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THE SKINSAW MURDERS

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CHAPTER BACKGROUND

AFTER SLUMBERING FOR MILLENNIA, RUNELORD KARZOUG WOKE IN THE DEPTHS OF THE LOST CITY OF XIN-SHALAST. UNABLE TO TRAVEL FAR FROM THE SOURCE OF HIS POWER, HE CONSCRIPTED THE STONE GIANT MOKMURIAN AS HIS MINION, BUT KARZOUG DEMANDED MORE. ENSLAVED GIANTS WERE WELL AND GOOD FOR WAR, BUT THEY LACKED FINESSE. KARZOUG NEEDED MORE SUBTLE AGENTS TO PROVIDE HIM WITH BOTH INTELLIGENCE ON THIS NEW WORLD AND SOULS TO FUEL HIS RETURN TO POWER. HE TURNED HIS ATTENTION TO THE MONSTROUS CREATURES THAT HAD CLAIMED SECTIONS OF XIN-SHALAST DURING HIS LONG SLEEP. OF ALL THESE, IT WAS THE LAMIAS WITH WHOM HE FORGED THE CLOSEST BOND.



The two lamia matriarchs Karzoug chose to act as his agents in Varisia were siblings—a devious rogue named Xanesha and a deadly sorcerer named Lucrecia. Lucrecia chose the backwater town of Turtleback Ferry as her hunting grounds. Xanesha, on the other hand, opted for quantity over quality of greedy souls, and came to the bustling city of Magnimar. Unlike Lucrecia, who grooms greed in her victims (as a farmer might raise cattle for the slaughter), Xanesha plans to hunt dozens of victims in the wild and thus provide her master with sinful souls at a much quicker rate.

Before she began her work, though, Xanesha needed a cover. Her investigations led her to an organization called the Brothers of the Seven, a secret society that was itself a cover for a cult of murderers known as the Skinsaw Men. Xanesha insinuated herself into the cult by seducing its leader, a corrupt justice named Ironbriar, and it wasn't long before she took charge of the cult completely.

Xanesha found that running a cult of killers suited her. They never questioned her background and assumed she was a divine agent sent by their sadistic deity. Xanesha never bothered to correct them. She began directing her new minions to “harvest” greedy souls—primarily merchants, bankers, moneylenders, gamblers, and adventurers. These unlucky men and women were brought back to the cult's headquarters within a lumber mill kept as a cover for the cult's sinister truths, where they were marked with the Sihedron Rune and then sacrificed. To further augment her own wealth, Xanesha formed an alliance with the Red Mantis assassins, agents of whom Xanesha had learned were active in Varisia developing several horrific diseases to use as weapons. Xanesha suspected that the caverns below a local manor built by a founder of the Brothers of the Seven might hold just such a disease that she can sell to the Red Mantis, and in so doing make a tidy profit for herself. And when a desperate noble named Aldern Foxglove approached her, the lamia matriarch saw a chance to satisfy two goals at once.

THE FOXGLOVE LEGACY

Built nearly 80 years ago by a Magnimar merchant prince named Vorel, Foxglove Manor was one of the first homes raised along the Lost Coast. Himself a founding member of the Brothers of the Seven, Vorel was forced to borrow money from his partners to build the manor, and promised them that, after a century, ownership of the manor and its grounds would revert to the society.

Of course, Vorel Foxglove had his own sinister plans—a necromancer by trade, he spent the next 20 years of his life researching methods to become a lich. Yet on what was to be the eve of his triumphant transformation, his wife Kasanda uncovered his vile plan. She confronted him, ruined his phylactery, and triggered a necromantic backlash that destroyed Vorel's body in one horrendous blast of disease and decay. His soul became absorbed by the manor, treating the house as the phylactery his wife had ruined. In a matter of minutes, Kasanda, her child, and all of the manor's servants succumbed to a potent and horrific affliction spread by Vorel's vengeful spirit.

When nothing had been heard from Foxglove Manor for days, visitors found the family and servants dead of a mysterious disease. Disposal of the bodies was handled with utmost secrecy by the surviving Foxgloves of Magnimar, and they shunned Foxglove Manor for decades to follow.

The building stood vacant for nearly 40 years before Traver Foxglove decided to move his family into the manor to reclaim his heritage and expunge the sour taint of the house's reputation. His wife Cyralie gave birth to Traver's only son Aldern not long after they moved in. For 6 years, it seemed as if whatever was wrong with the manor had corrected itself. Traver's son and daughters were growing into fine young aristocrats and his fortunes seemed to be booming.

In Traver, Vorel's unquiet spirit found unformed clay he could sculpt, and as the years wore on, Vorel's influence over Traver grew. In time, Cyralie became





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convinced that Traver's mental decline was caused by the manor itself. In a fit of desperation, she lit the servants' outbuilding on fire then returned to the manor intending to do the same to it, but Traver, now fully in Vorel's embrace, murdered her before she could light that fire. The shock of watching his wife die freed Traver from Vorel's influence long enough for him to kill himself in despair.

Smoke from the fire was seen as far away as Sandpoint, and when townfolk arrived to investigate, they found the servants' outbuilding burnt to the ground and Traver dead by his own hand. His wife's body was found burnt and dashed against the rocks below. Cowering in a second-floor bedroom, though, the townfolk discovered the Foxglove children. Aldern and his older sisters spent time in a Magnimar orphanage before they were claimed by Traver's second cousin and brought to the city of Korvosa to be raised.

Fifteen years passed before Aldern, now a grown man and a successful merchant himself, returned to the Lost Coast. Rich and popular, he secured a townhouse in Magnimar and set into motion his claim to the family manor. As he reestablished old family connections, he also approached the Brothers of the Seven—Aldern found that the society welcomed him with open arms, and it was primarily through their influence that he was able to reclaim Foxglove Manor with such ease.

But Aldern Foxglove had trouble finding skilled laborers and servants to aid him in restoring his family estate—Foxglove Manor's reputation as a bad place had had decades to take root in local superstition. Worse, the manor's cellars were infested with rats—horribly diseased and

aggressive rats that kept to themselves as long as no one ventured too far into the basement. The job was enormous, from the need to patch the leaky roof in dozens of places to dealing with the strange and repugnant fungus that grew so tenaciously in the basement.

It was about this time that Aldern, returning from a visit to Sandpoint, happened upon a group of Varisians on the moor not far from Foxglove Manor, trapped by the terrible gale he himself was trying to get home through. Seized by an uncharacteristic fit of charity, Aldern did one of the few selfless things of his life and brought the dozen Varisians home with him, inviting them to stay in his manor until the storm had ended. And in doing so, he brought Iesha into his life.

Iesha was surely the most beautiful woman Aldern had ever met, a goddess with raven-black hair and luscious curves, the voice of an angel and the heart of a lion. Aldern fell wildly and passionately in love with the Varisian woman and proposed marriage to her before dawn broke. Overwhelmed by the man's handsome looks, social standing, apparent generosity, and wealth, Iesha accepted, and they were married within the week. Alas, as Iesha would soon learn, there was more to Aldern than met the eye.

For Aldern had a mean streak in him, one planted in his soul during his unpleasant upbringing in Korvosa and nurtured by his association with the Brothers of the Seven—in particular by that group's leader, Justice Ironbriar. Aldern's passions and lust for Iesha gave way to jealousy and paranoia, and he grew overprotective of his wife's honor to the extent of locking her in the manor during his business trips to Magnimar. There, Ironbriar

continued to work at the man's soul, grooming him for eventual induction into the Skinsaw Cult.

Then, one night after arriving home late from Magnimar, Aldern found Iesha and one of the carpenters together in the library. Making a wildly inaccurate guess at what was going on, he brained the man with a statuette from a shelf, causing Iesha to fly into a frenzy. When Aldern recovered from his rage, he found he'd strangled his wife to death with her own silk scarf.

In a growing panic, Aldern disposed of the carpenter's body by throwing it down the nearby well, but he couldn't bring himself to do the same with Iesha. Instead, he wrapped her corpse in a sheet and hid it in the attic, locking the door and intending to return later to deal with the evidence. He then fled back to the Brothers of the Seven in Magnimar to seek their advice on how to handle this tragic turn of events.

The Brothers of the Seven promised him they'd take care of his problem, asking him to avoid returning home to his manor while they went to work. In the days that followed, Aldern explained to visitors that Iesha was away visiting friends in distant Absalom and that work on restoring his manor had come to a halt while he awaited more funds to pay for the final stages of the restoration. He kept up a brave face in public, but in truth, he was slowly being driven bankrupt, both morally and financially, by the Brothers of the Seven. Every week, they demanded more payments in return for their services, while at the same time providing him with the flayleaf he had become addicted to, drawing him further and further into their control. They never did go to Foxglove Manor to hold up their end of the deal.

That was when Xanesha decided to involve Aldern in her plans. Promised that his debt to the Brothers of the Seven would soon be paid in full, he was told that he could finally meet the group's mysterious patron. He was taken before Xanesha, who in her human guise informed Aldern that one final task remained before him. It was a simple task, really—return to Foxglove Manor, catch one of the diseased rats that plagued the cellars, and return with it to Xanesha for her to study.

Eager to finally be free of his debt, but nervous about returning to the scene of his crime, Aldern swore off the flayleaf, cleaned himself up, and headed north. He lacked the courage to go directly to Foxglove Manor, though, and instead continued on to Sandpoint, where he attended the Swallowtail Festival. When the goblins raided the town, Aldern's life was saved by the PCs. Aldern grew obsessed with one of these strangers, realizing that here might be someone he could use to climb out of his pit of depression. Ever a master of deception, he maintained his facade of being a successful local noble while he nurtured this new obsession.

Yet when he finally returned to Foxglove Manor after his stay in Sandpoint (avoiding the upper floors and the sounds of muffled sobbing that he assumed were only

in his mind), he had difficulty finding any rats. Vorel's spirit had wakened once again and caused the rats to retreat far underground. When Aldern searched the basement, he heard a strange scratching from under the sagging floor in a central room. Assuming the sounds to be the rats he sought, he dug through the floor and uncovered an ancient stairwell, one that led to Vorel's hidden laboratory under the manor. In these caverns, he finally discovered not only the rats he sought, but the source of their affliction: a disturbing patch of fungus that grew along a cave wall. Harvesting both, he unknowingly exposed himself to latent necromantic contagions, and by the time he returned to Magnimar with the samples secured for Xanesha, he had already all but succumbed to a potent form of ghoulish fever.

Xanesha recognized the sickness for what it was and encouraged its growth. Her influence lives on in Foxglove's undeath. She taught him the Sihedron ritual, and once his transformation was complete, sent him back to Foxglove Manor to build an army of ghouls and expand Karzoug's harvest.

CHAPTER SYNOPSIS

When a string of murders strikes Sandpoint, the PCs begin piecing together clues and soon realize the region may well face a plague of ghouls. After investigating murder scenes, interviewing victims, and perhaps running into some unexpected trouble along the way, the search for answers leads the PCs to Foxglove Manor.

Arriving at Foxglove Manor, the PCs find the rumors about the mansion being haunted are entirely true. Eventually, they confront the murderer—a ghoulishly transformed Aldern Foxglove—only to discover he's been working for another group based in Magnimar. Retracing his steps, the PCs come to the largest city in western Varisia and uncover a sinister secret society, finally confronting its monstrous leader atop a teetering clock tower.

ADVANCEMENT TRACK

4TH LEVEL: The PCs should be very close to 5th level when they begin Chapter Two.

5TH LEVEL: The PCs should reach 5th level relatively early in this chapter, perhaps even as soon as they start investigating the first set of clues left by the murderer.

6TH LEVEL: The PCs should reach 6th level soon after they begin investigating Foxglove Manor.

7TH LEVEL: The PCs should reach 7th level soon after they reach Magnimar.

CONCLUDING THE ADVENTURE: The PCs should be close to 8th level at the conclusion of this chapter.





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PART ONE: MURDER MOST FOUL

A MYSTERIOUS KILLER IS AT LARGE IN SANDPOINT, BUT AS THE ADVENTURE BEGINS, FEW IN TOWN KNOW THAT A MURDERER STALKS THEIR STREETS AT NIGHT. THE MURDERER IS NONE OTHER THAN ALDERN FOXGLOVE, TRANSFORMED INTO A GHAST AND TOLD BY XANESHA THAT, BY CARVING THE SIHEDRON RUNE UPON THE BODIES OF HIS VICTIMS BEFORE THEY ARE SLAIN, HE CAN SOMEDAY CLAIM THE OBJECT OF HIS MOST RECENT OBSESSION AS HIS OWN. HIS FIRST VICTIMS HAVE EITHER NOT YET BEEN DISCOVERED OR HAVE BEEN HUSHED UP BY SANDPOINT'S SHERIFF IN AN ATTEMPT TO KEEP THE TOWN FROM RELAPSING INTO THE PANIC THAT GRIPPED THEM SEVERAL YEARS AGO WHEN ANOTHER MURDERER, A MAN NAMED CHOPPER, MENACED THE TOWN.

An important part of this adventure is the unmasking of the murderer as none other than Lord Aldern Foxglove, the nobleman whom the PCs saved from the goblins at the start of Chapter One. Keep the pace of events up for the first part of this adventure: A murderer is at large, and as the body count mounts, a tangible sense of fear and frustration grows on the streets. By the time the PCs confront the villain, the discovery of his identity should be all the more shocking.

As Aldern continues to kill, it soon becomes apparent that those he murders are the lucky ones. As this adventure continues, a plague of ghouls in the Sandpoint region quickly drives away memories of goblins. Here is a menace that can't be frightened by dogs or easily defeated by organized resistance, a menace that rises in the bodies of the dead. Without the aid of heroes, the ghoul plague of Sandpoint could have devastating repercussions.

Aldern Foxglove, now the Skinsaw Man, operates from his ruined family seat at Foxglove Manor—a place now called the Misgivings by the locals for its tragic history. Approximately 6 miles southwest from Sandpoint, Foxglove Manor looms on a remote promontory overlooking the Varisian Gulf. Foxglove's undead state allows him to use the water to mask his tracks as he emerges from the surf or rivers to do his horrible work. By using waterways, he makes it impossible to track him to Foxglove Manor—the PCs must piece together the location of his lair by investigating the sites of his murders and the spread of his plague.

OBSESSION

In the previous chapter, the PCs rescued Aldern Foxglove from a band of goblins and then accompanied him on a boar hunt—his way of repaying the PCs for saving his life. Although he hid his desperation well, Aldern was deep in debt to the Brothers of the Seven at the time. When the PCs rescued him, he became obsessed with one of them, seeing in this PC a misplaced opportunity for his own redemption. Aldern's obsession stems from one of three sins: lust, envy, or wrath.

LUST: If the character is female, Foxglove lusts after the character, intending to replace his beloved Iesha and hoping in a twisted way that, in so doing, he'll somehow redeem the murder of his previous lover. Aldern wants to show the character how powerful he is, how clever he is, and how ruthless he is.

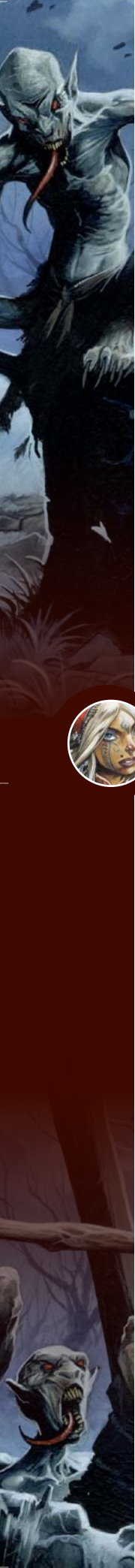
ENVY: If none of the PCs who rescued him are beautiful females, Aldern instead becomes insanely jealous of a PC who struck him as particularly brave and powerful. He wants to take that character's place, to prove his own might and wit. Aldern seeks to ridicule and drive out the character, involving him in a web of intrigue in which the PC might even get the blame for the murders himself.

WRATH: If neither of the two conditions above can be met, Foxglove's obsession has been twisted by his new undead state, and he now hates his rescuer and wants to destroy him. Aldern attempts to implicate the character as the murderer in the hope that the PC will be hanged.

Aldern's obsession with the PC compels him to steal relics and objects belonging to or discarded by the character. Try to foreshadow the discovery of Foxglove's "collection" in area B37 by informing the PC that minor personal items go missing now and then. None of these items should be particularly valuable to the PC—you want to unnerve the PC, after all, not lure him or her into a hunt for a missing piece of gear or favorite treasure.

SHERIFF HEMLOCK'S PLEA

After the PCs deal with Nualia and the goblins in Chapter One, give them some time to rest and recover from their adventures. There's no need to start Chapter Two the very same day that they return triumphant from Thistletop. Once you judge that enough time has passed and the PCs are ready for this adventure, they are approached by a sullen and grim-faced Sheriff Hemlock, who's decided to take the PCs into his confidence regarding this new string of murders. After the PCs' aid in defending Sandpoint, Sheriff Hemlock sees them as strong allies for the town, and the nature of the murders reminds him of Chopper's spree several years ago (see Appendix 2).



He wants help in investigating the crimes before things reach the same level of hysteria that they did then, and that means coming to the heroes of Sandpoint. After greeting the PCs and securing a relatively private place to talk to them, he says the following.

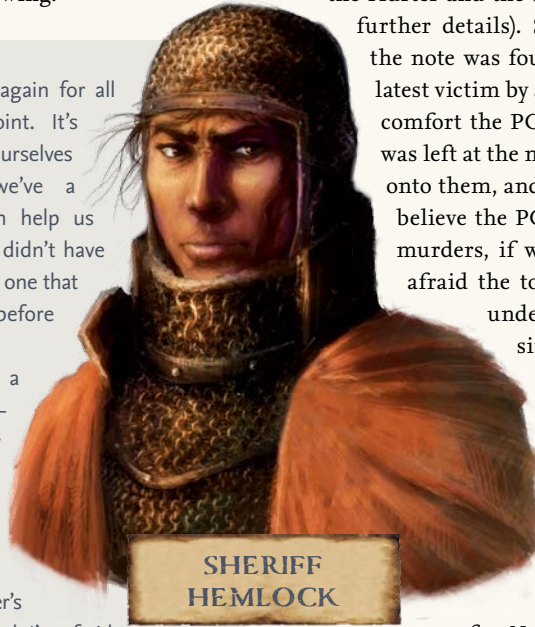


“First, let me thank you again for all you’ve done for Sandpoint. It’s fortunate you’ve proven yourselves so capable, because we’ve a problem I think you can help us with—a problem I wish I didn’t have to involve anyone with, but one that needs dealing with now before the situation grows worse.

“Put simply, we have a murderer in our midst—one who, I fear, has only begun his work. Some of you doubtless remember the Late Unpleasantness, how this town nearly tore itself apart in fear as Chopper’s slayings went on unanswered. I’m afraid we might have something similar brewing now.

“Last night, the murderer struck at the sawmill. There are two victims, and they’re... they’re in pretty gruesome shape. The bodies were discovered by one of the mill workers, a man named Ibor Thorn, and by the time my men and I arrived on the scene, a crowd of curious gawkers had already sprung up. I’ve got my men stationed there now, keeping the mill locked down, but the thing that bothers me isn’t the fact that we have two dead bodies inside. It’s the fact that this is actually the second set of murders we’ve had in the last few days.

“I come to you for help in this matter—my men are good, but they are also green. They were barely able to handle themselves against the goblins, and what we’re facing now is an evil far worse than goblins. I need the help. But I’m afraid you’ll need the help too. You see, I’m afraid that this particular murderer knows one of you as well.”



WRATH: “I do as you command, master!”

Whichever note is used, it’s signed “Your Lordship” (one of Aldern’s three personalities to emerge since his transformation into a ghastr—the other two being the Hurter and the Skinsaw Man—see page 105 for further details). Sheriff Hemlock explains that the note was found pinned to the sleeve of the latest victim by a splinter of wood. He’s quick to comfort the PCs with his belief that this note was left at the murder scene to throw suspicion onto them, and that while he certainly doesn’t believe the PCs had anything to do with the murders, if word of this note gets out, he’s afraid the town’s reaction might not be as understanding. For this reason, and since he doesn’t want to start a general panic, he asks the PCs to keep as quiet as possible about the murders.

Of course, it’s possible the PCs won’t want anything to do with the investigation. Sheriff Hemlock won’t force them to help, but Foxglove is a cunning

foe. New murders occur every few days,

and if the PCs let things go for too long, the situation can quickly get out of control, as detailed on page 86 under “Additional Murders.” Once things go bad, Hemlock might try to hire the PCs for aid, promising them a 500 gp reward if they can help stop the murders. Worse, the growing number of notes left for one of the PCs by the killer could make it look like the PCs are harboring a murderer themselves.

THE LEADS

Before the PCs race off to investigate the murders, Sheriff Hemlock runs the current list of clues by them. He informs them that while he’ll be working with them to figure out what’s going on, he suspects he’ll have his hands full keeping the peace in town. By deputizing the PCs, he hopes that the best possible minds and resources will be focused on solving the murders, leaving him and his guards to the task of keeping Sandpoint from erupting in a panic. He promises the PCs all the support they want, but again asks them to keep their investigations quiet for the town’s sake.

Hemlock provides the following list of leads.

SANDPOINT LUMBER MILL: The most recent murders took place here—the bodies are still present, and little has been done with the crime scene itself. Sheriff Hemlock suggests that this should be the first place the PCs investigate, since he would like to clean the mill up right away and get the bodies buried.

IBOR THORN: Sheriff Hemlock has interrogated Ibor, the man who discovered the bodies at the lumber mill, and doesn’t suspect the frightened man knows much more.

At this point, Hemlock passes a bloodstained scrap of parchment to the PC you have chosen to be the target of Foxglove’s obsession (see Handout 2–1). That PC’s name is written in blood on the outside of the folded parchment; inside is a short message depending on the type of obsession that PC has engendered in Foxglove’s diseased mind.

LUST: “You will learn to love me, desire me in time as she did. Give yourself to the Pack and it shall all end.”

ENVY: “We have spoken of this before, my master. Now it begins. Join the Pack and it will end.”



YOU WILL LEARN TO LOVE ME, DESIRE ME IN TIME AS SHE DID. GIVE YOURSELF TO THE PACK AND IT SHALL ALL END.

YOUR LORDSHIP

WE HAVE SPOKEN OF THIS BEFORE, MY MASTER. NOW IT BEGINS. JOIN THE PACK AND IT WILL END.

YOUR LORDSHIP

I DO AS YOU COMMAND, MASTER!

YOUR LORDSHIP

VEN VINDER: This merchant is Sheriff Hemlock's only suspect, although the sheriff is fairly certain that Ven is innocent and that the murders were committed by someone else.

THE FIRST MURDERS: Three con men from the town of Galduria were found murdered in an abandoned barn south of town a few days ago—their bodyguard survived the assault but has gone insane and was sent to Habel's Sanatorium—a privately run respite for the insane.

THE RUNE: The star carved on one victim's chest certainly has significance to the killer, but Hemlock's at a loss as to what it means. Perhaps an expert on runes (such as local scholar Brodert Quink) can be consulted?

SANDPOINT LUMBER MILL

One of the mill's operators, a penny-pinching man named Banny Harker, has been engaged in a semisecret affair with the daughter of a local shopkeeper. He and Katrine Vinder had been meeting at the mill often of late, using the noise of the log splitter to cover sounds of their trysting. Harker's name was one of many on the list provided to Foxglove by Xanesha, but Katrine was not—she was merely in the wrong place at the wrong time late last night.

After spending a few hours watching the activity at the mill from the safety of the marsh across the river, Foxglove crossed the water and clambered up the mill's

walls, entering through the upper floor. The ghost quickly overpowered Harker and set about preparing his body for the ritual to consign his greedy soul to Karzoug, but was interrupted as Katrine entered the room, seeking her lover's arms. A struggle ensued, and after Katrine managed to injure Foxglove with an axe, he pushed her into the log splitter. She died instantly, allowing Foxglove plenty of time to finish his gruesome task and slip back out into the night, returning to Foxglove Manor via the waterways.

The Sandpoint Lumber Mill stands on the shore of the Turandarok River. A sizeable crowd has gathered outside by the time the PCs arrive, and groups of nervous-looking town guards stand at the mill's entrances. A DC 10 Knowledge (local) check is enough to reveal that the mill was working last night—Harker and Thorn, the two millers, often worked late into the night, which had become a bone of contention around town as the noisy mill and its infernally creaky log splitter kept neighbors awake. The guards have already been informed by Sheriff Hemlock of his intent to deputize the PCs, and even if the sheriff doesn't accompany them to the mill, the guards nod silently and step aside to allow the PCs entry.

The mill is a well-built wooden structure with very thick walls. The roof is of wooden shingles, and doors are simple timber and unlocked. The mill machinery has been disengaged, but if it is started again everyone



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inside the mill makes Perception checks at a -4 penalty due to the noise. There are several points of interest to the PCs as they investigate the site, each detailed below.

THE TIMBER PIER: Timber is delivered to the mill via a small pier that extends out into the Turandarok River. A DC 15 Perception check made by anyone investigating the pier reveals a set of muddy footprints that leads from one end of the pier up to the mill itself. A DC 15 Survival check reveals that a barefoot human man clambered up from the mud under the pier, crossed over to the mill, and then scaled the wall to an upper-floor window.

THE MURDER SCENE: The mill interior is coated with sawdust strewn with footprints and splashes of blood. A DC 10 Survival check reveals what should be obvious—that a desperate struggle took place here several hours ago. If this check exceeds the DC by 10 or more, the character can tell that one set of prints in particular is not only barefoot, but reeks of rotten meat. Harker's body, Katrine's body, a suspicious axe, and a lingering stench of rotten flesh constitute the primary clues here.

THE ROTTEN SMELL: The lingering scent of decay in the air is curious—it smells almost as if an animal had died somewhere in the room and its remains were allowed to ripen. This is the lingering scent of Foxglove's undead body, a smell that is strongest on the blade of the suspicious axe and a few of the footprints he left behind.

KATRINE'S BODY: Poor Katrine was killed instantly when Foxglove pushed her into the log splitter. Her mangled, ruined remains lie on the mill's lower floor amid heaps of bloodstained firewood. A pale-faced, obviously upset guard stands at attention nearby. The log splitter itself is powered by a waterwheel and consists of a chute in the floor with rotating saw blades that cut logs as they are fed in. While there are no clues among Katrine's mangled remains, try to impress upon the PCs her horrible fate and the cruel efficiency of the log splitter as a deadly weapon—this helps foreshadow events awaiting the PCs later in this adventure.

HARKER'S BODY: Harker's body has been horribly desecrated. The poor man has been affixed to the wall by several hooks normally used to hang machinery. The body is mutilated, the face carved away and lower jaw missing entirely. His bare chest is defaced as well, bearing a strange rune in the shape of a seven-pointed star. This rune (the Sihedron Rune) should be familiar to the PCs, especially if they own the Sihedron medallion once worn by Nualia. Its appearance on the chest of a murdered man should drive home its importance to the PCs, yet they should be at a loss still as to what the rune means. A DC 25 Knowledge (arcana or history) check is enough to identify the marking as the Sihedron Rune, an antiquated glyph that symbolizes arcane magic once practiced in ancient Thassilon.

Closer examination of the body combined with a DC 15 Heal check reveals the presence of several additional

wounds. Unlike the deeper slashes on the body, these smaller gashes almost seem to have been made by a claws—claws on a five-fingered, human-sized hand. The rotten scent seems stronger near these wounds. The body is only recognizable as Harker's by a faded tattoo of a raven across his lower abdomen. With his missing face and jaw, his body is in no shape to function for a *speak with dead* spell.

THE SUSPICIOUS AXE: A handaxe is embedded in the floor near the log splitter, as if it had been dropped there. The handle is covered with bloody finger-marks (left by Katrine), and a close examination of the head reveals two things of note. First, smears of what look like rotten flesh and fragments of bone are caked on its blade, and second, the rotten meat stink is strong on it. Anyone who examines the blade this closely must make a DC 13 Fortitude save to avoid being sickened for 1d6+4 minutes. A character who has fought a ghost before automatically recognizes the distinctive stench—otherwise, someone who makes a DC 15 Knowledge (religion) check can identify the lingering stink of corruption as beyond that which a dead body can normally produce—the axe was likely used within the last 24 hours against some form of corporeal undead. If the DC is exceeded by 10 or more, the scent can be identified as having come from a ghost's flesh.

THE MARSH: If the PCs think to investigate the marsh on the other side of the river from the mill, a DC 20 Perception check reveals a relatively dry spot that bears a number of barefoot human tracks and a lingering stink of rotten flesh. A DC 15 Survival check made at this point reveals that the tracks lead from and into the river, but never away from the site. The spot is hidden by several low banks of nettles, but offers a perfect view of the mill to anyone hidden here.

