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SINS OF THE SAVIORS

BY STEPHEN S. GREER



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CHAPTER BACKGROUND

HIDDEN IN A REMOTE MOUNTAIN, ITS DOORSTEP DOUBLING AS A DRAGON'S LAIR, AN ANCIENT AND MYSTERIOUS DUNGEON CALLED RUNEFORGE LIES HIDDEN. DURING THE HEIGHT OF THASSILON, RUNEFORGE SERVED AS A PLACE FOR THE EMPIRE'S MOST CREATIVE AND GIFTED WIZARDS TO COME TOGETHER AND SHARE KNOWLEDGE. WITH THE EMPIRE'S CATAclysmic FALL, RUNEFORGE WAS CUT OFF FROM THE WORLD. FOR TEN THOUSAND YEARS, IT REMAINED ISOLATED WITHIN A POCKET OF ITS OWN REALITY, AND IN THAT TIME, STRANGE AND SINISTER THINGS HAVE GROWN WITHIN ITS ARCAINE HALLS. NOW, WITH KARZOUg'S IMMINENT RETURN, THE SECRETS OF RUNEFORGE ARE ABOUT TO RETURN TO THE WORLD.



That Thassilon ushered in an age of wonder is evident in the monuments that survived the passage of thousands of years, yet these monuments were but the creations of the slaves of this empire. Even mightier were the runelords' works of magic—the transmutation of flesh into gold, the conjuration of creatures akin to mountains, and the transformation of the landscape of Golarion itself according to their whims being but samples of their might. Yet on their own, the seven runelords did not command every aspect of magic. Their focused studies granted them great power in their chosen areas of specialization, but at the cost of two opposing schools of magical thought. No one runelord could grasp the entirety of magic, and thus their works were limited by their own inadequacies.

In response to this failing, the runelords agreed to the construction of a shared laboratory in a region held neutral by their seven nations. They named this place Runeforge, and here, practitioners of each of their seven specialties could work in tandem with one another, with little fear of sabotage, mockery, or interference, in an environment untainted by rivalries and grudges. It was intended to be a place of pure magic, where masters of each Thassilonian specialty could work and confer and create. The seven runelords bound themselves by edict that they themselves would never directly interfere with or even enter Runeforge, for fear that their presence would hamper the work being performed there. Each runelord chose from among his servants those who best represented his desires and goals, then sealed those servants in Runeforge using their own magic. Runeforge provided nourishment, comfort, and shelter for those within—servitude in Runeforge was a great honor, and a post held for life. Once a season, the inhabitants convened in the central chamber, around a well of power at the heart of the Sihedron Rune, and there they reported to their runelords the natures of their discoveries and advancements in magic. The well

could even function as a portal, allowing the transport of discoveries and creations to their masters in the seven distant capitals of Thassilon.

The work done in Runeforge was anything but safe, and often the wizards within its walls succumbed to madness or were slain by errors in judgment or experiments gone tragically awry. Although there was no shortage of replacements, the runelords had little interest in allowing just anyone into the complex. Only those of keen wit and quick mind could learn the ritual of opening required to enter Runeforge—a restriction that ensured that only the most gifted wizards were chosen for the honor.

Within months of the arcane laboratory's foundation, the runelords were hard at work, searching secretly for ways to influence Runeforge without revealing their interests to each other. Unfortunately for them, they had been too thorough in their initial magic, for fear that the other runelords would do precisely the same thing. For many decades, then, Runeforge functioned as intended: neutral ground for masters of Thassilonian magic to learn and study.

Some of the final works to come out of Runeforge were various methods of hibernation—the runelords knew the end was nigh and tasked their Runeforge factions with devising methods of surviving even the greatest catastrophes. Each faction came up with a different solution, and when Thassilon did finally collapse, Runeforge's discoveries served the runelords well. As they went into hibernation, Runeforge carried on—its inhabitants had already divorced themselves from the world to the extent that even the fall of their homeland barely fazed them. They carried on their work while chaos reigned outside. As the years wore into centuries, some of the groups in Runeforge died out, while others grew more powerful. And as those centuries stretched into millennia, the complex's denizens succumbed to madness, dementia, and depression. With the end of Thassilon, no new blood came into Runeforge, and nothing came out.





