulled into an orifice at the bottom of its body where enzymes work to break down organic matter to be digested. Engulfed opponents gain the pinned condition, are in danger of suffocating, are trapped within the creature’s body until they are no longer pinned, and are subject to the mairselath’s rot effect each round they remain engulfed.

Rot (Ex) contact; *save* Fort DC 22; *frequency* 1/round for 6 rounds; *effect* 1d4 Strength damage and 1d4 Constitution damage; *cure* save ends; *special* as long as the creature is engulfed, a successful save does not end the affliction, creatures not yet poisoned must save again each round they are engulfed

Spore Cloud (Ex) A heady cloud of spores constantly shrouds a mairselath. The mairselath gains concealment from any creature more than 10 feet away. Also, any creature entering the cloud is exposed to the mairselath’s fleshblight disease. A creature need save only once against a specific mairselath’s spore cloud effects during a 24 hour period.

A mairselath is the nightmarish result of a myceloid subjected to the excruciations of drow fleshwarping. The process produces a massive, shapeless body—bearing no resemblance to its original form—covered in lumpy, tumorous growths of fungus and ropy flesh that almost obscure its pale, plate-sized eyes. Five slender tentacles, glistening with slime, trail from the thing's underside. The fungal portions of the creature operate at an accelerated pace, wreathing it in a miasma of spores. A mairselath remains aloft by means of a permanent levitation spell, using jets of expelled air to propel itself. It retains the base creature's defensive abilities, combined with horrifically mutated powers and an all-consuming hunger.

House Parastric's drow originally developed these creatures as a way to deal with dug-in foes or particularly troublesome monster infestations in areas the drow did not wish to claim. They simply set one or more of these things loose and wait for the aberrations to destroy all life in the area. The drow usually have sorcerers prepared to move in afterward and clear the mairselaths out with lightning, as the creatures are not particularly loyal and indulge their great hunger at every opportunity. Otherwise, the drow allow the things to wander, so long as their gluttonous predations do not threaten the drow or their property.

Mairselaths still hold some sense of kinship to their distant relations, the myceloids. Occasionally a wayward mairselath will join a myceloid colony. The myceloids, for their part, usually accept the mairselath into their lair, appreciating the added strength and protection it provides while begrudging the mairselath's enormous appetite. Rumors hold that some mairselaths have made their way down into the vast depths of the Darklands, feeding indiscriminately and growing to enormous size. Stranger still, these rumors say they have formed a bizarre relationship with the mu spores dwelling there, attending to the massive, alien plants as courtiers to kings.

SKINSHROUD

This humanoid-shaped sack of flesh, covered in black blood, walks erratically on sagging legs. Its face consists of gaping holes where eyes and teeth once sat, and leather-like skin can be seen within the chilling visage.

SKINSHROUD

CR 10

XP 9,600

CE Medium undead

Init +10; **Senses** lifesense 60 ft.; Perception +20

DEFENSE

AC 23, touch 17, flat-footed 16 (+6 Dex, +1 dodge, +6 natural)

hp 142 (15d8+75)

Fort +10, **Ref** +11, **Will** +13

DR 10/slashing and magic; **Immune** cold, undead traits

Weaknesses vulnerability to fire

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee 2 slams +17 (1d6–1 plus 1d6 cold and blood frost)

Special Attacks blood frost, enshroud, skinsway (DC 22)

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 10th; concentration +15)

At will—*cause fear* (DC 16), *inflict moderate wounds* (DC 17), *ray of frost*

3/day—*fear* (DC 19), *mass inflict*

light wounds (DC 20), *ray of exhaustion* (DC 18)

STATISTICS

Str 8, **Dex** 23, **Con** —, **Int** 8, **Wis** 15, **Cha** 21

Base Atk +11; **CMB** +17 (+27 to grapple); **CMD** 27 (29 vs. grapple)

Feats Agile Maneuvers, Body ShieldB, UC, Combat Casting, Dodge, Improved Grapple, Improved Initiative, Improved Unarmed Strike, Iron Will, Weapon Finesse

Skills Craft (leather) +14, Perception +20, Stealth +24

Languages Common (can't speak)

SQ compression, create skinshroud

ECOLOGY

Environment any

Organization solitary or gang (2–5)

Treasure none

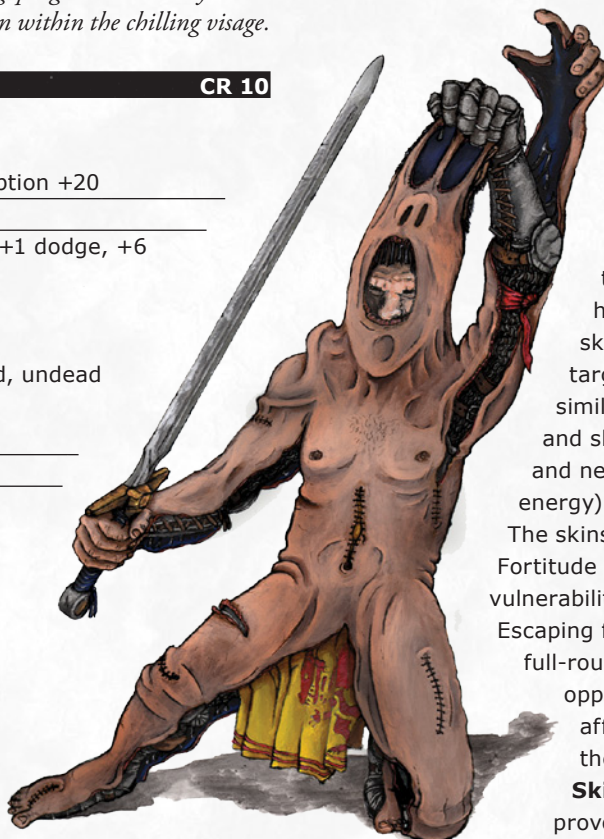
SPECIAL ABILITIES

Blood Frost (Su) A skinshroud's exterior exudes black blood that freezes to skin and clothing on contact. It automatically grapples any creature it hits with a slam attack and gets a +4 racial bonus on all grapple checks. Creatures grappled by the skinshroud takes 1d6 points of cold damage each round. If a skinshroud takes at least 15 points of fire damage, the blood melts away, suppressing this ability for 1d4 rounds. The substance breaks down immediately when the creature is destroyed.

Enshroud (Ex) A skinshroud that begins its turn grappling with a Medium or Small humanoid can attempt a combat maneuver check (as though attempting to pin the opponent). If it succeeds, it turns inside-out and enshrouds the creature, equipment and all. The host creature keeps the grappled condition, while the skinshroud loses it. The skinshroud does not need to maintain the grapple each round, but is limited to using its spell-like abilities and skinsway ability. A host not skinswayed may attempt to escape the grapple as normal, and immediately escapes if the skinshroud is turned by channeled energy.

The skinshroud and its host cannot be targeted individually by attacks, spells, or abilities. Such effects use the host creature's AC, SR, and Reflex saving throws as a single entity. Attacks that hit the host's AC, hit both creatures (each taking half the damage). Attacks that miss, but hit the host's touch AC, affect only the skinshroud, unless the attack normally targets touch AC. Magic effects work similarly, dealing half the damage to host and skinshroud or affecting both. Positive and negative energy (such as from channel energy) fully affect both host and skinshroud. The skinshroud and its host use their own Fortitude and Will saves and apply their own DR, vulnerabilities, and immunities, when applicable. Escaping from enshroudment requires a full-round action that provokes attacks of opportunity. Only the escaping host is still affected by any ongoing spells or affects; these effects end for the skinshroud.

Skinsway (Su) As a standard action that provokes attacks of opportunity, a



skinshroud can affect its host as a *dominate person* spell (DC 22) for as long as it remains enshrouded. A skinswayed host loses the grappled condition. At the beginning of each of its turns, the creature may attempt another Will save to regain control, but success returns the grappled condition, and the skinshroud can attempt skinsway again on its turn. The skinsway likewise ends if the skinshroud is turned. The save DC is Charisma-based.

Create Skinshroud (Su) A skinshroud with a sharp instrument can spend four hours flaying a dead body and use its own black blood as a necromantic catalyst to create another skinshroud. The new skinshroud is not controlled by its creator.

The drow experiment with black blood at a location, deep in Orv, called Bloodforge. One of their grisly experiments became the first skinshroud, but they are now self-replicating. A skinshroud is the undead dermis of a humanoid, turned inside-out and covered in black blood. Its arms and legs are split down their length, allowing it to cover a living person as a skin suit. Skinshrouds walk vaguely like men, but are eerily silent. Weighing about 30 pounds, they are very flexible, enabling them to pass through narrow spaces and giving them uncanny grappling ability.



SPLINTER SWARM

The body twitches, then blurs. A rasping buzz begins, rises, and crescendos as a cloud of pyramidal stones burst free and launch into the air.

SPLINTER SWARM CR 9

XP 6,400

N Diminutive magical beast (swarm)

Init +5; **Senses** dark vision 60 ft., low light vision; Perception +7

DEFENSE

AC 22, touch 20, flat-footed 16 (+5 Dex, +1 dodge, +2 natural, +4 size)

hp 114 (12d10+48)

Fort +14, **Ref** +15, **Will** +7

Defensive Abilities swarm traits; **DR** 5/adamantine; **Immune** weapon damage

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft, fly 40 ft (good).

Melee swarm (4d6 piercing and bludgeoning damage plus 1d6 bleed and infestation)

Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 0 ft.

Special Attack distraction (DC 20), infestation (DC 20)

STATISTICS

Str 1, **Dex** 21, **Con** 18, **Int** 6, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 3

Base Atk +12; **CMB** —; **CMD** —

Feats Dodge, Great Fortitude, Improved Natural Attack, Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes, Wingover

Skills Acrobatics +12 (+8 when jumping), Fly +20, Perception +9, Stealth +21

Languages undercommon (can't speak)

ECOLOGY

Environment underground

Organization solitary, pair, infestation (3-6), colony (5-8), or storm (9-14)

Treasure incidental

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Infestation (Ex) Creatures damaged by a splinter swarm must make a DC 20 Fortitude save. Creatures that successfully save cannot be affected by that swarm's infestation for 24 hours. Creatures that fail are implanted with shards from the splinters' shells. These shards feed upon the body of the host, multiplying in its body and growing into fully formed splinters. The infestation behaves like a disease, driving the victim mad over a period of several hours before a new swarm erupts from its body in a horrific, bloody display. Remove disease, heal, or similar effects also destroy the parasites and end the infestation. Splinter Infestation: Infestation – injury; save Fort 20; onset 1 hour; frequency 1/hour for 2d6 hours of gestation; effect 1d2 Wis damage, and at the end of the gestation period, a mature splinter swarm pours from the body, dealing 6d6 bleed damage to the host; cure 3 consecutive saves. The save DC is Constitution-based.

An individual splinter is about the size of a human's hand. Its shell resembles a sharp spike of rock. The stony exterior provides the perfect camouflage in their subterranean habitat, allowing splinters to ambush passing prey. This shell also serves as a splinter's armor and primary weapon. A splinter has a small hole at its pointed end, and a set of three sharp legs unfolds from its base. In flight, three wings at the creature's base propel it forward with blinding speed to drive it deeply into the flesh of prey.

While a single splinter is a minor threat, the creatures gather into swarms that are the scourge of the lightless tunnels between Orv's vaults. After a swarm has immobilized nearby sources of food, the creatures crawl over the battlefield, sucking blood and marrow. All that remains of a splinter swarm's meal are drained husks, full of holes.

Even those who survive the initial onslaught of a splinter swarm are not yet safe. The creatures' parasitic method of reproduction leaves victims stumbling through the Darklands, carrying the swarm's offspring to new domains. The eruption of a new swarm usually kills the host, which provides a meager first meal if no other food is immediately available.

Swarms larger than a storm are a rare occurrence, but there are tales of splinters gathering over days, massing in incalculable numbers before pouring into the vaults. These streams of destruction can prove dangerous to even the most powerful of Orv's inhabitants.

WYRMWING

A tiny serpent with a draconic head flies through the darkness on leathery wings.

WYRMWING**CR 1**

XP 400

N Tiny dragon

Init +6; **Senses** blindsense 60 ft., darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Perception +6**DEFENSE****AC** 15, touch 14, flat-footed 13 (+2 Dex, +1 natural, +2 size)**hp** 13 (2d12)**Fort** +3, **Ref** +5, **Will** +4**Immune** paralysis, sleep; **Resist** acid 5, fire 5**OFFENSE****Speed** 10 ft., fly 40 ft. (good)**Melee** bite +1 (1d3-3)**Ranged** corrosive spit +6 ranged touch (1d4 acid and 1d4 fire)**Space** 2-1/2 ft.; **Reach** 0 ft.**STATISTICS****Str** 4, **Dex** 14, **Con** 10, **Int** 3, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 11**Base Atk** +2; **CMB** -3; **CMD** 9 (can't be tripped)**Feats** Improved Initiative**Skills** Fly +15, Perception +6, Stealth +10**Languages** Draconic (cannot speak)**ECOLOGY****Environment** any underground**Organization** solitary, pair, or flight (3-12)**Treasure** standard**SPECIAL ABILITIES****Corrosive Spit (Ex)** A wyrmwing's primary attack is a glob of burning acidic saliva which it can spit up to 30 feet away (no range increment) as a standard action.**WYRMWING SWARM (WYRMFLIGHT)***A cacophony of loud hisses and the strong smell of sulfur announces the presence of countless of miniature dragons.***WYRMWING SWARM (WYRMFLIGHT)****CR 10**

XP 9,600

N Tiny dragon (swarm)

Init +6; **Senses** blindsense 60 ft., darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Perception +20**DEFENSE****AC** 21, touch 15, flat-footed 18 (+2 Dex, +1 dodge, +6 natural, +2 size)**hp** 136 (16d12+32)**Fort** +13, **Ref** +14, **Will** +13**Defensive Abilities** half damage from weapons, swarm traits; **Immune** paralysis, sleep; **Resist** acid 10, fire 10**OFFENSE****Speed** 5 ft., fly 40 ft. (good)**Melee** swarm (4d6 and distraction)**Space** 10 ft.; **Reach** 0 ft.**Special Attacks** distraction (DC 19)**STATISTICS****Str** 4, **Dex** 14, **Con** 13, **Int** 3, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 11**Base Atk** +16; **CMB** —; **CMD** —**Feats** Dodge, Flyby Attack, Great Fortitude, Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes, Mobility, Toughness**Skills** Fly +29, Perception +20**Languages** Draconic (cannot speak)**ECOLOGY****Environment** any underground**Organization** solitary or pack (2-5 swarms)**Treasure** standard**SPECIAL ABILITIES****Corrosive Barrage (Ex)** Whereas a single wyrmwing can spit a glob of burning acid, the angered swarm of wyrmwings can despoil an area with their amassed spitting. As a standard action, a wyrmwing swarm deals 4d6 points of acid damage and 4d6 points of fire damage to all creatures within 10 feet (including those that occupy the swarm's space). A successful DC 19 Reflex save reduces the damage by half. Fumes fill the affected area for 1 round, providing concealment to all creatures within the area of effect. The save DC is Constitution-based.

Wyrmwings are tiny but aggressive members of dragon-kind that inhabit underground tunnels, caves, and dungeons. Despite their unimpressive size and low intelligence they can be very dangerous due to their acidic spit, stubbornness, and tendency to gather in larger groups, often forming unrelenting swarms that fiercely attack anything perceived as a threat or food, including powerful creatures such as true dragons.

Wyrmwings are sometimes befriended by kobolds, who can appeal to

the wyrmwing's gluttony

and draconic ego, while

simultaneously tricking

them into following

the kobolds' directions.

Occasionally, a tribe of

kobolds manages to tame

a flight of wyrmwings,

but rarely does anyone

prevail over a whole

swarm of them. There

are rumors, however, of a

powerful spell known only

to a few ancient dragons,

kobold druids, and dragon-

blooded sorcerers that allows

its caster to summon and direct

a swarm of wyrmwings for a short

amount of time. Wyrmwings, like most

Darklands denizens, are indiscriminate

and voracious eaters. Like their larger

draconic cousins wyrmwings gorge

themselves given the opportunity but lack

the refined palate typical to the true dragons

and will eat any kind of meat—fresh, stale,

rotting, still living. When denied access to meat,

wyrmwings will resort to consuming any organic

matter available.

The average wyrmwing is 18 inches long, with a two-foot wide

wingspan, and weighs around six pounds.

Drow arcanists have been known to use wyrmwing spit glands as

an additional component of an acid arrow spell. A vial of wyrmwing

gland extract will add 1 point of fire damage per round to the affected

acid arrow spell.