STORY AWARD: Award the PCs 400 XP for identifying the Sihedron Rune, 400 XP if they deduce the fact that the murderer watched the site and perhaps used the river to cover his tracks, and 600 XP if they discover that the murderer may have been an undead creature.

IBOR THORN

Harker's partner Ibor is a young man, handsome if a bit narrow-faced. He is still in shock after having discovered the bodies when he arrived at work this morning. Although the sheriff already interrogated Ibor, Hemlock admits that the PCs might be able to get something out of the miller that he could not. He cautions them to be gentle in their interrogation, though—Thorn's been through a lot in the last few hours.

Ibor waits in a holding cell below the Sandpoint Garrison. His initial attitude toward the PCs is indifferent—unless he's made friendly, he refuses to say anything more, claiming nervously that he's already told the sheriff everything he knows.

If the PCs can secure Ibor's cooperation, he sighs heavily. Ibor can confirm that Harker had frequent



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midnight trysts with Katrine, but although Ven's a protective father, Ibor doesn't think he's capable of doing what was done to the victims. A DC 20 Sense Motive check reveals that Ibor's holding something back. If pressed, or if he is made helpful, he admits that Harker had been "cooking the books" for some time. Ibor's quick to point out that he never took part in the scams, but does admit that Harker might have stashed away quite a lot of money by skimming from the top of sales and business over the past several years. The Scarnettis, the noble family that owns the lumber mill, have a reputation for being ruthless—there are rumors that they're responsible for burning several competing grain mills in the region, after all, and Ibor wouldn't put it above the Scarnettis to hire someone to kill Harker if they found out he'd been embezzling money.



In fact, the Scarnettis have nothing to do with the murders, and an investigation of Titus Scarnetti and his family should quickly turn into a dead end, even when it becomes apparent that Harker was indeed embezzling from the mill's profits. Feel free to expand on this red herring as you wish—the detail that's important for the PCs to learn is that Harker was greedy, the only tie between all of the eventual murder victims.

STORY AWARD: Grant the PCs 400 XP if they learn about Harker's greed and that he was embezzling money.

VEN VINDER

Ven was the first person Sheriff Hemlock visited after learning of the murders, but after he informed Ven of his daughter's death at the mill, the man flew into a rage. Sheriff Hemlock took him into custody and let him cool off in a cell, but even though Ven fought like a devil, Hemlock's sure that his rage is born from the death of his beloved daughter and not from guilt at being caught. He's prepared to release Ven, but if the PCs wish to speak to him first, he lets them do so.

Of course, if in the previous chapter the PCs made an enemy of Ven Vinder, the shopkeeper suspects the PCs have something to do with Katrine's death. In this case, Ven wastes no time in accusing them of murdering his child and calling them jackals, deviants, and worse. His anger flares up again, doing him little good in clearing his name from the list of suspects. Although his accusations have little effect at the time, they take root in the minds of several of Sandpoint's citizens—Ven is well liked, and if he suspects that the PCs were involved in the murder, many in town are predisposed to accept his accusations. These seeds of suspicion grow as the adventure continues.

The PCs may actually grow to suspect that Ven killed Harker and his own daughter in a fit of wrath at finally discovering proof of their affair. If they do,

let them—if it's one thing that any murder mystery needs, it's red herrings. Eventually, the fact that Ven has little connection with the other murders should exonerate him. In any event, Sheriff Hemlock has little reason to keep him locked up once Ven's wife corroborates his alibi—that he was at home all evening during both sets of murders.

THE SIHEDRON RUNE

Although Sheriff Hemlock doesn't recognize the strange seven-pointed star carved into the dead man's chest, the PCs likely do: It's the same star from the dungeons below Thistletop and on the magic amulet worn by Nualia. A DC 15 Knowledge (local) check is enough for a PC to know that an expert on the ancient ruins that

dot Varisia's landscape dwells here in Sandpoint, living in the shadow of the Old Light, the town's own Thassilonian ruin. If the PCs don't make this connection, this expert may seek them out on his own once knowledge of the strange star pattern leaks into the rumor mill.

This person is **BRODERT QUINK** (NG male human expert 7), an authority on Varisian history who moved to Sandpoint to study the Old Light. Brodert is tremendously excited to be involved in a murder investigation, and does everything he can to aid the PCs. Unfortunately, much of the lore about ancient Thassilon has been lost; what does remain has been gathered from barely legible carvings on the surviving monuments or extracted from the myths and oral traditions of Varisian seers and storytellers.

What he knows about Thassilon is that it was a vast empire ruled by powerful wizards. The sheer size of the monuments they left behind testifies to their power, and the unnatural way many of these monuments have resisted erosion and the march of time testifies to their skill at magic. Most sages place the height of the Thassilonian empire at 7,000 to 8,000 years ago, but Brodert thinks the empire was even older—he suspects (correctly) it collapsed no sooner than 10,000 years in the past.

Much of what Brodert has to say is vague theory based on conjecture—his belief that the Old Light was once a war machine capable of spewing fire from its peak is relatively unpopular among his peers, for example. Yet he can tell the PCs a few things of interest about the star—namely, that it seems to be one of the most important runes of Thassilon. The star itself is known as the "Sihedron Rune," and signifies not only the seven virtues of rule (generally agreed among scholars to have been wealth, fertility, honest pride, abundance, eager striving, righteous anger, and rest), but also the seven schools of magic recognized by Thassilon (divination magic,



HANDOUT 2-2

MESSEURS. MORTWELL, HASK, AND TABE-

A DEAL HAS COME ABOUT THAT I NEED CAPITAL FOR. IT INVOLVES PROPERTY AND GOLD, AND THOUGH I AM NOT AT LIBERTY TO TELL YOU THE EXACT DETAILS, IT WILL MAKE US ALL RICH. COME TO BRADLEY'S BARN ON COUGAR CREEK TONIGHT. WE CAN MEET THERE TO DISCUSS OUR FUTURES.

-YOUR LORDSHIP

Brodert points out, was not held in high regard by the ancients). Brodert notes with a smirk that much of what is understood about Thassilon indicates its leaders were far from virtuous, and he believes the classic mortal sins (greed, lust, pride, gluttony, envy, wrath, and sloth) rose from corruptions of the Thassilonian virtues of rule. In any event, the Sihedron Rune was certainly a symbol of power, one that may well have stood for and symbolized the empire itself. The fact that the killer carved it into the flesh of his victim might point to the fact that the murderer is some sort of scholar—although as soon as Brodert comes to this conclusion, he just as quickly proclaims himself to be innocent. Of course, he is, but the PCs don't know that—having Brodert become an early suspect in the murders can be an interesting red herring.

A PC who can make a DC 25 Knowledge (arcana or history) check can provide much of the same information about the Sihedron Rune as can Brodert, but a visit to the old sage can still serve to introduce yet another of Sandpoint's locals to the PCs.

STORY AWARD: Learning about the Sihedron Rune's history, particularly its association with the seven virtues and the seven sins, earns the PCs 600 XP.

THE FIRST MURDERS

Sheriff Hemlock explains that 2 days ago, a patrol of guards along the Lost Coast Road were assaulted by a deranged man near an abandoned barn south of town along the banks of Cougar Creek. The man was obviously sick and insane, his flesh fevered, eyes wild, mouth frothing, and clothes caked with blood. The guards subdued him, but when they checked inside the barn they discovered the mutilated bodies of three men. Although all three bodies were far too disfigured to identify, one of them carried a piece of parchment that Hemlock gives to the PCs to read (reproduced as Handout 2-2). The note identifies the bodies as Tarch Mortwell, Lener Hask, and Gedwin Tabe, three notorious con men and swindlers known well to Sheriff Hemlock as local troublemakers.

He personally forbade the three men from operating their con games and barely legal operations in Sandpoint, and wasn't particularly surprised at the time to find them murdered—it was only a matter of time before they tried to swindle someone worse than them, after all. But in light of the mill murders and the fact that Mortwell, Hask, and Tabe all bore the same seven-pointed marking on their chests that Harker did, Hemlock is convinced there is something worse than revenge afoot.

The bodies of all three men lie in state in a cool basement room below the Sandpoint Garrison, not far from the holding cells containing Ibor and Ven—the PCs are welcome to examine them if they wish. Although decay has set in, a DC 15 Heal check reveals that all three bodies bear claw marks similar to those that the PCs might have discovered on Harker's body.

The insane man has been identified as one Grayst Sevilla, a local Varisian thug. He's been given over to the care of Erin Habe, caretaker of an independent sanatorium south of town; if the PCs wish to speak to Grayst to learn more, Sheriff Hemlock welcomes them to try but warns them that Grayst is "a bit off his rocker" and they shouldn't expect much. He provides them with a letter of introduction to Habe if they ask.

WHAT THE SKINSAW MAN DID: Two days ago, the Skinsaw Man lured these greedy swindlers to Bradley's Barn with a note he knew they couldn't resist. Suspicious, the three men hired a Varisian thug named Grayst to guard them. Unfortunately, even the four of them were no match for the Skinsaw Man, who easily overpowered the group. Foxglove had little interest in slaying Grayst, and instead bound him with rope, letting the man watch as he prepared the three swindlers for sacrifice, a display that drove Grayst mad. As the ghast worked, he spoke to his audience, and when he was done he left Grayst a parting gift—a bite to the shoulder that infected him with ghoulish fever. Grayst lapsed into a fever-haunted state of delusion, and only managed to escape his bonds the next day when he heard others passing by—others who turned out to be Hemlock's men.



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THE SAINTLY HAVEN OF RESPITE, BETTER KNOWN LOCALLY AS HABE'S SANATORIUM, IS RUN BY ERIN HABE, AN EXPERT ON DISEASE AND MENTAL DERANGEMENT. INDEPENDENTLY WEALTHY FROM HIS YEARS AS A DOCTOR IN MAGNIMAR, HE CHOSE TO BUILD THIS SANATORIUM IN A REMOTE DALE SOUTH OF SANDPOINT BECAUSE OF ITS SECLUSION. HE HOPED THAT HERE, HIS WARDS WOULD FIND THE PEACE OF MIND THEY NEEDED TO HEAL, JUST AS HE HIMSELF HOPED TO FIND THE PRIVACY TO CONTINUE HIS EXPERIMENTS INTO WHAT CAUSED THEIR RESPECTIVE DEMENTIAS WITHOUT WORRYING ABOUT OTHER FOLK MISUNDERSTANDING HIS SOMETIMES NECESSARILY BLOODY METHODS.

Unfortunately for Erin Habe, building the Sanatorium consumed all of his funds—and since his patients are not the type who can pay for his services (nor are they generally the type fortunate enough to have relatives who would pay), Habe soon had to turn to an outside source of funding to keep his Sanatorium up and running.

Habe wanted a silent partner to back his research, someone wealthy who could pay for the Sanatorium's expenses, but who wouldn't meddle in the day-to-day affairs. He believed he'd found his backer in the form of an elderly man who claimed to be a retired businessman eager to put some of his money back into society to better its ills. This man was, unknown to Habe, a smooth-talking necromancer named Caizarlu Zerren. Caizarlu was a member of the Magnimar Sczarni gang known as the Gallowed in his youth, but his dalliances in necromancy eventually went too far even for his fellow criminals, and they ran him out of town. In true Sczarni style, as he fled, the necromancer stole a small fortune in gemstones and jewels. The necromancer spent several months drifting from town to town in Western Varisia, but when he heard rumors that a man was looking for an investor to help run a Sanatorium, Caizarlu realized that not only was this an excellent opportunity to get himself a new base of operations hidden from the Sczarni (who he could only assume were still hunting for him to reclaim those stolen jewels), but also that a Sanatorium would be an excellent place to harvest raw materials for his necromantic experiments. Convincing Erin Habe that he was little more than a kindly retired businessman with a large wallet was unusually easy, and for the past few years, Caizarlu has lived in Habe's basement as the silent partner the alienist always wanted. Their arrangement has evolved beyond one of landlord and tenant, though—for whenever one of Habe's patients passes away (as they inevitably do—the alienist's experiments are not always safe for the patients), Caizarlu is always willing to dispose of the body. As long as the elderly Varisian pays the bills, and as long as what goes on down in the

basement stays in the basement behind locked doors, Erin Habe has no complaints.

The arrival of Grayst Sevilla has upset this arrangement in numerous ways, however, for here, for the first time in the Sanatorium's history, is a patient that equally intrigues both sinister scientists—a living man on the verge of becoming a ghoul.

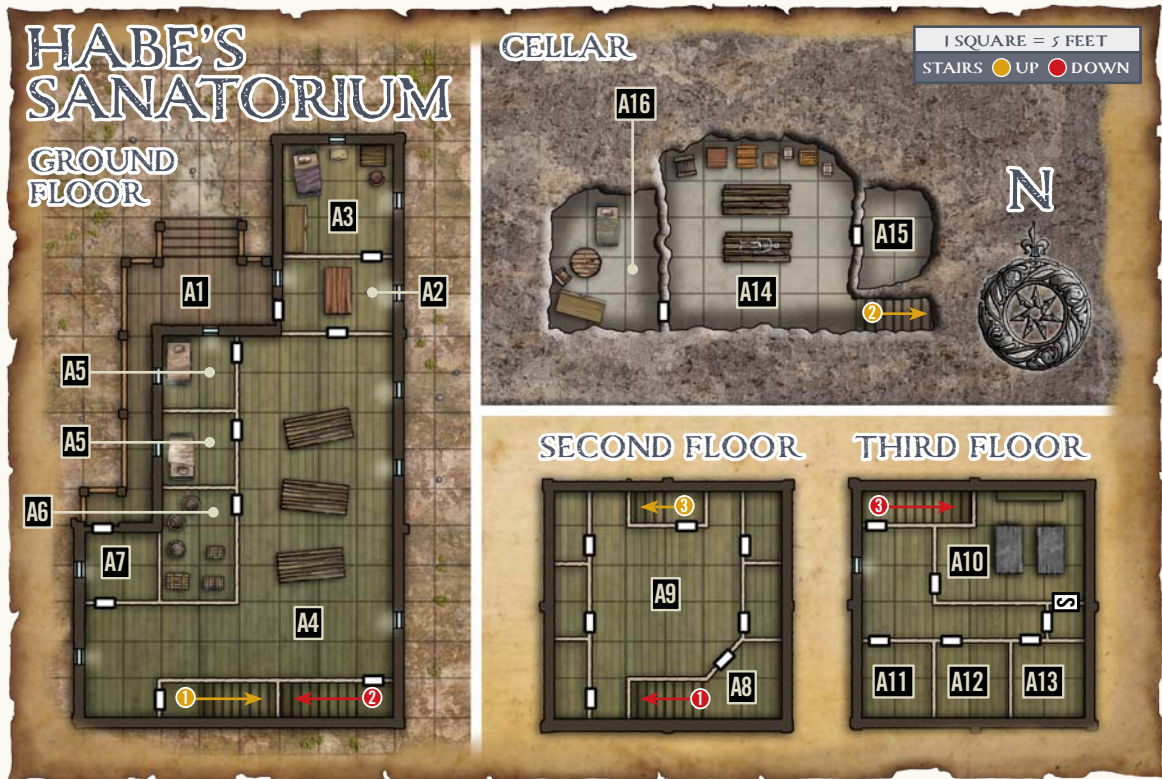
SANATORIUM FEATURES

The squat, stone building that serves as the sanatorium has three floors under a stout, stone-flagged roof, and is built in the lee of the limestone escarpment known as Ashen Rise. All doors are stout wooden ones (hardness 5, hp 20, Break DC 25), and a brisk sense of cleanliness fills the place—floors are scrubbed and walls are freshly painted white. Narrow windows, no more than 4 inches wide, allow for air circulation but are too small to allow access into the building. The somewhat sour smell of burning incense abounds—a scent that Habe has found soothes most deviant minds. All of the doors in the Sanatorium can be locked—when they're locked, a DC 30 Disable Device check picks the lock. Erin Habe carries keys to every door in the Sanatorium, save those in the cellar (those are carried by Caizarlu).

Erin Habe has many secrets he doesn't want made public—not the least of which is the fact that he knows his downstairs neighbor is a necromancer or that his own experiments on his patients push ethical and moral boundaries. When Sheriff Hemlock arrived at the Sanatorium's front door a few days ago, Habe was worried that the man had come to investigate the place—both Habe's questionably ethical research methods and the nature of his cellar-dwelling source of income. It was with barely hidden relief that he realized Hemlock was merely handing him another patient, a half-crazed man named Grayst Sevilla.

In the past few days, Grayst has become Habe's favorite subject. Not only is this man obviously insane, driven so by some still-undiscovered trauma, but he also suffers from a terrible disease causing a hideous physical malaise. Habe has recently determined that Grayst has





contracted ghoul fever, and is almost as curious to see how long the Varisian can hold out against the illness as he is to witness his expiration. Needless to say, Habe is unhappy to receive visitors at this time, and views them as a distraction from his work with Grayst. Yet he doesn't want to arouse undue suspicion, and with a bit of convincing allows the PCs to speak to his patient—under supervision. Further complicating the situation is Caizarlu's anticipation of Grayst's impending death—the elderly necromancer is eager for the body to be moved to his cellar, so he can observe the transformation from life to undeath firsthand.

The Sanatorium is also home to a pair of deformed orderlies—escaped tiefling slaves from Cheliox whom Erin hired for their muscle and their frightening appearances. The two tieflings are brothers, and work in overlapping shifts—at least one of them is always on patrol in the sanatorium, keeping an eye as much on the often violent inhabitants of the place as on anyone who might be trying to sneak into the building to poke around.

SANATORIUM KEY

Detailed below are brief descriptions of the rooms in the Sanatorium.

A1 VERANDA: The old floorboards of this wooden veranda creak under any weight—Stealth checks made by moving characters take a -2 penalty here as a result. During the day, the door to area **A7** remains locked, while at night both this door and the front door into area **A2** are locked.

A2 RECEPTION: This room contains a desk and three chairs—two to the west, one to the east. A cord hangs from a hole in the southern wall above a sign that reads, “Ring for service.” A tug on the cord rings bells in areas **A4**, **A9** and **A10**, alerting Erin Habe to visitors—he arrives in a minute or so to greet the PCs (see “Meeting the Doctor,” below). The doors to areas **A3** and **A4** are always kept locked.

A3 ERIN'S ROOM: Erin doesn't spend much time in this bedroom—often, his obsession with work sees him slumping off to sleep in a chair elsewhere in the Sanatorium. At night, there's a 25% chance Erin is here—if he's not, he can be found in area **A10**, going over his latest round of observations and notes taken from Grayst's deteriorating condition. A small coffer on the headboard contains Erin's meager life savings—the coffer is locked (DC 30 Disable Device to open) and contains 41 gp.

A4 WORKROOM: This disused area serves as a combination kitchen and sewing room—in the Sanatorium's early days, Erin had planned on allowing his less violent patients a few hours each day to stitch clothing and undertake other tailoring busywork, but his current lack of patients capable of such work has seen this room fall into disuse save by the orderlies twice a day when meals are prepared. The door opening into the stairwell leading down to the basement is kept locked—Erin does not have a key to this door, for control of this door (and the basement it leads to) was one of Caizarlu's nonnegotiable conditions for funding the Sanatorium.





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A5 ORDERLIES' ROOMS (CR 1): Each of these small bedrooms serves one of the two orderlies as a place to sleep. The orderlies are tiefling brothers—Gortus and Gurnak. After escaping slavery in Cheliax and stowing away on a ship bound for Magnimar, they responded to an advertisement for work up along the Lost Coast. The promise of pay, free room and board, and most importantly a remote place to hide out for a few years was too much to resist, and they've been working for Erin ever since. Gortus and Gurnak are bullies and brutes, and they won't hesitate to get physical with the PCs if Erin wants them "escorted" from the premises.

GORTUS AND GURNAK	XP 200 each	CR 1/2	HP 10 each
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Male tiefling rogue 1 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 264)

A6 STORAGE: Dusty tailoring supplies, including bolts of plain cloth and boxes of sewing supplies, vie for space in this cluttered room with food and water stores.

A7 WORKER'S ENTRANCE: This room contains a few oiled raincoats hanging on pegs—the orderlies use this entrance to come and go from the building when they make their patrols of the grounds.

A8 GUARDPOST: The door leading into area **A9** is reinforced with iron bands (hardness 8, hp 30, Break DC 26). It's normally kept locked.

A9 CELLBLOCK: The central part of this room is sometimes used as a common room for the patients, but the two current "guests" generally prefer to spend all their time in their cells. The northwestern cell is occupied by **BLIND SEDGE** (CN male human commoner 2), an old farmer who has no family and lost his sight to a goblin attack. The southwestern cell is occupied by a man named **WALD** (CN male human expert 1), a larger-than-life, 97-year-old man whose tenacious grip on life is matched only by his senility. The two men shriek and holler if they hear motion in the central room, but since their cell doors are kept locked, they're harmless.

A10 EXAMINATION ROOM: The central feature of this room is a large operating table on which Erin performs many of his surgeries and examinations on patients. A cabinet along the north wall is exceptionally well stocked with all manner of obscure and frightening-looking surgical tools—a DC 15 Heal check is enough to note that the supplies are both well-used and unnecessarily invasive for what should be a Sanatorium. Erin can be found here if he isn't in area **A3**, studying a patch of skin he's harvested from Grayst—if startled here, he overreacts and flees the room, opening the doors to cells **A11** and **A13** if he can so as to cover his flight downstairs to get Caizarlu's help in defeating the intruders. A secret door (DC 20 Perception

check to notice) is hidden in the western wall of a closet to the southeast.

A11 PIDGIT'S CELL (CR 2): The door to this high-security cell is made of iron (hardness 10, hp 60, Break DC 28)—and for a good reason, since the cell's sole occupant is a crazed wererat named Pidgit Tergelson. Pidgit's been under Erin's care for as long as the Sanatorium's been operating, and the wererat's condition has only worsened over the years. Erin is researching a possible link between Pidgit's lycanthropy and his mental disorder, but often spends months or even years all but ignoring the manic wererat as other projects come up. If Pidgit's cell is opened (as might be the case if Erin opens the door in an attempt to cover his retreat from the PCs), the wererat tentatively creeps from his cell until he spies any slashing weapon, whereupon his insanity kicks in and he frantically tries to secure the blade for himself, fighting to the death if he has to. Pidgit spends all of his time these days in hybrid form, and has effectively forgotten he was once a human being.

PIDGIT TERGELSON	XP 600	CR 2	HP 20
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Manic afflicted wererat (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 197)

AC 16, touch 14, flat-footed 12 (+3 Dex, +1 dodge, +2 natural)

Melee bite +4 (1d4+3 plus filth fever)

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Manic (Ex) Whenever Pidgit sees a bladed weapon, he becomes sickened with delight. If someone directly confronts Pidgit with a bladed weapon as a standard action (not merely using the weapon to attack), Pidgit must make a DC 14 Will save to resist becoming fascinated by the blade for 1d6 rounds. Full details on manias (and other forms of insanity) can be found on pages 250–251 of the *Pathfinder RPG GameMastery Guide*.

A12 EMPTY CELL: This high-security cell is currently empty; the door is unlocked.

A13 GRAYST'S CELL: This high-security cell is currently occupied by Grayst Sevilla. See page 81 for details on this unfortunate "patient."

A14 CAIZARLU'S LAB: This large room combines the features of a wizard's laboratory and a catacomb—several tables bearing bodies covered by drapes dominate the room, while tools ranging from shovels to dissection implements sit on shelves against the wall. A DC 15 Knowledge (arcana) check confirms that this is a necromantic laboratory. During the day, Caizarlu is always here, while at night, he's here 50% of the time (otherwise he's sleeping in area **A16**.) Currently there are three bodies on tables, humans who were "patients" in life, and whose bodies are preserved via *gentle repose*. A DC 20 Perception check is good enough for a PC to locate the *wand of gentle repose* (17 charges) that Caizarlu uses





life, gentle repose, ghoul touch, halt undead, and identify. There are also quite a lot of notes in the spellbook concerning ancient Thassilonian traditions of magic, including a few drawings of the Sihedron rune. You can use these notes to give the PCs further information about the rune if they missed opportunities earlier in the adventure, but Caizarlu's interest in the rune is coincidental—he has no actual connection to the Skinsaw Murders.

MEETING THE DOCTOR (CR 2)

Erin Habe's initial reaction to visitors is unfriendly—unless made friendly, he refuses anyone entry, claiming that he's in the middle of some frightfully important work and cannot be disturbed. Presenting Hemlock's letter of introduction grants the PCs a +2 bonus on Diplomacy or Intimidate checks. If the PCs manage to make Habe friendly, he'll agree to let them interview his patient Grayst, but only for a few minutes. He asks the PCs to wait in area **A4** with him while he sends the orderlies upstairs to gather Grayst and bring him down to meet the PCs.

Habe remains nervous and twitchy the entire time—he's worried that the PCs might see something in the Sanatorium that would arouse their suspicion, and wants them out of the building as soon as possible. If the PCs make any threatening moves (such as drawing weapons or casting spells), the jumpy doctor shrieks and reacts as detailed below under his tactics.

for these preservation efforts, hidden in a slot in a table leg. The only other item of interest here is a map of the Sandpoint hinterlands that Caizarlu has been using to track what he calls "ghoul activity." The necromancer gathered this information over the past several days, and has noted in particular that there's been an increase in ghoul sightings around the southern farmlands and along Foxglove River. Caizarlu's current research is concerned with developing a method by which one could track a ghoul's lineage back through several "generations" of ghoul attacks. His research has stalled, and he's hoping that Grayst will succumb soon so he'll be able to dissect the body to gather more data before it rises as a ghoul and becomes much more difficult to study. One takeaway from his notes is the very strong possibility of what he calls a "ghoulish source" having risen to prominence in the region.



A15 ZOMBIE STORAGE (CR 3): Caizarlu keeps four older ex-patients in storage here. All four are human zombies created via a *scroll of animate dead*. They follow the necromancer's orders as a result—he generally keeps the door to the room locked when he's not here, but unlocks it while he's working so if he needs help, he can call the four zombies out for assistance at any moment.

ERIN HABE	XP	CR	HP
	600	2	25

Male human expert 4
LN Medium humanoid
Init +1; **Senses** Perception +6

DEFENSE

AC 13, touch 11, flat-footed 12 (+2 armor, +1 Dex)
hp 25 (4d8+4)
Fort +1, **Ref** +2, **Will** +5

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.
Melee mwk dagger +5 (1d4+1/19–20)

TACTICS

During Combat If Erin panics, he tries to flee to area **A3** or area **A10**, whichever is farther from the PCs, and barricades himself in the room. If he has a chance, he'll open the doors to areas **A11** and **A13**, or pound on the door leading downstairs from area **A4** to bring more dangerous foes than him into the fight.
Morale If brought below 10 hit points or cornered, Erin drops to his knees and begs for mercy. He blames his sinister experimentation on Caizarlu, saying the necromancer forced him to take part in several experiments and warning the PCs that Caizarlu dwells downstairs. If the PCs seek Caizarlu out, Erin takes the first chance he can to flee—if he escapes, he heads south to Magnimar, hoping to lose himself in the big city and, someday, repair and rebuild his reputation.

HUMAN ZOMBIES (4)	XP	CR	HP
	200 each	1/2	12 each

(*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 288)

A16 CAIZARLU'S ROOM: The necromancer spends his nights here, in a relatively stark room that features a simple bed, a study table, and a plain wooden chair. His spellbook sits atop the desk—this book contains all the spells Caizarlu has prepared, plus *cause fear*, *false*





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STATISTICS

Str 12, **Dex** 12, **Con** 10, **Int** 15, **Wis** 9, **Cha** 8

Base Atk +3; **CMB** +4; **CMD** 15

Feats Iron Will, Skill Focus (Bluff), Skill Focus (Sense Motive)

Skills Bluff +9, Craft (tailor) +9, Diplomacy +6, Heal +6, Knowledge (local) +9, Perception +6, Profession (alienist) +6, Sense Motive +9, Sleight of Hand +8

Languages Common, Shoanti, Varisian

Combat Gear *potions of cure light wounds* (2); **Other Gear** +1 padded armor, masterwork dagger, masterwork manacles

STORY AWARD: Award the PCs XP as if they defeated Erin in combat if they manage to secure an interview with his patient without resorting to violence at all.

MEETING THE PATIENT (CR 2)

Grayst's skin is pale and looks gangrenous, his hair wild and eyes milky white. Anyone seeing him who makes a DC 14 Heal check realizes he's quite sick and close to death, and anyone who succeeds at a DC 24 success realizes Grayst is in the advanced stages of ghoulish fever. Grayst is mostly nonresponsive, wrapped as he is in a straitjacket, but a DC 20 Diplomacy check is enough to get him to respond to questioning. Unfortunately, Grayst has little to say apart from incoherent mumblings about "razors" and "too many teeth" and how "the Skinsaw Man is coming."

This all changes as soon as the PC with whom Foxglove is obsessed comes into view—Foxglove spent some time talking about this one, even showing Grayst a cameo painting he'd had done of the character. When he sees this PC, Grayst's eyes bulge and he speaks:



"He said. He said you would visit me. His Lordship. The one that unmade me said so. He has a place for you. A precious place. I'm so jealous. He has a message for you. He made me remember it. I hope I haven't forgotten. The master wouldn't approve if I forgot. Let me see... let... me... see..."

The message Grayst has for the PC depends on the nature of Foxglove's obsession.

LUST: "He said that if you came to his Misgivings, that if you joined his Pack, he would end his harvest in your honor."

ENVY: "He said you should come to the Misgivings soon, to meet the Pack, for they have something wonderful to show you."

WRATH: "The master said that the bodies you are finding are signs and portents, that when he is done, you shall be remembered forever and the Misgivings shall be your throne!"

A DC 15 Knowledge (local) check is enough for a PC to recognize "the Misgivings" as a local name for a run-down and abandoned estate further south—a place called Foxglove Manor.

At the climax of his speech, the message delivered, Grayst collapses and issues a low moan. One round later, his moan rises to a shriek, and as he lurches to his feet, his arms tear free of the old straitjacket. The man has nearly succumbed to ghoulish fever, and although severely ill, remains as strong as he ever was. He lunges at the PC he was speaking to, eager to kill the one whom his "master" loves more than him. The orderlies do their best to get Habe to safety before they step in to help, but anyone who tries to protect the targeted PC is assaulted by the diseased man as well.

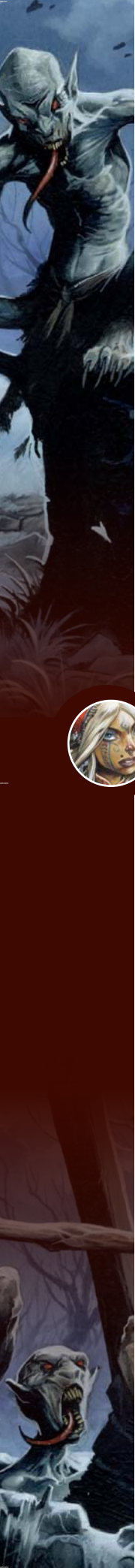
GRAYST SEVILLA	XP 600	CR 2	HP 22
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Male human fighter 4
 CN Medium humanoid (human)
Init +1; **Senses** Perception +1



GRAYST SEVILLA





DEFENSE

AC 7, touch 7, flat-footed 7 (-3 Dex)

hp 22 (4d10-4)

Fort +2, Ref -2, Will +2; +1 vs. fear

Defensive Abilities bravery +1

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee unarmed strike +8 (1d3+3)

TACTICS

During Combat Grayst focuses his anger on the PC he recognizes as being the focus of Foxglove's obsession, ignoring all other targets and even provoking attacks of opportunity in his attempts to reach his target.

Morale Grayst fights to the death.

STATISTICS

Str 16, Dex 4, Con 6, Int 8, Wis 12, Cha 10

Base Atk +4; **CMB** +7; **CMD** 14 **Feats** Diehard, Endurance, Improved Initiative, Improved Unarmed Strike, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (unarmed strike)

Skills Intimidate +7, Stealth +1

Languages Common, Varisian

SQ armor training 1

DEVELOPMENT: After Grayst's outburst, Habe begs for the PCs' forgiveness. He honestly had no idea that the man would react in such a manner, but more to the point, desperately wants to avoid having any bad word of mouth get around about him. Only if the PCs promise their silence (and do so with a successful Diplomacy check to back it up to make him at least friendly in disposition) does Habe allow the PCs to leave without panicking—otherwise, he assumes they'll be turning him in and tries to flee to recruit Caizarlu's aid in capturing the PCs.

Grayst, unfortunately, remains insane. Barring a *heal* or *greater restoration* spell, he's destined to live the rest of his short life as a madman. Aside from the clues he's given the PCs already, he has little more to offer them.

THE NECROMANCER (CR 4)

The old Varisian necromancer Caizarlu Zerren is something of a red herring—although evil and a dabbler in undeath himself, he has nothing directly to do with the Skinsaw Murders or the cult. Some of his notes in the basement can still inform the PCs about some of the other events unfolding in the region, but for the most part, Caizarlu is intended to be a foe to confront and defeat. Exactly how Caizarlu becomes involved with the PCs depends entirely on how they handle themselves in seeking an interview with Grayst. If the necromancer hears the sounds of combat or shouting above, he'll gather his four zombies from area **A15** and come to investigate—he's pretty comfortable with his current living situation, and won't suffer what he believes to be a group of misled do-gooders to ruin a good thing.

CAIZARLU ZERREN

XP	CR	HP
1,200	4	35

Male old human necromancer 5

NE Medium humanoid (human)

Init +0; Senses Perception +2

DEFENSE

AC 14, touch 10, flat-footed 14 (+4 armor)

hp 35 (5d6+15)

Fort +2, Ref +1, Will +6

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee mwk dagger +1 (1d4-2/19-20)

Special Attacks channel negative energy (DC 13, 6/day)

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 5th; concentration +8)

6/day—grave touch (2 rounds)

Spells Prepared (CL 5th; concentration +8)

3rd—*displacement*, *stinking cloud* (DC 16), *vampiric touch* (2)

2nd—*acid arrow*, *blindness/deafness* (DC 16, 2), *command undead* (DC 16), *mirror image*

1st—*chill touch* (DC 15), *mage armor*, *magic missile*, *obscuring mist*, *ray of enfeeblement* (DC 15, 2)

0 (at will)—*bleed* (DC 13), *detect magic*, *light*, *mage hand*, *prestidigitation*

Opposition Schools Abjuration, Enchantment

TACTICS

Before Combat Caizarlu casts *mage armor* and *mirror image* before entering combat.

During Combat Caizarlu lets his zombies engage foes in melee while he hangs back to cast spells, starting with *displacement* and following with his offensive spells. He uses *vampiric touch* whenever he drops below 20 hit points.

Morale Caizarlu attempts to flee if reduced to fewer than 10 hit points—if flight isn't an option, he miserably begs for his life on his hands and knees.

STATISTICS

Str 7, Dex 10, Con 12, Int 17, Wis 14, Cha 12

Base Atk +2; **CMB** +0; **CMD** 10

Feats Combat Casting, Command Undead, Craft Wand, Scribe Scroll, Skill Focus (Stealth), Spell Focus (necromancy), Toughness

Skills Bluff +6, Knowledge (arcana) +11, Knowledge (local) +11, Knowledge (religion) +11, Spellcraft +11, Stealth +8

Languages Common, Necril, Shoanti, Thassilonian, Varisian

SQ arcane bond (dagger)

Combat Gear *potion of cure moderate wounds*, *potion of gaseous form*, *wand of false life* (29 charges), *wand of identify* (15 charges); **Other Gear** masterwork dagger, key ring (contains keys to areas **A15** and **A16**), 11 pp, 4 gp, 14 gp

DEVELOPMENT: If Caizarlu escapes the battle, or if the PCs accept his surrender and then let him go, the old man nurses a bitter grudge against the PCs for ruining a good thing. He may well show up later in the campaign as a recurring villain if you wish—after he's gained a few more levels and a few more undead minions, of course!





THE SKINSAW MURDERS

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PART SEVEN: SHADOWS OF TIME

PART THREE: WALKING SCARECROWS



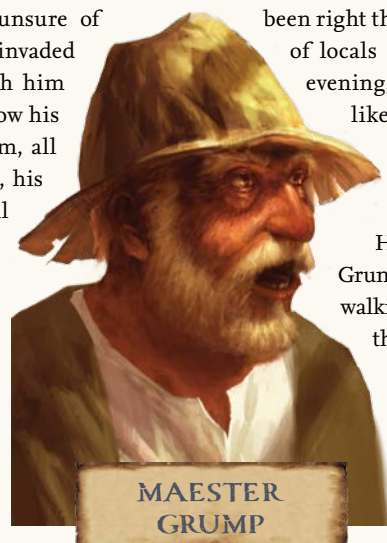
ALTHOUGH THE SWINDLERS AND THE MILLERS WERE THE FIRST VICTIMS DISCOVERED, THEY WERE NOT THE FIRST TO FALL TO THE SKINSAW MAN. THIS DUBIOUS HONOR FELL INSTEAD TO A FAMILY OF FARMERS WHO LIVED RELATIVELY CLOSE TO FOXGLOVE MANOR. OLD CRADE HAMBLEY WAS KNOWN AMONG SANDPOINT'S FARMERS FOR BEING A PENNY-PINCHER AND A TENACIOUS HAGGLER WHEN IT CAME TO SELLING HIS CROPS. HIS FAMILY DWELT IN POVERTY, EVEN THOUGH HIS FARMS SEEMED TO MAKE AS MUCH MONEY AS THOSE OF HIS NEIGHBORS. HE WAS CERTAINLY A GREEDY SOUL, AND PERFECT GRIST FOR KARZOUG'S RUNEWELL.

With this first set of murders, the Skinsaw Man was still a bit unsure of his powers. When he invaded the Hambley place, he brought with him several ghouls from the warrens below his manor. When they attacked the farm, all five members of the family—Crade, his wife Lis, and their three sons—fell to the horrific assault. The next night, when they arose as ghouls themselves, the Skinsaw Man was there to greet them, welcoming them into his pack. He told them to spread his sickness, to sneak into neighboring farms and attack their livestock, pets, and children.

In the following days, local farmers began talking about walking scarecrows that came out of the fields at night to feed—nothing was seen, but plenty was heard. Screams in the dark, glimpses of people being chased through fields and out over the moors by... things. When neighbors visited farms in the morning, they found them empty. At first, the fiercely independent farmers thought they could deal with the unseen menace themselves, but yesterday it became too much. A group of farmers armed with torches went to inspect the Hambley place, and only one survived.

A day after this adventure begins, this one survivor, a man named Maester Grump, arrives in Sandpoint breathless and covered with mud and sweat. He seeks out Sheriff Hemlock to tell his tale, and soon thereafter Hemlock tracks down the PCs.

Farmer Grump breaks into frantic babbling as soon as the PCs arrive, nervously muttering about walking scarecrows. Calming him down requires a few minutes of work, at which point he tells a short but harrowing story, speaking of how the southern farmlands have become plagued by foul walking scarecrows that stalk the night. All the farmers knew that the problems were



MAESTER GRUMP

coming from the old Hambley place—things “just ain’t been right there for a few days now”—but when a group of locals paid the Hambley farm a visit yesterday evening, they were attacked by folk that looked like corpses but fed like starving animals. At this point in the telling, Grump’s worked himself into a lather again and shrieks, “They even ate the dogs!”

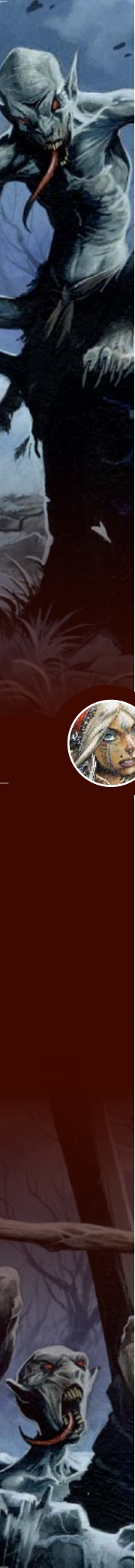
Hemlock explains that his men picked up Grump as he ran into town screaming about walking scarecrows. The sheriff asks the PCs if they can investigate, and agrees to provide up to four of the local watch to help them—he would provide more, but dares not leave the town any more exposed than it already is. He hopes that Grump’s story has been enhanced by the booze he can smell on the old farmer’s breath, but worries that the moonshine may actually have dulled the man’s memories of the grim fate that has been visited upon the Hambleys, and that the situation there is even worse than Grump knows.

If the PCs take Sheriff Hemlock up on his offer of aid, statistics for Sandpoint guards can be found on page 373. And of course, if the PCs have already visited Habe’s Sanatorium and have uncovered the truth about that place, they may already have a good idea of the peril that awaits them on the farm.

THE HAMBLEY FARM (CR 7)

The news of walking scarecrows spreads quickly through the farmlands, and PCs stopping to visit farms on the way find the normally friendly locals unwilling to chat with visitors. Over three dozen farmsteads dot the fields and vales southeast of Sandpoint, the farthest being some 6 miles from town. Farms to the east and north have heard stories of the trouble to the south, but it’s not until the PCs move south of Ashen Rise and approach Soggy River that the rumors turn into firsthand accounts.

Footpaths, dusty tracks about 10 feet wide hemmed in by fields of corn and other crops, connect the



FARMLANDS



1 INCH = 320 FEET

X	GHOUL SCARECROW
L	LIVING PERSON
N	NORMAL SCARECROW



farmsteads. The Hambley farm is nestled at the western edge of the Whisperwood, a forest said to be home to capricious gnomes, pixies, and other fey, but now overshadowed by the closer menace. All five of the other farms south of the Soggy River are now deserted, their occupants having either fled north to seek shelter with other farmers or been captured by the ghouls. Some of the ghouls created from these farmers have gone on to dwell in the tunnels below Foxglove Manor, but six remain in the vicinity of the Hambley farm, eager to continue their murderous spree.

The layout of the Hambley farm is shown on the Farmlands Map. Fields of tall-stalked plants transform the paths between them into oppressive tunnels, making it dangerously easy for visitors to become lost. The Hambley farmhouse and barn sit in the western portion of these fields. Both house and barn seem unremarkable from the outside, but an exploration of the interiors reveals the true extent of the horror visited upon the region.

The ghouls have not been idle over the past several days, and have been adding to their number by binding the victims they have chosen not to eat, making scarecrows of them and hanging them up to “ripen” in the surrounding fields. These ghoul scarecrows are marked with Xs on the map. Bound by baling twine to their frames, they hang confused, blinking through sack-covered faces in the harsh sun, unsure of what has happened to them yet aware of a growing and monstrous hunger. Each of these poor souls is effectively a ghoul now, and if any living creature approaches within 30 feet,

they struggle hideously against their bonds, making a Strength check each round in an attempt to break free. It’s only a DC 15 check to do so—any ghoul that rips free of its frame immediately attacks the nearest living creature with a shriek.

To confuse matters further, several normal scarecrows stand in the fields. Worse, two poor souls who haven’t yet succumbed to ghoul fever (but who surely will within a day) also hang from frames at the locations indicated on the map. These two living people are Horran and Lettie Guffmin, dragged off from their farm last night and left bound, gagged, and masked as scarecrows. Both are down to 2 Dexterity and 2 Constitution from ghoul fever; if rescued, they feebly warn the PCs about the ghouls that dwell in the barn before begging to be returned to their families.

GHOUL SCARECROWS (13)

XP	CR	HP
400 each	1	13 each

(Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 146)

A1 BARN: The barn is the larger of the two structures, an L-shaped building constructed around a unique feature—a 12-foot-high stone head, canted slightly to the left, depicting a helmed warrior, his face a stern model of determination. Moss has grown over much of the weathered figure, making his features hard to discern. This head, known locally as “the Stone Warrior,” is a remnant of an ancient Thassilonian statue that once stood in the area. Realizing the statue was too large to move and too unique to destroy, Hambley decided to use



TAKE THE FEVER INTO YOU, MY LOVE—IT SHALL BE BUT THE FIRST OF MY GIFTS TO YOU.
YOUR LORDSHIP

I FEAR YOU. I HATE YOU. YOU MUST FEAR AND HATE ME AS WELL. YOU MAY UNMASK ME, SO I MUST UNMASK YOU FIRST.
YOUR LORDSHIP

YOU, AND YOU ALONE, HAVE BROUGHT THIS FEARFUL HARVEST. THEY ARE DEAD BECAUSE OF YOU, AND MORE SHALL JOIN THEM SOON.
YOUR LORDSHIP



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it as a support for his barn and incorporated it into the building's structure. The ghouls themselves have made this barn their primary lair, and the place has become a macabre tangle of bones and partially eaten carcasses (in most cases livestock, but in some, human farmers).

CREATURES: In all, there are seven “free” ghouls dwelling in the region—six typical ghouls, who dwell in the barn, and a ghost lurking in A2 who in life was named Rogors Craesby. If the ghouls in the barn become aware of any intrusions (perhaps because of a shrieking ghoul leaping off its scarecrow frame), one group of three moves out into the fields to seek out intruders, while the remaining three move into the farmhouse to join Rogors.

GHOULS (6)	XP 400 each	CR 1	HP 13 each
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(Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 146)

A2 FARMHOUSE: The farmhouse is in a terrible state as well. It was here that Foxglove murdered Hambley and his family—while his wife and sons have joined the ghoul pack that now dwells in the barn, Hambley’s mutilated body lies in the farmhouse’s kitchen. Although the corpse is already decaying and swarming with flies, the Sihedron Rune is still plainly visible upon the man’s chest, as is a single scrap of parchment pinned to his tunic (see Handout 2-3). The parchment

bears the name of the PC Foxglove is obsessed with; the contents depend on the nature of his obsession.

LUST: “Take the fever into you, my love—it shall be but the first of my gifts to you.”

ENVY: “I fear you. I hate you. You must fear and hate me as well. You may unmask me, so I must unmask you first.”

WRATH: “You, and you alone, have brought this fearful harvest. They are dead because of you, and more shall join them soon.”

A search of the rotting body uncovers a rusted iron key in one pocket—the key to a footlocker hidden in the master bedroom (see Treasure below).

CREATURE: A one-eared ghast lurks inside the Hambleys’ farmhouse. In life, he was a man named Rogors Craesby and served as a caretaker for Foxglove Manor. He is now the leader of the ghouls here in Aldern’s absence.

ROGORS CRAESBY	XP 600	CR 2	HP 17
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Male ghast (Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 146)

Gear key to the front door of Foxglove manor

TREASURE: Rogors was once the caretaker of Foxglove Manor, and an iron key still hangs around his neck on a leather cord. The key bears a heraldic symbol of a curious flower surrounded by thorns. A DC 15 Knowledge (nobility) check identifies the heraldry as the Foxglove



family crest—any PC who spent more than a few hours with Aldern Foxglove in Chapter One gains a +10 bonus on this check and can attempt it even if she has no ranks in the skill. If the PCs don't already know about it, a DC 15 Knowledge (local) check reveals to them the fact that the Foxglove family estate is located on the coast a mere 3 miles to the west of the Hambley farm.

A search of the master bedroom, along with a DC 22 Perception check, uncovers a loose floorboard under which Crade Hambley hid a stout wooden coffer. It can be unlocked with the key found on his body or with a DC 25 Disable Device check. Inside, meticulously organized into leather pouches containing 100 sp each, is Hambley's life's savings—a total of 3,400 sp. Characters who might feel awkward about claiming these coins as their own can turn the savings over to Mayor Deverin, who gladly attempts to track down Hambley's heirs or, barring that, uses the savings to help out the rest of the hinterlands farmers.

ADDITIONAL MURDERS

Of course, Aldern Foxglove has no intention of stopping his murder spree with the latest deaths at the Sandpoint Lumber Mill. As this adventure progresses, the Skinsaw Man continues to visit Sandpoint every few nights to look for new victims. He stays away from areas where the PCs are known to be present—he has little wish to confront them now, and would rather they come to his lair on their own. Several clues as to the Skinsaw Man's identity and the location of his lair wait to be uncovered by the PCs

in the preceding encounters, but they may not pick up on them. Alternatively, they may drag their feet about investigating the region's most notorious haunted house.

If the PCs need additional clues or motivation, you can provide both by having the Skinsaw Man claim additional victims in Sandpoint. Xanesha has done her research, and has singled out nearly a dozen individuals in town whose greed marks them as excellent candidates for the Sihedron ritual. For the most part, these victims should be minor NPCs from town, but if the PCs really need a shot in the arm, you can target one of the NPCs they've grown close to. Titus Scarnetti might be a good choice for a high-profile murder victim. Barring that, one of the local shopkeepers, like butcher Chod Bevuk, grocer Olmur Danvakus, or boutique owner Hayliss Korvaski all make likely victims. Hopefully the PCs head south to Foxglove Manor before Sandpoint runs out of citizens!

Although the results of each murder are similar to those the PCs saw at the mill, you should endeavor to include a new clue at each site. Perhaps they find a bloody, obviously clawed handprint on a wall. They might find a pet, partially eaten and with a few long teeth lodged in the flesh (identifiable as ghoul or ghastr teeth with a DC 20 Knowledge [religion] check). And at each murder, they find new notes penned for the target of Foxglove's obsession, notes that grow increasingly foul and descriptive in their threats and invitations to "become one with the Pack." If the PCs seem to be growing too frustrated, it's probably time to have one

YOU CONTINUE TO IGNORE my INVITATIONS, my LOVE. Did you NOT SENSE my NEED FOR you THAT EVENING AFTER WE HUNTED?

YOUR LORDSHIP

CAN THIS BE? CAN THE FOX BE OUTFOXING THE HUNTER? STRANGE—YOU SEEMED SO CONFIDENT AGAINST THE BOARS OF TICKWOOD...

YOUR LORDSHIP

YOU'VE LET THEM ALL DIE! THEIR LIVES COULD HAVE BEEN SPARED, BUT YOUR FOOLISHNESS DOOMED THEM ALL! JUST AS YOU LET MY DOG DIE ON THAT GOBLIN'S BLADE, I LET THEM DIE UPON MY OWN!

YOUR LORDSHIP

of these notes more or less spell out where Foxglove is hiding with a message like this (see Handout 2-4):

LUST: “You continue to ignore my invitations, my love. Did you not sense my need for you that evening after we hunted?”

ENVY: “Can this be? Can the fox be outfoxing the hunter? Strange—you seemed so confident against the boars of Tickwood...”

WRATH: “You’ve let them all die! Their lives could have been spared, but your foolishness doomed them all! Just as you let my dog die on that goblin’s blade, I let them die upon my own!”

NIGHT OF THE GHOULS

These increasingly frequent attacks on the town soon unnerve the citizens of Sandpoint to the brink of chaos. Some folk pack their belongings and move out by daylight, while others bar their doors and shutters at dusk to keep out the “Night Things.” The number of ghoulish attacks in the outlying regions increases, and before long there can be no denying the nature of this new plague of violence. If the PCs let things go this far, you’ll need to improvise, drawing upon the information given about Sandpoint elsewhere in this book as necessary.

Finally, keep in mind that normally those slain by Aldern Foxglove rise the next night as ghouls. The

Sihedron ritual disrupts this process—any creature he kills and then offers to Karzoug via the ritual does not rise as an undead upon the next midnight. But as his murder spree continues, he might leave other victims as unmarked, undead time-bombs that rise a night after their death to wreak even more mayhem on the town of Sandpoint. In this event, you should make sure to track where each of the bodies is kept—unless the PCs wish otherwise, the bodies are stored in a few empty cells in the Sandpoint Garrison while the investigation into the deaths continues.

One interesting and potentially exciting logical development from the increasing number of ghouls is a midnight siege on the town of Sandpoint. In this event, the ghouls in the outlying regions grow hungry and eager to sup upon the tender bellies and bones of fat merchants, rather than continuing to scarp and gnaw the lean limbs of honest hard-working farmers. The ghouls don’t just walk into town, though—they’re sneakier than that. Taking a cue from Foxglove himself, the undead weigh themselves down with stones and use the Turandarok River to invade the town at midnight, rising from the river’s waters to stagger wet and sodden into the town’s streets. If you opt for this event, the PCs should first hear of it in the form of screams as the ghouls begin breaking into riverfront homes.



THE SKINSAW
MURDERS

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BACKGROUND

PART ONE:
MURDER MOST FOUL

PART TWO:
THE THING IN THE ATTIC

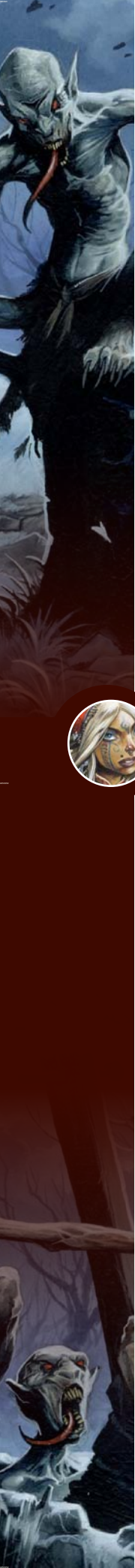
PART THREE:
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PART FOUR: MISGIVINGS

THE “MISGIVINGS” IS THE LOCAL NAME FOR FOXGLOVE MANOR, A REGION SHUNNED BY LOCALS FOR YEARS AS A PLACE OF SHADOWY MENACE, BAD LUCK, AND HAUNTS. NO ONE TRAVELS THE ROAD TO THE MISGIVINGS TODAY. BEFORE HIS TRANSFORMATION INTO A GHAST, LORD FOXGLOVE MADE ATTEMPTS TO REBUILD AND RECLAIM THE PLACE, BUT FOUND FEW WILLING TO WORK IN THE REGION DUE TO ITS ILL HISTORY. OF COURSE, NOW THAT HE’S BECOME UNDEAD, THE HOUSE’S REPUTATION HAS PLAYED RIGHT INTO HIS MURDEROUS HANDS.



The route leading out to Foxglove Manor is a 3-mile hike along a narrow path that follows the Foxglove River from the covered bridge where it flows under the Lost Coast Road to the dark sea cliffs overlooking the Varisian Gulf. Here, wild sea birds call out to a roaring ocean that churns hundreds of feet below. As the PCs near Foxglove Manor, it almost seems as if nature herself has become sick and twisted. Nettles

and thorns grow more prominent, trees are leafless and bent, and the wind seems unnaturally cold and shrill as it whistles through the cliffside crags. The path slowly rises, bending around a steep corner in the cliffs, and then Foxglove Manor looms at the edge of the world.

The strangely cold sea wind rises to a keening shriek as Foxglove Manor comes into view. The place has earned its local nickname of the “Misgivings” well, for it almost

FOXGLOVE MANOR LORE

Once the PCs realize that Foxglove Manor and its mysterious owner might be behind the murders and the ghoul problems in the farmlands, wise characters probably do a bit of research. The following information can be determined by making Knowledge (local) checks or Diplomacy checks to gather information. A successful check reveals all information for that DC as well as all information from lower DCs.

CHECK DC	INFORMATION GAINED
DC 12	Foxglove Manor is over 80 years old, and has been the seat of the Foxglove family the whole time. Some sort of tragedy struck the family a few decades ago, and no one’s lived there since. Common rumor holds that the place is haunted.
DC 15	Foxglove Manor is known as the “Misgivings” by some locals, particularly by Varisians. It certainly has a bad reputation—sightings of strange lights in the attic windows, muffled sounds of screaming from above and below, and even rumors of a huge bat-winged devil living in the caves below the manor are but a few of the tales told about the place. The Foxglove family lived there as recently as 2 decades ago, but then a fire burned down the servants’ building, Cyralie Foxglove was found dead—burnt and dashed on the rocks below the cliffs behind the house—and Traver Foxglove was found in his bedroom, dead by his own hand. The children, including young Aldern Foxglove, were sent away to be raised in Korvosa by distant relations.
DC 20	Aldern Foxglove recently returned to live in the manor, but he had a hell of a time hiring locals to aid him in the reconstruction and repair of the old building. Until Aldern moved back in, the place was cared for by a man named Rogors Craesby (a retired innkeeper who lost an ear in a bar fight many years ago) who came in 3 days a week from Sandpoint to air the place out, check for squatters, and make minor repairs.
DC 25	Foxglove Manor was built decades ago by Vorel Foxglove, a merchant prince from Magnimar. He and his family lived there for 20 years before the entire family perished from disease. The surviving Foxgloves of Magnimar shunned the place for 40 years, until Traver Foxglove moved back in.
DC 30	The Foxgloves have traditionally been associated with the Brothers of the Seven, a secretive gentlemen’s club based in Magnimar and consisting of merchants or thieves, depending on whom you talk to. Members of the society periodically visited Foxglove Manor at night during the years the manor went un-lived-in, perhaps to check up on the building and make minor repairs—or perhaps for more sinister pursuits.





THE SKINSAW MURDERS

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FOXGLOVE MANOR TIMELINE

This timeline presents the major events in Foxglove Manor's history for ease of reference.