Stormwings

Stormwings are wyrmwings with affinity for cold and lightning

instead of fire and acid. They replace fire and acid resistance with cold

and electricity resistances and change fire and acid damage caused by

corrosive spit or corrosive barrage with cold and electricity damage. ✖



ADVICE FROM A GOLABION NOOB: MAKE IT YOUR OWN!

BY ROBERT "HUNTER1828"
THOMSON

So, you've picked up the *Pathfinder Campaign Setting: Inner Sea World Guide* and want to start running a *Pathfinder Roleplaying Game* set in Golarion. You've thumbed through the book and perused the Paizo.com store. You've seen that there are numerous resources available, like *Pathfinder Campaign Setting* books, *Pathfinder Player Companions*, and *Pathfinder Modules*. It might all seem overwhelming. Perhaps you've started to think, "What have I gotten myself into?"

As the saying from the classic sci-fi book goes, "Don't panic!" Slow down and take a deep breath. It will be just fine. Trust me.

Last year, I began running my first campaign set in Golarion. For years I had run most of my games (including predecessors of the *Pathfinder Roleplaying Game*) in another famous published campaign setting—let's call it the "Misplaced Lands". But when I started looking at Golarion, despite my 36 years of experience running roleplaying games, I nearly panicked! I almost fell into a trap that many cannot avoid: the belief that I need to know every single detail about every single place, person and creature in Golarion. Too many fall into that trap—a trap that also exists for that other campaign setting I mentioned.

Many potential Game Masters feel they need to read every supplement and every novel, to be able to run a game "the way it

should be run." But that's the thing: the way the game should be run is entirely up to you. You don't need every single *Pathfinder Player Companion* or *Campaign Setting* supplement. Sure, they can be helpful and useful, but you don't need the *Pathfinder Player Companion: Andoran*, *Spirit of Liberty* to run a game set in Andoran. The *Inner Sea World Guide* gives you more than enough information to do so. If you have access to the *Player Companion*, by all means make use of it, but don't shy away from running the game you want just because you don't have it!

At the same time, unless you are running an official Pathfinder Society scenario, do not feel beholden to other published material for your own game. As long as your game is yours and your players'—and organized play isn't part of it—never be afraid to change things up: ignore things you don't like, add things you do like, mix and match to suit you and your players. Want good drow on the surface? Do it. Want fewer or no dwarves? Do it. Don't want technology and firearms? Ignore them. Want to run a game set in Ustalav, but you haven't read *Pathfinder Tales: Prince of Wolves*? No problem. The player characters are the heroes of your game, not the characters in the book. Let them be the heroes, even if it "changes" things described in the novel!

The most important part of any roleplaying game, *Pathfinder* or otherwise, is having fun. If you stress too much about needing to know every detail of every *Pathfinder Tales* novel or *Player Companion*, you will burn yourself out very quickly, and your players will be able to tell. It's easy to spend too much time researching by reading game books and novels and too little time actually coming up with good, fun adventures that your players will remember for years to come.

Once I calmed down and realized that I had run games in that other setting for years and made it my own, ignoring novels and supplements or using them as I chose, it was easy to apply these guidelines to Golarion.

I read the *Inner Sea World Guide*, started my game, and then slowly picked up a few of the *Player Companions* and *Pathfinder Campaign Setting* books as my game progressed. If a new

book told me that events from earlier in my game would not or could not have happened, I didn't stress about it. The version of Golarion I run for my players is ours—different from anyone else's Golarion. All along, my players have enjoyed themselves and have expressed dismay that the campaign will soon be ending due to several folks (including myself) moving away. That kind of connection with your game is what you want to develop.

So, if all you have is the *Inner Sea World*

Guide, you can still run an excellent game. There is more than enough information in that one book to help you create fun, exciting, and memorable games for your players for months or even years to come. Never feel you have to know absolutely everything to make your game fun for others! ✖✖





DEVERIN'S FOLLY

BY MATT "ENDERBIN"

RUPPRECHT

ART BY DAVE MALLON

MAP BY LIZ "LILITH"

COURTS



Those who dig and delve into the Devil's Platter find only bad luck, dark places and a cold grave.

Deverin's Folly is a short adventure designed for a group of four 2nd level adventurers. If your players have already run through Black Fang's Lair and require more XP to reach 2nd level consider running a couple of the Beginner Box Bash short adventures (<http://paizo.com/beginnerbox>). These can be set in and around the town of Sandpoint and used to introduce players to the setting. During this adventure, characters should accumulate enough XP under the Medium advancement track to reach nearly halfway to 3rd level.

This adventure uses only monsters, treasure and pawns from the Beginner Box. If you are a new GM, this maybe your first time running an adventure without a pre-printed battle map. Pick up a wet or dry erase marker and turn over the flip-mat from the Beginners Box. On the back, you find an empty grid. Do not worry too much about drawing the map exactly—your players will never know! Remember what kind of vision the PCs have and what lights they are carrying, so you can draw or describe only what the PCs see (*Hero's Handbook 51*).

ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

The 4360's were a boom time for prospectors up and down the Lost Coast. Headstrong minor nobles trying to break off the yolk of family responsibility, set out from Magnimar, searching from the Mushfens to the Fogscar Mountains for untapped natural resources and mining opportunities. For a brief time the city became a major trading center for iron, silver and tin, and many skilled gnomes and dwarves flocked to the city looking for work. At the tail end of the booming 60's a self-educated geologist by the name of Lugano Deverin secured funding to prospect the limestone hills of the Devil Platter near the small fishing village that would later become the town of Sandpoint.

Lugano hired a pair of experienced miners and spent the next three years searching for a suitable location. He found it on the southern side of the Devil's platter, one rich in rock salt and beautiful quartz crystals. The crystals were an instant success in Magnimar and Lugano, and his associates, made a healthy profit. They bought land in Sandpoint and had houses built. Deverin became a local philanthropist investing in several projects in and around the town. He funded the formation of the first watch and a regular supply wagon, which would carry

his goods to Magnimar and return the following week laden with manufactured goods.

Good things rarely last, and one day, 76 years ago, the miners uncovered a strange ooze-like creature hibernating on a particularly large geode of crystal. The creature lashed out and after a sudden whirlwind of, both miners lay dead.

Lugano fled from the mine clutching his last bag of crystals. Witnessing the death of his colleagues traumatized him greatly. He hastily boarded up the mine and retired to a quiet life in Sandpoint, never to speak of it again.

BEGIN READING ALOUD TO START THE ADVENTURE!

Your recent adventures in and around the town of Sandpoint have earned you a small degree of local fame. Tavern keepers welcome you with open arms hoping you will entertain their clientele with stories of your most recent adventure. It is no wonder then, that you were approached by a desperate farmer and landowner who beseeched you to help him with a problem.

He introduced himself as Stu Ludlow and described how his sheep are being dragged away in the middle of night by an abomination with a hundred legs! Clearly an over exaggeration!

Eager to help, and encouraged by the promised reward of 50 silver pieces, two sides of mutton and a jar of Ludlow's celebrated cider, you have travelled to the farmlands a few miles south of Sandpoint which sit nestled behind the limestone hills collectively known as the Devil's Platter. Farmer Ludlow wasted no time showing you tracks indicating that the nocturnal hunter dragged its prey from his pasture to an old miners shack at the foot of the hills.

The Ludlow Farm lies along the southern edge of Devil's Platter on the Sandpoint Hinterlands map (*Game Master's Guide 90*)—a hike of about 4 miles from Sandpoint. Acres of orchards surround a central stone farmhouse and giant barn. The main building houses Ludlow's extended family, farmhands and staff for his cider press. Several dozen sheep and pigs graze between the apple trees.

DEVERIN'S FOLLY

Farmer Ludlow ushers the PCs through the orchard to the north side of his farm. The apple trees give way to a pasture rising to the edge of the barren limestone hill known as the Devils Platter, and at its base is an old shack. Ludlow retreats to the edge of the orchard and along with a handful of farmhand's, nervously watches them from the tree line.

1a: Miner's Shack

All that remains of the old mine is a rundown hut. Once the PCs arrive read the following:

A rickety looking miner's shack with a boarded up entrance leans against the steep, grey limestone hill. The wood is bleached and weathered. Several slate tiles have fallen to the floor and lie among rusted buckets and pickaxes. The ground is covered with gravel spoil, which has prevented the shack becoming overgrown.

A search of the area turns up a variety of rusty mining tools and a faded 'Dangerous! Do Not Enter!' sign that once hung on the shack. Several planks have been pried away from the shack's eastern side, exposing a 2' wide hole large enough to crawl through. Pulling the

STARTING THE ADVENTURE IN SANDPOINT

The ‘Read Aloud’ text assumes that you wish to start the adventure immediately and that the PCs have arrived at the farm prepared to explore Deverin’s Folly. However, Pathfinder adventures frequently present the GM with a backdrop and multiple “hooks” or ideas for how to get the PCs involved in the adventure. These frequently involve more role-playing elements and help invest the players in the setting and objectives.

The PCs start in the town of Sandpoint (*Game Master’s Guide* 88), most likely resting at a local inn after a recent adventure. A well-respected local farmer named Stu Ludlow is in town trying to hire help to fight off a monstrous creature, which is killing his sheep. Choose the most appropriate adventure hook for your players:

- Farmer Ludlow has posted a flyer at the town hall offering to charter a “band of adventurous and able-bodied men-at-arms to rid his farm of a vicious hundred-legged killer”. He offers a reward of 50 silver coins and two whole sides of mutton. Directions to his farm are included at the bottom of the notice.
- Hearing about their success against the dragon, Blackfang, Farmer Ludlow approaches the PCs directly and beseeches them to come to his aid. His offer is the same as above, and he insists they leave for his farm as soon as possible.
- Ameiko Kaijitsu, the owner of the Rusty Dragon Inn, approaches the PCs. A local farmer called Stu Ludlow, who supplies her inn with lamb and strong cider, is having some difficulties with a creature killing his sheep. She promised to be on the lookout for adventurous types passing through Sandpoint seeking work. She is aware of a reward but insists they should talk to Ludlow directly about it.

Whichever hook (or combination) is used, farmer Ludlow can be bargained with (DC 15 **Diplomacy** check) to increase the reward to 100 silver coins, 4 sides of mutton and 2 jars of his somewhat infamous cider.

boards from the entrance requires a DC 14 **Strength** check. A giant centipede, the cause of the farmer’s missing sheep, nests in **Area 1b** and is instantly aware of the PCs, no matter which way they enter.

1b: Mine Entrance (XP 600)

The giant centipede that has been terrorizing the farm nests inside of the shack:

The inside of the shack smells of rotten vegetation and putrid meat. A half eaten sheep carcass is dumped on the floor. A heap of wooden posts, rotting sacks and leaves rises to a height of 3 feet against the western wall, and a well-supported mineshaft leads north into the hillside.

CREATURE: The heap is the nest of a giant centipede, which moved into the old shack two months ago after it chased a dire rat into the building. Shortly afterward, it discovered the nearby farm and

started taking sheep. The giant centipede remains hidden beneath the pile of sacks and leaves (DC 20 Perception check to notice a slight movement) until its home is disturbed.

GIANT CENTIPEDE (CR ½ ; XP 200)

hp 5 (see page 71 in the *Game Master’s Guide*)

TACTICS

During Combat The giant centipede lunges forward and attempts to bite the closest target. When it attacks it thrashes its tail, bashing the walls and causing the old shack to collapse (see trap below). Due to the fact that it is so close to the floor, the giant centipede gains a +4 bonus to its Armor Class against the collapsing shack’s attack roll.

Morale The giant centipede fights to the death to defend its nest.

COLLAPSING SHACK: The shack is run down and nearly at the point of collapse. In this state, it acts a trap (see page 38 in the *Game Master’s Guide*).

COLLAPSING SHACK (CR 1; XP 400)

Type mechanical; **Perception** DC 20; **Disable Device** DC 20

EFFECTS

Trigger Atk +15 melee against targets inside and within 5’ of the Collapsing Shack (2d6 damage from falling timber, DC 12 **Reflex** save for half damage)

TREASURE: Searching the centipede’s nest (DC 12 Perception check) reveals a small leather pouch of clear quartz crystals worth 25 gp.

1c: Foreman’s Office (XP Varies)

When the mine was operational, this room was used as a combination office, bunkhouse and kitchen:

The rough walls and heavy ceiling beams indicate that at one time this room must have been a mine face. It was then converted into a combination foreman’s office, bunkhouse and storeroom. A folding wooden table and chair stand against the south wall and two makeshift beds against the east. Several sacks and tools lean against the north wall. Alongside the sacks is a wooden storage cabinet. The cabinet doors are open revealing it to be empty.

CREATURES: Four creatures make this room their home. Three dire rats nest under a bed and hiss loudly when the PCs enter the room. A DC 15 **Perception** check allows a PC to identify three distinct rats hiding under the bed. The fourth creature is an old mimic, currently disguised at the cabinet. The mimic was driven up to this area by the earth elemental in **Area F** and is trapped. It survives by eating the occasional dire rat—a practice that has made it terribly sick. The mimic remains disguised hoping to avoid fighting the PCs.

DIRE RATS (3) (CR 1; XP 135 EACH)

hp 5 (see page 65 in the *Game Master’s Guide*)

TACTICS

During Combat The rats rush out and attack any PC within 5 feet of the beds. They attempt to gang up and flank a single opponent.

Morale Stupid and territorial the dire rats fight to the death.

FURNITURE: The folding wooden table is stacked with sheets

of rotting parchment covered with faded writing. A DC 15 **Perception** check reveals them to be shipment manifests and lists of supplies. The PCs can find the name “Lugano Deverin” on many of the papers. A DC 20 **Knowledge (local)** or **Knowledge (history)** check allows a PC to recall that Lugano Deverin was the reclusive grandfather of Sandpoint’s current mayor. A dried up silver inkwell (worth 10gp) and a rock crystal paperweight (worth 20 gp) sit on the edge of the table.

The two makeshift wooden beds are full of mold and rat filth. A DC 15 **Perception** check finds a carved wooden holy symbol of Torag, the patron god of dwarves and artisans hidden among the remains.

The sacks against the north wall contain firewood, ten sticks of chalk, five iron pitons, 50’ of hemp rope, a grappling hook, five torches, and two empty water skins. Next to the sacks, wrapped in oiled cloth, are two sledgehammers (can be used as warhammer) and two wood axes (treat as throwing axes).

CABINET: The mimic is old and sick from eating diseased rats. It remains disguised as a simple wooden cabinet and genuinely hopes that the PCs will pass it by (DC 20 **Perception** check to recognize the object is a mimic). However, if the cabinet is searched, the mimic cannot resist the primal urge to lash out and attack. If the PCs do not encounter the mimic, they do not get XP for defeating it.

SICKENED MIMIC (CR 4; XP 1,200)

hp 40 (see page 75 in the *Game Master’s Guide* or other source.)

TACTICS

During Combat The mimic has the **Sickened** condition (*Game Master’s Guide* page 95) from eating diseased rats, making it a less dangerous foe. If forced to fight it will attempt to slam and grab the closest target. It will try to maneuver into a position where it can escape if the battle goes against it.

Morale The mimic fights until it only has 10 hp, then attempts to flee toward **Area 1b**. If it can get out of sight of the PCs, it attempts to mimic an object and hide.

TREASURE: The mimic rested on and partially wrapped around a small chest. The chest is locked and the key long since lost (DC 20 **Disable Device** check to unlock, or DC 20 **Strength** check to break, or Hardness 5 & 10 hp to damage—*Game Master’s Guide* page 39). Inside the PCs find a +1 *dagger*, two *potions of cure light wounds* and a purse containing 45gp.

1d: Tunnel Intersection

The PCs have a choice as to which direction they wish to explore. When they arrive at the intersection read the following:



The mineshaft splits, here, into two tunnels leading off to the east and west. A sturdy wooden support braces the ceiling, and the limestone walls are flecked with crystals that glitter as you pass.

TUNNELS: Deverin’s miners decided to strike out in two directions, running tunnels to the east and west. They mined and exhausted a vein of rock salt to the east until they broke into the natural cave (**Area 1f**). After briefly exploring, they turned back and tunneled west until they found a rich deposit of clear quartz crystal.

The western tunnel leading away from the intersection is dark and unremarkable. The eastern tunnel runs for a short distance before ending in a jagged, man-sized hole where the miners broke through into **Area 1f**. Green hued light from luminous fungi spills through the hole, creating an almost ghostlike shape.