DATE	NOTABLE EVENTS
4624 AR	Foxglove Manor is built by Vorel Foxglove. Construction is funded partially by the Brothers of the Seven, with the understanding that after 100 years, ownership of the manor reverts to them.
4644 AR	Vorel Foxglove attempts to become a lich, but when his wife Kasanda interrupts the ritual and destroys his phylactery, the botched ritual backfires and consumes him in a storm of disease and tumors. His body is destroyed, and his life force becomes infused into the house above. Kasanda tries to escape with her daughter, but is infected with the disease as well and spreads it to her child and the servants; they all perish within minutes of contracting the horrific disease.
4687 AR	Vorel's great-nephew, Traver Foxglove, and his family move into the manor; Aldern Foxglove is born.
4693 AR	Convinced that the property is evil, Traver's wife Cyralie sets fire to the servants' quarters but is thrown from the window in the observatory by Traver when she tries to burn down the manor. Traver takes his own life, and the children are taken to Korvosa to be raised by relations.
12 months ago	Aldern Foxglove returns to Foxglove Manor and begins restoration work on the house.
8 months ago	Aldern meets Iesha; the two are married by the end of the week.
3 months ago	Aldern murders Iesha and stows her body in the attic. Iesha rises as a revenant that night, but is unable to escape from the attic. Her periodic sobs and shrieks add a new layer to the rumors that the house is haunted. Aldern seeks help from the Brothers of the Seven to cover up the murder.
1 month ago	Aldern goes bankrupt after being blackmailed by the Brothers of the Seven. To pay off the remainder of his debts to the Brothers, he agrees to return to Foxglove Manor and collect diseased rats for them.
Campaign starts	Before returning to Foxglove Manor, Aldern visits Sandpoint to steel his nerves. He attends the Swallowtail Festival, meets the PCs, and becomes obsessed with one of them.
1 week later	Aldern eventually returns to Foxglove Manor; he hears Iesha's sobs in the attic above, but thinking that her body has long since been taken away by the Brothers of the Seven, assumes he's imagining her ghost. His obsession with the PC grows as he toils day and night to dig through to the caverns below. He enters the caverns, gathers samples of the fungus for Xanasha, and contracts ghoul fever.

appears to loathe its perch high above the ocean, as if the entire house were poised for a suicide leap. The roof sags in many places, and mold and mildew cake the crumbling walls. Vines of diseased-looking gray wisteria strangle the structure in several places, hanging down over the precipitous cliff edge almost like tangled braids of hair. The house is crooked, its gables angling sharply and breached in at least three places, hastily repaired by planks of sodden wood. Chimneys rise from various points among the rooftops, leaning like old men in a storm, and grinning gargoyle faces leer from under the eaves.

FOXGLOVE MANOR

Decay abounds inside Foxglove Manor. Ceilings sag, plaster swells, and timbers rot. Inside, doors are often wedged shut by dampness and rot, requiring a DC 14

Strength check to open. Mold and stains mar walls and floors, often in strangely unsettling patterns (but never more so than in area B3). Rooms are unlit except where stated; during the day, the grime and mold encrusting the windows filter the sunlight to dim light within. When describing areas in Foxglove Manor, take pains to mention the little things now and then—the pervasive smell of decaying wood, the periodic groaning of the house's joists reacting to unaccustomed movement within, a dusty mound of dead flies on a windowsill, or the overall air of ancient neglect.

Foxglove Manor is, in fact, haunted by the spirit of Vorel Foxglove after his failed attempt to become a lich infused the entire structure and the caves below with his life force. In many ways, Foxglove Manor became Vorel's phylactery, and all who enter its walls are entering the



mind of this long-dead murderer and necromancer. Yet Vorel's existence as a haunting presence does not manifest as a single undead monster that can be fought and defeated—he's more like an overall aura or taint that suffuses the entire building. Certainly, his haunting presence makes the place comfortable for the undead, and ghouls have long dwelt in the caverns below. Of course, as long as he dwells within the building's walls and foundations, Vorel can make destroying the manor difficult, to say the least.

Vorel can make his influence felt anywhere inside of Foxglove Manor or in the caverns below the house. For the most part, his presence manifests as small events intended to enhance the unpleasant feeling inside the house, little more than tricks of the light and vague feelings of unease. In certain parts of the house, though, Vorel can create more potent effects. These effects are detailed in the following encounter areas in the form of haunts.

There are two obvious entrances into Foxglove Manor, the front doors (which lead into area **B2**) and the side doors (which lead into area **B7**). In both cases, the doors are locked; they can be opened with a DC 30 Disable Device check, or by the key carried by Rogors Craesby. Numerous windows could provide entrance into the manor as well; the unbroken, grime-encrusted panes of glass in their frames speak not only of the Foxglove family's wealth in being able to afford such an extravagance, but also of the manor's notorious reputation—no vandals have dared break them. The windows themselves are curtained from the inside, but it's a relatively simple matter to break most of them and climb into the room beyond. Clambering up onto an upper story or the roof requires a DC 20 Climb check—there are numerous handholds, but many are rotten and crumble under any weight. Finally, characters can attempt to enter the house via the hidden tunnel connected to the well, but doing so places them in immediate danger in area **B32**.

BURNING DOWN THE HOUSE

Attempts to destroy Foxglove Manor while Vorel's spirit still haunts the place are difficult, as some of the manor's previous inhabitants eventually learned. Small-scale destruction (such as breaking down doors, smashing in windows, or the like) go unnoticed, but damage to the underlying structure of the building should be treated as if the structure had hardness 10. Attempts to burn the manor down find the house to be remarkably flame-resistant—individual pieces of furniture burn fitfully, but the walls of the house itself only smolder under the application of flame.

A focused attempt to light the house on fire quickly rouses Vorel's spirit in a manner similar to how it reacted in the past to such attempts. Feel free to get creative regarding how the house defends itself in such

a situation, but the easiest method would be to have the offending vandal targeted by a *fear*, *confusion*, or even a *phantasmal killer* effect (CL 15th). Creatures immune to fear might instead be targeted by *dominate person* or *charm monster* effects that seek to either force the vandal away or even compel the vandal to leap from the cliffside (such commands should trigger additional saving throws as appropriate). In the event that a creature completely immune to mind-affecting effects attempts to destroy the house, Vorel's spirit rouses the ghouls below the house as well as the swarms in its walls, basement, and surroundings to rise as one to attack the offender.

OBSERVING THE MANOR

Although the Skinsaw Man comes and goes from Foxglove Manor frequently, you can assume he's within the house at any point the PCs visit the manor. If the PCs decide to camp out on the manor grounds to watch the house, perhaps hoping to catch a suspected murderer coming and going, they'll be in for a long wait. The ghouls in the tunnels below only leave at the Skinsaw Man's command when he wishes their aid—and he hasn't needed their help lately. And, of course, when he leaves the manor himself, he does so via the underwater tunnel at area **B36**, using coastlines and rivers to reach his destination.

THE FOXGLOVE HAUNTS

While Vorel Foxglove is the primary evil spirit that haunts Foxglove Manor, it is not the only one. The house's condition as a surrogate phylactery has captured the spirits of six deaths, and each of these deaths gives rise to haunts with a particular set of features that makes them more likely to affect certain characters. A seventh category of haunts exists in Foxglove Manor as well—these are universal haunts powered by the collective unquiet energy from all six spirits, and as such function as normal haunts. Haunts themselves are detailed in full on pages 242–243 of the *GameMastery Guide*—you should be sure to familiarize yourself with those rules before running this part of the campaign.

Before the PCs enter Foxglove Manor, you should assign one of six categories to each PC, jotting down their assignments on a piece of paper (do not reveal them to the PCs). When a haunt of a certain category manifests, it only affects the assigned PC—other characters can aid the PC in question and can even observe the haunt's effects, but are not endangered by that haunt's effects. When assigning haunt categories to your PCs, try to keep one PC to a haunt—if you have more than six PCs in your group, though, you'll either need to double up on some of them or invent new categories of your own. No PC should be assigned to more than one haunt; if you have fewer than six PCs in your group, unassigned haunts become universal haunts.





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UNIVERSAL HAUNT: These haunts affect everyone in the vicinity—they represent the combined spiritual energy of all six unquiet spirits bound to the Misgivings.

BURNING HAUNT (CYRALIE FOXGLOVE): Cyralie Foxglove tried to burn Foxglove Manor down when she realized it was driving her husband Traver mad, but succeeded only in burning down the servants' building before she was slain by a Vorel-influenced Traver. Burning haunts should be assigned to a violent PC, the PC with the greatest obsession with fire, or the PC most prone to loneliness and depression.

FESTERING HAUNT (VOREL FOXGLOVE): These haunts are associated with Vorel's painful death, consumed by the necromantic backlash that unleashed a thousand diseases in his flesh. This haunt should be assigned to a male PC, a PC who has a history of disease or a fear of sickness, or the PC who is the most accepting of necromancy and the undead.

INSANE HAUNT (TRAVER FOXGLOVE): An accomplished hunter and loyal husband, Traver managed to resist Vorel's influence for many years but was eventually driven to deeper and deeper madness. This haunt should be assigned to the most impulsive PC, or to the PC regarded by the players as the least trustworthy or most prone to unexpected actions.

OBSESSED HAUNT (ALDERN FOXGLOVE): This haunt plays off of Aldern's obsession with one of the PCs as much as it does Vorel's obsession with endless life. This haunt should be assigned to the PC with whom Aldern is obsessed.

VENGEFUL HAUNT (IESHA FOXGLOVE): This haunt is associated with Aldern's murdered wife Iesha, and carries with it a burning need for revenge and retribution. This haunt should be assigned to a PC who has expressed a need for revenge, or who is currently involved in a romantic relationship.

WRATHFUL HAUNT (KASANDA FOXGLOVE): Linked to Vorel's wife, this haunt is infused with Vorel's rage and hatred of women and augmented by his wife's betrayal and disruption of the lichdom ritual he attempted moments before his death. This haunt should be assigned to a female PC, or to a character who has had some form of betrayal affect her in the past.

DESTROYING THE HAUNTS: All of the haunts in Foxglove Manor share the same destruction requirement. As long as the patch of supernatural fungus in area B37 persists, the haunts in the manor above automatically reset every day. See area B37 for the methods by which the haunting of Foxglove Manor can be ended.

SPENDING THE NIGHT

Any character foolish enough to sleep in Foxglove Manor exposes himself to Vorel's presence even more. Such PCs experience disturbing dreams, either of being trapped in a crumbling house with no exits that grows smaller and smaller with each breath (for

male characters) or of being stalked through a house by a shapeless monster that wishes to do them harm or drive them to kill themselves by exposing their mistakes and weaknesses in the form of horrific visions (for female characters). In either case, a sleeping character must make a DC 15 Will save upon waking to avoid taking 1d4 points of Wisdom damage from the horrific dreams—a character who takes Wisdom damage also wakens fatigued.

B1 RUINED SERVANTS' QUARTERS (CR 5)



It's impossible to tell how many floors the outbuilding that stood here once had, for all that remains are the sooty, scorched stones of its foundation. To the east, a four-foot-wide stone well sits, partially collapsed, in the corner of the ruins.

The well drops 100 feet into a 50-foot-deep pool of rainwater. Just above the level of the water, a passageway leads southeast into area B32. An overhang makes it difficult to notice this opening from above—if the PCs can see this far into the darkness, it's a DC 35 Perception check to notice the passage from the surface.

CREATURES: The first time the PCs pass by this area, a few sickly looking ravens are perched atop the foundation stones; they fly clumsily away once approached. The second time the PCs pass by (likely on their way out of the manor), hundreds upon thousands of ravens sit quietly in this area, covering every square foot of the ruins. These ravens are disturbingly silent and still, watching as one as the PCs approach. As soon as anyone comes within 30 feet, the ravens take to the air and swoop to attack, only then revealing their true natures. These ravens are, in fact, four swarms of undead birds known as carrionstorms, created when carrion birds feed upon ghoul-tainted flesh. The carrionstorms can sense Vorel's influence in the area, and although the evil spirit cannot control them directly, the birds do their best to kill anyone attempting to escape the manor. They pursue foes as far as the Lost Coast Road, but do not follow those who flee back into the manor—their goal, after all, is to return the intruders to Vorel's cradle for him to deal with personally.

CARRIONSTORMS (4)	XP 400 each	CR 1	HP 8 each
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(see page 408)

B2 ENTRANCE HALL (CR 4)



The sound of the house straining and creaking gives this long, high-ceilinged room an additional sense of age and decay. The place smells damp, the unpleasant tinge of mold lacing the air as surely as it stains the wooden floor, walls, and furniture

FOXGLOVE MANOR

1 SQUARE = 5 FEET
STAIRS ● UP ● DOWN



UPPER FLOOR



BASEMENT



ATTIC



CAVERNS





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in pallid patches. Moldering trophies hang on the wall to the northeast: a boar, a bear, a firepelt cougar, and a stag, yet they pale in comparison to the monster on display in the center of the room. Here crouches a twelve-foot-long creature with the body of a lion, a scorpion's tail fitted with dozens of razor barbs, huge batlike wings, and a deformed humanoid face.

As the PCs enter this room, allow the PCs a DC 20 Perception check—success indicates that they briefly hear what sound like sobs coming from somewhere upstairs. These noises come from Iesha in area **B24**—feel free to ask the PCs to make additional Perception checks now and then to catch a brief snatch of her sobbing as they explore the manor.

HAUNT: The first time the PCs enter this area, the PC haunted by burning automatically catches a momentary whiff of burning hair and flesh. The second time the PCs pass through this area, the haunting manifests in a much more dramatic manner, as the mantichore (killed and preserved by Traver Foxglove) lurches to sudden life, its face shifting to resemble that of Cyralie Foxglove and its fur erupting into flame. Its tail strikes forward against the victim in an attempt to burn him, then returns to normal.

BURNING MANTICORE

XP	CR	HP
1,200	4	8

CE burning haunt (stuffed mantichore)

Caster Level 4th

Notice Perception DC 20 (to notice smoldering fur)

hp 8; **Trigger** proximity; **Reset** 1 day

Effect Atk +4 touch (burning stinger against one target in area **B2**, 4d6 fire damage); Reflex DC 15 to avoid catching on fire (these flames burn only the haunted target, and cannot spread to other creatures or objects)

B3 THE SPIRAL STAIN



A rather gruesome antique—what appears to be a mummified monkey head—hangs on the northern wall here, its tiny mouth gaping. A bellpull extends from the monkey's gaping mouth. A ratty throw rug partially obscures a foul stain of dark-colored mold on the floor.

The stain under the rug is about 10 feet across, a swirling pattern of dark blue, sickly green, and black mold that grows in a spiral. If examined closely with a DC 20 Perception check, it looks almost like a bird's-eye view of a spiraling staircase descending downward, with each step littered with skulls and bones. The stain itself is a harmless manifestation of Vorel's spirit, and a clue to the entrance to the caverns below—it grows back within 24 hours if scrubbed away.

TREASURE: The monkey head is actually a minor wondrous item called a *hungry decapitant*. When the attached rope is pulled, the head gives out a shrill simian shriek akin to an *alarm* spell. The strange curio, one of the few remaining from Traver's time in the house, was used to signal the start of dinner. It can be removed from the wall easily, and continues to function thereafter. It's worth 500 gp.

B4 DINING ROOM



A mahogany table surrounded by chairs sits in this room. Twin fireplaces loom to the west, while to the east, stained-glass windows obscure what could have been a breathtaking view of the Lost Coast. Each window depicts a monster rising out of smoke pouring from a seven-sided box. From north to south are depicted a gnarled tree with an enraged face, an immense hook-beaked bird with sky-blue and gold plumage, a winged centaurlike creature with a lion's lower body and a snarling woman's upper torso, and a deep blue squidlike creature with evil red eyes.

Here, as in areas **B12**, **B22**, and **B29**, stained-glass windows look out over the Varisian Gulf. A DC 15 Knowledge (architecture and engineering) check notes that it was an unusual design choice to fit the rooms with arguably the best view of the Lost Coast with windows one cannot see through—this hint speaks to the importance of the images, constituting a set of hidden clues left by Lord Vorel Foxglove.

The route to lichdom is a personal quest. While each prospective lich can build upon the discoveries and methods of previous necromancers, the actual formula varies from soul to soul. Proud of his accomplishments, yet knowing he couldn't brag of them to most folk, Vorel instead decided to commemorate his personal path to lichdom with the banks of stained-glass windows, using symbolism and metaphor instead of facts and figures. The four stages of his process are meant to be read from attic to basement; the stained-glass windows here depict the third step of his procedure—the construction of his phylactery. Vorel built his phylactery from body parts harvested from four exceptionally long-lived monsters—a treant, a roc, a sphinx, and a kraken. A DC 25 Knowledge (arcana) check is enough to note that the runes on the box are necromancy-related, that the monsters seem not to be emerging from the boxes but rather being drawn in, and that their snarling visages express not rage, but rather fear.

B5 LOUNGE (CR 4)



This dusty room features a long couch caked with white sheets of wispy fungus. Eddies of dust skitter along the warped floorboards as if caught up by a slight breeze, yet no wind is noticeable in the air.



HAUNT: A character who makes a DC 20 Perception check notices that the dust is being disturbed, almost as if an invisible person were pacing violently back and forth before the fireplace. A character who attempts to pass through this path exposes himself to a brief flash of memory—a woman’s memory filled with worry about what her husband might be doing on those late nights spent in the basement. An instant later, the character is suddenly convinced that one of the other PCs is his child, and develops a powerful urge to escape the house with that PC before something horrible happens.

WORRIED WIFE	XP 1,200	CR 4	HP 8
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CE universal haunt (5-foot square in front of fireplace)

Caster Level 4th

Notice Perception DC 20 (to hear a woman’s voice whisper, “Lorey”—this was the name of Vorel’s and Kasanda’s daughter)

hp 8; **Trigger** proximity; **Reset** 1 day

Effect spell effect (*suggestion* to drag another PC out of the house to area **B1**, likely into the carrionstorms; Will DC 14 resists; CL 4th)

B6 WASHROOM (CR 1/4)



This is a simple washroom. An ancient metal washtub stands to the north, a ring of mildew crusting its inner surface. A strange, furtive scratching comes from inside the tub.

CREATURE: Rats have always been a problem in Foxglove Manor, especially now. The creatures nest

in the walls and caverns below, and most of them have been exposed to the dangerous mold growing in area **B37**. One such rat has fallen into the tub in this room and cannot escape. The creature is a horrific and pitiful sight, a blind, tumor-heavy wretch that uses scent to detect intruders. If it notices any, it begins shrieking in a frenzy, attempting a DC 25 Climb check each round in a desperate attempt to clamber out of the tub and feed on anyone it smells.

DISEASED RAT	XP 100	CR 1/4	HP 4
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AC 10, touch 10, flat-footed 10 (–2 blind, +2 size)

hp 4 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 132)

Melee bite +4 (1d3–4 plus disease)

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Blind (Ex) The rat hasn’t been afflicted long enough by its illness to have grown accustomed to its condition, and suffers the full effects of the blinded condition as a result.

Disease (Su) *Vorel’s Phage*: Bite—injury or ingestion; *save* Fort DC 11; *onset* 1 day; *frequency* 1/day; *effect* 1d4 Cha damage and 1d4 Con damage; *cure* 3 consecutive saves. Those of the Foxglove bloodline who die of Vorel’s Phage rise soon thereafter as a ghost or other undead horror. The save DC is Constitution-based.

B7 DANCING PARLOR (CR 3)



This oak-paneled chamber must have once been breathtaking, but is a sad sight now—the floorboards are warped with moisture and the



paneling scratched and spotted with mold. A grand piano, its surface splotchy and keys warped, leans tiredly in the southeast corner.

HAUNT: Aldern's wife Iesha enjoyed dancing here for her new husband, spinning in ever-increasing pirouettes of Varisian ecstasy to the sounds of the piano. An investigation of the piano with a Perform (keyboard) check reveals that it seems unnaturally decayed, as if it had been standing unattended here for decades, yet if any keys are depressed, they are in perfect tune.

As soon as any of the piano's keys are pressed, the instrument explodes into music, playing a catchy but discordant Varisian song. A character in the room linked to vengeful haunts is swept into a series of rapidly increasing pirouettes, leaping across the room in the arms of an invisible dance partner. The haunted PC can, of course, see his partner: Iesha in all her vibrant beauty. Each round that passes, Iesha's beauty fades as her neck darkens into an angry blue-and-black bruise, her eyes bulge and water, her mouth twists in pain, and her tongue protrudes as if she were being invisibly strangled. In the final round of the haunt, she crumbles away into rot in her partner's arms.

DANCE OF RUIN	XP 800	CR 3	HP 13
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CE persistent vengeful haunt (all of area B7)

Caster Level 3rd

Notice Perception DC 15 (to hear faint piano music)

hp 13; **Trigger** touch (piano); **Reset** 1 day

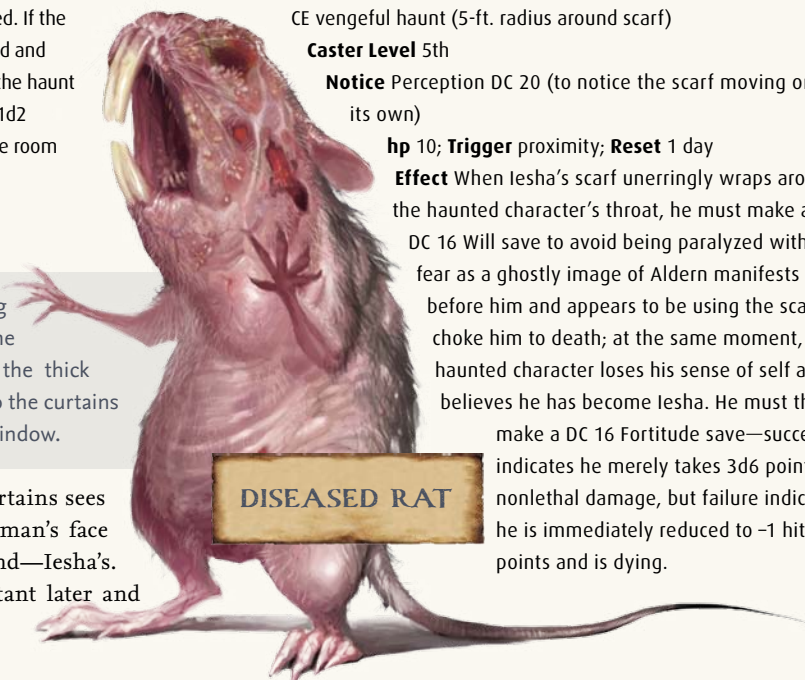
Effect The haunted character is caught up in a whirling dance and spins wildly through the room for 1d6 rounds, taking 1 point of Strength damage each round (the dancing character can attempt a DC 15 Will save at the start of each round to end the dance early). Once the dance ends (whether or not it ended early), the character becomes fatigued. If the character can be successfully grappled and pinned, the haunt shrieks in rage as the haunt ends prematurely; her shriek causes 1d2 points of Wisdom damage to all in the room (DC 15 Will save negates).

B8 DRAWING ROOM



This cozy-looking drawing room is marred by the unnatural dampness and the thick sheets of mold that cling to the curtains closed over the southern window.

A character who opens the curtains sees a brief glimpse of a forlorn woman's face reflected in the window beyond—Iesha's. The reflection vanishes an instant later and does not manifest again.



B9 LIBRARY (CR 5)



This library features two chairs, one of which lies on its side, before a stone fireplace. A scarf, its reds and golds contrasting with the drab palette of the room, is draped over the side of the fallen chair. A book sits facedown on the floor between the chairs. A stone bookend, carved to look like a praying angel with butterfly wings, lies on its side in the fireplace itself.

A splash of dried blood stains the back of the northernmost chair, and an examination of the bookend reveals more blood, clots of hair, and bits of skull and flesh—in addition, part of one wing has been broken off.

HAUNT: This room was where Aldern murdered his wife and an innocent carpenter only a few short months ago. Already under Vorel's growing influence, Aldern returned home drunk one night and found the two here, huddled in the chairs by the fire, their heads almost touching as they leaned toward each other. Aldern mistook their shared examination of a book on Varisian history for passion and roared into the room, sweeping up a stone bookend from a shelf as he approached. He brained the carpenter with the bookend, knocking him senseless, then dropped the bookend and strangled Iesha with her own scarf. He hid her body upstairs and dumped the carpenter down the well (where he survived only long enough to be killed by the skaveling in area B32).

This room's haunt activates as soon as the PC haunted by vengeance approaches within 5 feet of the scarf. At this point, a horrific shriek fills the room as the scarf flies into the air to wrap around the haunted PC's throat.

IESHA'S VENGEANCE	XP 1,600	CR 5	HP 10
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CE vengeful haunt (5-ft. radius around scarf)

Caster Level 5th

Notice Perception DC 20 (to notice the scarf moving on its own)

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

Effect When Iesha's scarf unerringly wraps around the haunted character's throat, he must make a DC 16 Will save to avoid being paralyzed with fear as a ghostly image of Aldern manifests before him and appears to be using the scarf to choke him to death; at the same moment, the haunted character loses his sense of self and believes he has become Iesha. He must then make a DC 16 Fortitude save—success indicates he merely takes 3d6 points of nonlethal damage, but failure indicates he is immediately reduced to -1 hit points and is dying.



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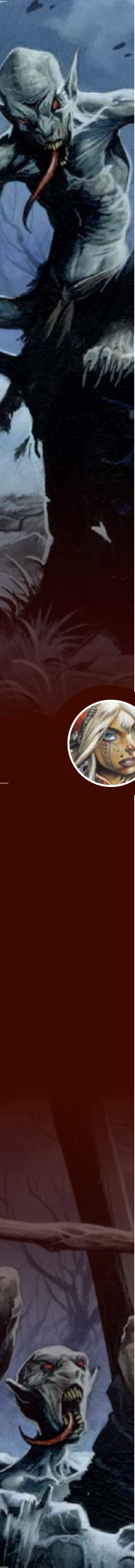
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TREASURE: Once the haunt is over, Iesha's scarf settles to the ground, lifeless. It is a work of art worth 100 gp, and can be used to influence Iesha's revenant in area **B24**. The scarf remains haunted, though, and it tries to kill again once every day as long as it remains in the manor—removing the scarf from the manor suppresses the haunt until the scarf is brought back into the building. A character not associated with vengeful haunts can carry the scarf without fear—as long as she doesn't come within 5 feet of a character the haunted scarf wants to murder!

B10 STAIRWELL

As PCs traverse this flight of stairs, their footsteps echo back at them a round later, as though an invisible person were following them. Although this might seem like a supernatural haunting, the effect is purely natural—the noise is simply the floorboards settling back after they are walked upon.

B11 ALDERN'S BEDROOM (CR 3)



This bedroom features a child-sized bed, a chair next to a toy box, and a looming stone fireplace big enough for a child to get lost in.

HAUNT: When Cyralie Foxglove tried to burn down the manor, she started (and succeeded) with the servants' quarters. She then moved back into the house, intending to reach area **B22** to light her second fire in Traver's favorite room. Her children saw her, wild-eyed and brandishing a torch, and when they saw their father attack their mother in that room, they ran down here to hide.

FRIGHTENED CHILD

XP	CR	HP
800	3	6

CE obsessed haunt (western area of room surrounding bed)

Caster Level 3rd

Notice Perception DC 20 (to hear the sound of a child sobbing)

hp 6; **Trigger** proximity; **Reset** 1 day

Effect The haunted character suddenly becomes convinced that his parents are trying to kill each other, and that whichever of them survives will be coming to kill him next; he has a vision of his mother, wielding a torch, and his father, festering with tumors and wielding a long knife, both struggling to kill each other. The vision passes as fast as it occurs, at which point the haunted PC must make a DC 14 Will save to avoid taking 1d4 points of Wisdom damage from the mind-numbing terror of the sight.

B12 MUSICIANS' GALLERY



This large room features two padded chairs and a long couch facing a wide alcove lined with stained-glass windows. These windows depict a diverse array of animals and plants—from north to south

are a large pale and ghostly scorpion, a gaunt man holding out his arms as a dozen bats hang from him, a moth with a strange skull-like pattern on its wings, a tangle of dull green plants with bell-shaped flowers, and a young maiden sitting astride a well in a forest while a spindly spider the size of a dog descends along a string of webbing above her.

A DC 20 Knowledge (arcana) check identifies all five of the subjects in the windows as classic spell components for necromancy magic (scorpion venom, vampire's breath, the tongues of deathwing moths, belladonna, and the heart of a maiden slain by poison); if the check exceeds this DC by 10 or more, those spell components are recognized as having ties to several known lich apotheosis formulae.

B13 GUEST BEDCHAMBER (CR 4)



This entire bedroom is caked with a thick, spongy layer of dark green, blue, and black mold.