INSCRIPTION: A DC 15 **Perception** check reveals the initials LD, DG, SS and the year 4637 engraved into the wooden support post. Lugano Deverin and his associates cut their initials here 76 years ago—a mere six months before Lugano abandoned the venture.

1e: Quartz Mine (XP 1,200)

This mine face is home to a strange creature—a gray ooze. Discarded tools and rubble are strewn about the cave, left there after the ooze attacked the miners.

A long vein of clear crystals bisects the rough-cut western wall of this large irregular shaped chamber. Numerous wooden posts and cross beams hold the roof up. Rubble, discarded tools and an upturned barrow litter the floor.

TOOLS: Two pickaxe handles and a 5’ wooden pole (once used as a lever) lie on the floor near the entrance. The handles can be used as improvised clubs; the pole, as a quarterstaff.

CREATURE: While excavating the rich quartz vein the miners

uncovered a gray ooze. Despite their best efforts, they could not scare the creature off. After the two miners were killed, Lugano abandoned the mine. The ooze spent the intervening years in a semi-dormant state, slowly absorbing minerals from the exposed crystals. The gray ooze aggressively defends its home. It detaches from the rock face and slithers relentlessly toward the PCs. A gray ooze is difficult to spot. PCs must make a DC 15 **Perception** check to notice the gray ooze before combat begins or be surprised.

GRAY OOZE (CR 4; XP 1,200)

hp 50 (see page 73 in the *Game Master's Guide*)

TACTICS

During Combat The gray ooze has lived its entire life (possibly thousands of years) feeding from mineral deposits under the Devil's Platter. It will attack and chase intruders from the room but will not pursue them beyond the tunnel intersection (**Area 1d**). It will then return to **Area 1e** and climb back onto the crystal vein.

Morale If reduced to 15 hp, the gray ooze will attempt to flee. It climbs into the crystal vein and flows through a fracture in the bedrock, and returns ten days later, fully healed.

REOPENING THE MINE: Enterprising PCs may decide to pickup where Lugano left off and reopen the mine. It will take skilled miners, but will yield several thousand gold pieces' worth of crystal for a couple of years. The venture is not without danger, however, and is likely to draw the attention of bandits, monsters and the local criminal element known as the Sczarni. If the PCs want to spend a short period of time collecting quartz, they can find 10 crystals worth 25 gp each.

1f: Natural Cave (XP 800 or 600)

The PCs pass beyond the mine tunnels and enter natural caves in the very uppermost region of the darklands. This room has been the abode of a small earth elemental for the past thirty years. When they approach the entrance read the following:

This natural cave is a stark contrast to the mine tunnels. The floor is rough and uneven and three large stalagmites rise to up toward the high ceiling. The cave is carpeted with a phosphorescent fungus, which gives off a soft violet glow. A giant mushroom with vent-like holes in its stalk stands by another entrance tunnel to the northeast.

FUNGI: The phosphorescent fungus is harmless and casts dim light as a candle. The natural stone floor is uneven (*Games Master's Guide* 35) and increases the DC of **Acrobatics** checks by 5, requires 2 squares of movement and prevents running and charging.

The giant mushroom standing near the northeast tunnel looks like a shrieker (*Games Master's Guide* 37), but it can be identified as harmless (and actually edible) with a DC 20 **Knowledge (dungeoneering)** check.

CREATURE: The natural cave is home to an earth elemental. The creature appears to be made if the same limestone rock as the Devil's Platter and has luminous fungi growing like a lion's mane down its back. The elemental has chosen

to protect the natural beauty of the cave and its fungus and does not take kindly to visitors trampling through! It stands motionless against the east wall, listening to the sounds of the earth and eventually turns toward the PCs and studies them, all the while making no attempt at communication.

If the characters try to cross the room without damaging the carpet of glowing fungi they must succeed at a DC 15 **Acrobatics** check (the DC includes a modifier for natural stone floor). If successful, the elemental remains motionless and just watches them. Failure on the check, or taking any other destructive or hostile actions, elicits an immediate and violent response from the earth elemental.

EARTH ELEMENTAL (CR 3; XP 800)

hp 34 (see page 66 in the *Game Master's Guide*)

TACTICS

During Combat Enraged at intruders crushing its fungal garden, the earth elemental strides forward emitting an earthquake-like roar.

Morale The elemental will fight until destroyed.

Development: If the PCs avoid damaging the fungus, grant them XP for a CR 2 encounter. You might also have the earth elemental choose to help them at some point in the future.

1g: Long Tunnel

This natural tunnel leads the PCs further under the Devils Platter and into the darklands. Although narrow and claustrophobic it is not dangerous:

A cramped natural tunnel covered in phosphorescent moss leads away into the darkness.

TUNNEL: The tunnel follows a natural fault-line. It descends at a constant angle for approximately 250' taking the PCs into the upper reaches of the Darklands region known as Nar-Voth. The phosphorescent moss is harmless. As the PCs approach the tunnel's eastern end they start to hear the sound of rushing water from **Area 1h**.

1h: Underground River

Underground rivers are a common and dangerous feature of



Darklands expeditions. When the PCs come to the end of the tunnel (**Area 1g**) read them the following:

The tunnel emerges high above a raging, underground river that runs through a vast cave. A precarious ledge descends along the western wall until it reaches an old calcified rope bridge crossing the river. On the other side of the cavern, an impressive flowstone curtain, like a waterfall made of smooth, glistening rock, is illuminated from behind by a green light. The same sickly green light spills from a cave entrance at the base of the curtain, offering an exit to the east.

LEDGE: The entrance from **Area 1g** is 40' above the river and slippery due to moisture (*Games Master's Guide* 35). PCs trying to traverse the ledge must succeed at a DC 15 **Acrobatics** check (includes modifier for the slippery surface) or slip and slide down the ramp. The ledge curves toward the wall preventing a sliding PC from falling into the river, but they will take 1d6 points of damage (DC 20 **Reflex** avoids) as they bash against the rock wall.

RIVER: The river is shallow but loud, cold and fast moving. Occasionally, an ugly, sightless albino fish swims by. Each round a PC spends in the water requires them to make a DC 15 **Fortitude** save or suffer 1d4 points of cold damage, and make a DC 15 **Swim** check or be swept 20' downstream. PCs pushed farther than 100' south of the bridge fall into a sinkhole and drown unless they can breathe underwater.

ROPE BRIDGE: The rope bridge is ancient and constructed from a bizarre variety of subterranean vine. The bridge is partially calcified and resembles rope dripping with candle wax. Despite appearances, the bridge is safe to cross, doing so causes a good deal of creaking and cracking of lime-scale. The GM is encouraged to play up the brittle and dangerous look of the bridge.

FLOWSTONE WATERFALL: When the PCs cross the bridge, read the following passage to them:

At the base of the flowstone waterfall are gaps, each wide enough for a person to walk through. A sickly green glow shines through each gap. The glow dims and brightens with an irregular pattern, occasionally changing to an unsettling blue-green color.

1i: The Glowing Stone (XP 800)

This impressive cave has been used as a meeting place for millennia. Many subterranean inhabitants of this region consider it neutral ground—a place to trade and bargain with other denizens of Nar-Voth. Read the following aloud:

This roughly circular cave has exits to the east and south, and a cathedral-like ceiling rises high overhead. The walls are slick and smooth, with flowstone formations cascading down out of the darkness. The floor is bowl shaped and covered with gravel. A conspicuous block of limestone, worked into a perfect 3-foot cube dominates the center of the cave. Curled around the base of the cube, as if hugging it, are two reptilian humanoids lying on their sides. One of the creatures clutches a fist-sized lump of black rock to his chest. The rock glows with a dim green light, casting strange, lingering shadows across the walls.

CREATURES: The two reptilian creatures are troglodytes. They

are outcasts on the run after stealing a holy artifact, a rare chunk of skymetal called abysium, from their tribe's shaman. Abysium holds a tremendous amount of energy, which it slowly bleeds-off as a blue-green glow. Also known as feverstone, prolonged exposure proves toxic to most races but, oddly not troglodytes, upon which it acts as a narcotic. Both troglodytes are fascinated by the strange chunk of rock and will do anything to retain it. The troglodytes jump to their feet and hiss at the PCs. One of them offers a warning, "You will not take it, Smooth-skins! It is ours!"

TROGLODYTES (2) (CR 1; XP 400 EACH)

hp 13 (see page 80 in the *Game Master's Guide*)

TACTICS

During Combat The troglodytes fight as a pair and advance into melee range to take full advantage of their **stench** special ability.

Morale The troglodytes have been on the run for days. They are tired and under the narcotic effects of the Abysium. They refuse to back down against weak surface dwellers, and will die defending the stone.

STONE CUBE: The stone cube carries an inscription on each of its five visible faces; the same phrase in five different languages. A DC 15 **Intelligence** check identifies the five scripts as Aklo, Draconic, Terran, Thassalonian and Undercommon. Those who can read these languages can translate the inscription: *Here ends the realm of Dargan-toth, Greatest of his Kind and Ally of the Vis'leth'Bir*. The exact meaning and purpose of the stone is left to the GM and can be used as a hook for further Darkland adventures.

TREASURE: Dumped near the limestone cube are the troglodytes' possessions wrapped in a cloth; 5 lbs of stinking white fish, various stone tools, a single ancient silver coin (worth 50gp to a collector), and a stone vial stoppered with a fungus plug containing a single *elixir of swimming*. The cloth sack is actually a *cloak of resistance +1*.

ABYSIUM: The chunk of abysium skymetal is extremely rare, dangerous and valuable. Experts in Sandpoint and Magnimar will offer to purchase it for up to 500 gp. If the PCs hold onto the rock, they will need to devise a container to avoid its toxic effects. Anyone who carries the rock becomes **Sickened**, and the condition lasts for 1d4 hours after it is removed (see page 70 of *Pathfinder 61: Shards of Sin*).

TUNNELS: Two tunnels exit this cave into the upper reaches of the Darklands. Where they lead is beyond the scope of this adventure and is left to the GM to decide. If you intend for the adventure to end here, you can have both tunnels blocked by cave-ins.

CONCLUDING THE ADVENTURE


The adventure ends once the PCs have explored the mine and its connecting caves. The PCs will want to return to farmer Ludlow and claim their reward. They may also wish to return to Sandpoint to research or sell the abysium rock. After that, you have many options to continue the story.

Perhaps an angry tribe of troglodytes looking to retrieve their 'holy stone' will harass Sandpoint or kidnap farmer Ludlow, prompting the PCs to mount a rescue. Alternatively, the PCs may choose to return to explore the Darklands and investigate the meaning of the strange cube-shaped rock, taking them deeper into the tunnels leading to Nar-Voth. ✖



INTO THE DARK: A BEGINNER-STYLE ADVENTURE

BY ALEX "DAVIOT" PUTNAM
ART BY SILVIA GONZALEZ
MAP BY ALEX "CANADA
GUY" MOORE



This is a short adventure for four 2nd-level characters, set near the town of Sandpoint. If the PCs have already completed "Black Fang's Dungeon" and "Deadly Mine" from the *Beginner Box GM Kit* (available at <http://paizo.com/beginnerbox>), they should be at or very close to 2nd level—if your group is short on XP, consider a random encounter from the *Game Master's Guide* or rewarding the difference when the party reports their success against Black Fang to the mayor. If you've not played these adventures, don't worry; it can be played just as well with new 2nd-level characters, veterans out for another challenge.

This adventure assumes you're familiar with how to run an adventure and have the Beginner Box handy, as well as the *GM Kit* (available for free from paizo.com/beginnerbox) to reference for monsters, treasure, and gear. Area 1 of this adventure can connect to Area 5 of the "Deadly Mine", to Area 10 of "Black Fang's Dungeon", or can be its own cavern.

BEGINREADINGALOUDTOSTARTTHEADVENTURE!

After your most recent exploits, you came to the town of Sandpoint where you could rest, boast, and spend your treasure. You had only been in town for two days when Sheriff Belor Hemlock contacted you with disturbing news: a caravan of traders from Magnimar spotted a ghoul lurking on the outskirts of town! The Sheriff has also received reports of a strange woman in tattered robes asking the locals about nearby grave sites and the old abandoned mine. He believes the ghoul's appearance is somehow connected to this woman, especially since one of the town's hunters came across two sets of tracks last night, one of boots and the other of clawed feet, moving together away from town and into the hills.

The Sheriff doesn't want a gang of ghouls spreading their illness among the people. He needs the adventurers to find out what the robbed woman is up to. He gave you a pair of manacles, a grappling hook, and a length of rope, and asked you to go to the old mine and investigate. If the woman is responsible for the undead, you are to

end the threat and bring her in: alive, if possible; dead, if necessary.

Having made the one-day journey to the mines, you now stare into a natural limestone chimney, a vertical shaft leading down into the dark.

1: Pit Shaft and Landing

This room includes the climb down the shaft, and a clue about the ghoul. Have the players decide who will carry the three new items (there's only one of each), prepare the map of the room, then ask how the PCs will descend down the shaft.

CLIMBING DOWN: The pit is roughly 10 feet by 5 feet, 20 feet deep, and moderately smooth. It takes a DC 20 **Climb** check to climb up or down. If the PCs set the grappling hook and rope at the top, the DC is just 5. If they also knot the rope, the DC drops to 0, and no check is needed. A character takes 1d6 damage if they fall 10 feet or more, or 2d6 if they fall the full distance. Once the group climbs down and explores the room, read the following:

The faint drip of water falling onto limestone echoes on this chamber's walls, though the room itself has a thin coating of dust on the floor, recently disturbed.

TRACKS: A DC 15 **Perception** check makes out the clawed, gaunt prints of a ghoul, heading down the path to the west, as well human boot prints. A 20 or better on the check also reveals that the ghoul appears to have come and gone several times.

2: Troglodyte Chamber (XP 800)

The cleric and the ghoul traveled through this area, leaving a pair of "hired" troglodytes, feral lizard-men from deeper underground, to guard the path. It also leads to **Area 3**, a treasure cache. When the PCs enter the area, draw it on the map and read the following:

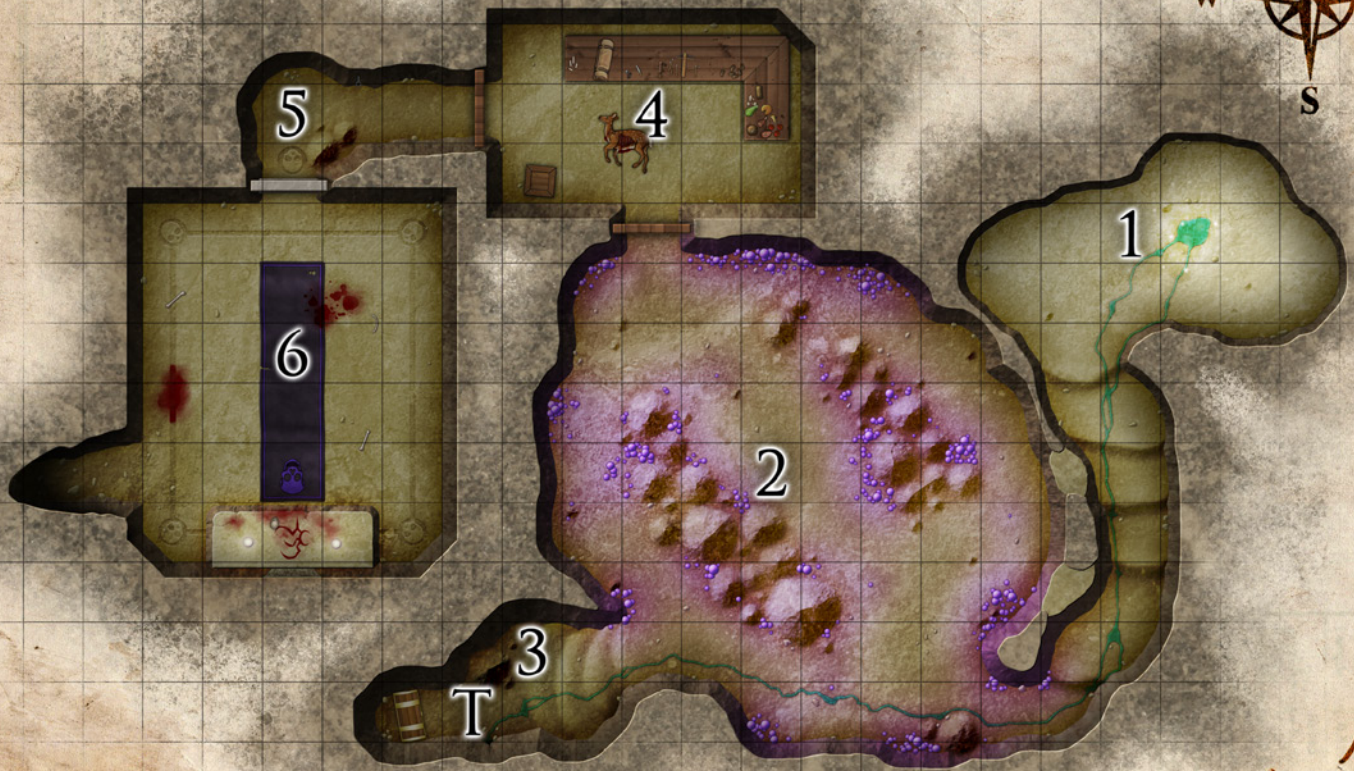
The path winds south, then southwest, down ancient flowstone steps into a larger chamber, where stalactites slowly drip onto their counterparts on the floor. Luminescent mushrooms light the room in a soft purple glow. At the other end of the chamber, two malodorous reptilian monsters slouch in front of a wooden door, while to the west, the cavern slopes down to a side chamber.