Although disgusting and foul-smelling, the mold in this room is a harmless manifestation of the evil spirits in Foxglove Manor; if destroyed, it regrows within 24 hours.

HAUNT: After disrupting Vorel's attempt to become a lich, Kasanda fled back up from the caverns below Foxglove Manor to seek out her daughter Lorey and then escape, yet by the time she reached this room (her daughter's bedroom), Vorel had already suffused the walls of the place with his evil. Kasanda realized she was being overtaken by his phage when her daughter saw her face and screamed in terror; the disease quickly spread to her daughter and their servants. Every living thing in Foxglove Manor was dead within only a few minutes, their bodies deformed and twisted.

Both Kasanda and Lorey perished of the phage in here, and when the PC associated with the festering haunt enters the room, he suddenly feels an itching on his face. Although to his companions nothing seems amiss, the PC feels as if his face had suddenly erupted into a tangled mess of tumors and boils, lasting just long enough for him to attempt to claw the offending sickness from his skull.

PHANTOM PHAGE

XP	CR	HP
1,200	4	18

CE persistent festering haunt (10-ft.-by-10-ft. area in northwest)

Caster Level 4th

Notice Perception DC 15 (to hear a child's voice, quivering with fear, ask, "What's on your face, mommy?")

hp 18; **Trigger** proximity; **Reset** 1 day

Effect The haunted character must make a DC 14 Will save; failure indicates he claws desperately at the flesh of his own face, dealing 1d6 points of damage and 1d4 points of Charisma damage. The haunted character must make a new save each



round he remains in this room to avoid damaging his face again and again—the haunt effect ends once he makes two consecutive saving throws, is dragged from the room, or falls unconscious from physical or Charisma damage.

B14 UPSTAIRS WASHROOM (CR 1)



An iron tub sits in the middle of this room, the floorboards around it sagging with the tub's weight.

TRAP: The floor in this room is unstable—any Medium or larger creature that enters the room triggers a collapse that drops it down into area B6.

COLLAPSING FLOOR

XP
400

CR
1

Type mechanical; **Perception** DC 20; **Disable Device** DC 25

EFFECTS

Trigger location; **Reset** repair

Effect 10-ft. fall (1d6); multiple targets (all creatures in area B14); DC 15 Reflex save avoids.

B15 MASTER BEDROOM (CR 5)



This once fine chamber has been destroyed. The bed is smashed, mattress torn apart, walls gouged as if by knives, chairs hacked apart, and paintings on the walls torn to pieces—with one exception. A portrait hanging on the northwest wall seems to be untouched, although it hangs backward, its unseen subject facing the wall.

The master bedroom was destroyed by Aldern after he hid Iesha's body in the attic, although in his fit of rage he couldn't bear to destroy the portrait of his wife he'd commissioned a few months before. If turned around, the portrait reveals a beautiful dark-haired Varisian woman in a thoughtful pose.

Upon seeing the portrait, a PC haunted by obsession experiences a sudden wave of sadness, and a PC haunted by vengeance a sudden wave of fear. These emotions pass quickly without any real game effect.

HAUNT: Although the room was recently destroyed by Aldern, the haunt that suffuses the chamber is keyed to the room's first inhabitants—Vorel and Kasanda Foxglove. Only 1d4 rounds after a character haunted by wrath enters this room, he suddenly becomes dizzy and staggers, even if he has since left the room. An instant later, the dizzy spell passes but he becomes filled with an overwhelming hatred of women, and for 1d4 rounds is driven by an urge to attack the closest woman.

MISOGYNISTIC RAGE

XP
1,600

CR
5

HP
22

CE persistent wrathful haunt (northwestern half of the room)

Caster Level 5th



PORTRAIT OF
IESHA FOXGLOVE

Notice Perception DC 15 (to hear the sound of a woman's voice saying, "What do you get up to down in the damp below?")

hp 22; **Trigger** touch (painting); **Reset** 1 day

Effect The haunted character must make a DC 16 Will save or be compelled to attack the closest female (as if by *dominate person*), using all of his capabilities in an attempt to kill the target—this haunting continues for 1d4 rounds, or until the initial target is slain. If no suitable target is within sight, he instead attacks himself, leaping out the window if no weapon is handy. Each round the compulsion persists, the character may attempt a new DC 16 Will save to end the effect early.

B16 STAIRWELL

These stairs lead up to the attic. The door to this stairwell is locked but can be picked with a DC 25 Disable Device check or smashed down with a DC 24 Strength check—the key to the lock was destroyed by Aldern Foxglove.

B17 GALLERY (CR 4)



A stone fireplace sits in the northwestern portion of this chamber. Paintings hang on the walls to the north and south, each covered over with a thick sheet of dusty cobwebs that obscures its subject from view.

Wiping away the dusty cobwebs over the paintings reveals portraits of the previous tenants of Foxglove Manor. The three to the north depict Vorel and Kasanda Foxglove and their daughter Lorey. Vorel is a tall, middle-aged man with long dark hair, a clean-shaven face, and dark blue noble's clothes, while Kasanda is a stern-faced brunette woman with wisps of gray in her short hair and



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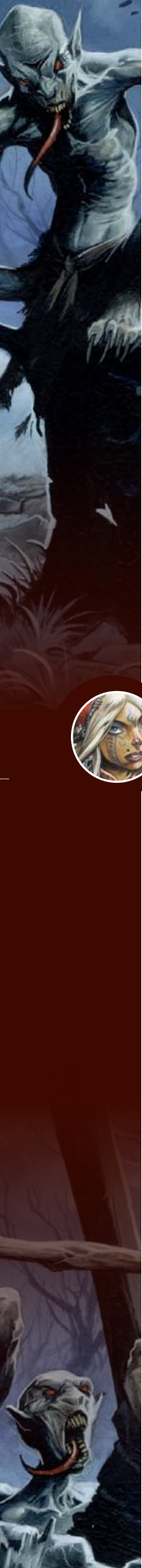
PART THREE: WALKING SCARECROWS

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a flowing blue dress. The five to the south show Traver and Cyralie Foxglove, their son Aldern, and their two daughters Sendeli and Zeeva. Traver, like Vorel, is tall and thin, but with an even narrower face and a thin mustache. Cyralie is a young woman with long red hair and an impish smile. Each painting bears a plaque that identifies those pictured within.

HAUNT: If all of the portraits have their cobwebs cleared away, the temperature in the room drops dramatically. Breath frosts in the air and fingers of rime slither across the walls. The figures depicted in the portraits suddenly shift from paintings of living people to those of dead folk. Kasanda and Lorey slump into misshapen, tumor-ridden corpses. Traver grows pale as a long cut opens in his throat and blood washes down over his chest. Cyralie blackens and chars, and her arms, legs, and back twist as if broken in dozens of places. Aldern's flesh darkens with rot, his hair falls out, and he deforms into a ghoul-like monster. Both Sendeli's and Zeeva's portraits frost over but otherwise remain unchanged. Vorel's entire portrait, frame and all, erupts into a sudden explosion of fungus and tumorous growth. This wave of fungus and disease washes over the entire room in seconds before the room suddenly reverts to normal.



THE STRICKEN FAMILY

XP	CR	HP
1,200	4	8

CE universal haunt (all of area **B17**)

Caster Level 4th

Notice Perception DC 15 (to notice the room grow cold)

hp 8; **Trigger** touch; **Reset** 1 day

Effect When the room explodes into rot and fungal decay, every PC in the room must make a DC 15 Fortitude save to avoid contracting Vorel's Phage (see page 94). Once the room reverts to normal, those characters who failed their saves can see tiny splotches of mold and tender red bumps on their flesh, but until the disease has a chance to incubate, these symptoms remain invisible to others.

B18 BEDROOM (CR 5)



The furniture in this bedroom, while dusty and unkempt, does not exhibit any major signs of water or mold damage. The one exception is a dark stain on the desk near the northern window.

HAUNT: After Traver Foxglove killed his wife in area **B22**, the shock of watching her burning body plummet onto the rocks below allowed him to regain control of his mind and body. He could feel Vorel out there still, trying to reassert control over his flesh, but for a few moments at least, Traver was his own man again. In a desperate (some might say cowardly) move, he fled here, to the room he and his wife had shared, sat down at his desk, and slit his own throat with his dagger.

As soon as a PC haunted by insanity comes within 5 feet of the desk, he shudders and is suddenly overwhelmed with the conviction that he has just killed the person he loves most. Overwhelmed with despair, he moves to the desk, retrieves what appears to be a silver-handled dagger from it, and tries to cut his own throat. Anyone who attempts to stop him is instead attacked. If he survives, the "dagger" reverts to its true form—a splintered but very sharp length of wood.

SUICIDE COMPULSION

XP	CR	HP
1,600	5	10

CE insane haunt (5-ft.-radius spread around desk)

Caster Level 5th

Notice Perception DC 20 (to notice the appearance of a dagger on the desk that, an instant before, was not there)

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

Effect The haunted character must make a DC 15 Will save. Failure indicates he moves over to the desk and attempts a coup de grace action on himself with the jagged length of wood, dealing 2d4 (plus twice his Strength modifier) points of damage to himself. He must make a Fortitude save (DC 10 + the damage dealt) to avoid being slain by this suicide attempt. If anyone tries to prevent the attempt, the haunted character instead makes a single attack against that person with the "dagger." If he hits, the supernaturally guided strike automatically scores a critical hit and delivers 2d4 points of damage plus twice the haunted character's Strength modifier—in addition, this hit causes 1d4 points of bleed damage. After this attack, the "dagger" turns back into wood.

B19 WORKROOM



A large number of wooden planks, rope, and other repair supplies are stored here. The ceiling above sags noticeably; in several areas patches of the sky above are visible.

This room was partially repaired by Aldern and his hired assistants, but they didn't finish the job before Vorel's spirit manifested.

B20 STOREROOMS

Each of these rooms is stacked with old furniture, sheets and linens, boxes and crates, and other bits. Nothing of value can be found here.

B21 LOFT



The ceiling of this room angles down steeply, leaving only four feet of headroom to the southeast. A low cot and a dresser are the room's only furnishings.

This loft was once the home of the manor's head butler, but hasn't been lived in since Vorel's time.

As the PCs round the corner in the hallway beyond the entrance to this door, a sudden and unmistakable shriek





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of pain echoes through the attic. The sound obviously comes from the door to area **B24**.

B22 OBSERVATORY (CR 5)



A desk and a chair sit in the middle of this drafty room. Chimneys rise to the west, while to the east, two intricate stained-glass windows are set into the wall. The northern window depicts a dark-haired woman with pale skin, large green eyes, and a black-and-red gown; with both hands she wields a jagged iron staff. The southern window's lower half has been broken and patched with canvas; what remains of its upper half depicts a handsome man dressed in regal finery and a crown of ivory and jade. Small scorch marks mar the wood near the broken window. A battered and ruined telescope lies on its side near the desk and a large trap door in the roof has been tied shut by several lengths of rope.

The trap door in the roof could once be raised and lowered, exposing a slice of the sky for observation, but the pulley system has long since fallen apart. The trap door can now be opened only with a DC 24 Strength check. The broken telescope on the floor was once a magnificent piece of equipment but is now beyond repair.

The stained-glass windows here once depicted the two wizards who most directly inspired Vorel's research into the secrets of lichdom. Each figure can be identified with a DC 20 Knowledge (history) check. The northern window depicts Arazni, the Harlot Queen of Geb, while the southern one depicts Socorro, the Butcher of Carrion Hill.

HAUNT: This room is where Cyralie confronted Traver about his encroaching madness, hoping she could convince him to leave the manor with her before it was too late. Unfortunately for her, that time had already passed. Traver attacked her, and when she tried to light the room on fire, he redirected the flow of the fire using magic to ignite her instead. As she burned to death, Cyralie staggered across the room and threw herself through the window to plummet to her death on the rocks below. This sight caused Traver to finally snap out of his madness long enough for him to retreat to area **B18** and kill himself.

When the PC assigned to the burning haunt enters this room, he suddenly feels uncomfortably hot. A second later, he believes he has suddenly caught on fire, and that the only way to put the flames out before he burns to death is to throw himself through the unbroken window and, hopefully, into the sea below. The haunted character attempts this self-destructive act only once; if restrained from leaping through the window for 1 round, he recovers his wits to some extent.

PLUMMETING INFERNO	XP 1,600	CR 5	HP 10
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CE burning haunt (area **B22**)

Caster Level 5th

Notice Perception DC 15 (to notice the stink of burning flesh)

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

Effect The haunted character must make a DC 16 Will save. If he fails, he is compelled to hurl himself through the unbroken window of Arazni, taking 2d6 points of damage from the shattering glass and a further 1d6 points of damage from the fall onto the rooftop below. A weather vane on the roof makes a single +8 attack against the falling character; if it hits, the character takes another 1d6+7 points of damage, but his fall ends. If it fails to hit him, the character must make a DC 15 Reflex save. If that fails, he slides off the steep roof over the course of 1 round, whereupon he may make a final DC 10 Climb check to catch himself before falling 300 feet to the rocky surf below, taking 20d6 points of damage in the process.

B23 PRIVATE STUDY (CR 3)



Shelves of books line the walls of this room, interspersed with curious objects such as skulls fitted with stubs of candles, tribal fetishes, and decorative scroll cases. An empty birdcage lies near the southern wall beside a small desk and a fine leather chair. Statues and sculptures grin from all corners of the room.

Aldern's father Traver often spent time here, poring over old accounts of safaris, expeditions, and the odd excerpt from the *Pathfinder Chronicles*. Traver rarely visited any parts of the house other than this room and the observatory after Vorel's influence started to take hold of his mind in the last few months before his death.

HAUNT: When the PC haunted by insanity enters this room, dozens of memories of expeditions, sea voyages, and travels to exotic locales race through his mind, remnants of Traver Foxglove's journeys before he settled down here in Varisia. As the memories build momentum, they become increasingly infused with a sense of bitter disappointment and regret, and the character becomes increasingly aware that he is now receiving memories that never were, memories of fantastic discoveries he could have made had he not chosen to settle down with a shrill harpy of a wife.

UNFULFILLED GLORIES	XP 800	CR 3	HP 6
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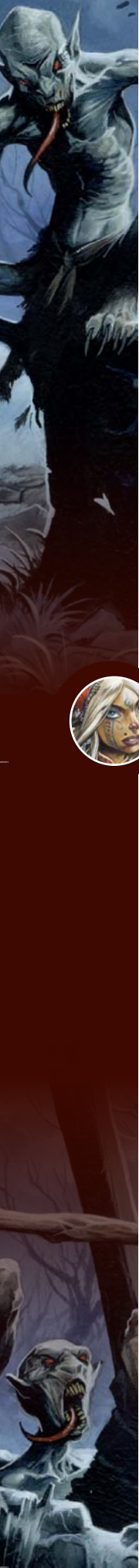
CE insane haunt (area **B23**)

Caster Level 3rd

Notice Perception DC 20 (to hear the sound of pages rustling, as if a book were being read rapidly)

hp 6; **Trigger** Proximity; **Reset** 1 day

Effect Once the memories grow bitter and culminate in an overwhelming sense of depression and loss, the haunted PC must succeed at a DC 14 Will save to resist taking 1d6 points of Wisdom damage.



TREASURE: The oddments include several dozen curious fetishes and masks, but the most impressive piece is an old painting of a bullfight. The painting bears a plaque that reads “Throwdown in Swynetown,” and in the painting, vast crowds jeer and cheer the bullfighter on, the huge bull aurochs towering over him, its cruel forward-jutting horns each the length of a spear. Dozens of bodies lie in the streets—the aurochs has clearly rampaged through them already, and although a score of brightly colored spears jut from the creature’s flanks and back, it still rages on. This painting is, in fact, an original work by renowned Magnimarian artist Andosalu, worth 600 gp.

A DC 25 Perception check made of the wall behind the painting reveals a loose brick—the small hollow beyond was one of several secret niches Vorel built into his house. This particular niche has gone unnoticed by anyone since Vorel’s death so long ago—it still contains three stacks of coins (20 pp in all), two vials that once contained doses of pesh but now contain only a foul-smelling and worthless residue, and a copper key. This key is a spare to Vorel’s workshop (area **B29**)—it also opens the lock in the stone door to area **B37**.

The books are mostly on Shoanti tribal cultures and history, along with numerous maps of mysterious realms and nautical charts. None of the books are particularly valuable. The scroll cases contain more maps, along with a *scroll of lightning bolt* and a *scroll of keen edge*.



B24 IESHA’S PRISON (CR 6)

The door to this room is locked, but the unmistakable sound of a sobbing woman can be heard beyond it. The door can be unlocked with a DC 25 Disable Device check, or battered down with a DC 24 Strength check.



This room is cold and damp; an old armoire stands near the east wall. The ceiling slopes down to only four feet high to the northeast, leaving little room for a small window. A full-size mirror in a dark wooden frame of coiling roses leans against these bricks, angled toward the tiny window.

CREATURE: After he murdered Iesha, Aldern Foxglove moved her body into this corner storeroom, wrapped it in a sheet torn from their marital bed, and hid it behind the crates. He locked the door and handed the key over to the Brothers of the Seven, assuming they would need it to clean up the situation for him. Of course, they did no such thing, and so Iesha remained here, dead. But not for long.

The night after her murder, the woman rose as an undead creature known as a revenant. Driven by a powerful desire for vengeance against Aldern Foxglove, Iesha is not without her weaknesses in her new, undead incarnation—for one, the sight of her own reflection has rendered her helpless with self-loathing. Moving

the mirror (or destroying it) causes her to instantly recover—she stands up and unleashes a baleful shriek, then cries out, “Aldern! I can smell your fear! You’ll be in my arms soon!”

Unless the PCs get in her way or attack her, Iesha then begins to unerringly seek out her murderous husband using her ability to locate creatures—Aldern is currently lurking in area **B37**, and if the PCs can keep up with Iesha, she’ll lead them directly to him (see Development, below).

If any PC is openly carrying her scarf from area **B9** or the portrait from area **B15**, Iesha must make a saving throw to avoid being overwhelmed by self-loathing; if she resists, her wrath is momentarily turned away from Aldern to the one who carries the object that reminds her of her life. Handing over the object to her can stop her rage—she immediately destroys the item, then continues on her relentless march toward Aldern.

IESHA FOXGLOVE, REVENANT

XP	CR	HP
2,400	6	76

(*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 2* 235)

TACTICS

During Combat If Iesha ends up attacking the PCs, she fights them until they either hand over whatever item it was that triggered her wrath or everyone in the group spends a round not attacking her or getting in her way; at this point, she breaks off the attack and continues on her march toward Aldern.

DEVELOPMENT: If the PCs allow Iesha to pass uncontested, she works her way downstairs to the basement, taking the most direct route. As an undead, she is immune to the effects of the haunts, but PCs following her may find their attempt delayed or compromised as they are forced to deal with haunts she simply ignores and passes by.

When she reaches the ground floor, she pauses over the moldy stain at area **B3** for several moments, staring transfixed at the spiral stain. After a few minutes, or once the PCs catch up to her, she unleashes a baleful shriek and begins smashing and clawing at the stained floorboards with her claws—it takes her only about a minute to smash through the floor with her savage claws, at which point she clammers through the hole and drops down into area **B30** below (characters who cannot get through the door to area **B29** can use this route to enter the caverns as well, of course).

Once through the spiral stain, Iesha continues her journey, descending the stairs and moving with unerring obsession through the caverns to the door into area **B37** partway down the ledge in area **B36**. Sensing her supernatural rage at their undead master, the ghouls in the caverns do not contest Iesha’s passage through the caverns and she does not stop to attack them—the same cannot be said of the PCs, whom the ghouls quickly move to attack if they notice them following Iesha.

The door to area **B37** poses a final barrier to Iesha. Feel free to have her scramble and smash against this





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door for as long as you wish if you want the PCs to be present for her attack on Foxglove—otherwise you can have her smash through the door to confront her murderer whenever you wish. Iesha's actions once she encounters Foxglove in area **B37** are detailed in that room's "Development" section.

B25 KITCHEN (CR 4)



A large oaken table, its surface covered with moldy stains and rat droppings, sits in the center of this large kitchen. Shelves line the walls, and an oversized fireplace dominates the northeast portion of the room. The shelves in the southwest wall are in a much greater state of disarray, and two one-foot-wide cracks in the wall near the floor lead south into the earth beyond the basement walls.

The two cracks in the walls are short tunnels that lead over to area **B27**, fissures that allow the rat swarms in there to move in and out of the place as they please. Several of the tunnels wind up and provide access into the wooden walls of the manor above as well.

CREATURES: Any substantial noise in this room is enough to attract the attention of the two diseased rat swarms in area **B27**. The rapidly growing susurrus of oily, diseased rat bodies slithering through tight confines, combined with the rising wave of rodent squeaks, gives the PCs 1d3 rounds to prepare for the onslaught before the swarms pour out into area **B25**, one after the other.

RAT SWARMS (2)	XP 600 each	CR 2	HP 16 each
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(Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 232)

TACTICS

During Combat Once enraged, the swarms continue to pursue intruders throughout the house. They do not follow prey outside.

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Disease (Su) The swarm inflicts Vorel's Phage when it damages foes (Fort save DC 12; see page 94 for a description of the effects of Vorel's Phage).

TREASURE: In a cupboard near the oven sits a very fine silver dinner set, with an exceptionally large silver salver and a dozen crystal decanters. The set as a whole is worth 1,000 gp. A DC 15 Perception check reveals a small clay urn hidden in a nook behind a loose brick on the chimney. The urn is stuffed with some dried pine cones and three small violet garnets worth 100 gp each.

B26 KITCHEN STAFF'S QUARTERS



Two bunks stand in this room, relatively free of dust and mold. A single chair lies on its side between them.

This room was where the kitchen staff lived back in Traver's day. Aldern was going to rebuild this room as a new servants' quarters, but the rat problem even a year ago was enough that he didn't make much progress on this front. Since he abandoned the manor again, leaving Vorel's spirit waxing powerful, the rat problem has only increased.

B27 PANTRY

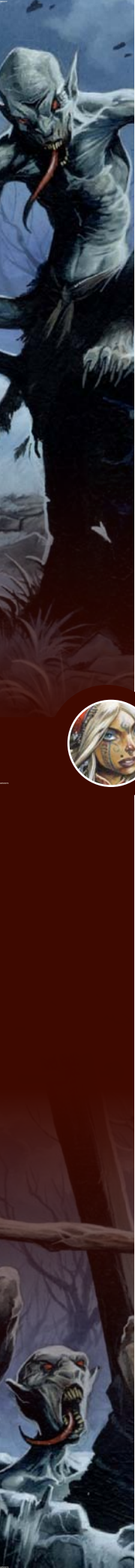


Once a pantry, this room has become a filthy, reeking lair of what must be hundreds, if not thousands, of rats. Swaths of fur cling to everything, and mounds of rat droppings cover the floor.



IESHA FOXGLOVE





DEVELOPMENT: If the PCs haven't already disturbed the rat swarms in area **B25**, they are encountered here.

B28 WINE CELLAR



Two wine racks line the walls here, their shelves empty and dusty. Mounds of broken glass bottles clutter the floor.

TREASURE: A DC 20 Perception check reveals something interesting on the top shelf of the western rack—a hinged and hidden compartment in the back wall. Beyond is a narrow nook in which are hidden eight fine vintages of wine from the famed Vigardeis vineyard in distant Cheliax. Each bottle is worth 100 gp.

B29 VOREL'S WORKSHOP (CR 4)

The door to this room is locked and made of iron, and while patches of rust mar its face, it remains quite stout. It's a DC 30 Disable Device check to pick the lock, or a DC 28 Strength check to break it down. Aldern Foxglove carries the key, but a spare can be found in area **B23**.



This room looks to have once been some sort of arcane workshop, although it now lies in ruin. A row of soggy books sits on the northern end of a workbench along the western wall. At the other end of the workbench, what looks like three iron birdcages sit, each containing a dead diseased rat. To the east, two stained-glass windows loom. The northern window depicts a thin man with gaunt features drinking a foul-looking brew of green fluid, while the southern one shows the same man but in an advanced state of decay, as if he had been dead for several weeks. His arms raised and head thrown back in triumph, his rotting body turns to smoke and spirals into a seven-sided box.

The stained-glass windows look out over the Varisian Gulf; although the basement itself is underground, the curved eastern wall of this room extends beyond the side of the cliff face. These final windows depict Vorel Foxglove taking the potion he brewed to catalyze his transformation into a lich (recognizable for who he is with a DC 25 Knowledge [nobility] check, by any PC who has examined the portraits in area **B17**, or by PCs haunted by festering or wrathful haunts), and then showing his new undead body bonding with his phylactery.

The books are in sorry shape, but a look through them reveals that they all cover various arts of necromancy and the creation of undeath. Worm-eaten and crumbling, they won't stand up to much investigation, but a character who looks through them and makes note of where the previous owner had glossed the text with marks and observations can make a DC 25 Knowledge (arcana) or Knowledge (religion) to realize that whoever studied

these books was investigating the transformation of mortal into a lich.

The iron cages each contain a dead rat that suffered from Vorel's Phage. Physical contact with one of these rats is not enough to expose a character to the disease, but eating one certainly does. Close examination of any of these cages reveals a small symbol of a pig with a mouthful of lock picks peering at a keyhole; under the pig is a guildsign that says "Pug's Contraptions—Magnimar." These cages were left here by Aldern—he's already delivered a sample of the fungus from area **B37** to the Brothers of the Seven, and he intends to deliver these three dead rats sometime soon.

HAUNT: Kasanda finally discovered the depths of her husband Vorel's plan here; forbidden by him to enter this room, she managed to do so one fateful night by using a *chime of opening* she'd purchased for just this purpose. While Vorel prepared the final stages of his lich transformation ritual, Kasanda found his books and realized what he was up to. Enraged and horrified, she moved down to the caverns below to confront him.

The PC haunted by wrath experiences a sudden urge to read the books on the workbench as soon as she comes within 5 feet of the center of the room. If she touches them, she freezes in place as a flood of information flows through her mind. She experiences a series of visions chronicling the various stages Vorel went through in his quest to become a lich, from researching the works of previous liches, to gathering the components for the lich transformation potion, to building his phylactery, finally culminating in a vision of Vorel taking his potion and doubling over in agony as his body began to rot away. All of these visions take place as if in a realm of animated stained-glass windows, which should obviously explain the true nature of the windows in Foxglove Manor. As Vorel doubles over, the PC is filled with blinding shame that a loved one would do this to himself, followed by a burning rage that he was stopped before he finished his ritual. These visions take only a few seconds to occur; once they end, the PC doubles over in an agony of anger.

ORIGINS OF LICHDOM

XP	CR	HP
1,200	4	8

CE wrathful haunt (5-ft. radius in center of room)

Caster Level 4th

Notice Perception DC 20 (to notice subtle movement in the stained-glass windows, as if the man depicted therein were sneering at the observer)

hp 8; **Trigger** proximity; **Reset** 1 day

Effect Once the haunted character receives the vision described above, she must make a DC 14 Will save or suddenly be filled with terror at the knowledge that Vorel has already succeeded in transforming himself into a lich, and must flee at top speed upstairs to try to find her "child" and rescue her. Anyone who gets in the character's way or tries to stop her suddenly seems to transform into Vorel, and the haunted character must attack





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that character to the best of her ability until she can continue on her flight up to area **B13**. *Calm emotions*, *dispel evil*, and *protection from evil* can end this effect before the character reaches **B13**, as can any effect that removes a fear effect; otherwise the effect persists until the PC reaches area **B13**—upon seeing no child there, she recovers from the effect.

B30 THE PIT (CR 4)



Piles of broken stone, dirt, and a few ruined pickaxes line the edges of this room. The floor in the middle of the room has been torn up to reveal an ancient set of stone spiral stairs, obviously of much older construction than the surrounding basement, winding deep into the bedrock below. A foul stink, like that of rotten meat, wafts up on a cold breeze from the darkness.

These stairs existed before Foxglove Manor was constructed, leading down into an ancient complex devoted to the worship of Urgathoa, goddess of undeath. The complex has partially flooded and eroded into what looks like little more than a series of caves today. Vorel knew about the complex and incorporated the stairs into his design, but he kept their existence secret from his wife. After the manor fell vacant, Justice Ironbriar made a search of the place. He hired a priest to use *stone shape* to conceal the entrance to the caves, hoping to keep them from whoever would come to dwell here later until legal ownership of the manor reverted to the Brothers of the Seven. It wasn't until Xanasha sent Aldern back here to gather samples of the fungus she suspected grew deep below that this entrance was reopened.

The stairs descend 80 feet to area **B31**.

HAUNT: When an obsession-haunted PC first sets foot on the stairs, she experiences a sudden vision of Aldern, sweaty, filthy, and wild-eyed, digging away at the stone floor of this room with a pickaxe. With each swing, he grunts out two words: "For you." The PC knows that Aldern is speaking of her. As the vision ends, Aldern breaks through into the room beyond, and a horde of shrieking ghouls rises up to pull him into the darkness below before they turn their lambent eyes to the PC.

GHOULISH UPRISING

XP	CR	HP
1,200	4	8

CE obsessed haunt (upper 20 ft. of spiral stairs)

Caster Level 4th

Notice Perception DC 15 (to notice a sudden increase in the stink of rotten flesh)

hp 8; **Trigger** Proximity; **Reset** 1 day

Effect As the ghouls reach for the haunted PC, she must make a DC 16 Will save to shake off the vision and regain her senses. If she fails, the ghouls grab her and begin to tear and bite at her flesh. Observers see the haunted PC jerk and thrash in the air as if she were being shaken by a mob, and suddenly

deep red claw and bite wounds appear on her flesh. The haunted PC takes 6d6 points of damage from the assault (half on a DC 16 Fortitude save), and must make a DC 16 Fortitude save to resist catching ghoul fever (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 146).

B31 LANDING



The stairs end in a limestone cavern. The walls drip with moisture, and swaths of black and dark blue mold grow in spiraling, tangled patterns on the floor, ceiling, and walls. Rubble and broken bones clutter the floor, and a rhythmic sound—like the breathing of some immense creature—echoes through the cave from three tunnels, one to the north and two to the west. Of the two western tunnels, the southernmost one seems to be a relatively new creation.

The tunnel leading to area **B32** is only a few months old—observing the wall's cracks and crumbling sandstone, Aldern had his ghouls use pickaxes to create a second entrance to the tunnels.

The breathing sound is nothing more than the sounds of the surf echoing strangely through various other fissures that connect area **B32** and **B36** to the cliffs overlooking the Varisian Gulf.

DEVELOPMENT: Characters who make excessive noise or light here quickly attract the attention of the ghouls in areas **B34** and **B35**, who come to investigate.

B32 FEEDING CAVE (CR 5)



This long cave stinks of rotten meat. The source of the horrific smell is readily apparent—a swath of carcasses is strewn about the floor of this place.

CREATURE: A single dire bat took residence in this cavern in the years before Aldern returned. The creature came and went by squeezing up and down the well shaft, emerging nightly in area **B1** to feed until it was savaged by Aldern and his ghoul minions. Now, the bat has become a ghoulish undead bat, and one of the cavern's most horrific guardians. Known more properly as a skaveling (such creatures are used as mounts by the foul necromantic denizens of the deepest reaches of the Darklands), the undead bat never leaves its den today, yet it defends its lair with a single-minded fury against intruders.

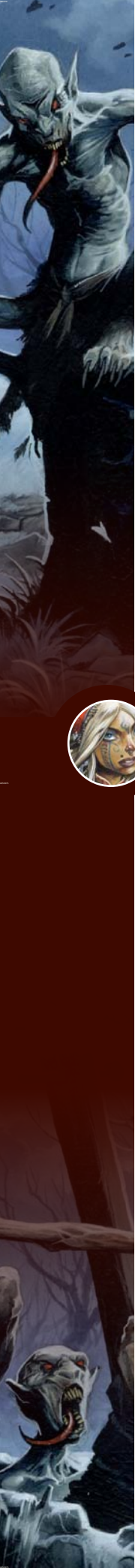
SKAVELING

XP	CR	HP
1,600	5	58

(*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 2 42)

TREASURE: Two of the three dead humans among the skaveling's victims are long-dead Varisian nomads with nothing of much value on their remains. The third,





however, is the corpse of notorious one-armed bandit Shaz “Redshiv” Bilger, suspected of organizing the robbery of nearly two dozen merchant convoys along the Lost Coast Road over the past decade. His partially eaten remains can be identified with a DC 20 Knowledge (local) check. Proof of his demise presented to the law at Magnimar is worth a 500 gp reward.

Of more immediate monetary gratification, though, is Shaz’s surviving gear, which consists of a pearl ring worth 300 gp, an adamantine longsword, a *hat of disguise*, and a scattering of 56 gp.

B33 DANGEROUS MOLD (CR 6)



The mold seems to grow particularly thick in this portion of the tunnel. Several pickaxes have been tossed into the corner of the room—one of them looks particularly well made.

After widening the tunnel to area B32, the ghouls abandoned their digging tools here, barely even noticing the poisonous cloud of spores the act kicked up at the time. The southern two 5-foot-squares here are thick with fungus, much of it yellow mold.

YELLOW MOLD

XP	CR
2,400	6

Hazard (*Pathfinder RPG Core Rulebook* 416)

TREASURE: Of the six picks abandoned here, five are ruined from the mold and the damp. The sixth, however, happens to be a +1 *heavy pick* that has weathered the conditions rather well.

B34 GHOULISH GUARDIANS (CR 4)

CREATURES: This otherwise nondescript cave is always watched over by three ghouls, stationed here and commanded to act as guardians by Aldern. The ghouls hide in the shadows: one in the nook to the north, one in the shadows of the southeast entrance, and one in the shadows of the western entrance. If they’re spotted, they attack at once. Sounds of combat here draw the attention of the ghouls in area B35, but not the denizens of area B36; the additional ghouls from area B35 arrive in 3 rounds.

GHOULS (3)

XP	CR	HP
400 each	1	13 each

(*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 146)

B35 THE GRAVE (CR 5)



The western half of this foul-smelling cavern is heaped with bones, each scarred by the scraping of teeth. Most of the bones have been cracked open for the marrow within.

CREATURES: Another four ghouls dwell in here, crouched upon the macabre heaps of bones as they chew the last remaining tatters of flesh from the rapidly diminishing pile of body parts. If the PCs take the time to look closely, one of these ghouls has a partially smashed-in skull from which a strangely shaped chunk of stone protrudes. This ghoul was once a carpenter in Aldern’s employ—the same one he caught with his wife Iesha. The man wasn’t quite dead when Foxglove dumped his body into the well, nor was he deceased when the ghouls in this tunnel found him—amused by his poor luck, they decided to make the doomed man into one of their own rather than feed on his delicious entrails. The bit of stone protruding from his head matches the missing wing from the statuette in area B9.

GHOULS (4)

XP	CR	HP
400 each	1	13 each

(*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 146)

B36 THE VENT (CR 6)



The cramped tunnel opens into a vertiginous gulf here, a cathedral-like cavern with a roof arching thirty feet overhead and dropping into a sloshing pool of foamy seawater fifty feet below. A steep stone ledge winds down to these surging depths, its slope glistening with moisture and mold. A stone door stands in the northwestern wall about halfway down the slope.

The sloping ledge is difficult to navigate; a character who doesn’t climb along its surface (doing so is a DC 5 Climb check) must make a DC 12 Acrobatics check each round. Failure by 5 or more sends the character sliding down the ramp all the way to the bottom; the character takes 1d6 points of damage for every 20 feet he slides until he plunges into the cold waters at the bottom.

The pool at the bottom is 100 feet deep. At its bed, it opens into a large cavern that eventually connects to the sea via several underground tunnels that wind for nearly a half-mile to the south. The sound of the water surging and sloshing is the source of the “breathing” sound heard throughout these caves. It’s a DC 15 Swim check to navigate the pool’s waters due to the churning currents.

The stone door leading to area B37 is untrapped, but is locked. A PC can pick the lock with a successful DC 30 Disable Device, or can smash down the door with a successful DC 28 Strength check. Alternatively, the key to Vorel’s workshop opens the lock—Aldern carries one copy of this key, while a spare hangs on a peg behind the painting in area B23.

CREATURES: The characters might have come to think that they’ve seen the last of the Lost Coast’s goblins by this point, but in fact a pack of four goblin commandos from the Toadlick tribe to the north wandered a little





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too close to Foxglove Manor a few weeks ago and were set upon by the skaveling while it was on one of its increasingly rare forays outside. Aldern found the goblins later that evening; he rescued their bodies from the ghoul bat and let them ripen in area **B37** amid the dangerous spores under the fungus there—as a result, the four goblins rose as ghosts. Aldern wasted no time in putting them to work here as the final guardians of his realm.

GOBLIN GHOSTS (4)	XP 600 each	CR 2	HP 17 each
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Variant ghost (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 146)

CE Small undead

Init +5; Senses darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +9

Aura stench (10-ft. radius, DC 15, 1d6+4 minutes),

DEFENSE

AC 20, touch 16, flat-footed 15 (+5 Dex, +4 natural, +1 size)

hp 17 (2d8+8)

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

Defensive Abilities channel resistance +2; **Immune** undead traits

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee bite +7 (1d4+1 plus disease and paralysis), 2 claws +7 (1d4+1 plus paralysis)

Special Attacks paralysis (1d4+1 rounds, DC 15)

TACTICS

During Combat The goblin ghosts focus their attacks on one target, attempting to overwhelm their victim with their claws and bites.

Morale The goblin ghosts fight to the death.

STATISTICS

Str 13, **Dex** 21, **Con** —, **Int** 17, **Wis** 18, **Cha** 18

Base Atk +1; **CMB** +1; **CMD** 16

Feats Weapon Finesse

Skills Acrobatics +7, Climb +6, Intimidate +9, Perception +9, Sense Motive +9, Stealth +14, Swim +3

Languages Goblin

B37 **VOREL'S LABORATORY (CR 7)**



The air in this damp cavern reeks of a horrific stench—a foul combination of decay, brine, and mold. The cave contains a rickety table, its damp surface cluttered with all manner of what appears to be garbage: empty bottles, bits of clothing, crumpled bits of paper, and more, lying in neatly organized rows. A painting leans against the far side of the table, facing a large leather chair that sits nearby. This chair's high back and cushion are horribly stained by smears of rotten meat and its arms are sticky with blood. A smaller table sits against the southern wall, its surface heaped with plates and platters of rotten, maggot-infested meat. The horrific stench of the room seems strongest to the west, where the cave's wall has been overtaken by a horrific growth of dark green mold and dripping fungi. At the center, a patch of black tumescent fungus grows, its horny ridges and tumorlike bulbs forming what could almost be taken to be a humanoid outline. What appears to have once



been an exquisite puzzle box the size of a man's fist lies smashed on the ground at the fungoid shape's feet.

A closer inspection of the collection on the table should be enough to worry one of the PCs, for this is Aldern's collection of relics from that PC's life. You should tailor the list of things found here to the PC Aldern is obsessed with, ranging from mundane things like used potion bottles and scrolls on up to objects as personal as a lock of hair (perhaps harvested from the PC as she slept or from a discarded comb) or, if you can engineer such an event earlier in this adventure, even small personal objects that have gone missing. The only objects here that weren't taken from the stalked PC are a stack of charcoal drawings on water-damaged parchment depicting the character, drawn by Aldern's hand. The nature of the drawings varies (erotica for lust, heroic poses for envy, or pictures of the PC killed in numerous manners for wrath), but the subject remains the same throughout the collection of several dozen pages. Mixed in with these drawings is a letter written in a graceful hand. Addressed to Aldern at his Magnimar townhouse address, the letter is presented on page 108 as Handout 2–5, and provides the PCs with the strongest link to Magnimar they are likely to find in Foxglove Manor.

The portrait that leans against the table's far side is of Iesha, but Aldern has used his own waning artistic skills in a clumsy attempt to repaint the portrait with blood and bits of runny rotten flesh into a caricature of the PC he has become obsessed with. The painting can be cleaned with a DC 25 Craft (painting) check and a day of work to reveal its original subject. This painting was done in Foxglove's townhouse in Magnimar, and although Iesha is the main subject, an open window over her shoulder shows a portion of a city skyline that can be identified with a DC 15 Knowledge (local) check as the city of Magnimar.

The fungus on the wall comprises the remains of Vorel Foxglove—after his wife disrupted the ritual he was performing here to become a lich, the necromantic energy lashed back and destroyed his physical body, transforming it into the embodiment of contagion and fungoid corruption that grows on the wall here. Anyone who touches the foul fungus must make a DC 20 Fortitude save or immediately contract Vorel's Phage (see page 94). The onset, in this case, is immediate—the character takes the ability damage at once. Actually ingesting a portion of the fungus imparts a –4 penalty on the saving throw.

The shattered box on the ground is the remains of Vorel's phylactery. A DC 20 Knowledge (arcana) check identifies it as being associated with necromancy; if this check exceeds this DC by 10 or more, the character realizes it is an incomplete and ruined lich phylactery.

In addition, characters who've been following the story laid out in the stained-glass windows in the manor above may recognize the box as the one depicted in some of those windows.

CREATURE: Aldern Foxglove, once a handsome and cultured nobleman who had a way with the ladies, is now condemned to an unlife of unending hunger, driven to eat the flesh of those he once might have called friends or lovers. His transformation into a ghastr has ruined his mind, yet his former personality was not completely destroyed—at least, not at first. To deal with his increasing madness, Aldern developed a split personality. He alternately refers to himself as His Lordship, the Skinsaw Man, and the Hurter. He spends his days conversing with himself as His Lordship, fearing the arrival of the Hurter, whom he regards as an entirely separate person. His Lordship is a frightened creature with a nervous twitch and a quick, excited voice. The Hurter appears in times of stress or excitement—a hateful, murdering cannibal who seeks to continue his harvest of living flesh. It is this personality that is most tied to Vorel's spirit, yet despite its feral and savage hunger, it is the Skinsaw Man that is, perhaps, the most dangerous. This personality seeks to find salvation and purpose among the Skinsaw Cult and is slowly becoming the dominant face in this tortured soul. In time, Aldern the Hurter and Aldern the Lord will be gone, and Norgorber will have a powerful new minion to call his own.

Aldern sits in his chair as the PCs arrive, His Lordship in control for a few moments. When he sees the PCs, his eyes widen in a mixture of fear and delight, but when he sees the PC who is the object of his obsession, he staggers to his feet. His proclamation to that PC depends on the nature of his obsession.

LUST: "You! You've come to me! I knew my letters would sway your heart, my love! Let us consummate our... our... hunger!"

ENVY: "No! You were supposed to die! You still live!"

WRATH: "You live! Well and good, for now I shall have the reward of tasting your heart while it is yet warm..."

No matter the nature of his obsession, the Hurter takes over and Aldern attacks. As soon as he is injured, His Lordship takes over. At this point, Aldern drops to his knees, sobs, and begs for the PCs to save him. He is terrified that the Hurter will come again, and is willing to say anything to convince the PCs to aid him. While in this state, he can reveal much of his story to the PCs, including his association with the Brothers of the Seven.

Unfortunately for the PCs, as His Lordship begins revealing the secrets of the Brothers of the Seven, the Skinsaw Man arrives. He suddenly breaks into a wide grin, stands slowly, bows before the PCs, and says, "I wonder how your deaths shall affect your friends. What things might you have done that will go unfinished?"





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What will those broken promises spawn? How will your murders shape the world?" He attacks with a renewed fury at this point, gaining a +2 profane bonus on attack rolls and damage rolls and fighting to the death.

Aldern's transformation into a ghastr is a unique case—he essentially retained his skills and memories from life, while his body transformed and changed into the undead horror he is today. Those who succumb to his ghastr fever arise as normal ghastrs—they do not retain any abilities they had in life.

THE SKINSAW MAN

XP	CR	HP
3,200	7	90

Male unique ghastr aristocrat 4/rogue 3
CN Medium undead (human)

Init +10; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +4

Aura stench (10-ft. radius, DC 17, sickened for 1d6+4 minutes),

DEFENSE

AC 23, touch 18, flat-footed 16 (+3 armor, +1 deflection, +6 Dex, +1 dodge, +2 natural)

hp 90 (7d8+59)

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

Defensive Abilities channel resistance +4, evasion, trap sense +1; **Immune** undead traits

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee +1 war razor +12 (1d4+5/19-20), bite +6 (1d6+2 plus disease and paralysis), claw +6 (1d6+2 plus paralysis)

Special Attacks disease (ghastr fever, DC 17), paralysis (1d4+1 rounds, DC 17), sneak attack +2d6

TACTICS

During Combat Aldern's tactics in combat are influenced to a certain degree by his personalities, as detailed above. When the Skinsaw Man takes over, he puts on his *stalker's mask* and assumes the form of his obsession, attacking that character to the exclusion of all other targets.

Morale Aldern fights to the death.

STATISTICS

Str 19, **Dex** 22, **Con** —, **Int** 18, **Wis** 18, **Cha** 24

Base Atk +5; **CMB** +9; **CMD** 27

Feats Dodge, Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes, Persuasive, Toughness, Weapon Finesse

Skills Acrobatics +16 (+21 jump), Bluff +17, Climb +14, Diplomacy +19, Intimidate +19, Knowledge (local) +14, Knowledge (nobility) +14, Ride +14, Sense Motive +14, Sleight of Hand +16, Stealth +21

Languages Common, Elven, Varisian

SQ rogue talents (finesse rogue), trapfinding +1

Gear +1 leather armor, +1 war razor, ring of jumping, ring of protection +1, stalker's mask, extravagant noble's outfit worth 200 gp, cameo worth 100 gp containing tiny portrait of PC, key to area B29

HAUNT: The patch of fungus on the wall presents an additional hazard to a PC associated with the festering haunt. When he sees the strangely humanoid shape on

the wall, he realizes the shape matches that of his own shadow exactly, and suddenly experiences a sensation of vertigo as he feels compelled to feed on the fungus to reclaim his stolen shadow.

VOREL'S LEGACY

XP	CR	HP
800	3	8

CE festering haunt (5-ft. spread from west wall)

Caster Level 4th

Notice Perception DC 15 (to notice the phylactery shards rattle)

hp 8; **Trigger** proximity; **Reset** 1 day

Effect The haunted character is compelled, as if via a *suggestion* spell, to eat some of the fungus on the wall. A DC 14 Will save is enough to resist the compulsion.



THE SKINSAW MAN

HANDOUT 2-5

Aldern,

You have served us quite well. The delivery you harvested from the caverns far exceeds what I had hoped for. You may consider your debt to the Brothers paid in full. Yet I still have need of you, and when you awaken from your death, you should find your mind clear and able to understand this task more than in the state you lie in as I write this.

You shall remember the workings of the Sihedron ritual, I trust. You seemed quite lucid at the time, but if you find after your rebirth that you have forgotten, return to your townhouse in Magnimar. My agents shall contact you there soon—no need for you to bother the Brothers further. I will provide the list of proper victims for the Sihedron ritual in two days' time. Commit that list to memory and then destroy it before you begin your work. The ones I have selected must be marked before they die; otherwise they do my master no good and the greed in their souls will go to waste.

If others get in your way, though, you may do with them as you please. Eat them, savage them, or turn them into pawns—it matters not to me.

—Xanasha, Mistress of the Seven



TREASURE: If cleaned, the portrait of Iesha is worth 200 gp. A small silver key ring worth 10 gp sits on the table amid the rotten meat, with two keys on the ring. The larger of these two is a tarnished iron key set with a round opal worth 100 gp—this is the key to Foxglove's townhouse in Magnimar. The smaller key is made of bronze and has an unusually long tang ending in a set of three notched blades. The head of this key resembles a roaring lion. This key opens the hidden cache on the third floor of the townhouse. Finally, a DC 25 Perception check made while searching the fungus south of the dangerous black patch uncovers a mold-encrusted but still functional *chime of opening* (5 charges), the same one used over 60 years ago by Kasanda Foxglove to enter her husband's secret world.

DEVELOPMENT: The patch of dangerous fungus can be temporarily destroyed by fire, acid, or the application of at least 5 vials of holy water, but the foul stuff simply regrows in 24 hours unless the site is subjected to a *hallow* and a *consecrate* spell or a *dispel evil* spell. Casting these spells here causes the fungus to suddenly animate and tear free from the wall. The thing howls in a sloshy, barely human voice, then crumbles to dust—the haunt of Foxglove Manor is thus exorcised, and while the building retains its unwelcoming aura, it is no longer haunted.

If the PCs released Iesha's revenant from her attic prison and allowed her to work her way down into these caverns, her confrontation with Aldern could be an exciting climax for this part of the adventure. When

she reaches the locked stone door to this room, you can assume it takes her about as long as it takes the PCs to make their way down into the area from above to eventually smash her way through the door, regardless of how long the PCs actually take to navigate the undead and haunts along the way.

Confronted by Iesha, Foxglove shrieks out in grief and falls to his knees to beg forgiveness from his murdered wife. For a brief moment, as Iesha caresses Aldern's sallow cheek, it may appear that she may be willing to forgive—yet a moment later, she shrieks in rage and attempts to destroy him. Her first attack on Aldern is effectively a surprise round against the ghost, after which you can resolve the combat normally, with the PCs taking part in the battle as well.

If the PCs aren't present for this confrontation, Aldern calls the goblin ghosts from area B36 to his aid as soon as Iesha attacks. These ghosts make all the difference—with their aid, Aldern destroys Iesha while surviving the fight himself with 3d6 hit points remaining, making his eventual fight against the PCs much easier assuming they can confront him before he has a chance to heal his damage. If the goblin ghosts are not available to help, though, Iesha destroys Aldern in a few rounds of combat.

STORY AWARD: If the PCs exorcise Vorel's spirit, award them 3,200 XP. If the PCs release Iesha and she achieves peace by taking part in Aldern Foxglove's destruction, award the PCs 2,400 XP (as if they had defeated Iesha in combat).





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ALTHOUGH THE LOST COAST IS REMOTE AND QUIET, NEWS TRAVELS FAST. WORD OF THE MURDERS IN SANDPOINT QUICKLY REACHES MAGNIMAR, WHERE UNKNOWN TO THAT CITY'S LEADERS, THERE ARE THOSE WHO ARE PLEASED WITH ALDERN'S WORK. YET OTHERS SEE THESE MURDERS IN AN ENTIRELY DIFFERENT LIGHT—FOR MAGNIMAR HAS HAD TROUBLE WITH KILLINGS OF LATE AS WELL. THE SKINSAW MURDERS OF SANDPOINT ARE INDEED LINKED TO THE KILLINGS THAT HAVE RECENTLY PLAGUED MAGNIMAR—AND WORSE, IF THE MURDERERS ARE NOT STOPPED SOON, THEY MAY JUST ADD TO THEIR LIST OF VICTIMS THE CITY'S OWN LORD-MAYOR!



Haldmeer Grobaras, lord-mayor of Magnimar, is a bombastic and self-serving nobleman who sees his stewardship over the city as a reward for his hard work as an aristocrat and not as a service to his people. Normally, the plight of the poor isn't his concern—he has people who have people to take care of those problems. Yet this new plague of slayings is something else. Merchants, nobles, bankers, and recently the proprietor of one of Haldmeer's favorite gambling dens have been slain, and it's no longer possible to discount theories that an entire cult of madmen might be involved. Angry demands to stop the slayings fill the streets and taverns by day, and Haldmeer isn't sure that the frightened silence of the nights is much better.

Unfortunately, his rule of Magnimar has left the bureaucratic machine in bad need of a tune-up. Magnimar's guards aren't equipped to handle a group as crafty and sneaky as the Skinsaw Cult, especially with one of the city's own justices living a double life as one of the cult's leaders. This man, Justice Ironbriar, works behind the scenes to defeat and distract organized attempts by the government to handle the situation, sending guards and investigators on wild-goose chases and wasting resources so the cult can continue its work. And just as fast as news of the Sandpoint murders travels to Magnimar, so too does news of heroes standing against and defeating Foxglove. By the time the PCs come to Magnimar and begin their investigations there, Ironbriar is ready for them.

WELCOME TO MAGNIMAR

Magnimar is a sprawling city—any number of adventures can begin (or end) in the City of Monuments, but this adventure focuses only on those things pertinent to “The Skinsaw Murders.” Player characters, being what they are, will certainly get distracted by the sights and sounds of the city—in this case, consult the notes on the city in Appendix 3 of this book. Further details on the city appear in *Pathfinder Campaign Setting: Magnimar, City of Monuments*, a 64-page sourcebook that describes the city in great detail.

As the PCs explore Magnimar, they'll certainly hear rumors and news about a disturbingly familiar spate

of murders plaguing the City of Monuments. Stories of merchants, politicians, crooked guards, and moneylenders showing up dead—their bodies mutilated, faces missing, and chests carved with seven-pointed stars—seem to be on everyone's lips, and it seems that every week brings a new victim to light. The crime scenes are now tightly controlled by the city government—the PCs should have little or no chance of getting access to one of them to investigate. Which is just as well, for the Skinsaw cultists are quite adept at leaving behind no traces, and little remains behind at these sites to incriminate them.

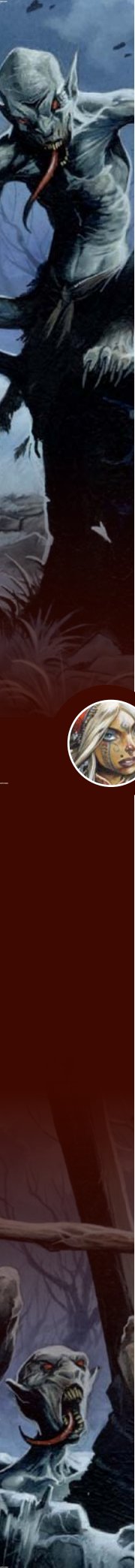
Unfortunately for the cult, Foxglove hasn't been so careful about hiding his trail. Despite the cultists' best efforts to preserve their secrets, clues remain hidden at Foxglove's townhouse that could well send the PCs on their way to disrupting the Skinsaw Cult completely.

FOLLOWING THE LEADS

While defeating Aldern Foxglove puts an end to the murders in Sandpoint, the PCs should find numerous clues in the Misgivings that indicate Foxglove was not acting alone—that he had allies and perhaps even a superior in Magnimar. At the very least, the discovery of these links to Magnimar should compel the PCs to visit the larger city out of curiosity.

If the PCs don't take the bait, though, Xanesha and the Skinsaw Cult won't ignore them for long—plenty of viable greedy souls remain in Sandpoint to fall to the Sihedron, after all. Eventually, the lamia matriarch simply sends a new proxy to the region to pick up Aldern's murder spree where it left off. This new agent is most likely one of the faceless stalkers who serve Xanesha, since this choice allows her to also seek revenge on those who robbed her of a useful undead tool. After some research, she picks one of the PCs and orders her faceless stalker to assume that PC's form and to periodically allow citizens to witness its murderous acts. It shouldn't be long before the PCs will be forced to act to clear their own name.

More likely, though, the discovery of the “Pug's Contraptions” maker's marks on the iron cages in area



B29 or the letter from Xanesha found in area **B37** compels the PCs to make a trip to Magnimar. An investigation of Pug's Contraptions reveals it to be an innocuous tinker's shop—if asked about the iron cages, Pug himself remembers selling them to Aldern Foxglove a few weeks ago. With a DC 16 Diplomacy check (or a bribe of at least 25 gp), Pug can give the PCs directions to Foxglove's townhouse—the address to which he delivered the cages once they were done. Pug has no idea what they were for: "Birds, I guess. They're bird cages, after all, ain't they?"

This clue from Pug, or the more direct clue from Xanesha's letter (a name, at this point in the adventure, the PCs shouldn't have any luck in finding more information about), should spur the PCs into investigating Foxglove's Magnimar home.

C. FOXGLOVE TOWNHOUSE (CR 6)

Aldern Foxglove's townhouse is the logical first stop in town for PCs seeking more clues about the brotherhood mentioned in the letter, but unfortunately it's also the logical place for the Skinsaw Cult to make its first attempt to murder the PCs.

The townhouse is located in the Grand Arch District, not far from Starsilver Plaza. It hasn't been lived in for months, although Aldern still owns the property. Since he's not yet been declared dead, the building has stood empty for that time. Justice Ironbriar has had copies of the building's keys made, but although the cultists ransacked the house for valuables and destroyed any clues they could find that might point back to their association with Aldern, they overlooked a hidden cache that Foxglove used to store personal oddments. If the PCs have Aldern's key, the design on its head should give them the clue they need to discover this cache.

The building itself is three stories tall. Boards have been nailed over the windows on the ground floor, courtesy of the Skinsaw Cult. A DC 20 Diplomacy check made to gather information in the vicinity reveals that the house was boarded up by carpenters one night not all that long ago. The back door is boarded over, but the front door is only locked (DC 30 Disable Device to open the lock). Attempts to enter the building by force during the day invariably draw the attention of the city guards, but no one questions PCs who enter the house using a key.