CREATURES: The two troglodytes aren't particularly attentive (unless the PCs bring lights or make loud noises) and the PCs might want to turn the tables and set up their own ambush, getting a surprise round (see the *GM Kit*) and their choice of a standard or move action before regular combat starts. The troglodytes' stench ability applies when a PC first starts a turn within 30 feet of one; anyone who succeeds on the Fortitude save can't be affected by the stench for the rest of the adventure.

A DC 11 **Knowledge (dungeoneering)** or **(local)** check (an easy check, but one that requires training) is enough to identify the troglodytes and their stench ability. A 16 or better recognizes that the monsters rarely have organized societies, and tend to scavenge metal weapons (a fact that could be useful if the PCs want to try talking with them).

LIGHTS: Although the troglodytes are not very perceptive, they will notice if the PCs are carrying torches or other lights when they come down the steps. The glowing mushrooms only provide dim light: enough to move around, but not enough to easily attack. Creatures

INTO THE DARK



without darkvision have a 20% chance to miss when they attack in dim light (see Concealment on page 59 of the *Hero's Handbook*).

LEDGES: There are two open ledges on the stairs that give a clear view of the main part of this area. Clever characters might hide here and use ranged weapons or spells as part of an ambush.

TALKING: The troglodytes are cruel, but they don't like their current "job". If the PCs try talking to the troglodytes, have them make a **Diplomacy** check (or a **Charisma** check if a PC doesn't have the skill) against a DC of 20. If at least one PC succeeds on the check, the troglodytes sneer and agree to talk; otherwise they snarl and attack.

The troglodytes can explain that they're guarding the door for "another soft-skinned mammal" and won't let them pass. If asked who hired them, they describe the person as "a grey robe-wearing dead-speaker". If the PCs ask to walk past them, have them make another **Diplomacy** check, but this time against a DC 25; a particularly good argument grants a +2 on the check, and offering to give/bribe the troglodytes two metal weapons grants a +5 on the check (these two bonuses can stack). If they succeed, the troglodytes agree to look the other way; if the best roll was a 21-24, they again refuse and ask the PCs to leave. If the PCs stay in the room or if the best Diplomacy roll was a 20 or worse, they change their minds and attack.

SNEAKING: The dim light and the large rock pillars provide cover, making it perfect for a rogue (or other sneaky character) to set up an ambush. The troglodytes have a +0 modifier to their Perception

to oppose a PC's **Stealth** check.

TROGLODYTES (2) (CR 1; XP 400 EACH)

hp 13 (see page 80 in the *Game Master's Guide*)

TACTICS

During Combat The troglodytes use their claws in melee. If they can, they will use a move and standard action together as a full attack to make three attacks (1 bite and 2 claws). They try to gang up on the biggest threat, or circle around the rocks to get closer if the PCs hang back and use ranged weapons and spells.

TREASURE: The troglodytes carry a total of 16 gold pieces. These coins were "payment" for guarding the door.

XP: If the PCs make it past the troglodytes without a fight, award them the 800 XP as if they had defeated them. If the PCs later fight them, don't award the XP again.

3: Trapped Passage (XP 400)

This small, dark room leads to a dead end with a trap followed by an unlocked chest. Read the following when the PCs first enter:

This side chamber gently slopes down to a dead end, water trickling in rivulets to a small crack in the wall. Of more interest is the sturdy wood and brass treasure chest at the end of the passage.

TRAP: Unless the PCs ask to examine the room, roll **Perception** checks for the PCs in secret to see if they notice the trap's tripwire (a DC 20 succeeds; rogues get a +1 to this check from trapfinding). Since the trap is mechanical, any character with at least 1 rank in **Disable Device** can try disarming the trap, not just a rogue. Otherwise, the trap triggers when a character walks through the marked square.

ARROW TRAP (CR 1; XP 400)

(see page 38 in the *Game Master's Guide*)

Type mechanical; **Perception** DC 20; **Disable Device** DC 20

Trigger touch; **Reset** none

EFFECTS

Attack +15 ranged (1d8+1/x3)

TREASURE: The chest contains a *potion of cure moderate wounds* (magic, see page 51 of the *Game Master's Guide*), a wizard's *scroll of scorching ray* (magic, page 52), 80 gold coins in a velvet pouch, and a large opal gem worth 350 gold pieces.

4: The Ghoul in the Workshop (XP 400)

This natural cavern has been excavated as a storeroom. The cleric has uses it as a workshop and living space. It currently contains the ghoul, eating the corpse of an animal. The wooden door to **Area 5** is unlocked. Read the following when the PCs first enter:

The smell of sawdust heralds this storeroom, the walls worked by some previous inhabitants, and a long workbench takes up the north wall of the room. A sinewy humanoid monster is hunched over the body of a small deer, eating flesh from the corpse.

CREATURE: The ghoul is somewhat distracted by its grisly meal, and ignores the sounds of combat in the previous room and doesn't hear the door open. If the PCs enter the room regularly, roll the ghoul's **Perception** check (a d20+7) against a DC of 10 to see if it notices; if it fails this check or if the PCs intentionally use *Stealth*, they may get the chance to surprise it.

GHOUL (CR 1; XP 400)

hp 13 (see page 70 in the *Game Master's Guide*)

TACTICS

During Combat The ghoul lashes out at the nearest PC. If it fails its Will save against a PC cleric's channel energy ability (or *cure light wounds* used as a touch attack) or if it is reduced to 5 hit points or less, it attempts to flee, spending a move action to open the door to **Area 5** before going to **Area 6** to warn its master.

WORKBENCH AND CRATE: The top of the workbench contains a variety of small tools, along with the gear of a hunter who fell victim to the ghoul a short while ago: a masterwork light crossbow, a bolt quiver with 8 crossbow bolts, and a dagger. It also has some of the cleric's belongings: several half-used candles, a flint and steel starter, a bedroll, and a week's worth (7) of trail rations. The nearby crate is empty, instead being used as a crude chair.

TREASURE: A DC 15 **Perception** check reveals a small lockbox stashed under the workbench (see below). The chest has a simple lock and can be opened with a DC 20 **Disable Device**. The cleric in Area 6 carries the key if the PCs can't or don't wish to pick the lock. The lockbox contains a *brooch of shielding* (magic, page 57 of the *Game Master's Guide*), an ornate silver comb depicting a dragon wrapped

around the handle worth 75 gold pieces, and 40 gold.

5: The Passageway

This small L-shaped chamber is meant to give the players a pause and warn their PCs that an important room is immediately after. Read the following when they enter the room:

The worked cave walls turn again to natural stone, a rough patch of cave that turns abruptly left, marked only with a large limestone stalagmite and a cast iron sconce in the wall that holds an unlit torch. The passageway stops at a heavy stone door, carved with images of a monstrous skull devouring a hapless crowd, while a strange, claw-like rune is carved overhead in the frame of the door.

DOOR: The stone door has no lock, and is counterbalanced to open with a touch, though it squeaks and groans loudly, announcing its opening to the inhabitants of **Area 6**, before closing itself automatically once someone lets go of the door.

Have each PC making an untrained **Knowledge (religion)** check with a DC 10. Those who succeed know that the symbol isn't one of the deities commonly worshipped in the Sandpoint area. PCs with ranks in **Knowledge (arcana)** or **(religion)** check can make a DC 20 check to realize the rune is the mark of a demon lord. Achieving a 25 or better on the roll reveals it to be the rune of Kabriri, the demonic master of ghouls and grave-robbers, also known as "He Who Gnaws".

TORCH: The metal torch bracket is firmly hammered into the wall. The ordinary torch in the sconce can be lit and removed by any



character needing a light source.

6: Themista's Lair (XP 1,400)

This chamber has been refashioned into a shrine by Themista, the evil cleric recently seen in Sandpoint, who uses it for her experiments controlling undead. It serves as the "boss" encounter for this adventure. When the PCs enter this area, read the following:

The unsettling stone door groans open to a large, vaulted stone chamber lit by motes of magical light on an altar furnished with a skull. Whatever the room once was, it now serves a fiendish purpose. An unsettling human woman in purple-adornd grey robes and chainmail armor stands before her makeshift shrine, guarded by three upright, walking corpses. She glares at you, smirking before she speaks.

"So you are the little dogs those gossiping villagers sent to nip at my heels? Your little Sandpoint has no idea what lies in the tunnels that twist and turn below its farmlands: more than petty goblins and a wyrmling, that's for sure. I am Themista, beloved of He Who Gnaws. And you, my troublesome heroes, are prey. Get them!"

CREATURES: In addition to the evil cleric, this room contains three zombies under her command; if the ghoul from **Area 4** escaped, it shows up here, too. (If the PCs stopped to pick through treasure instead of immediately pursuing the ghoul, the creature made its way here. In this case, Themista has spent one use of her channel energy ability to fully heal the ghoul. While this reduces the number of times she can use that ability in combat, she has a fully healed ghoul to help her, which may make this encounter even tougher.)

Once Themista stops speaking, have everyone roll initiative and begin combat. Themista is a powerful and intelligent foe. Although she is not as overwhelming an opponent as Black Fang, she intends to fight to the death.

THEMISTA (EVIL CLERIC) (CR 3; XP 800)

hp 32 (see page 67 in the *Game Master's Guide*)

TACTICS

During Combat Themista attempts to hang back in combat, keeping her zombie minions between her and the PCs. She starts combat by drawing her crossbow and firing at a lightly-armored opponent, attempting to hit them while flat-footed, if possible. Next, she uses her spells, casting *hold person*

on physically weaker targets, such as wizards, and her two castings of *cause fear* on mentally weaker targets, such as fighters or rogues. Whenever her zombies (or the ghoul, if it survived) are seriously hurt, she uses her channel energy ability to heal all undead in the room by 2d6 hit points, saving at least one use for later. Once her undead are destroyed and she's seriously injured, she uses channel energy (her last usage if needed) in an attempt to cause damage to the living, hoping to finish off injured party members. She uses her prepared healing spells on herself when she can, and *sound burst* when the party is clustered together.

ZOMBIES (3) (CR 1/2; XP 200 EACH)

hp 12 (see page 83 in the *Game Master's Guide*)

TACTICS

During Combat The zombies are mindless opponents.

They focus on the nearest PC to attack. If two PCs are equally close, each attacks the one that damaged it last. Like the skeletons in Black Fang's Lair, zombies are immune to cold damage, *cause fear*, *charm person*, *sleep*, and **doom**, and also have damage reduction (DR). A zombie's damage reduction affects damage from bludgeoning and piercing weapons, but does not affect damage from slashing weapons, channel energy, force missile, spells, alchemist's fire, or holy water.

THE ALTAR: The simple stone altar consists of a stone bench, marked in dried blood with the same rune as on the door outside and holding a humanoid skull and a pair of burnt-out candles. The candles are lit by Themista's *light orison*. Of interest, the candles cast their glow on the wall immediately behind the altar, where the PCs can see a crude map that depicts the cavern they are in as only one branch of a vast network of tunnels that snakes beneath Sandpoint. One area at the center of the map is marked with Kabriri's rune. A PC who succeeds on a DC 15 **Knowledge (geography)** check recognizes the marked area as "The Pit", a local site that is said to be the lair of the notorious creature known as the Sandpoint Devil.

THE TUNNEL: The hole in the wall leads deeper into the cavern network, and further adventures for you and your players to enjoy.

CONCLUDING THE ADVENTURE


Although the promise of a vast underground adventure awaits, the PCs should return to town with Themista (if the PCs stabilized her when she was below 0 hp) or news of her demise, and deliver the information about the cavern network beneath the countryside. Not only is Black Fang probably still on the loose, but there might be a larger temple to Kabriri, Lord of Ghouls, located nearby. The PCs will need strength of arm and nerves of steel if they wish to discover its location and learn whatever connection it may have with Sandpoint's infamous monster. ❖





THE GATEWAY TO NAR-VOTH

BY MARK GABRINGER
ART BY STEPHEN PRESCOTT
AND BABBY CURBY III
MAP BY ALEX "CANADA
GUY" MOORE



The *Gateway to Nar-Voth* is a short adventure for four 4th level characters, set under Sandpoint in the ruins of the Old Light. For more information on Sandpoint, refer to the *Beginner Box Game Master's Guide*.

The Gateway to Nar-Voth assumes you are familiar with how to run an adventure and have the *Pathfinder Roleplaying Game Beginner Box* material handy. It also makes use of new monster stat blocks that are included in this issue of *Wayfinder*.

ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

Thousands of years ago the location that eventually became Sandpoint was part of the nation of Bakrakhan, which was ruled by Alaznist, Runelord of Wrath. Bakrakhan was one of seven nations that made up the ancient empire of Thassilon, each of which was ruled by an incredibly powerful and power-hungry wizard, known as a Runelord.

Bakrakhan was constantly at war with the neighboring Shalast, ruled by the Runelord of Greed. To defend her borders, Runelord Alaznist created fiery sentry posts, known as Hellfire Flumes, which dotted the lands between Bakrakhan and Shalast. The Hellfire Flumes used an arcane focus to draw energy from the Elemental Plane of Fire and unleash it with devastating, pinpoint accuracy against targets up to two miles away.

Deep beneath Xin-Bakrakhan, the capital of Bakrakhan, tunnels and caverns connected to the lightless lands beneath Golarion's surface, known as the Darklands. The Darklands, like their upland counterparts, are full of dangers, horrors and twisted civilizations, including dwarves and orcs who came to the surface world from deep within the Darklands.

The Runelord of Wrath hoped to find a way to use the Darklands to connect her capital city with several of the Hellfire Flumes. Such a connection would allow her to move troops to the border for a massive invasion without being detected by the Runelord of Greed's own granite sentry watchtowers. The Darklands would not be so easily tamed, however, and Alaznist was never able to mount the overwhelming assault she desired, but her plan met with limited

success in a few places.

Present day Sandpoint is home to a sage and scholar named Brodert Quink who has been studying the Old Light, as the townsfolk call it, for the last several years. The local wisdom holds that the crumbled tower was once a lighthouse, but Brodert doubts this is the case. Brodert believes it was an arcane weapon of ancient power—a Hellfire Flume. Without much proof of the matter, his belief has not won him friends in Sandpoint or in academic circles. Lacking the funds to mount a proper expedition to explore the deep, ruined shaft, he has conducted his studies as best he could from the surface, even going so far as to build his house next door to the ruin.

Last year, Brodert published a poorly received treatise on the subject, entitled "Hellfire Flumes: Fact or Fiction" to the Founder's Archive in Magnimar. Last week he was called on by a fellow scholar, Ardelia Enelveka, who wanted to talk to him about the subject. Brodert even gave her a guided tour around the surface ruins and spoke with her for most of the day. Brodert's excitement was short lived, though, as Ardelia spent only one night at the Rusty Dragon Inn before returning to Magnimar the following morning.

BEGIN READING ALOUD TO START THE ADVENTURE!

Two days ago, a beam of white light erupted from the Sandpoint landmark known as the Old Light, rising straight up into the night sky and remaining for nearly an hour. This strange occurrence has put Mayor Kendra Deverin in a foul mood. She has had to deal with many concerned citizens, but Brodert Quink was the worst. He came to her house banging on the door immediately after the incident.

You have been summoned to Mayor Deverin's office. She is a middle-aged, no non-sense woman, and is seated behind her desk when you arrive. There is a man present in the room, seated with his back to you. He turns to look over his shoulder, as the Mayor stands and begins speaking.

"Good morning, adventurers. Thank you for coming so quickly. Allow me to introduce Brodert Quink." She nods at the man. "What happened at the Old Light is like nothing I've never seen. People are scared, but Brodert here has some ideas about what's going on. I would like to hire you to go down into the ruins and find out what you can, then report back to me. I have made arrangements to get you down and back safely, and I can pay you 500 gold, each, for your efforts."

Brodert insists that his theory about the Old Light being a weapon is true, and that ancient agents of the Runelord of Wrath are upon them, prepared to smite the entire town of Sandpoint! Brodert informed the Mayor that his recent visitor from Magnimar, a female wizard name Ardelia Enelveka must have something to do with all this. He all but demanded the Mayor send Sheriff Hemlock and a few of his men down the shaft of the Old Light to put a stop to whatever Ardelia is up to. The Mayor chose to hire the adventurers, instead.

PART 1: PREPARATIONS

Mayor Deverin does want to find out more about what happened and deal with Ardelia Enelveka, if necessary. She has already convinced IlSORAI Gandethus, local wizard and headmaster of Turandarok Academy, to supply her with enough *potions of feather fall* to get the entire party safely to the bottom and a *wand of fly* (with 5 charges, one for each PC and an additional one for Brodert) to get the party members

THE GATEWAY TO NAR-VOTH



back up the shaft of the Old Light. Brodert insists that the mayor allow him to accompany the PCs, as he is the only person in town who has studied the language of ancient Thassilon.

BUNNING BRODEBT AS AN NPC

Brodert Quink very much wants to accompany the PCs into the Old Light. The research possibilities have his mind swimming. He is not an adventurer, though, and has never been more than an academic. He will not rush into obvious danger, but may overlook dangers in his eagerness to learn.

Though he does have knowledge of ancient Thassilon, he won't know things like the command words to disable traps until he can read Ardelia's book. Generally, his attitude will vacillate between excitement and smug self-satisfaction. However, after the confrontation with Ardelia, he is likely to become much more timid and withdrawn, wanting to return with the journal to the safety of his study.

With the *potions* and *wand* provided, getting down and back up the shaft of the Old Light safely is quite easy, but the PCs may wish to make more than one trip. If so, they will have to find and pay for their own way.

A *potion of feather fall* will do the trick for the small cost of 50 gp. Getting back up, however, is something else all together. A *scroll of fly* at 375 gp and especially a *flying ointment* (see page 58 of the *Game Master's Guide*) are

likely to be too costly for PCs. As long as they have a wizard in the group, encourage the PCs to combine their money and buy their own *wand of fly* for 2250 gp, if they need to make additional trips in and out of the Old Light.

Frugal and creative PCs may try tying ropes together and climbing down. Combining five 50' lengths of rope and securing one end to the top of the shaft is certainly possible—and for 5 gp, economical. Following the Climbing rules (see “Skills” on page of the *Hero's Handbook*), a PC with a movement speed of 30' requires 29 **Climb** checks to make it from bottom to top, or 40 **Climb** checks for a movement speed of 20'. The **Climb** DC is 5 which means unless the PC has a negative Strength modifier they would not fail by 4 or more, which means they will not fall, even on a roll of a natural 1. There is no reason to have these PCs any climbing checks. Strongly encourage PCs with a negative Strength to look for magical solutions to the problem, as a fall from 50' or more is likely to be spectacularly fatal.

PART 2: BELOW THE OLD LIGHT

All the creatures encountered here should have the equipment listed in the stat block entries from the Game Master's Guide or on page XX of this issue of Wayfinder, in addition to anything listed as Treasure.

1: The Bottom and the Trapped Hallway (XP 800)

Once the PCs have reached the bottom of the Old Light, read the following:

Nearly two hundred feet below the city of Sandpoint, the bottom of the ruined tower is surprisingly clean, with only a few shattered chunks of stonework littering the floor. A sickly, pale green moss grows over most of the fitted stonework on the floor and walls.

There are obvious footprints in the moss heading toward the eastern wall, where a door-shaped outline is visible.

Door: Ardelia Enelveka and her hired help passed through the doorway without taking any special care to conceal their passage. There is an ancient stonework locking mechanism on the inside of the door but it is broken.

Moss: A DC 10 **Knowledge (nature)** check tells the PCs that this moss isn't dangerous or poisonous to them.

When the PCs proceed, read the following:

The five-foot-wide hallway runs forty feet east, opening into a larger room beyond. The walls are smooth and clean with no sign of the moss or other plant growth like there was at the bottom of the shaft. Midway through the hallway the stone in the floor shows signs of corrosion.

Trap: Halfway down the hallway awaits a magical *acid arrow* trap (see Traps, *Game Master's Guide*, page 39). Speaking the correct command word in the ancient language of Thassilon within 5' of the trapped block disarms the trap for 5 minutes. The trap's magical aura is visible via *detect magic*.

2: Square room (XP 800)

This smooth, stone room has two empty torch sconces, one in the northeastern corner and the other in the southeastern corner. The stone floor seems especially worn along the north-south hallway.

Creature: When the PCs enter the room, they have 3 rounds to speak the command word in Thassilonian before an animated statue steps from a nook in the eastern wall that was hidden by an illusion. The statue will attack any living creatures until it is destroyed or the command word is given. A cleric or wizard casting *detect magic* will notice magical glow of the illusion on the eastern wall.

ANIMATED STATUE (CR 3; XP 800)

hp 36 (*Game Master's Guide* 62)

TACTICS

During Combat The animated statue attacks the nearest PC using its slam and grab attack until all intruders have been defeated or it is destroyed.

3: Interrogation room (XP 800)

Doors: Both wooden doors for this room are closed and locked (DC 25 **Disable Device**) or can be opened with a key carried by one of the skeletal champions in **Area 4**.

There is a large table on the north side of the room with leather straps at both ends. The south side of the room contains a wooden table with handheld tools for inflicting pain. The southwestern wall contains a panel with 6 levers, all in the down position.

Levers: Each lever controls the gate for a cell in **Area 3a**. They are all currently locked in the down position with a metal bar and locking mechanism (DC 25 **Disable Device**) or can be removed with the same key that opens the doors to the room.

3a: Cells (XP none)

There is a single empty torch sconce on the northern wall. The cells are cramped and bare, except for the two cells closest to the door, which hold the skeletal remains of humanoid creatures; the floors were probably covered with straw for the prisoners to sleep on.

Cells: One lever in **Area 3** controls the door for each cell. A DC 15 **Heal** check identifies the skeletons as human with no obvious cause of death.

Treasure: A DC 15 **Perception** check reveals that a ring lies among the bones in one cell. *Detect magic* reveals the ring to be magical. It is a *ring of climbing* (see page 51 of the *Game Master's Guide*).

4: Barracks (XP 1,200)

The broken remains of bunks and wardrobes are scattered across this small room. A smooth, stone-carved feature on the north wall glows softly, providing light.

Creature: There are two skeletal champions here who rise up from the rubble and attack the PCs as they enter. One of them is carrying a silver key, which opens the locks in **Area 3**.

Light Stone: Carvings on the bowl shaped stone resemble flames. The stone glows with its own light, but gives off no heat. Anyone casting *detect magic* notices its magical aura. This stone is identical to others that provide light in other rooms. Each one loses its magic (and light) if anyone tries to remove it from the wall.

Treasure: The skeletal champions have 31 gp, 3 turquoise gems (worth 10 gp each) and a *scroll of hold person* between them.

SKELTAL CHAMPIONS (2) (CR 2; XP 600 EACH)

hp 17 (*Game Master's Guide* 79)

TACTICS

During Combat The long dead guards fight mercilessly until destroyed.

5: Mess Hall (XP 1,600)

This large room appears to have been used for the storage, preparation and consumption of meals. The tables have been pushed into the southwest corner, and a circle of strange symbols is drawn on the floor. The room is lit by glowing stones mounted on the walls.

A woman is seated at one of the tables, studying what appears to be a very old book. A terrifying beast that looks like a dog with charred, smoldering flesh sits next to her. The body of a man lies on the floor on the other side of the room.

Creatures: Ardelia Enelveka is here studying an ancient book when the PCs enter the room. If she sees Brodert with the PCs she mocks him, saying, "I didn't think you possessed the courage to actually come down here, old man." She orders the hell hound to attack and joins in the battle with her spells.

ARDELIA ENELVEKA (CR 3; XP 800)

hp 24 (see Evil Wizard in *Game Master's Guide* 68)

TACTICS

During Combat Ardelia casts *sleep* on characters that rely on

melee combat and uses *scorching ray* against wizards. If she falls below 8 hit points, she will try to escape using *invisibility*.

HELL HOUND (CR 3; XP 800)

hp 30 (*Game Master's Guide* 74)

TACTICS

During Combat The hell hound will use its breath weapon immediately and again every 2d4 rounds, if able. It is bound to protect Ardelia and attacks anyone who threatens her safety.

Body: Ardelia's recently deceased companion seems to have sustained serious burns.

Book: The ancient journal is written in the tongue of the

to summon the Hell Hound to protect her after the Fire Elemental in **Area 6** killed her hired help.

Treasure: Ardelia carries a pouch containing 76 gp and a *wand of fly*, which she planned to use to return to the surface. She also wears a broach worth 55 gp.

6: Viewing chamber (XP 800)

The door opens to reveal a square room lit by a man-sized tower of living flame. The fiery creature rushes toward the now-open door.

Ardelia's prying into the Hellfire Flume's connections with the Elemental Plane of Fire caused it to unleash its beam of light, but also



Thassilonians, which Brodert Quink can read but requires some study to translate. The journal details and illustrates some of the day-to-day operations of the Hellfire Flume, confirming Quink's beliefs. The journal also contains the command words to disable the *acid arrow* trap and stop the animated statue from attacking. He offers to teach them to the PCs, although the statue may already be destroyed. It takes several hours to translate the useful information in the journal.

Magic Circle: A DC 15 **Spellcraft** or **Knowledge (arcana)** check reveals this to be a summoning circle. The circle was used by Ardelia

released a fire elemental, which attacked her and her hired guards. The two men died fending off the creature's attacks, but before they died, they trapped it in this chamber, which used to be part of the divination magic that allowed Alaznist's minions to aim the Hellfire Flume's beam.

Once they have dealt with the elemental, the PCs will notice that the western wall is partly covered with the remains of an eight-foot tall, six-foot wide mirror. There are the piles of ash and a heavily charred humanoid body near the heavy stone door. The entire room is lit by a smooth, carved stone set into the northern wall.

Creature: A fire elemental is loose in here, unable to escape through the stone door. It attacks anyone who enters the room.

FIRE ELEMENTAL (CR 3; XP 800)

hp 30 (*Game Master's Guide* 69)

TACTICS

During Combat The fire elemental relentlessly attacks the first PC through the door.

Body: The recently deceased companion of Ardelia has sustained serious burns.

Mirror: The edge of the mirror is decorated in silver filigree. The mirror has shattered with jagged pieces littering the floor. Anyone casting *detect magic* will still detect faint magical auras on the shattered pieces.

Stone: As with the Barracks these stones provide magical light and are carved into the walls.

Treasure: PCs searching the room will find a cloak in surprisingly good condition lying among the ashes. It is a *cloak of resistance +1*. Underneath the cloak, lies a small pouch containing two 1st-level *pearls of power* (see pages 57 and 59 of the *Game Master's Guide*, respectively).

PART 3: INTO NAR-VOTH

Once the PCs have dealt with Ardelia, they can explore more of the ruins. However, their scholarly guide will soon decide that he has had quite enough adventuring for one day.

7: Into the Earth (XP none)

The tunnel narrows slightly and begins to slope downward into the earth. To the south a massive stone door blocks further movement. There is a carved arch over the door with Thassilonian words and magic runes.

Arch: Anyone casting *detect magic* will immediately sense an overwhelming magical aura coming from the door and the arch above it. If Brodert is with the PCs and has the journal, he exclaims loudly and begins flipping through pages until he finds an illustration of the door. Translating the writings, he explains that this opens into a massive series of caves and tunnels known as the Darklands. Further he explains that the book contains the correct command words that will open the doors. He offers to teach the PCs how to speak the words, but chooses not to follow them deeper into the tunnels. After the run in with Ardelia, Brodert is eager to return to the surface with the journal for further study.

8: Mushroom cavern (XP none)

The tunnel stretches out over 200 feet as it gently slopes down into the earth. It opens into a damp and musty cavern with rough walls. Most of the walls and floor are grown over with fist-sized or larger mushrooms. The air is wet and humid, and from the east you can hear the gentle splashing of water.

Mushrooms: Anyone attempting to move through the room faster than half speed must succeed at a DC 10 **Acrobatics** check or slip and

fall prone. A DC 15 **Knowledge (nature)** check identifies that these mushrooms are quite delicious when cooked. Anyone who eats them raw, however, must make a DC 20 **Fortitude** save or become Sickened (see Conditions, *Game Master's Guide*, page 95) for 2d12 minutes.

9: Filthy cave (XP 1,200)

Mounds of filth are piled around this cave, decaying and giving off a strong, unpleasant odor. Jagged stalagmites rise up from among the fetid piles and small, fist-sized spots of glowing, pale blue fungus grow on many of the piles. There are also tracks through the muck and smears of organic material on the walls.

Creature: A pair of morlocks, degenerate creatures who dwell in the Darklands, lives amidst this squalor. Should the PCs engage with the morlock in **Area 9a**, these two will join the fight on the 2nd round of combat.

MORLOCKS (2) (CR 2; XP 600 EACH)

hp 22 (*Wayfinder #9 XX*)

TACTICS

Before Combat The morlocks are likely alerted to the PCs' approach by their light sources. They will climb to the roof of the cave and wait to ambush the intruders to their domain.

During Combat The morlocks use their swarming ability to combat the largest physical threat, then focus on the next most dangerous foe.

Piles: These masses of organic material are in different states of decay and putrefaction, with some kind of glowing blue fungus starting to grow on them. It would be foolish to ingest any of it, and those who do must make a DC 20 **Fortitude** save or become Nauseated (see Conditions, *Game Master's Guide*, page 95) for 1d10 minutes.

Treasure: One of the morlocks carries a pouch with three smooth-cut pieces of jade (worth 100 gp each).

9a: Filthy cave (XP 600)

An overpowering stench of rot has settled in this part of the cavern, as well. The cave floor slopes gently toward the south end, and much of it is filled with decaying filth and stalagmites.

Creature: Another morlock lurks here.

MORLOCK (CR 2; XP 600)

hp 22 (*Wayfinder #9 XX*)

TACTICS

Before Combat The morlock will attempt to hide near the ceiling of the cave until the PCs pass, coming up from behind to attack.

10: Underground oasis (XP none)

A small, but steady flow of water cascades down from the ceiling through a large boulder and collects into a small pool. The edges of the pool are slick with a fuzzy, deep green moss. Larger mushrooms, the size of small dogs, grow along floor and northern wall.

Mushrooms: A DC 15 **Knowledge (nature)** check identifies these mushrooms are safe to eat, raw or cooked.

Pool: The pool is only about three feet deep. A DC 10 **Knowledge (nature)** identifies the water as safe to drink.

11: Gateway to Nar-Voth (XP 1,200)

This cavern is large and open. The southern end is filled with a massive pair of stone doors, carved with an intricate scene and decorated with deep-set runes along the edges.

Suddenly, four long-eared humanoids leap from the shadows! Their skin is night-black, but the hair on their heads is stark white. They snarl at you, spitting out words in a language that sounds only vaguely like Elven.

Creatures: A patrol of drow elves rests here while preparing to return through the Gateway to their territory deep in the Darklands. Related to elves, the drow have an evil streak unlike their surface cousins. They rule subterranean cities and are among the most feared and hated inhabitants of the Darklands, who known to make slaves of weaker races. Shorter and somewhat more slender than surface elves, their dark skin ranges from black to a hazy purple. Most drow have white hair and eyes, though silver hair and red eyes are also common.

The three drow soldiers are led by a drow noble. In addition to her normal gear and treasure, she also carries an apple-sized token that glows under inspection by *detect magic*. The token has the image of a tower (actually, an intact Hellfire Flume) on one side and a black widow spider on the other.

Likely alerted to the PCs' approach by the sight of their light

sources, the drow attempt to ambush the PCs using their magical darkness to their advantage. Secretly roll a **Stealth** check for the drow (1d20+2), then have the PCs make **Perception** checks. PCs who fail the check are surprised and may not act in the surprise round. The drow and any PCs who succeed on the check may take either a standard action or a move action during the surprise round.

DROW (3) (CR 1/3; XP 135 EACH)

hp 5 (Wayfinder #9 XX)

TACTICS

During Combat The drow prefer to rely on their magical *darkness* to gain the advantage and use their poisoned hand crossbows to render their opponents unconscious.