CREATURES: Justice Ironbriar is no fool. He suspects that after the PCs finished with Aldern, they'd follow up on any clues they found at the manor by visiting this building. As a result, he's prepared an ambush using two faceless stalkers, swamp-dwelling aberrations capable of assuming humanoid form. Ironbriar ordered the two creatures, on "loan" from his new mistress Xanesha,

to take the shapes of Aldern and Iesha Foxglove, and to await the PCs' arrival here. Both bide their time on the ground floor, but once they realize their "home" has visitors, they call out to the PCs and track them down, apparently eager to treat their guests to a home-cooked meal in the kitchen. Of course, this is a ruse; the faceless stalkers are merely trying to size up the PCs. Once they're ready, the monsters assume their true forms and attack.

FACELESS STALKERS (2)

XP	CR	HP
1,200 each	4	42 each

(Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 2 122)

TACTICS

During Combat The faceless stalkers attempt to keep one foe flanked at all times, fighting near walls if possible to prevent the same happening to them.

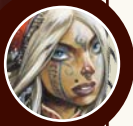
Morale The faceless stalkers fight until one is killed, whereupon the other attempts to flee. It does not return to its lair in the Shadow Clock, as it is terrified of Xanesha's likely response to its failure—instead it tries to flee the city entirely to return to the Mushfens.

TREASURE: A secret cache is hidden in the fireplace mantel on the third floor. This mantel is decorated with two roaring lion heads at either end; if the PCs found Aldern's key ring in Foxglove Manor, the lions match the one on the mysterious

bronze key. A DC 20 Perception check reveals a tiny keyhole deep in the back of the left lion's throat. Without the key, a successful DC 30 Disable Device check is required to force the cache open.

The hidden cache in the master bedroom contains one of Foxglove's nest eggs: a bag of 200 pp along with a shallow wooden case containing a number of legal papers pertaining to the townhouse, as well as the deed to Foxglove Manor. The deed indicates that the Foxglove family only financed two-thirds of the manor's construction 80 years ago; the remainder was financed by a group called the Brothers of the Seven. The deed also bears an unusual clause near the end that indicates that after 100 years, ownership of Foxglove Manor and the lands within a mile "around and below" reverts to the brothers.

Under the case is a thin ledger—the majority of the entries are mundane, but several near the end should catch the PCs' attention. These are nearly a dozen entries from over the past 3 months labeled as "Iesha's Trip to Absalom," each indicating Foxglove was paying someone referred to as "B-7" 200 gp a week for her "trip," dropping off the payment every Oathday at midnight at a place called "the Seven's Sawmill." A DC 15 Knowledge (local) check is enough to reveal the location of this sawmill, as is a DC 15 Diplomacy check made to gather information.





THE SKINSAW MURDERS

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PART SEVEN: SHADOWS OF TIME

Now all men and women present and future that we, the members of the Brothers of the Seven, upon this day the 6th. Abadius in the year of 4624, Absalom Reckoning, hereby concede and by this deed confirm upon Vorel Foxglove provisional ownership of the holding to be known here and henceforth as Foxglove Manor, located north of Magnimar on the Lost Coast Road due west of Bleaklow Moor upon the promontory, for so long as he, Vorel Foxglove, shall live, or so long as his direct descendants shall live, to a period not to exceed one hundred years. Construction of Foxglove Manor, having been financed partially on the holdings and coin of Vorel Foxglove to the amount of six and sixty percent, and partially upon the coffers of the Brothers of the Seven to the amount of the remainder, four and thirty percent, backed by collateral in the form of the Seven's Sawmill, located itself upon Kyver's Islet of Magnimar, shall ensure only the physical and initial construction of the aforementioned manor, with any subsequent repair and maintenance to be the sole responsibility of Vorel Foxglove or his descendants for the aforementioned period of one hundred years. Upon the passing of this time, on the date of 6th Abadius of 4724, Absalom Reckoning, ownership of Foxglove Manor, to include all lands within a mile around and below, immediately and forevermore reverts to the Brothers of the Seven, with the employment of the manor; its grounds, and all improvements placed upon it by any prior inhabitants to be subject to the Brotherhood's discretion. And so that our gift, concession, warranty, acquittance, and defense have the best perpetual strength and security, we have affixed Magnimar's seal to the present charter, which shall serve in lieu of signatures, the names of the Brotherhood to remain apart from this or any other document.



FOXGLOVE TOWNHOUSE

1 SQUARE = 5 FEET
STAIRS ● UP ● DOWN



FIRST FLOOR

SECOND FLOOR



THIRD FLOOR



SECRET CACHE





PART SIX: THE SEVEN'S SAWMILL

THE CULT OF NORGORBER IS A COMPLEX ORGANISM, BUT THE GOD OF MURDER, SECRETS, GREED, AND POISON WOULD HAVE IT NO OTHER WAY. THE CULT'S LEGACY IN MAGNIMAR STRETCHES BACK TO THE CITY'S FOUNDING OVER A CENTURY AGO, WHEN A FIGURE KNOWN TODAY IN WHISPERS AS THE FOREVER MAN LAID HIS OWN FOUNDATIONS WITHIN MAGNIMAR'S—HE ENSURED THAT THE CULT OF NORGORBER WOULD ALWAYS HAVE A PLACE IN THE CITY'S HEART, MIND, AND SOUL. TODAY, SEVERAL BRANCHES OF THE CULT FUNCTION SIDE BY SIDE, ALTHOUGH NOT NECESSARILY IN FULL COOPERATION. THE CULT OF THE SKINSAW MAN, IN PARTICULAR, HAS ITS OWN GOALS IN MIND FOR THE CITY...



Many thieves' guilds include small shrines to Norgorber in his guise as the "Gray Master." Hidden sects of conspirators who venerate him as the god of secrets know him as the Reaper of Reputations. And those who see divinity in the poisonous know him as "Blackfingers." Yet the most sinister and dangerous of his followers are the Skinsaw Men—they know Norgorber as Father Skinsaw. These fanatic murderers are not assassins—they kill not for wealth, but for the sick joy of it. The Skinsaw Men hold that all of their murders serve a greater cause, their leaders receiving visions of victims that they believe to be divine messages from Father Skinsaw. With each murder, society is shaped—deeds the victim might have accomplished go unrealized and the lives of those who knew the dead shift and change in subtle ways. Over the course of years, or even centuries, murders can shape nations and write the future's history. And when the Final Bleeding occurs, then shall Father Skinsaw reveal to his flock the purpose of this shaping of society by death.

The Skinsaw Men of Magnimar come from old blood, a master cult that has existed for hundreds of years in the decadent Chelish city of Vyre. Yet today, the Magnimarian branch is very much its own entity. An elf named Ironbriar has served as the cult's master since Vorel Foxglove's disappearance—the long-lived cleric leads a double life as one of the city's justices and has used the ironic cover to great effect. Few would suspect a justice, one of the city's ruling judges, of being a cultist of the god of murder, after all. He helped establish the semi-secret Brothers of the Seven society (with the aid of six other merchants, among them Vorel Foxglove) as a cover for his cult, and over the decades, Ironbriar has taken advantage of his growing (but always small) cadre of murderers, using them now and then for additional income. The commission from the Red Mantis to deliver samples of Vorel's Phage is one such bit of moonlighting, but his involvement with the beautiful Xanesha is more personal. At first, he believed she was interested in him for his connections among the justices of Magnimar, but in fact it is his Skinsaw

Men she wants. Xanesha's loyalty, unbeknownst to Ironbriar, is in fact to Karzoug—she sees Ironbriar as little more than a tool. To ensure his cooperation, she charmed Justice Ironbriar and has maintained her magical control over the man for many months. She uses this influence to send his cultists out to kill not those whom Norgorber wills, but rather those whose greedy souls will more rapidly fill Karzoug's *runewell*.

Although himself a reprehensible murderer and traitor to Magnimar, Ironbriar's involvement in these new murders is not his own doing, and if the PCs can free him from Xanesha's control, he might even be able to lead them to her lair. If not and he is killed, there are plenty of other clues awaiting the PCs at the Seven's Sawmill that can lead them to their final confrontation with Xanesha.

SAWMILL GENERAL FEATURES

The Seven's Sawmill is one of several mills that operate along the shores of Kyver's Islet. The mill is intended to look from outside like a standard lumber mill, but while it does indeed produce lumber, the structure's primary purpose is to give the Brothers of the Seven a cover and a safe place to meet. While the sawmill looks innocuous from outside, the information the PCs can find in Foxglove's townhouse should alert them to the sinister truth.

The mill's walls are made of wood, and all doors are standard unlocked wooden affairs, with the exception of the actual entrances to the building, both of which are locked (Disable Device DC 30). Floors are wooden and worn smooth by the passage of feet. The mill itself is powered by four waterwheels in the undermill (area D3)—the grinding and creaking of these waterwheels constantly fill the mill with sound.

D1 OUTER WALK



Built over the mouth of the Yondabakari River, this wood building sits on massive wooden pilings driven into the riverbed below. A wooden boardwalk wraps around the northern rim of the





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building, and a flight of stairs leads down to a door on the east side just above the water level. The churning of four large waterwheels under the mill fills the air with sound and mist.

Characters who stake out the mill see that from outward appearances, it seems normal. Deliveries of new lumber arrive in a holding pond near the mill and are pulled up through two chutes into area **D4** by ropes and pulleys. Shipments of processed timber or firewood ship out once every 3 days, hauled by horses in large wagons.

D2 LOADING BAY



The entirety of the first floor consists of a loading area. An opening in the ceiling into the floor above is filled with a tangle of ropes and slings for lowering timber. Nearby, stairs ascend to the next floor. Two sturdy wagons sit to the south, next to a bank of machinery accessed by four low doors; the grinding and creaking of the machinery fills the room.

A character can climb up into the upper floor via the hanging ropes and slings with a DC 10 Climb check, but the stairs provide a much easier way to reach the same location. The four low doors to the south open into workspaces where the waterwheel-driven machinery that powers the logsplitters and saws on the upper floors runs up along the southern wall of the mill. As long as the waterwheels are running, Perception checks are made at a -2 penalty in this room.

The partially walled-off alcove in the northeast section of this room contains several large mounds of filthy hay. A DC 15 Survival check is enough to reveal that something large—perhaps an ogre or a giant—once used this area as a place to rest. In truth, this was once the lair of a hideous flesh golem known as the Scarecrow that has been claimed as a guardian by Xanesha—the monster can now be encountered in area **E1** of the Shadow Clock.

D3 THE UNDERMILL (CR 5)



This is a place of mist and noise. Four immense waterwheels churn steadily in the northern part of this large room, while to the south, whirring belts of leather, gears, pulleys, and thick ropes spin and churn, using the eternal motion of the river below to power pistons that rumble along the southern wall.

Levers at the west and east ends of the four waterwheels once provided emergency stops, but they have long since rusted in place; an attempt to pull either simply results in the lever breaking off. To stop the wheels, characters must either succeed at a DC 20 Disable Device check or physically destroy them. Alternatively, a DC 25 Disable Device check can sabotage the machinery elsewhere

in the room (indicated by shaded squares on the map). Failure at either of these checks by 5 or more indicates the character is caught by the machinery and takes 1d6 points of damage; he must also make a DC 15 Reflex save to avoid being pulled into the gear works for another 3d6 points of damage. Each round, he can attempt a new saving throw (or a DC 20 Escape Artist check) to escape; otherwise he continues to take 3d6 points of damage per round.

Attempts to destroy the waterwheels (hardness 5, hp 120, Break DC 30) or the machinery (hardness 8, hp 60 per 5-foot square, Break DC 26) via melee attacks force a DC 15 Reflex save each round to avoid being caught up in the machines. Stopping the wheels renders the log splitters in area **D5** harmless.

CREATURES: The machinery here needs near-constant upkeep and maintenance. This task falls to three cultists who work in shifts day and night. The cultists do not wear their robes while working, but their razors and masks are never far away. They respond to intruders with feigned friendliness at first, warning them that this room is no place for visitors and that if they need assistance, they should contact the mill manager. If the PCs demand to know the manager's name and address, the cultists smile calmly, claim that they aren't allowed to hand out that type of information, and slowly move to surround the intruders. Once they're flanking foes, they don their masks and attack.

As long as a character is in a square bordered by an outer wall, he's safe. If he moves through any other square during combat, he treats that square as difficult terrain and must succeed at a DC 15 Reflex save, as detailed above, to avoid being caught in the machinery or waterwheels. A character caught in the waterwheels is dumped into the river below after 1d3 rounds. The cultists are intimately familiar with the workings of the room and can move through the machinery safely (although it still counts as difficult terrain for them).

SKINSAW CULTISTS (3)	XP	CR	HP
	600 each	2	21 each

Human cleric of Norgorber 1/rogue 2
 NE Medium humanoid (human)
Init +7; **Senses** Perception +10

DEFENSE

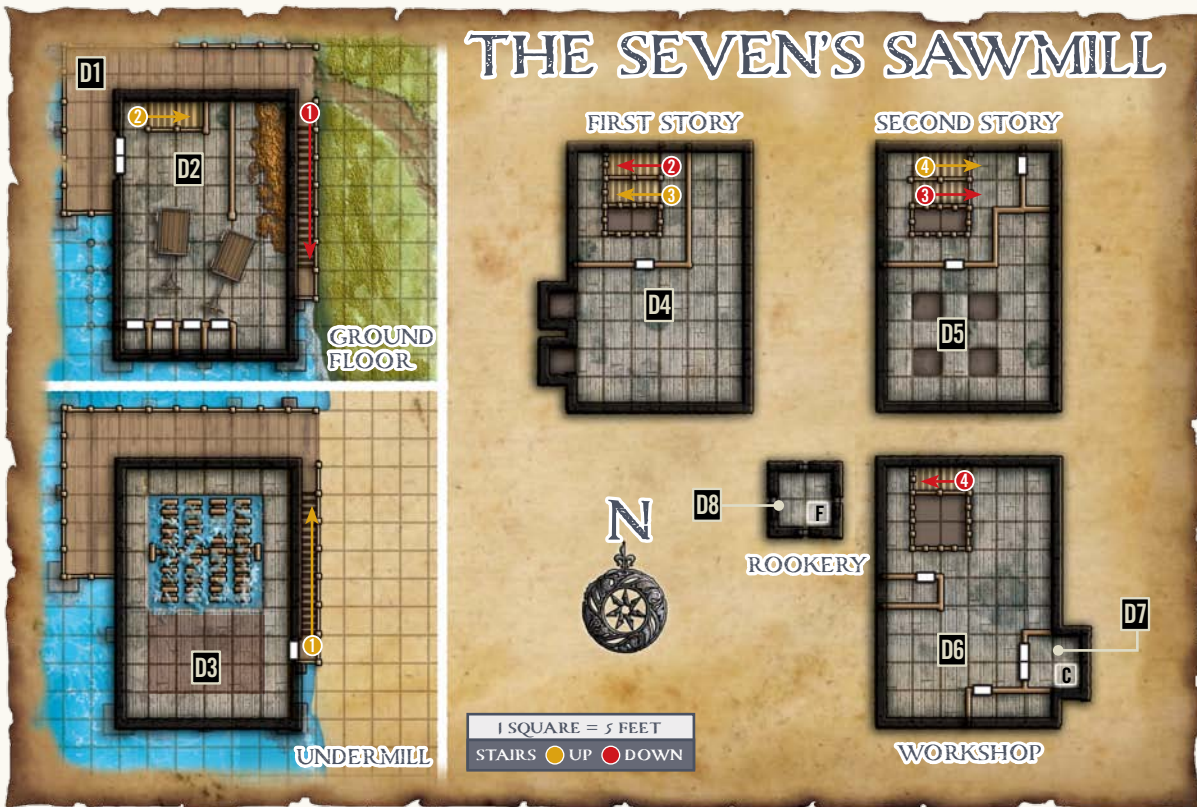
AC 15, touch 13, flat-footed 12 (+2 armor, +3 Dex)
hp 21 (3d8+5)
Fort +3, **Ref** +6, **Will** +4
Defensive Abilities evasion

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.
Melee mwk war razor +5 (1d4+2/19-20)
Ranged hand crossbow +4 (1d4/19-20)
Special Attacks channel negative energy 2/day (DC 9, 1d6), sneak attack +1d6
Spell-Like Abilities (CL 1st; concentration +3)
 5/day—bleeding touch (1 round), copycat (1 round)



THE SEVEN'S SAWMILL



COMBAT AT THE SAWMILL

Although the various areas in the sawmill are presented as individual encounters, once the cultists realize that they're under attack, things should quickly escalate. If the sound of battle doesn't alert cultists on other floors or neighboring rooms, a fleeing cultist should do just that. The assumption is that once a battle begins, the PCs will be faced with several waves of cultists—as one group falls, another arrives to continue the fight. These waves of cultists should culminate with Justice Ironbriar joining the fray and fighting alongside his allies.

Parties that manage to use stealth to their advantage will quickly find these encounters to be quite a bit easier—all of the denizens of the sawmill have sneak attack, after all, and taking the cultists on one or even two at a time allows them far fewer opportunities to flank and take advantage of their rogue levels.

Spells Prepared (CL 1st; concentration +3)

1st—*command* (DC 13), *disguise self*^P (DC 13), *shield of faith*

0 (at will)—*bleed* (DC 12), *light*, *mending*

D Domain spell; **Domains** Death, Trickery

TACTICS

During Combat A Skinsaw cultist casts *shield of faith* on the first round of combat if he has a chance, saving *command* for emergencies if he needs to slow down pursuit. Here in the undermill, a cultist might attempt to trip or bull rush a character not armed with a melee weapon into the machinery.

Morale If one of the cultists is slain, the others attempt to flee upstairs to join their brothers in defending the mill.

STATISTICS

Str 12, **Dex** 17, **Con** 13, **Int** 10, **Wis** 14, **Cha** 8

Base Atk +1; **CMB** +2; **CMD** 15

Feats Improved Initiative, Martial Weapon Proficiency, Selective Channeling, Weapon Finesse

Skills Acrobatics +9, Climb +7, Intimidate +5, Knowledge (local) +6, Perception +10, Sleight of Hand +9, Stealth +9

Languages Common

SQ rogue talents (finesse rogue), trapfinding +1

Gear leather armor, hand crossbow with 10 bolts, masterwork war razor, *skinsaw mask*, 20 gp

D4 LUMBER COLLECTION (CR 6)



This large storeroom is filled with stacks of timber, firewood, and other finished lumber products waiting for shipment. A network of pulleys on tracks covers the ceiling, ropes dangling here and there to aid in the shifting of inventory as needed. Machinery churns along the south wall, while nearby two chutes fitted with winches allow lumber to be hauled up from the holding pools below. Four openings in the ceiling lead to the upper floor; chutes extend through each of these from the log splitters in the room above. Under each opening is a collection bin.





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CREATURES: Except during sermons, this area is populated by four Skinsaw cultists who busy themselves inspecting lumber, arranging product, and preparing shipments. Like their fellows in the undermill, they react to intruders with smiles as they slowly work themselves into flanking positions before attacking; they do not wear their masks or robes, but they do keep their razors hidden throughout the room. At night, the cultists are out on the city streets with their razors, stalking prospective victims.

SKINSAW CULTISTS (4)	XP 600 each	CR 2	HP 21 each
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(see page 113)

D5 LOG SPLITTERS (CR 6)

The floor of this room has a thick carpet of sawdust, penetrated by two large log splitters and saws set up over openings in the floor. Another pair of openings is fitted with winches and ropes to raise and lower uncut lumber from below.

If the waterwheels are functioning, these log splitters and saws thunder away at stacks of lumber. The cacophony imparts a -4 penalty on Perception checks to all creatures in this room.

The log splitters are powered by the waterwheel machinery; each splitter consists of a chute in the floor with blades that split logs as they are fed in. A character can clamber onto a log splitter with a DC 5 Climb check, but must succeed at a DC 5 Reflex save to avoid being caught by the whirling blades. A character who falls into one of the four shaded squares (or is pushed into it) can avoid being caught by the blades with a DC 15 Reflex save. Once a character falls into a working splitter, she takes 6d6 points of slashing damage and is then dropped into the collection bin 10 feet below in area D4.

CREATURES: During the day, four Skinsaw cultists toil in this room, loading lumber into the log splitters with care and precision. They react to intrusions as their brothers in areas D3 and D4 do, with warnings that this is a “dangerous place”—and eventually, with razors.

SKINSAW CULTISTS (4)	XP 600 each	CR 2	HP 21 each
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(see page 113)

TREASURE: The closet in the northeast corner of this floor contains two dozen robes used by the Skinsaw cultists during ceremonies or for their prowls through the nighted streets. A barrel at the southern end of this closet contains a fair amount of loot harvested from their victims; the cultists maintain a community pool of stolen goods and coins for use as the need arises.

The barrel currently contains three bags of 100 gp; three *potions of barkskin* +3; a beautiful crystal decanter set with an obsidian stopper, worth 300 gp; and a tiny wooden box containing three poorly cut diamonds, worth 200 gp each.

D6 WORKSHOP (CR 4)

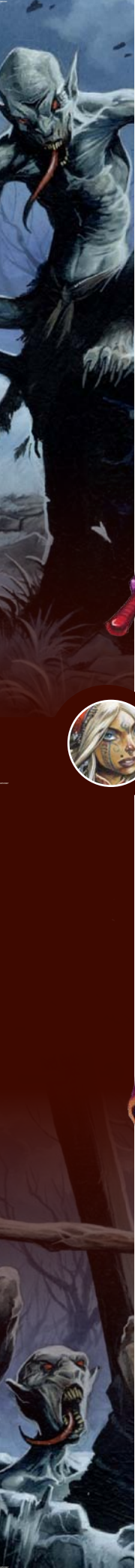
A thick layer of sawdust covers the floor, mounded nearly a foot deep in places. Workbenches sit here and there in the room, their surfaces cluttered with saws, hand drills, planers, and other woodworking tools.

This room serves the cultists not only as a place for them to work on various projects, but once a week as a



SKINSAW CULTIST





place for them to gather to hear Ironbriar's sermons and share his visions. Lately, the cultists have taken to capturing victims alive and returning here to watch Ironbriar perform the Sihedron ritual upon the bodies before they are slain—disposal of these bodies generally falls to two lesser cultists while the rest clean up the place. Nonetheless, a DC 15 Perception check reveals numerous places where blood stains sawdust-covered floorboards, or bits of gristle remain caught in tools. The two smaller side rooms in this area are both unused storerooms.

CREATURES: During the day, two cultists work on this floor, planing timbers or creating custom-sized lumber for customers. As with the other cultists in the mill, they react to intruders with feigned concern for their safety before donning masks and drawing razors.



JUSTICE
IRONBRIAR

SKINSAW CULTISTS (2)

XP 600 each	CR 2	HP 21 each
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(see page 113)

DEVELOPMENT: If the PCs decide to wait for a cult meeting or ritual and infiltrate the sawmill at that point (these meetings take place at midnight every Oathday), they'll find the lower floors of the mill abandoned—all 13 cultists are instead in this room, where they've pushed aside the tables to make room to stand in a semicircle around Ironbriar, who leads them in prayer before murdering his latest victim (an unconscious gambler) after performing the Sihedron ritual. The cultists are unlikely to notice the PCs' arrival—give the party automatic surprise if they attack the group during this time of unholy prayer. Of course, a battle with 13 Skinsaw cultists and Justice Ironbriar at the same time is a CR 10 encounter—very difficult, but not impossible for a group of 7th-level characters.

D7 IRONBRIAR'S OFFICE (CR 7)

Both entrances into this room—the double doors and the trap door in the ceiling—are locked. A PC who succeeds at a DC 30 Disable Device check can pick the locks; otherwise, the wooden doors must be bashed down if the key (carried by Ironbriar) is not available.



The walls of this room bear macabre decorations—human faces stretched flat over wooden frames by strips of leather or black twine. Each face grimaces in a slightly different expression of pain, looking down on a cramped room that contains a desk, a high-backed rocking chair, and a low-slung cot heaped with scratchy-looking blankets. A ladder in the southeast corner of the room leads up to a trap door in the ceiling.

CREATURE: For the past several decades, after Vorel Foxglove vanished, an elven cleric of Norgorber named Ironbriar has led the Skinsaw Cult. His appointment to Magnimar's Justice Council only strengthened the security of the cult, but his recent magical seduction by the lamia matriarch Xanesha has perhaps damaged his reputation with his followers beyond recovery.

Justice Ironbriar keeps a home in the Alabaster District of Magnimar but is rarely there, leaving its care to a small army of servants and entertaining guests only as his role as a justice requires. The rest of his time he spends here, stalking the streets, or visiting his mistress Xanesha at the Shadow Clock.

Ironbriar is one of the Forlorn—elves raised outside of elven communities by humans. Like most of the Forlorn, Ironbriar grew up on the streets; in this case, in the city of Vyre in northwestern Cheliah. On the streets of Vyre, he quickly learned the laws of Norgorber, and by the time his travels brought him to





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Magnimar, he was already a practicing priest of the god of murder.

Today, Ironbriar is a stern-faced man who believes he's finally found love, when in fact he's actually just been charmed by the object of his obsession. He keeps Xanesha's identity secret from his followers, more out of jealousy that they might try to steal her away than anything else.

Ironbriar prefers to let his cultists handle intruders, but once they start fleeing up to area **D6** with stories of the PCs causing problems downstairs, he puts on his *reaper's mask* and seeks them out personally—he looks forward to bringing their framed faces to Xanesha as trophies. He's not interested in speaking to the PCs, but if they can engage him in even a few rounds of conversation, a successful DC 25 Sense Motive check is enough for the PCs to realize that Ironbriar is affected by a charm effect.

JUSTICE IRONBRIAR

XP	CR	HP
3,200	7	61

Male elf cleric of Norgorber 6/rogue 2

NE Medium humanoid (elf)

Init +6; **Senses** low-light vision; Perception +13

DEFENSE

AC 26, touch 20, flat-footed 19 (+4 armor, +3 deflection, +6 Dex, +1 dodge, +2 shield)

hp 61 (8d8+22)

Fort +6, **Ref** +11, **Will** +7; +2 vs. enchantments

Defensive Abilities evasion; **Immune** sleep

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee +1 *short sword* +12 (1d6/19–20)

Ranged mwk hand crossbow +12 (1d4/19–20 plus poison)

Special Attacks channel negative energy 4/day (DC 14, 3d6), sneak attack +1d6

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 6th; concentration +8)

5/day—copycat (6 rounds), dazing touch

Spells Prepared (CL 6th; concentration +8)

3rd—*dispel magic*, *suggestion*⁰ (DC 15), *summon monster III*

2nd—*bear's endurance*, *cat's grace*, *hold person* (DC 14), *invisibility*⁰, *undetected alignment*

1st—*charm person*⁰ (DC 13), *command* (DC 13), *cure light wounds*, *divine favor*, *shield of faith*

0 (at will)—*light*, *mending*, *read magic*, *stabilize*

D Domain spell; **Domains** Charm, Trickery

TACTICS

Before Combat Ironbriar prepares for combat by casting *bear's endurance*, *cat's grace*, *shield of faith*, and *invisibility*.

During Combat Ironbriar prefers to let his cultists fight in melee, himself hanging back to use his spells and channel energy at range. Once he's cast his ranged spells, he moves in to flank foes with his magic sword. If fighting on his own, he tries to time things so that he casts *summon monster III* to bring in additional allies with which to flank foes—he prefers to summon 1d3 lemures with this spell so as to gain more allies

with which to flank than a single tougher ally. Ironbriar also prefers to fight in larger areas where he can take advantage of movement, and as such attempts to escape into area **D6** to fight as soon as he can.

Morale As long as he remains under the effect of Xanesha's *charm monster* spell, Ironbriar fights to the death. If the charm effect ends, he suddenly realizes how the lamia matriarch has been using him and immediately offers the PCs a deal, as detailed under Development. If the PCs refuse to deal with Ironbriar, he does his best to escape into the city—he abandons his life here and attempts to flee back to the city of Vyre to start a new life.