DROW NOBLE (CR 3; XP 800)

hp 20 (Wayfinder #9 XX)

TACTICS

During Combat The drow noble uses her spells (*cause fear, suggestion, hold person*) to deal with PCs that her soldiers are unable to put to sleep.

Doors: Crafted from the surrounding stone, these doors are carved with an intricate scene depicting humans traveling through a series of caves and tunnels to a large surface city. There are depictions of the humans fighting drow, demonic monsters and other creatures of that the PCs cannot recognize. The doors can only be opened by a magic token, such as the one carried by the drow noble. The doors automatically close 10 minutes after they have been opened. It is nearly impossible to keep them propped open, though blocking them with a large piece of stone might work.

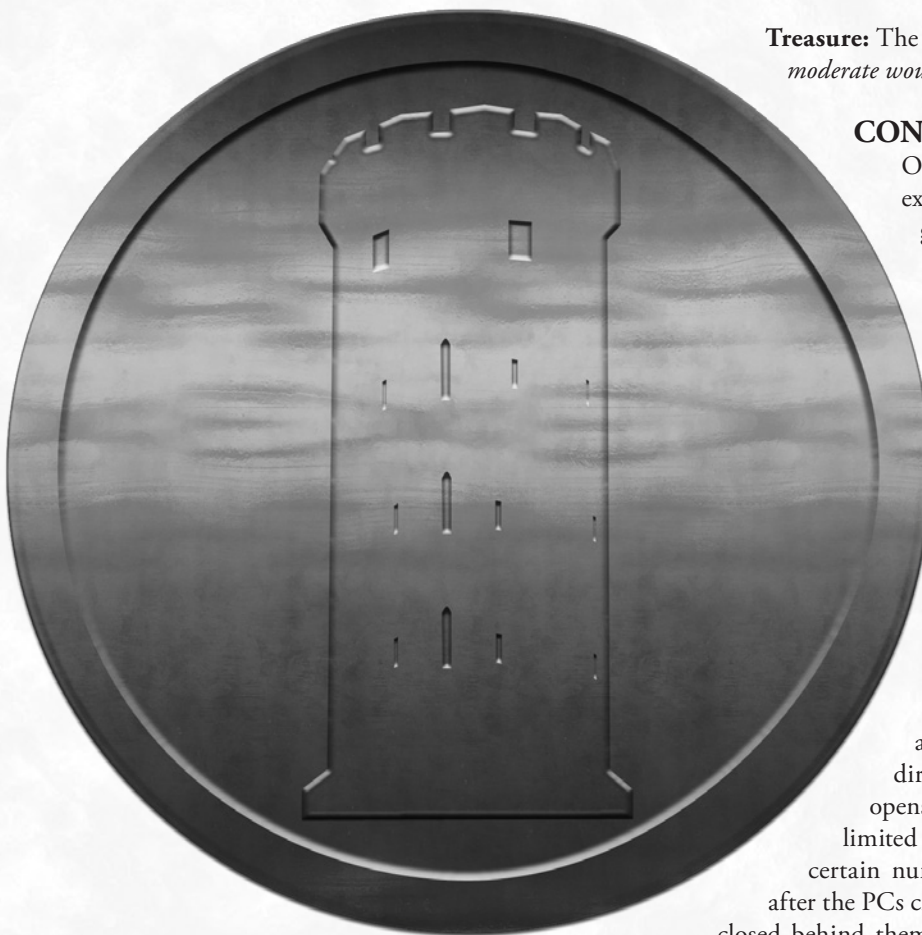
Treasure: The four drow carry a total of 13 gp, 2 *potions of cure moderate wounds* and a *ring of sustenance*.

CONCLUDING THE ADVENTURE

Once the PCs return to Sandpoint, the Mayor expresses her gratitude for stopping Ardelia and gives them their reward. Brodert sets to work studying the recovered journal with high hopes of improving his reputation as a scholar. Ardelia's tinkering did significant damage to the ruins, and it will likely never be able to produce the same beam of light effect again. However, with Brodert's help, a wizard of sufficient power may be able to partially repair it, and prove his theory correct, once and for all.

As for the Gateway to Nar-Voth, the PCs can use it as a means to explore more of the strange and deadly Darklands! It makes an excellent launching point for a long-term campaign.

The meaning and importance of the Gateway are left open-ended for you to take it in whatever direction you and your players wish. The token that opens the Gateway could be a permanent item or a limited use magic item that crumbles into dust after a certain number of uses. If the token were to disintegrate after the PCs crossed into Nar-Voth and the massive stone doors closed behind them, they would be forced to explore more of the lands beneath Golarion, just to find a way to get back home. ✖



BEGINNER BOX CONVERSIONS

BY PARIS CRENSHAW AND
MARK GABINGER
ART BY JASON KIRCKOFF
AND DANNY BROG

The stat blocks below provide conversions of some of the Darklands' iconic creatures to go along with the wide variety of monsters and other enemies in the Game Master's Guide from the Pathfinder Beginner Box. Along with these new creatures, you will find Beginner Box conversions of the spells they use. You can also add these spells to the options available to your players.

Derro

This pale blue humanoid has bulging white eyes, wild hair, four-fingered hands, and a large hooked club.

Derros are a race of small humanoids who live underground. They are insane creatures that scurry about in the dark, conducting horrible experiments with dark magic, often using living beings as test subjects.

DERRO CR 3; XP 800

Chaotic Evil humanoid (derro)

hp 25 (3d8+12)

Initiative +6; **Speed** 20 ft. (4 squares)

Senses darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +0

DEFENSE

AC 17, touch 13, flat-footed 15

Fort +5, **Ref** +3, **Will** +6

Spell Resistance 14

Weaknesses vulnerability to sunlight

OFFENSE

Melee (standard action) short sword +5 (1d4)

Melee (standard action) aklys +5 (1d6 plus trip)

Ranged (standard action) repeating light crossbow +5 (1d6/19–20 plus poison)

Ranged (standard action) aklys +5 (1d6)

Special Attacks sneak attack +1d6

Spells (caster level 3rd)

At will—*darkness*, *ghost sound** (DC 13)

1/day—*daze** (DC 13), *sound burst* (DC 15)

* new spell described below

STATISTICS

Str +0, **Dex** +2, **Con** +4, **Int** +0, **Wis** -3, **Cha** +3

Base Atk +2; **CMB** +1; **CMD** 13

Skills Perception +0, Stealth +9

Feats Improved Initiative, Weapon Finesse

ITEMS

Equipment leather armor, short sword, aklys, repeating light crossbow with 5 poisoned bolts, one extra case of 5 light crossbow bolts

Treasure 1 Major Random Treasure roll, 2 Minor Random Treasure rolls (page 30 of the *Game Master's Guide*)

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Aklys Derros use a special weapon called an aklys. The aklys is a hooked throwing club with a 20-foot cord; the derro can retrieve the aklys as a move action after throwing it. Opponents hit with an aklys are knocked prone (see page 95 of the *Game Master's Guide*).

Madness Derros use their Charisma modifier on Will saves instead of their Wisdom modifier and are immune to insanity and confusion effects.

Poison Derros apply poison to their crossbow bolts to weaken their foes. Whenever a derro hits a target with a poisoned bolt, that creature must make a DC 14 Fort save or take a -1 penalty on melee attack and damage rolls for 1 day. This penalty increases by 1 each time the creature is hit and fails its Fort save.

Repeating Crossbow A repeating crossbow (whether heavy or



light) holds 5 crossbow bolts. As long as it holds bolts, you can reload it by pulling the reloading lever (a free action that takes only one hand). Loading a new case of 5 bolts is a full-round action.

Spell Resistance When a creature that has spell resistance is targeted by a spell, the spellcaster must roll 1d20 + his cleric level or wizard level. If the total is less than the creature's spell resistance, the spell has no effect on the creature.

Vulnerability to Sunlight A derro gains the sickened condition after it has been exposed to sunlight for one hour and remains sickened for one hour after the exposure ends.

Drow

This dark-skinned elf with silver hair and white, pupil-less eyes stands before you in a battle-ready pose.

Although related to the elves, the drow are a vile and evil cousin at best. Sometimes called dark elves, these cunning creatures prowl the caves and tunnels of the world below, ruling vast subterranean cities through fear and might.

DROW

R 1/3; XP 135

Chaotic Evil humanoid (elf)

hp 5 (1d8+1)

Initiative +2; **Speed** 30 ft. (6 squares)

Senses darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +2

DEFENSE

AC 15, touch 12, flat-footed 13

Fort +2, **Ref** +2, **Will** -1; +2 vs. enchantment

Immune sleep; **Spell Resistance** 7

Weaknesses light blindness

OFFENSE

Melee (standard action) rapier +2 (1d6/18-20)

Ranged (standard action)

hand crossbow +3 (1d4/19-20 plus poison)

Spells (caster level 1st)

1/day—*dancing lights**, *darkness*, *faerie fire**

* new spell described below

STATISTICS

Str +0, **Dex** +2, **Con** +0, **Int** +0, **Wis** -1, **Cha** +0

Skills Perception +2, Stealth +2

Feats Weapon Finesse

ITEMS

Equipment drow poison (2), hand crossbow with 20 bolts, leather armor, rapier, shield, light steel

Treasure 1 Minor Random Treasure roll (*Game Master's Guide*, page 30)

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Hand Crossbow The hand crossbow is smaller than a light crossbow, requiring only one hand. Loading this weapon is a move action that also takes one hand.

Light Blindness Drow are blinded for 1 round if exposed to bright light, such as sunlight or the *daylight* spell.

Poison Drow use a special poison on their crossbow bolts. Whenever a drow hits a foe with a hand crossbow bolt, that target must make a DC 13 Fort save or fall unconscious for 1

minute.

Spell Resistance When a creature that has spell resistance is targeted by a spell, the spellcaster must roll 1d20 + his cleric level or wizard level. If the total is less than the creature's spell resistance, the spell has no effect on the creature.

Some drow, usually females, are born with greater physical and mental strength, as well as innate magical abilities, that make them more powerful than others of their kind. These special drow are called drow nobles. Many of them become clerics in the service of evil, demonic powers.

DROW NOBLE CLERIC

CR 3; XP 800

Chaotic Evil humanoid (elf)

hp 20 (3d8+3)

Initiative +3; **Speed** 20 ft. (4 squares)

Senses darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +5

DEFENSE

AC 21, touch 13, flat-footed 18

Fort +4, **Ref** +4, **Will** +6; +2 vs. enchantments

Immune sleep; **Spell Resistance** 14

Weaknesses light blindness

OFFENSE

Melee (standard action) masterwork rapier +6 (1d6+1/18-20)

Ranged (standard action) hand crossbow +5 (1d4/19-20 plus poison)

Spells (caster level 3rd)

2nd—*cure moderate wounds*, *hold person* (DC 15), *silence** (DC15)

1st—*bleed**, *cause fear* (DC 14, prepared twice), *cure light wounds*

Orisons—*bleed**, *light*, *read magic*, *stabilize*

Constant—*detect magic*

At will—*dancing lights**, *deeper darkness**, *faerie fire**, *feather fall*, *levitate*

1/day—*divine favor*, *dispel magic* (DC 16), *suggestion* (DC 16)

* new spell described below

STATISTICS

Str +1, **Dex** +3, **Con** +1, **Int** +0, **Wis** +3, **Cha** +1

Skills Knowledge (Religion) +6, Sense Motive +9, Spellcraft +6

Feats Improved Channel, Weapon Finesse

ITEMS

Equipment drow poison (4), masterwork breastplate, heavy steel shield, masterwork rapier, *potion of invisibility*, *scroll of dispel magic*, *wand of cure light wounds*

Treasure 1 Major Random Treasure roll, 3 Minor Random Treasure rolls (page 30 of the *Game Master's Guide*)

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Bleeding Touch Six times per day, the drow noble can call upon her dark gods and make a melee touch attack (with a total bonus of +5 on the roll) that deals 1d6 points of damage to the



target. The target takes another 1d6 damage on the cleric's next turn unless someone casts a *cure* spell on the target or spends a standard action to make a DC 15 Heal check on the target.

Channel Energy The drow noble's channel energy either damages living creatures (except the drow noble) within 30 feet for 2d6 damage (Will save DC 14 for half damage) or heals undead creatures within 30 feet for 2d6 damage. The drow noble can use channel energy 4 times per day.

Hand Crossbow The hand crossbow is smaller than a light crossbow, requiring only one hand. Loading this weapon is a move action that also takes one hand.

Light Blindness Drow are blinded for 1 round if exposed to bright light, such as sunlight or the *daylight* spell.

Poison Drow use a special poison on their crossbow bolts. Whenever a drow hits a foe with a hand crossbow bolt, that target must make a DC 13 Fort save or fall unconscious for 1 minute.

Spell Resistance When a creature that has spell resistance is targeted by a spell, the spellcaster must roll 1d20 + his cleric level or wizard level. If the total is less than the creature's spell resistance, the spell has no effect on the creature.

Touch of Chaos Six times per day, the drow noble can call upon her dark gods and make a melee touch attack (with a total bonus of +5 on the roll) to imbue a target with raw chaos. For the next round, anytime the target needs to roll a d20, he must roll twice and take the worst result.

Morlock

Skin pale as a slug's belly, eyes huge and bulging, this thing crawls down the wall like a spider, but its shape is hideously humanoid.

Morlocks are degenerate humanoids that have regressed through years of subterranean dwelling into ravenous, barely thinking beasts of the endless night.

MORLOCK CR 2; XP 600

Chaotic Evil monstrous humanoid

hp 22 (3d10+6)

Initiative +8; **Speed** 40 ft. (8 squares)

Senses darkvision 60 ft., scent; Perception +2

DEFENSE

AC 15, touch 14, flat-footed 11

Fort +3, **Ref** +9, **Will** +5

Immune disease, poison

Weaknesses light blindness

OFFENSE

Climb 30 ft. (6 squares)

Melee (standard action) club +5 (1d6+2)

Melee (move and standard action) club +5 (1d6+2), bite +0 (1d4+1)

STATISTICS

Str +2, **Dex** +5, **Con** +2, **Int** -3, **Wis** +2, **Cha** -2

Skills Acrobatics +13, Climb +22, Stealth +8 (+12 in caverns)

Feats Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes

ITEMS

Equipment club

Treasure 2 Minor Random Treasure rolls (page 30 of the *Game Master's Guide*)

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Expert Climber A morlock can cling to cave walls and even ceilings as long as the surface has hand- and footholds.

Leap Attack As a standard action, a morlock may make a single attack during a jump. It can make this attack at any point along the course of the leap - the start, the end, or while in mid-air.

Swarming Morlocks dwell and fight in cramped quarters and are quite adept at swarming foes. Up to two morlocks can share the same square at the same time. Two morlocks attacking the same foe in this way are considered to be flanking that foe.



NEW SPELLS

BLEED (ORISON)

Range 30 ft.; **Duration** instantaneous

This spell causes a living creature that is below 0 hit points but stabilized to resume dying. Upon casting this spell, you target a living creature that has -1 or fewer hit points. That creature begins dying, taking 1 point of damage per round. The creature

can be stabilized later normally. Casting this spell on a creature that is already dying causes it to take 1 point of damage.

DAZE (CANTRIP)

Range 30 ft; **Duration** 1 round

You cloud the mind of a humanoid creature with 4 or fewer Hit Dice so that it gains the dazed condition and takes no actions (see page 94 of the *Game Master's Guide*). Humanoids of 5 or more HD are not affected. A targeted creature receives a Will save to resist (DC 10 + your INT Mod). After a creature has been dazed by this spell, it is immune to the spell's effects for 1 minute.

GHOST SOUND (CANTRIP)

Range 30 ft; **Duration** 1 round/wizard level

You use illusion to create sounds that can seem to be moving or coming from a fixed point. You cannot change the sound after the spell is cast. The sound can be as loud as four normal humans per wizard level (maximum 40 humans). A horde of rats running and squeaking is about as loud as eight humans running and shouting. A roaring lion is as loud as 16 humans, while a roaring dragon is equal to the noise from 32 humans. Anyone who hears a ghost sound receives a Will save to disbelieve it (DC 10 + your INT Mod).

DANCING LIGHTS (CANTRIP)

Range 100 ft; **Duration** 1 minute

This spell creates up to 4 lights that resemble glowing spheres, lanterns or torches (giving off that amount of light). These orbs must stay within a 10-foot-radius area of each other and can be

moved up to 100 feet per round as a free action. Alternatively the can be created in to one faintly glowing, humanoid shape.

DEEPER DARKNESS (LEVEL 3, CLERIC)

Range touch; **Duration** 10 minutes/cleric level

You make an object radiate magical darkness in a 60-foot radius. Torches, lanterns, light spells, and most other lights do not work in this darkness. Even creatures with darkvision (like dwarves) cannot see in this magical darkness. Only 3rd level or higher spells, like a *daylight* spell, can cancel out the effects of *deeper darkness*.

FAERIE FIRE (LEVEL 1, SPECIAL)

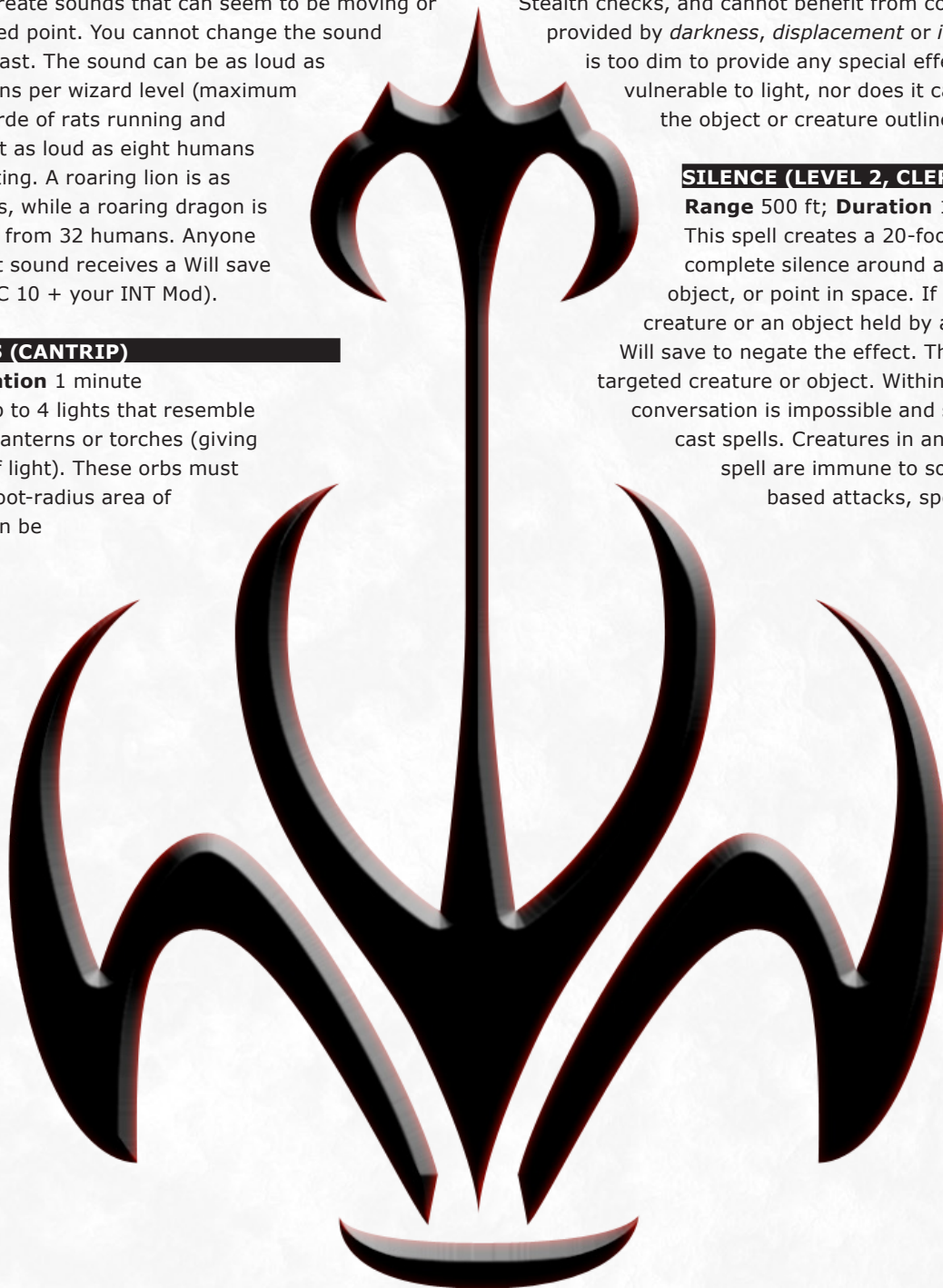
Range 500 ft; **Duration** 1 minute/caster level

This spell outlines an object or person in a pale violet glowing light. Creatures outlined by faerie fire take a -20 penalty on all Stealth checks, and cannot benefit from concealment normally provided by *darkness*, *displacement* or *invisibility*. The light is too dim to provide any special effect on creatures vulnerable to light, nor does it cause any harm to the object or creature outlined.

SILENCE (LEVEL 2, CLERIC)

Range 500 ft; **Duration** 1 round/cleric level

This spell creates a 20-foot radius area of complete silence around a targeted creature, object, or point in space. If the target is a creature or an object held by a creature, it gets a Will save to negate the effect. The area moves with a targeted creature or object. Within the area of silence, conversation is impossible and spellcasters cannot cast spells. Creatures in an area of a silence spell are immune to sound- or language-based attacks, spells, and effects. ✖



BOLIG HIGHGOLD

Male dwarf ranger 4

NG Medium humanoid (dwarf)

Init +2/+4 underground; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +5

DEFENSE

AC 21, touch 12, flat-footed 19 (+5 armor, +2 Dex, +4 shield) (+4 vs. giants)

hp 38 (4d10+12)

Fort +6, **Ref** +6, **Will** +2; +2 vs. poison, spells, and SLAs

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft.

Melee +1 *morningstar* +4 (1d6+4/x3) and mwk heavy spiked shield +4 (1d6+1) or +1 *morningstar* +8 (1d6+4/x3) or mwk throwing axe +8 (1d6+3)

Ranged mwk throwing axe +7 (1d6+3)

Special Attacks favored enemy (dwarves +2), +1 on attack rolls against goblinoid and orc humanoids

Ranger Spells Prepared (CL 1st; concentration +2)
1st—*longstrider*

STATISTICS

Str 16, **Dex** 14, **Con** 15, **Int** 8, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 10

Base Atk +4; **CMB** +7; **CMD** 19 (23 vs. bull rush, trip)

Feats Endurance, Improved Shield Bash, Shield Focus, Two-Weapon Fighting

Skills Appraise +0 (+2 to assess nonmagical metals or gemstones), Climb +5, Heal +5, Intimidate +5, Knowledge (dungeoneering) +5, Knowledge (geography) +5, Knowledge (nature) +3, Perception +5 (+7 underground or to notice unusual stonework), Stealth +6 (+8 underground), Survival +8 (+10 underground or to follow or identify tracks), Swim +5

Languages Common, Dwarven

Special Qualities favored terrain (underground +2), hunter's bond (companions), track +2, wild empathy +4

Combat Gear *potion of bear's endurance*, *potions of cure light wounds* (3);

Other Gear +1 chain shirt, +1 *morningstar*, +1 heavy steel shield, bedroll, carved dwarven statuette worth 50 gp, chalk (1 stick), dagger, flint and steel, grappling hook, hip flask, masterwork backpack, masterwork throwing axe, map case, mithral ring (worth 100 gp), rations (6 days), rope



(50 ft.), sapphire worth 50 gp, signet ring, tankard, traveler's outfit, waterskin, whetstone, 4 gp, 8 sp, 20 cp.

Background: Twenty years ago, duergar raiders slew the last of your clan while you were away hunting. After that, you devoted your life to hunting them, instead. Wherever and whenever you've found the gray dwarves, you've left every last one of them dead. It was your sole purpose for living until you met Erigga Foehammer. As a chronicler, orator, and ballad-singer, she wanted to ensure the histories of your Highgold clan wouldn't be lost to time. And along the way, you both developed a romantic interest in one another. You hope one day to marry her and acquired a mithral ring to offer her when the time seems right. But you also know her family has never cared for you, because you have no clan holdings to look after their daughter. So you haven't yet plucked up the courage to ask Erigga or her family for her hand in marriage.

Now, unfortunately, Errigga's father—Lord Morgrym Foehammer—has passed away, and you can no longer seek his blessing. Instead, you must turn to her brothers, Orlan and Klyndagh. Dwarven tradition maintains that all the surviving heirs of the Foehammer clan must return Morgrym's remains to their family's ancestral tomb in the Darklands. You've already volunteered to help guide them safely there, having braved the dangers of the tunnels below Janderhoff several times already. You also hope this excursion will give you the opportunity to finally prove your worth to Errigga's family and gain greater acceptance before you publicly declare your love upon your return.

Unfortunately, another capable warrior named Durnig Chiselstone has also chosen to accompany the Foehammers on their expedition, and Erigga already seems very taken with him. Durnig's ancestors have a long list of heroic accomplishments, and he seems destined to follow in their footsteps. He's already built a great military career fighting orcs and duergar, and he's next in line to inherit the crown of the Chiselstone clan. Erigga says she wants to chronicle his adventures, but you fear that might cause her to forget about your love for her. In an effort to keep her, you believe you must outdo Durnig in every way. If she's impressed by bravery and skill, you'll have to demonstrate yours to fully secure her heart.

So far, the only person with whom you've confided these things is Erigga's cousin, Artis Aleson. Known as a bit of a rogue and outsider himself, Artis holds a lot less tightly to dwarven tradition and supports competition with Durnig, whom he doesn't like very much, anyway. You're not entirely sure why Artis chose to join this excursion to return his uncle's remains to the family tomb, but you're grateful for his friendship and advice—particularly where it concerns outdoing Durnig, or convincing Orlan and Klyndagh to accept you as an equal despite no longer having a clan of your own. To that end, you hope by marrying Errigga, you can remedy the loss of your family and start anew. ✕✕

Bolig Highgold is a PC created by Neil Spicer for use with the adventure "The Foehammer Promise" on page 4.

Artwork by Jess Door.

The transition of power after the death of a clan leader is serious business, but for these six dwarves, determining who will pass the Test of the Crown may be the least of their worries.

DURNIG CHISELSTONE

Male dwarf fighter 4

LN Medium humanoid (dwarf)

Init +2; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +0

DEFENSE

AC 22, touch 12, flat-footed 20 (+7 armor, +2 Dex, +3 shield)
(+4 vs. giants)

hp 42 (4d10+16)

Fort +6, **Ref** +3, **Will** +1; +1 vs. fear; 2 vs. poison, spells, and SLAs

Defensive Abilities bravery +1

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft.

Melee +1 *dwarven waraxe* +9 (1d10+6/x3) or dagger +7
(1d4+3/19–20)

Ranged mwk light crossbow +7 (1d8/19–20)

Special Attacks +1 on attack rolls against goblinoid and orc humanoids

STATISTICS

Str 16, **Dex** 14, **Con** 15, **Int** 10, **Wis** 10, **Cha** 10

Base Atk +4; **CMB** +7; **CMD** 19 (23 vs. bull rush, trip)

Feats Cleave, Power Attack, Toughness, Weapon Focus (*dwarven waraxe*), Weapon Specialization (*dwarven waraxe*)

Skills Appraise +0 (+2 to assess nonmagical metals or gemstones), Climb +5, Intimidate +5, Knowledge (dungeoneering) +5, Perception +0 (+2 to notice unusual stonework), Survival +8

Languages Common, Dwarven

Special Qualities armor training 1

Combat Gear *potion of aid*, *potion of bull's strength*, *potions of cure light wounds* (3); **Other Gear** +1 *breastplate*, +1 *dwarven waraxe*, +1 *heavy steel shield*, bedroll, belt pouch, canteen, cooking kit, flasks of oil (3), flint and steel, hooded lantern, masterwork backpack, masterwork light crossbow with 10 bolts, military badge of commendation (worth 25 gp), noble's outfit, rations (6 days), rope (50 ft.), sapphire worth 50 gp, signet ring, soldier's uniform, tankard, traveler's outfit, whetstone, 12 gp, 8 sp, 20 cp.

Background: You've long held Lord Morgrym Foehammer in high regard. That's because your father used to tell you countless stories of the dwarf's heroism and the many adventures they shared, before both of them went on to form their own clans and become noble lords of Janderhoff. Those stories fueled much of your imagination and desire to become an



adventurer yourself

It was with great sadness that you recently learned of Morgrym's passing. Because of the admiration you had for him—and the debt your father owed Morgrym for saving his life many years ago—you offered to serve as an honor guard to those escorting his body back to the family's ancestral tomb in the Darklands.

The remaining Foehammers immediately accepted your offer, likely due in no small part to the reputation you built for yourself over the past few years. In fact, your skills with your father's ancient dwarven waraxe are virtually unmatched among Janderhoff's soldiers. And you've acquitted yourself exceptionally well in many battles against the hated orcs of Belkzen, as well as the duergar of the deep caverns below the Mindspin Mountains.

It's the latter that you expect to guard against during the family's expedition to lay Morgrym to rest. For the tomb itself lies nearly halfway between Janderhoff and the duergar citadel of Fellstrok, a passage you know quite well from your frequent forays. You expect many more challenges in the Darklands. And you relish such opportunities to not only keep the remaining Foehammers safe, but to also increase your legend by overcoming danger in ever more impressive ways.

Among your traveling companions, you fully respect the dour Foehammer brothers, Orlan and Klyndagh, even though you view yourself as more experienced than either of them in facing life or death situations. In addition, although you've only just met their sister, Erigga, you believe her to be the most beautiful dwarf you've ever seen. You hope this journey allows you to spend more time with her and to gauge her interest in a possible courtship. So far, she seems very interested in the history and heroic accomplishments of you and your clan. And you've already made plans to ask Orlan and Klyndagh for their permission to woo the young girl.

Unfortunately, Erigga also seems infatuated with a clanless ranger named Bolig Highgold. He's part of the expedition, as well, and appears to be your chief rival for her affections. Regardless, he seems a poor match for Erigga. As the last of his clan, you believe there's no way he can ever achieve the same glories and status as a noble dwarf of your standing, or ever be recognized in the annals of dwarven history with an epic song or ballad. You actually pity him somewhat for his circumstances, but to the victor go the spoils—and you're always victorious.

Meanwhile, you do not pity Erigga's cousin, Artis. You were surprised to hear he also volunteered for the expedition, as everyone knows the tavern-house rogue and gambler rarely does anything without it benefiting himself. You just haven't figured out his angle yet. So you keep a close eye on him, lest he betray Erigga and her brothers. In fact, you sometimes go out of your way to inconvenience Artis, if you can—just to drive home the point that you're watching him. ✖

Durnig Chiselstone is a PC created by Neil Spicer for use with the adventure "The Foehammer Promise" on page 4.

Artwork by Andrew DeFelice.

The transition of power after the death of a clan leader is serious business, but for these six dwarves, determining who will pass the Test of the Crown may be the least of their worries.

ERRIGA FOEHAMMER

Female dwarf bard 3 / fighter 1

CG Medium humanoid (dwarf)

Init +1; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +5

DEFENSE

AC 18, touch 11, flat-footed 17 (+5 armor, +1 Dex, +2 shield) (+4 vs. giants)

hp 34 (4HD; 3d8+1d10+11)

Fort +4, **Ref** +4, **Will** +3; +2 vs. poison, spells, and SLAs; +4 vs. bardic performance, language-dependent, and sonic attacks

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft.

Melee +1 *shortsword* +7 (1d6+3/19–20) or throwing axe +5 (1d6+2)

Ranged mwk light crossbow +5 (1d8/19–20) or throwing axe +4 (1d6+2)

Special Attacks bardic performance 10 rounds/day (countersong, distraction, fascinate, inspire competence +2, inspire courage +1), +1 on attack rolls against goblinoid and orc humanoids

Bard Spells Known (CL 3rd; concentration +5)

1st (4/day)—*cure light wounds*, *flare burst*^{APG} (DC 13), *moment of greatness*^{UC}, *saving finale*^{APG}

0 (at will)—*dancing lights*, *detect magic*, *flare* (DC 12), *ghost sound* (DC 12), *know direction*, *message*

STATISTICS

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

Base Atk +3; **CMB** +5; **CMD** 16 (20 vs. bull rush, trip)

Feats Stone Singer^{APG}, Toughness, Weapon Focus (short sword)

Skills Appraise +5, Bluff +6, Diplomacy +8, Intimidate +6, Knowledge (geography) +6, Knowledge (history) +7 (+9 about dwarves or their enemies), Knowledge (local) +6, Knowledge (nobility) +7, Linguistics +5, Perception +5 (+7 underground or to notice unusual stonework), Perform (oratory) +6, Perform (sing) +8, Sense Motive +5, Spellcraft +5, Stealth +3, Use Magic Device +6

Languages Common, Dwarven, Terran, Undercommon

Special Qualities bardic knowledge +1, lorekeeper, versatile performance (sing)

Combat Gear *wand of sound burst* (18 charges);

Other Gear +1 *chain shirt*, +1 *short sword*, heavy wooden shield, masterwork light crossbow with 20 bolts, throwing axe, backpack, bedroll, flint and steel, gold signet ring worth 100 gp, rations (6 days), ruby worth 50 gp, traveler's outfit, waterskin, whetstone, 62 gp, 8

sp, 20 cp.