STATISTICS

Str 8, **Dex** 22, **Con** 12, **Int** 14, **Wis** 15, **Cha** 13

Base Atk +5; **CMB** +4; **CMD** 24

Feats Dodge, Mobility, Selective Channeling, Toughness, Weapon Finesse

Skills Bluff +12, Diplomacy +8, Intimidate +8, Knowledge (local) +11, Knowledge (religion) +11, Linguistics +7, Perception +13, Stealth +17

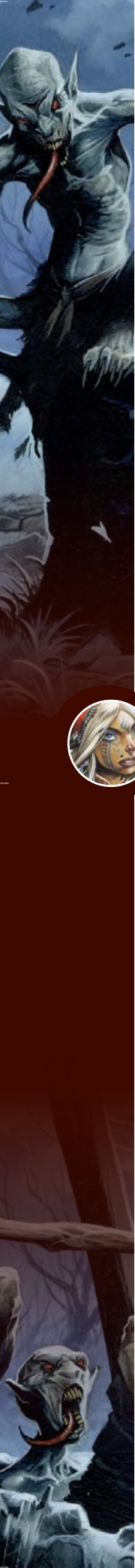
Languages Common, Draconic, Elven, Halfling, Infernal, Varisian **SQ** rogue talents (finesse rogue), trapfinding +1

Combat Gear *wand of cure moderate wounds* (12 charges);

Other Gear mithral chain shirt, +1 *buckler*, +1 *short sword*, masterwork hand crossbow with 10 poisoned bolts (drow poison), *reaper's mask*, key to area **D7**

TREASURE: The faces of Ironbriar's victims are ghoulish but worth little. The large footlocker, however, is filled with oddments that Ironbriar has collected from his many victims over the years. A fair number are of a historical nature, including books, sea charts, etchings of vast rock formations and dolmens accompanied by maps, several pamphlets discussing a "forgotten" school of magic known as the Alchymyc [arcana] check), and a fine painting depicting a city carved from a vast frozen waterfall with towering ice cathedrals and domes (this painting is worth 200 gp).

Near the bottom are several books. The first of these is a wizard's spellbook emblazoned with two entwined snakes (one red, one green) that contains the following spells: *blink*, *cat's grace*, *chill touch*, *enlarge person*, *fox's cunning*, *grease*, *haste*, *lightning bolt*, *mage armor*, *magic missile*, *scorching ray*, *shocking grasp*, *shrink item*, *spider climb*, and *web*. The second book is an old and beautifully filigreed tome containing numerous hand-drawn illustrations and titled *The Serpents Tane: Fairy Tales of the Eldest*. The book presents tales of the Tane—the most feared of a group of notorious fey known as the Twisted, goliaths of war and madness dreamt and stitched into being by the Eldest. The Tane are said to be terrible to behold, and the stories speak of them stumbling into mortal lands, where they ravage kingdoms by creating firestorms, crushing keeps with their feet, and eating dragons. Specific



Tane described include monstrous creatures like the Jabberwock (a thing of scales and fire and crushing fury), the Thrasfyr (also known as the Dreaming Hill of the Dark, a chimeric monster wrapped in chains that the book claims took part in the Three-Thousand-Year War of the Eldest), and the Sard (the Storm of Insanities, a thing of boughs and briars and misery, an ancient Wychwood Elm given life and hate by the Eldest). This fine and rare tome is worth 500 gp.

Finally, a slim volume near the bottom of the chest serves double-duty as a ledger and journal for Justice Ironbriar. He's recorded everything in the journal in a cipher he painstakingly invented himself using a mix of Draconic, Elven, and Infernal characters. A character who can read all three of these languages can make a DC 25 Linguistics check after 2d4 days of study to untangle the complex cipher. If a PC deciphers it, she finds enough evidence in the book to put Ironbriar in the gallows. If the PCs haven't already determined that Ironbriar wasn't the mastermind behind the murders, his journal makes it clear enough. The journal goes on to reveal that someone Ironbriar refers to as "Lovely Xanesha" has stolen his heart and provided him with a new method of murder. There's not much information about Xanesha in the journal, but the book does reveal that he's visited her dozens of times at a site in northern Magnimar called the Shadow Clock.

The ledger also indicates that Ironbriar has received payment from the Red Mantis for delivery of "Vorel's Legacy." This refers to the deadly fungus harvested from area **B37** of Foxglove Manor, sent to a sinister group of assassins based in Mediogalti. For now, this lead is a red herring that the PCs are unlikely to follow up on, but this shipment plays a significant role in the Curse of the Crimson Throne Adventure Path.

DEVELOPMENT: If Ironbriar is released from Xanesha's *charm monster* spell, all of his rage is suddenly directed at the lamia matriarch. He immediately ceases combat with the PCs, going as far as to throw down his weapon or even drop to his knees to beg for his life. If the PCs ignore this, he simply tries to flee. Otherwise, he offers the PCs a deal—he tells them that Xanesha is responsible for all of the murders, both those in Sandpoint and the recent spate here in Magnimar, and that she was using the Brothers of the Seven as patsies for her own plans (Ironbriar carefully tries to blame the "cult" aspects of the situation on her influence, and does his best to leave Norgorber out of it). In return for the PCs looking the other way for 12 hours (long enough for Ironbriar to escape Magnimar), he promises to reveal to them not only the location of Xanesha's hideout, but also the strength of her forces and guardians. He only reveals this last if he thinks he can trust the PCs. He knows about the Scarecrow and how many faceless stalkers Xanesha keeps in the tower (three in all), and can even provide a brief description of the lamia matriarch's abilities.

D8 ROOKERY



A timber cabinet sits against the northern wall here, its doors made of iron mesh. Inside perch three strangely silent ravens. A table nearby holds a tall narrow bucket of bird feed, a quill, and a vial of ink, as well as several thin parchments weighted down by a polished rock.

These are messenger ravens, as a DC 12 Handle Animal check or DC 15 Knowledge (local or nature) check can reveal. Ironbriar uses them to communicate with Xanesha; if the PCs use *Speak with Animals*, they can learn as much for the price of a few bird snacks offered from the bucket on the table, in addition to the fact that the birds quite enjoy their chances to fly to "the snake lady tower." If the ravens are released, they fly unerringly north at full speed. If at least one PC can keep an eye on the ravens with a successful DC 20 Perception check, and watch from a position of enough prominence (this rookery is prominent enough), she'll see the ravens swoop under the Irespan to the north to alight atop one of the tallest towers under the ancient stone bridge—the Shadow Clock.

IRONBRIAR EXPOSED

Although confronting Justice Ironbriar does not immediately end the overall threat Xanesha poses to Magnimar (and, indeed, this is by the lamia matriarch's design—the cult was always intended to be a convenient smokescreen for her to hide behind), the revelation that one of the city justices was in fact the leader of a notorious murder cult certainly has the potential to make a bigger splash.

In large part, the size of that splash depends upon the PCs. If they quietly defeat Ironbriar and his cultists and prevent knowledge of what he was truly up to from becoming common knowledge, the truth of the justice's disappearance simply becomes another of Magnimar's unsolved mysteries. If the PCs are linked to his death in any way, though, exposing his true nature is the only real way to avoid imprisonment in Magnimar's notorious prison, the Hells.

Lord-Mayor Haldmeer Grobaras himself seeks the PCs out to hear their story of how they exposed the corrupt elf. A corpulent man, Grobaras is also exceptionally quick-witted, and as the PCs explain things he's equally quick to pick up on the threads of the entire conspiracy. In this way, you can use Haldmeer as a convenient way to encourage the PCs to continue their search for the real leader of the Skinsaw Cult—Xanesha.

For her part, the lamia matriarch prefers to lie low in the aftermath of Ironbriar's defeat. If the PCs linger in Magnimar for long without confronting her, though, she may soon take matters into her own hands!





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PART SEVEN: SHADOWS OF TIME

FOR MANY YEARS, XANESHA DWELT IN THE HOARY SPIRES OF THE LOST CITY OF XIN-SHALAST. SHE WAS HONORED TO BE AMONG THOSE FEW CHOSEN BY KARZOUG HIMSELF TO BE SENT SOUTH TO BEGIN THE HARVEST OF SOULS OF GREED. WHILE HER SISTER LUCRECIA JOURNEYED INTO CENTRAL VARISIA TO PREY UPON REMOTE VILLAGES, XANESHA ENDED UP IN MAGNIMAR. SHE TOOK HER TIME SEEKING THE PERFECT AGENT TO PERFORM THE SIHEDRON RITUAL, AND EXCEEDED HER EXPECTATIONS IN CATCHING JUSTICE IRONBRIAR.

Now, the lamia matriarch is free to explore the city and discover new greedy candidates for murder while leaving the actual work of the slayings to her underlings. Her current goal is to engineer the sacrifice of Lord-Mayor Haldmeer Grobaras, one of the greediest men in Varisia; although this task is still in its early planning stages, Xanesha could eventually bring Magnimar to its knees if she's allowed to carry out her assassination plot.

Xanesha was drawn to the part of Magnimar known as Underbridge for its lawlessness and sociological turmoil—here was a place where she could dwell without constant fear of discovery. Her chosen lair is the Shadow Clock, one of several failed attempts to bring order to this ramshackle region.

THE SHADOW CLOCK

Hidden beneath the grimy, blackened goliath that is the Irespan, the lesser works of men huddle like weeds at the foot of the great trees that are the ruined bridge's stone supports. Near one of these supports leans a decrepit and sagging clock tower, a dying structure of weathered stone, wood, and rusted metal supports that teeters to an unlikely height of over 180 feet. High above, near the tower's roof and barely 5 feet from the Irespan's stony belly, a tangle of scaffolding sits near a section of the structure that has fallen away. The tower's clock face is frozen in time, defiantly (and falsely) proclaiming it to be 3 o'clock, while above, a stone statue of an angel, her wings crumbling, leans precariously, almost as if she were preparing a final leap from her decaying perch.

The Shadow Clock is a minor marvel of engineering. The locals in the region half expect it to collapse any day, and several Underbridge taverns have longstanding betting pools on how many structures the clock tower will crush and how many people it will kill when it finally falls. The tower itself is made mostly of limestone, with a tangled skeleton of wooden supports buttressed here and there by iron bands. The stone walls are etched by wind, rain, and grime. While this pitted surface might seem to make for a relatively easy climb,

the fact that so many of the stones are loose makes such a stunt dangerous—a DC 25 Climb check is required to scale the tower's outer walls. Inside, it's not much safer; the crumbling wooden steps are known as the "Terrible Stairs" to the locals. After the tenth unfortunate death when someone tried to climb these stairs several years ago, the city ordered the tower closed.

Yet the locals of Underbridge know better. They whisper stories that someone has moved into the clock tower. Many claim to have seen a serpentine shape slithering out of the gap near the roof, slinking through the night sky into regions unknown, while others tell of a shadowy bulk twice the size of a human sometimes seen lurking in the darkness at the clock's base. No one has dared enter the tower to confirm these rumors, yet most who live in Underbridge do not doubt their veracity.

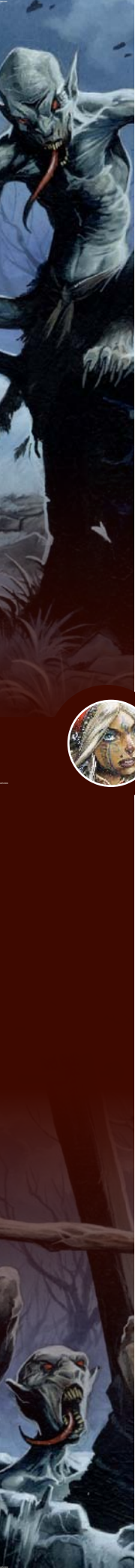
The Shadow Clock is currently inhabited by Xanesha, three charmed faceless stalkers, and a self-aware flesh golem known as the Scarecrow. Each section on the map is 20 feet higher than the previous one.

E1 THE SCARECROW'S LAIR (CR 7)



The air inside the clock tower is dusty and dry. Swaths of rubble and mounds of plaster lie in heaps on the stone floor, particularly in the southwest corner. A single wagon sits to the northeast, and six partially collapsed offices line the northern and eastern walls, their doors hanging askew and their ceilings caved in. A wooden staircase winds up into the cavernous space above. High overhead, four immense bronze bells hang from sturdy crossbeams.

The collapsed rooms were once used as barracks, workshops, and storerooms, but nothing of value remains here now. A DC 15 Survival check reveals that, despite the place's general appearance of ruin, a fair amount of foot traffic has been through the area—the floor bears several Medium humanoid footprints and a pair of enormous misshapen prints that defy easy





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MAP SIX: THE SHADOW CLOCK



classification. This second pair of prints has been left by the room's guardian.

CREATURE: A thing of horror, a monstrosity created decades ago by none other than Vorel Foxglove (one of many favors he performed for the Brothers of the Seven before his unfortunate end), dwells in this area—a being known only as the Scarecrow. This misshapen monster is a thing from a child's nightmares—a flesh golem who, through an accident of magic, gained sentience many decades ago when its elemental spirit went berserk. A jumbled mass of body parts incorporating as much cow and horse as man, the Scarecrow's considerable girth is topped by an idiot head that leers and drools like a grotesque baby. Its face is cruelly stitched, the lips sewn partially together. It is dressed in straw and dung-covered rags that give off the sickly sweet smell of decay. A trio of what appear to be carved pumpkins hang from cords on the Scarecrow's belt, but a second glance reveals these to be horribly bloated human heads with a sick yellow tinge. The Skinsaw Cultists often used the Scarecrow to do minor dirty work in the city, terrifying the local slum populace with appearances every so often and letting the creature dwell in area D2 of their sawmill. When Xanesha learned about the golem from Ironbriar, she had him bring it before her and quickly added it to her collection of minions. Although the Scarecrow is immune to *charm monster* and other methods of magical manipulation thanks to its immunity to magic, it readily agreed to work for Xanesha simply because she offered it a larger place to lurk—it much prefers its new home here to the cramped quarters back in the sawmill.

When at rest here in the clock tower, the Scarecrow bides its time lurking in the northeast corner of the room, the *cloak of elvenkind* it wears increasing its ability to remain unseen. If it notices intruders, it remains motionless and hidden for several rounds before moving to attack once any of the PCs comes more than halfway into the room or once most of the group has moved along upstairs.

SCARECROW	XP 3,200	CR 7	HP 79
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Awakened flesh golem (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 160, Classic Horrors Revisited 12*)

CE Large construct

Init -1; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Perception +9

DEFENSE

AC 20, touch 8, flat-footed 20 (-1 Dex, +12 natural, -1 size)

hp 79 (9d10+30)

Fort +3, **Ref** +2, **Will** +3

DR 5/adamantine; **Immune** construct traits, magic

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee +1 *scythe* +13/+8 (2d6+8/×4) or

2 slams +13 (2d8+5)

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

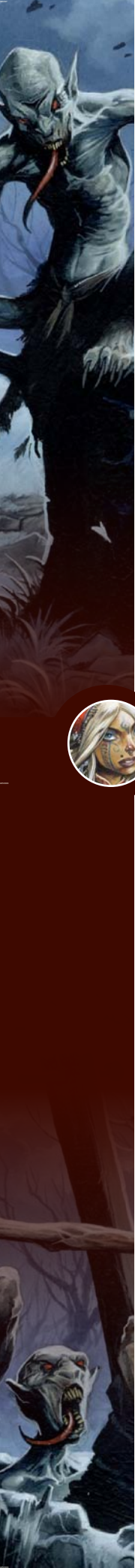
Special Attacks berserk (5% chance)

TACTICS

During Combat The Scarecrow does not pursue foes up the stairs, but it does chase after anyone who tries to escape into the alleys of Underbridge.

Morale Although a construct and loyal to the cult, the Scarecrow values its life as well. If brought below 20 hit points, it tries to





escape into the ocean, where it remains for days until it feels brave enough to emerge and seek out someone it can bully into repairing its damage.

STATISTICS

Str 20, **Dex** 9, **Con** —, **Int** 12, **Wis** 11, **Cha** 10

Base Atk +9; **CMB** +15; **CMD** 24

Feats Martial Weapon Proficiency, Power Attack, Skill Focus (Stealth), Vital Strike, Weapon Focus (scythe)

Skills Climb +14, Perception +9, Stealth +12

Languages Common, Infernal

Other Gear +1 scythe, cloak of elvenkind

TREASURE: A DC 20 Perception check made while searching the mound of debris in the southwest corner uncovers a moldy leather sack containing 125 gp, 309 sp, a tarnished silver ring worth 75 gp, and a silver mirror worth 50 gp.

DEVELOPMENT: The Scarecrow is Xanesha's primary thug—if the PCs take their time in finding her, you can have her take matters into her own hands by sending the Scarecrow out to attack them. In such a case, the Scarecrow lurks in an alleyway near their inn or wherever the PCs are staying in town, then lumbers up to attack the first lone PC it sees—the monster is inhumanly patient, and can wait for days before making its move.

E2 THE TERRIBLE STAIR (CR 4)



The inner wall of this vast space is traversed by a winding wooden stairway supported by an intricate network of wooden beams but lacking, at many stretches, a handrail or other enclosure. In certain places, two or even three stairs at a time are partially missing or gone altogether.

This stairwell looks treacherous—and it most certainly is. The rotting wood can support no more than one Medium creature in any pair of adjacent squares. If the wood is overloaded, it creaks and sways alarmingly for 1d4+1 rounds. If at the end of this time the section is still overloaded, it cracks and falls away, dropping anyone on that section into area E1 below. Anyone in a crumbling section can grab onto nearby remaining stairs with a DC 15 Reflex save, but otherwise takes the appropriate falling damage. The Scarecrow never climbs the stairs and Xanesha navigates the tower by climbing down its exterior under the cover of night, leaving only the faceless stalkers to use the stairs with any frequency—and they're always careful to stay at least 10 feet away from each other.

TRAP: If the faceless stalkers in area E3 above notice the PCs, they wait until the party is halfway up the stairs before they make their move by cutting several intentionally weakened ropes that support the massive bells above.

Once the ropes are cut, the southeasternmost bell gives way, causing the immense bronze bell to ring for the first time in years as it swings down and then tears free with a tremendous crash. The bell tumbles and smashes along the walls, tearing through the section of stairs just below it (and leaving a 10-foot-wide gap) before crashing its way down into area E1 below. Along the way, it has a chance of striking 1d4 of the characters—randomly determine which ones have a chance of being struck. Any character who didn't hear the ropes and timbers snap is considered flat-footed against the bell's attack.

Note that this trap can only be disabled from area E3; if the characters approach from below, they likely won't have a chance to prevent this dangerous event from being triggered.

FALLING BELL	XP	CR
	1,200	4

Type mechanical; **Perception** DC 16; **Disable Device** DC 20

EFFECTS

Trigger manual; **Reset** repair

Effect Falling bronze bell, targets 1d4 characters in area E1 or E2, Atk +15 (6d6 bludgeoning damage). The bell breaks stairs in a 10-foot-long swath wherever it hits a PC. A character damaged by the bell falls into area E1, taking the appropriate falling damage, unless he succeeds at a DC 15 Reflex save to cling to the stairs.

E3 THE BELLS (CR 7)



Four immense bronze bells hang from timbers here, affixed by rusting lengths of chain and thick ropes. Above the bells are massive gears and clockworks, although they seem both rusted and scavenged—many of the smaller components are missing entirely. The rickety wooden stairs wind up and around them but don't quite reach the ceiling above, coming to an end at an opening in the wall. Here, the stairs continue up the exterior of the tower to a room that must lie just beyond the ceiling directly above the bells.

The rickety stairs lead up and over themselves out through the hole in the wall to area E4 above.

CREATURES: The three charmed faceless stalkers that guard the Terrible Stair spend most of their time waiting patiently here for intruders to attack. Their first gambit is to drop a bell on intruders; they haven't prepared any of the other bells for such an assault, and once they drop the first one, they lurk here, waiting to attack anyone who progresses farther up the stairs.

FACELESS STALKERS (3)	XP	CR	HP
	1,200 each	4	42 each

(Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 2 122)





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E4 CLOCK TOWER ROOKERY



A timber cabinet with a mesh door sits against the southern wall of this room, while a boarded-up door stands in the wall to the east.

The cabinet contains a single black messenger raven (plus any additional ravens that the PCs might have released from area **D8**). Xanesha uses these ravens to send messages to Ironbriar on the few occasions she feels the need to do so.

E5 CLOCKWORKS



This large and cluttered room is filled with immense gears and clockworks. Most of them appear to have rusted into place.

Whereas the stairwell leading up the inner walls of the clock tower is quite rickety, the wooden floor of this chamber is solid. The clockworks themselves have long since fallen into ruin—it would take many months of repair work by gifted tinkers to rebuild and restore the clock. Although the room looks sinister and dangerous with all its gears, there's nothing to be found here.

E6 THE ANGEL (CR 9)



The smoky, filthy rooftops of Underbridge sprawl below this dizzying perch. The conical roof supports an onyx statue of an angel. Towering like a god, her weathered features are caked with grime, making her seem almost demonic in countenance. At the far end of the hollow space under the roof, in the angel's shadow, is a nest of cushions, silk sheets, and a line of several small chests.

This space is enclosed within the partially open shell of the tower's roof—cunningly engineered supports in the sloping roof itself support the statue 15 feet above the center of this room.

CREATURE: Xanesha has claimed this area as her lair, both for the unparalleled view of Magnimar's poorest district and for the isolation afforded by its remote location. She comes and goes via climbing down the tower's exterior (she automatically makes the DC 25 Climb check to do so), usually making sure to become invisible first to prevent curious eyes from noticing her. She often spends her nights in other parts of the city, in her human guise and in the arms of charmed lovers who strike her fancy during her walks among the enemy. Many of these "lovers" pine for her company for weeks or months after she abandons them, but they are the lucky ones who aren't murdered and brought back here to serve as food. In many ways, Xanesha is a predator living hidden among her prey. She has grown fond of her position in Magnimar over the years and is content to leave the actual work of harvesting greedy souls to the Skinsaw Cult. Recently, she's been contacted with recurring frequency by Mokmurian or his agents—she realizes the time of Karzoug's return is close at hand and has decided to spur on the cult in its work. Recruiting Aldern was actually Ironbriar's idea, but Xanesha prefers to think of it as her own.

Although powerful, Xanesha is also careful. When the PCs invade her home, she likely notices soon (if not from the sound of a fight against the lumbering Scarecrow, then certainly as a result of a falling bell). She prepares as detailed in her Tactics section, but does not seek out the PCs out—instead, she watches and waits for them to come to her. If her minions can take care of the problem, all the better, but at least this way she'll have an idea of the PCs' tactics if they do survive long enough to confront her.



XANESHA



My sister—

I trust your little band of murderers is doing well, gathering the greedy souls for our Lord's rise? Has Magnimar proven to be as sinful as you had hoped? It may interest you to know that my plan to nurture greed here in this backwater has blossomed—the quality of greed in a soul is so much more refined when it is given the proper care. Are you still simply carving the Sihedron on them as they expire? How crude! My method of marking is so much more elegant. In any event, I'm sure that your plans for harvesting greed where and when you can find it "in the wild" are progressing well enough—I just hope that your raw, ungrouped, and likely inferior victims don't interact poorly when mixed with the purity of my own subjects. If you tire of your little project there, know that you're always welcome to come to Turtleback Ferry and serve as my assistant, little sister! Fort Rannick should be in our control by the time you receive this letter, in any event, so there'll be plenty of room for you if you wish to take me up on my generous offer.

Oh! Before I forget! Have you managed to harvest that lord-mayor yet? By all accounts, he might just be the cream of the crop in Magnimar—his soul might even rival several from my hand-grown harvest!



XANESHA

XP	CR	HP
6,400	9	133

Female lamia matriarch rogue 1 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 2* 175)
CE Large monstrous humanoid

Init +7; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Perception +2

DEFENSE

AC 25, touch 16, flat-footed 18 (+1 armor, +7 Dex, +8 natural, -1 size)

hp 133 (13 HD; 12d10+1d8+63)

Fort +8, **Ref** +17, **Will** +10; +2 vs. poison

Immune mind-affecting effects; **SR** 19

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft., climb 40 ft., swim 40 ft.

Melee *Impaler of Thorns* +17/+12/+7 (1d8+8/19-20/x3) or touch +11 (1d4 Wisdom drain)

Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft. (10 ft. with *Impaler of Thorns*)

Special Attacks Wisdom drain, sneak attack +1d6

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 12th; concentration +19)

At will—*charm monster* (DC 21), *ventriloquism* (DC 18)

3/day—*deep slumber* (DC 20), *dream*, *major image* (DC 20), *mirror image*, *suggestion* (DC 20)

Spells Known (CL 6th; concentration +13)

3rd (5/day)—*cure serious wounds*

2nd (7/day)—*invisibility*, *scorching ray*

1st (8/day)—*cure light wounds*, *feather fall*, *magic missile*, *sanctuary* (DC 18)

0 (at will)—*acid splash*, *dancing lights*, *detect magic*, *ghost sound* (DC 17), *mage hand*, *mending*, *prestidigitation*

TACTICS

Before Combat If she realizes the PCs are near (as is the case if the faceless stalkers drop a bell), Xaneshia casts *invisibility*

and *mirror image* on herself. She also activates her *Sihedron medallion's* false life ability.

During Combat Xaneshia uses *major image* to make an illusory flying demon appear in a cloud of smoke that then begins to circle the top of the tower. She then moves to make a sneak attack on the nearest PC. After this attack, she prefers to fight in melee, saving her *medusa mask* to temporarily petrify any particularly dangerous foe. If she is reduced to fewer than 60 hit points, she casts *cure serious wounds* on herself.

Morale If she's reduced to 20 hit points or fewer, Xaneshia attempts to flee Magnimar, abandoning her plot and the scroll hidden in her nest. Simply slithering off the side of the tower and using *feather fall* to descend to the ground below is her easiest method of escape. If she escapes, she cuts ties with her kin and Mokmurian, afraid of the punishment for failure. She grows obsessed with the PCs, however, seeing their capture as the only way she can redeem herself to Mokmurian—in this case, she becomes a recurring villain who might ally with any number of foes the PCs find themselves up against in the next adventure—although she specifically tries to avoid any situation that would reveal her failure to her sister Lucrecia.

STATISTICS

Str 20, **Dex** 25, **Con** 19, **Int** 18, **Wis** 14, **Cha** 25

Base Atk +12; **CMB** +18; **CMD** 35 (can't be tripped)

Feats Combat Casting, Combat Reflexes, Extend Spell, Improved Critical (spear), Power Attack, Silent Spell, Vital Strike

Skills Acrobatics +23 (+27 when jumping), Bluff +23, Climb +29, Diplomacy +14, Knowledge (arcana) +17, Knowledge (local) +20, Sense Motive +18, Spellcraft +17, Swim +29





Languages Abyssal, Common, Draconic, Thassilonian
SQ change shape (fixed Medium humanoid form, *alter self*),
 trapfinding +1, undersized weapons
Other Gear *Impaler of Thorns, medusa mask, Sihedron
 medallion, snakeskin tunic, keys to locked chests*

TREASURE: The majority of the treasure Xanasha keeps is in the form of offerings and gifts from the Skinsaw cultists. Xanasha keeps all of these treasures spread between seven locked chests (these chests can be opened with the keys she carries, or with DC 30 Disable Device checks) set neatly in a row against the far wall. The first five chests each contain coins, kept in small leather pouches in denominations of 100 coins per pouch. In all, there is 33,000 cp, 8,100 sp, 900 gp, and 100 pp spread throughout these first several chests. The sixth chest contains 4,200 gp of various bits of jewelry and small pouches of gemstones. The seventh chest contains four potions of *cure moderate wounds*, a +2 *Small kukri*, a *ring of jumping*, and a *golembane scarab*—she’s keeping this last item handy just in case the Scarecrow needs to be punished.

But the greatest treasure to be found here is not hidden among the chests. A DC 15 Perception check is all that’s needed to notice a crumpled-up wad of parchment in the southwest corner of the room. Although unsigned, this is a letter from Xanasha’s sister Lucrecia—a missive filled with taunts intended to mock and frustrate Xanasha—but that can also serve as an incredible source of information for the PCs. The letter is reproduced on the previous page as Handout 2–7.

STORY AWARD: If the PCs recover the list of “Sihedron Sacrifices” and reveal Xanasha’s defeated plot to the lord-mayor, award them 4,800 XP.

CONCLUDING THE CHAPTER

With Xanasha’s defeat, the murders that have plagued Magnimar and Sandpoint cease. If the lord-mayor Grobaras discovers that the murderers were planning his assassination, he faints. When he recovers, he invites the PCs to attend a feast at his home, Defiant’s Garden. Grobaras is hardly a scion of virtue, but he is nonetheless a powerful man, and in reward for defeating the murderers he grants each PC 6,000 gp. In addition, the PCs have likely gathered a large number of evil magic items—the masks worn by the cultists. Any official church in Magnimar will gladly pay bounties for these evil magic items equal to half their value—in this manner, PCs can effectively sell off these valuable items and get rewarded while at the same time being assured that they will not fall back into the wrong hands.

The PCs have, at this point, braved a haunted house, defeated a dangerous cult, and saved the leader of Magnimar, yet they should feel yet more is brewing behind the scenes. The recurrence of the Sihedron Rune should trouble them as well. Unfortunately, even in Magnimar, little can be learned about Thassilon—a fact that has frustrated many scholars who have tried to decipher the mysteries of Varisia’s ancient ruins. But whether the PCs realize it or not, the time draws near when they will learn all they need to know about Varisia’s ancient past.