Background: Life hasn't been especially fair for you. Not only have you had to constantly compete with your brothers for attention when it comes to matters concerning the Foehammer clan, but the family patriarch, your father—Lord Morgrym—passed away recently. His death sapped much of the joy from your life, as he often doted on you, and, more than anyone, he would solicit your opinions and counsel for new perspectives on political issues.

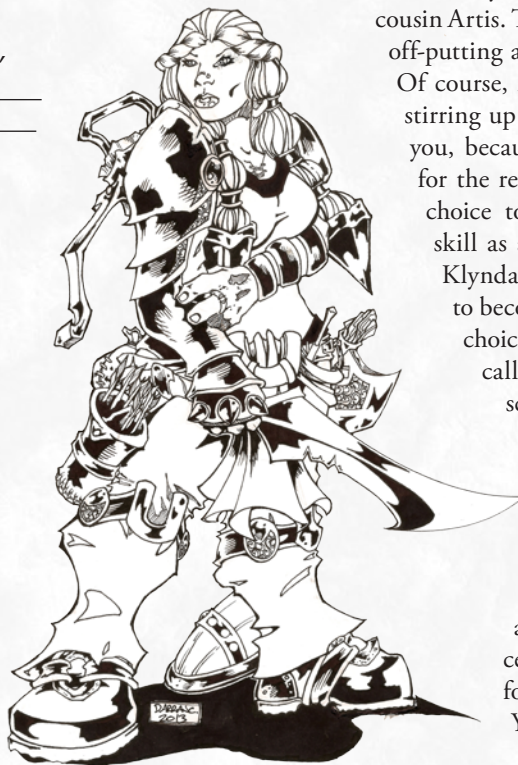
Now, you and your brothers—as well as your cousin, Artis—are tasked with laying your father to rest in the family's ancestral tomb. Tradition demands that each of you also undertake the Test of the Crown, a rite conducted by the tomb's guardian to determine who will lead the clan in the decades that follow. Though you know your brothers don't want you along—and underestimate your potential—you mean to prove your worth. In your opinion, the clan could use a Lady Foehammer to usher in a new age of prosperity. Then you'll finally have everyone's respect.

You're also pleased to have the clanless ranger Bolig Highgold along as you've grown quite attached to him and hope one day to marry him. Unfortunately, you also know your family would never approve of your pairing, as he has little material wealth or political clout to offer such a union. As a result, the two of you have kept your romance secret. But if you win the Test of the Crown, you intend to announce your betrothal to one and all—your first official act as leader of the clan.

Meanwhile, you look forward to traveling with your cousin Artis. The lovable rogue isn't nearly as dour or off-putting as your brothers Orlan and Klyndagh. Of course, he has a bit of a shady reputation for stirring up trouble at times, but that's okay with you, because it makes life more interesting. As for the rest of your family, you respect Orlan's choice to join the church of Torag and his skill as a craftsman. And you also appreciate Klyndagh's difficult decision to buck tradition to become a wizard—certainly not a popular choice with your father, but a worthwhile calling, nonetheless, and undeserving of scorn.

Lastly, you're also very impressed with Durnig Chiselstone, a celebrated honor guard sent to protect your family as you journey to their ancestral tomb. A virtual paragon of dwarven culture—and descended from a long line of celebrated heroes—he seems destined for legendary accomplishments, as well. You admire everything about him and hope to chronicle his exploits in an original ballad—something truly

epic to inspire a whole new generation of dwarves in Janderhoff and hopefully beyond. ✖



Erriga Foehammer is a PC created by Neil Spicer for use with the adventure “The Foehammer Promise” on page 4.

Artwork by Darren “Haunted Jester” Caldemeyer.

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ORLAN FOEHAMMER

Male dwarf cleric (forgemaster) of Torag 4 (Advanced Race Guide 15)

LG Medium humanoid (dwarf)

Init -1; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +5

DEFENSE

AC 20, touch 9, flat-footed 20 (81 armor, -1 Dex, +3 shield) (+4 vs. giants)

hp 33 (4d8+12)

Fort +5, **Ref** +0, **Will** +8; +2 vs. poison, spells, and SLAs

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft.

Melee +1 *warhammer* +7 (1d8+3/x3) or dagger +5 (1d4+2/19-20)

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

Special Attacks +1 on attack rolls against goblinoid and orc humanoids

Domain Spell-Like Abilities (CL 4th; concentration +8)

7/day—*artificer's touch* (1d6+2, bypasses 4 DR and hardness)

Cleric Spells Prepared (CL 4th; concentration +8)

2nd—*bear's endurance*, *groundswell*^{ARG}, *weapon of awe*^{APG}, *wood shape*^D

1st—*animate rope*^D, *bless*, *divine favor*, *lead blades*^{APG}, *shield of faith*

0 (at will)—*detect magic*, *guidance*, *mending*, *stabilize*

D Domain spell; **Domain** Artifice

STATISTICS

Str 14, **Dex** 8, **Con** 12, **Int** 13, **Wis** 18, **Cha** 10

Base Atk +3; **CMB** +5; **CMD** 14 (18 vs. bull rush, trip)

Feats Craft Magic Arms and Armor, Toughness, Weapon Focus (warhammer)

Skills Appraise +5, Craft (armor) +5 (+7 when working with metal or stone), Craft (weapons) +5 (+7 when working with metal or stone), Diplomacy +5, Heal +8, Knowledge (history) +7, Perception +5 (+7 underground or to notice unusual stonework), Sense Motive +8

Languages Common, Dwarven, Undercommon

Special Qualities aura, craftsman, divine smith, rune forger 4/day (deathstrike, forgemaster's blessing, glowglyph), steel spells

Combat Gear *potion of delay poison*, *scroll of abundant ammunition*, *scroll of resist energy* (acid), *wand of cure light wounds* (23 charges); **Other Gear** +1 *banded mail*, +1 *heavy steel shield*, +1 *warhammer*, backpack, bedroll, flint and steel, gold signet ring worth 100 gp, masterwork light crossbow with 10 bolts, rations (6 days), silver holy symbol of Torag, traveler's outfit, waterskin, whetstone, 83gp, 8 sp, 20 cp.



Background: You knew this day would come. When your father—Lord Morgrym Foehammer—passed away, you always expected it would fall to you and your wizard brother, Klyndagh, to carry his remains back to the family tomb where both of you would undertake the Test of the Crown to see which of you would gain leadership of the clan. You didn't realize, however, your cousin and younger sister would be joining you. And, personally, you'd rather see them both remain behind.

While you adore your sister Erigga, you believe she's too young to go on such a dangerous journey outside Janderhoff's gates—much less undertake the Test of the Crown. While female dwarves have led the clan in the past, you also know it only came during leaner times when no male heir existed. You believe Erigga somehow convinced your mother to let her join the expedition under the pretense of her role as an historian chronicling the change of leadership once a new dwarf is crowned. But, knowing your sister like you do, you fully expect her to volunteer for the Test, as well, once she reaches the tomb.

Regardless of these misgivings, you also know your mother will hold you and your brother Klyndagh accountable for Erigga's well-being. Both of you resent having to add the role of babysitter to the solemn task of laying your father to rest while preparing to crown one of you the next Lord Foehammer.

You also suspect Erigga and the clanless ranger Bolig Highgold have become romantically involved with one another. You wonder if he might have put her up to taking the test. After all, Bolig has few friends in Janderhoff, and he could benefit greatly if he somehow married the next Lady Foehammer. Even so, Bolig's skill at navigating the Darklands will prove invaluable to the expedition. And he still has to answer to you and Klyndagh. You and your brother have already made a pact to keep Bolig away from your sister.

Meanwhile, you wish you could leave behind your cousin Artis, as well. The local brewer and roguish tavern owner has a bit of a reputation for greed, especially at the unsanctioned gambling halls you heard he opened two months ago. You want to make sure he doesn't seek the crown, as well—or worse, try to loot anything from the family tomb. So far, he's kept an unusually low profile while preparing for this trip, and you suspect he's up to something.

You feel much better about the veteran warrior Durnig Chiselstone sent to defend the expedition. He's something of a rising star in Janderhoff, having built a reputation as a slayer of orcs, duergar, and even a young red dragon—if the tales of his exploits are to be believed. He's a bit bloodthirsty at times, but there's no question he can wield an axe like a warrior in the legends of old. You just hope he doesn't get in over his head or lead the group astray while chasing further glory for himself in the tunnels below Janderhoff. Still, as a priest of Torag, you fully appreciate the protection he'll bring to you and your clan. ✖

Orlan Foehammer is a PC created by Neil Spicer for use with the adventure "The Foehammer Promise" on page 4.

Artwork by Andrew DeFelice.

The transition of power after the death of a clan leader is serious business, but for these six dwarves, determining who will pass the Test of the Crown may be the least of their worries.

CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS!

From the Brazen Peaks, to the Zho Mountains, the deserts sigh with hot winds, and danger lurks behind every dune. Yet, the caravans keep moving, and trade endures.

Come, Adventurer, spend your gold here, in my humble stall, and we shall trade--not only for goods, but for stories of the desert, of the wonders of Katapesh, and the majesty of Qadira! I will tell you of the wonders of the Peculiar Emporium, and the dangers of the Nightstalls. I will recount to you the sights and smells of glorious Katbeer, the city of a thousand caravans! And you, Brave Traveler, will you tell me of the ruins of El-Fatar, Kelmarane, Al-Bashir, or Shadun? Or perhaps you have ventured to the Zolurket Mines, testing the rumors that they are still full of ores and riches? No? Oh well...here then, peruse my wares! Exotics from Bug Harbor! A carpet from Gurat! I'm told it can fly, if you know the command word! Wait! My friend! I'll give it to you for 100 gold! 50! Do not walk away from such a bargain!

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The theme for Wayfinder #10 will be *The Sands of Golarion: Katapesh and Qadira*. Please use the *Inner Sea World Guide* as your main reference (as well as that handy-dandy PathfinderWiki!) In the case of a plethora of articles on similar subjects, preference will be given to articles that follow this theme. As always, crunch, fiction, and flavor articles are welcome!

In addition, writers can submit to one of several regular series featured in Wayfinder:

- **Advice:** Have some advice you want to pass on to new GMs or players to the world of Golarion?
- **Bestiary:** New creatures to terrorize your PCs with!
- **Golarion Gazetteer:** Places or towns on the Inner Sea maps that have little to no information on them in the campaign setting literature. Expand and explore!
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- **Prestigious:** This article is devoted to a new prestige class for the world of Golarion.
- **Realm Building:** The Kingmaker Adventure Path introduced a lot of new goodies for building armies, cities and kingdoms. This column is focused on building upon those rules.
- **Side Treks:** Side treks feature short outlines for a sidetrek adventure set in a particular Pathfinder adventure, from the products listed below. One side trek outline per submission for this column. Please reference earlier Wayfinders for the layout for this article. Submission size: 325 words.
- **Tales from the Front:** Fiction articles based on any of Paizo's adventure modules or paths.
- **Weal or Woe?** Two NPCs (including statblocks), one helpful, one not so much. Include hooks for the PCs to know (or hate) this NPC and how to use them in a campaign. Include a boon (Weal) and drawback (Woe) for the NPCs in your article. Please reference earlier Wayfinders for the layout for this article.

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- Thou shalt not disregard canon, thou shalt build upon it.
- Keep in mind thy audience. Keep it PG-13. No slash fic/porn fantasies, cheesecake/beefcake/fan service.
- Short and sweet. Unless otherwise specified, article sizes are 750 and 1,500 words. These are HARD targets, not a range, so come as close as possible to these targets. Coming in too far under or over these targets will likely result in

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- Stick to the theme. An article on frost giants in a desert-themed issue is not going to make it. Sorry.
- Submissions used to defame, harass, or threaten board members are not tolerated.

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 - Do not use fancy fonts or colors or styles for formatting - these will get stripped out in the editing and layout process. Use the standard body font for the program you're using - bold and italics are fine.
 - For tables, please make them tab delimited. Fancy formatted tables just get reduced to this format anyway.
- Include your name and board name as text at the very beginning of your submission - example, "Liz 'Lilith' Courts". We compile these in a folder, and if we open up the file, and your name is absent, it's hard to credit you. So, don't make us hunt for you name, OK?
- Your entries will go through editing passes for clarity and concision. Depending on time constraints, you may or may not receive feedback on the editing process and your script.
- **DEADLINE: September 30, 2013, 11:59 Pacific.** All entries will be handled on a first come, first serve basis. Some articles may be rejected depending on the final size of the PDF.

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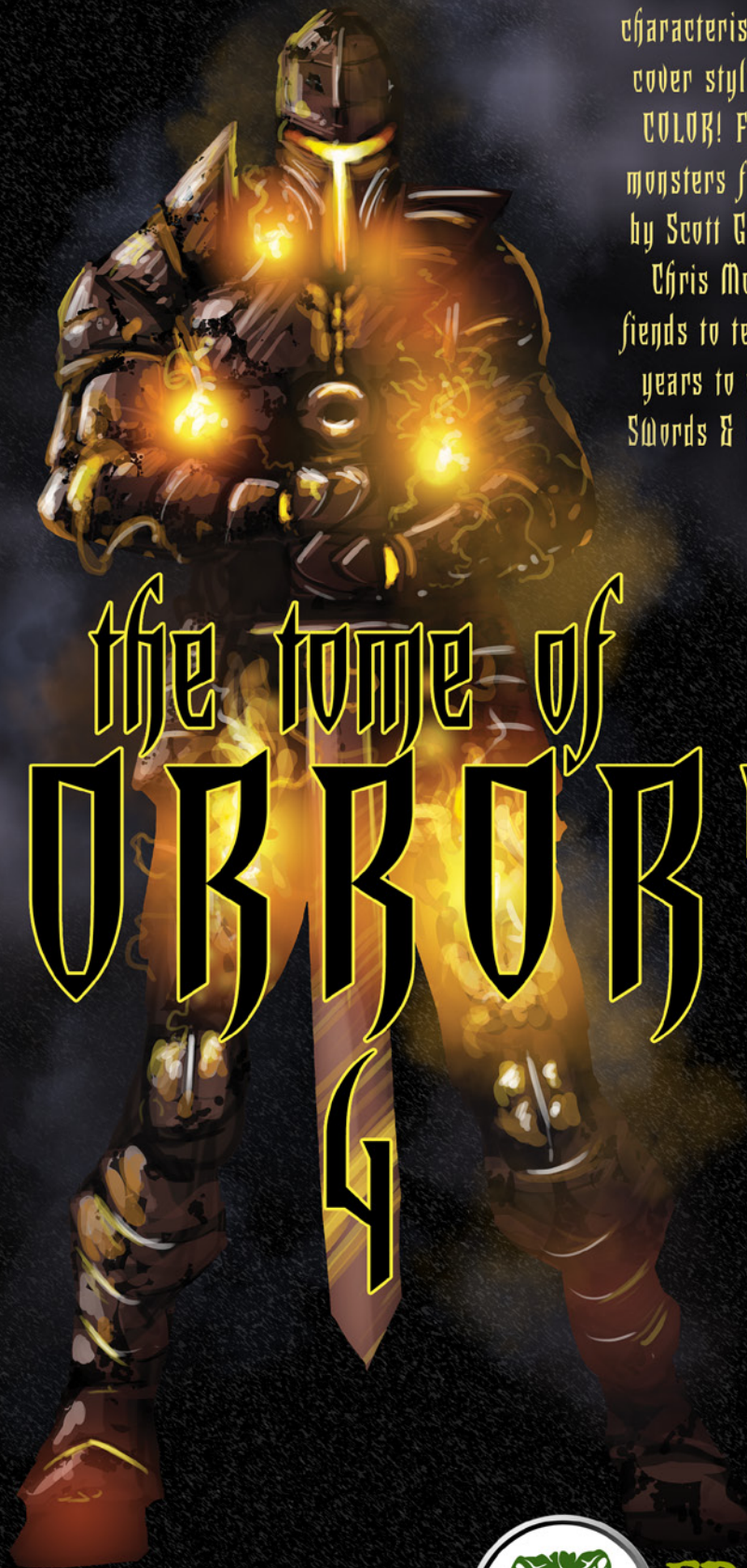
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