Today, the remaining denizens of Runeforge are as much its prisoners as its caretakers—the once-grand laboratory is now little more than an asylum. Those few who have survived do so by embracing the darker side of magic, while others gave up, leaving their ageless minions to carry on the work. Vital clues preserved in the notes and workings of the complex hint at not only how each of the runelords planned on surviving the fall of Thassilon, but also how to undo the magic that has preserved them for the past 10,000 years.

CHAPTER SUMMARY

When a mysterious sinkhole appears in Sandpoint, the PCs investigate and find deeper Thassilonian ruins below their hometown—ruins that contain clues to the location of Runeforge, the site of many Thassilonian discoveries and inventions, including the various methods the runelords used to enter hibernation as their empire collapsed. Unfortunately, these ruins are also the lair of an ancient, insane Lamashtan cultist known as the Scribbler. By interpreting clues within the Scribbler's demented rhymes, the PCs can learn the location of the ancient dungeon known as Runeforge.

Armed with this knowledge, the PCs must travel north and enter Runeforge itself. Once inside, they find the place is still inhabited, tended by Thassilonian wizards who have carried on the traditions of their masters for thousands of years. By exploring Runeforge, the PCs can uncover the method by which Karzoug intends to return to the world of the living—and in so doing, find the secret to his defeat.

Runeforge consists of seven different wings, each replete with its own denizens, traps, strange magics, and treasures. Furthermore, numerous hints and clues about the nature of their eventual foe, Karzoug, can be learned by exploring these wings. The PCs' primary goal here should be the gathering of two components they can use in the dungeon's central chamber to forge *dominant weapons* to help them defeat Karzoug (items found in the Iron Cages of Lust and in the Shimmering Veils of Pride, two of Runeforge's more dangerous wings). Wise parties, however, will explore the entire dungeon, for the experience and treasures waiting to be claimed within will aid them in *Rise of the Runelords'* final chapter as surely as the dominant weapons themselves.

ADVANCEMENT TRACK

13TH LEVEL: The PCs should be 13th level when they begin this chapter.

14TH LEVEL: The PCs should reach 14th level after defeating the white dragon Arkhryst.

15TH LEVEL: The PCs should reach 15th level by the time they begin exploring the sixth wing of Runeforge (since the exact order in which they explore the wings of this dungeon is fluid, they may hit 15th level earlier if they manage to explore and survive the more dangerous wings of Runeforge earlier than expected).

CONCLUDING THE ADVENTURE: The PCs should be well into 15th level by the time they finish this chapter.



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PART ONE: THE SCRIBBLER'S RHYME

CONSIDERING ALL THAT HAS HAPPENED—THE BLOODSHED, THE LIVES LOST, AND THE MILES UPON MILES OF VARISIAN SOIL JOURNEYED ACROSS TO STOP THE MACHINATIONS AND MINIONS OF AN ANCIENT TYRANT—IT MIGHT SEEM IRONIC THAT THE KEY TO DEFEATING THE RISE OF RUNELORD KARZOUG HAS LAIN DORMANT BELOW SANDPOINT THE WHOLE TIME. YET IN THE RUINED TEMPLE OF LAMASHTU ONCE HIDDEN BELOW SANDPOINT LIES A MANIACAL MIND WHO KNOWS THE ROUTE TO THE RUNEFORGE—A HIDDEN ARCANE LABORATORY WHOSE WEAPONS WILL BE INVALUABLE IN DEFEATING KARZOUG.



Sandpoint has been through a lot, including a goblin raid, slaughter at the local Glassworks, several grisly murders, and most recently a full-blown assault by giants and a dragon. It's certainly a testament to the townsfolk's resilience that they have carried on as hardily as they have. Of course, they've had protectors at hand to help them through these times of peril, and when trouble stirs anew in the region, it's to these protectors the good folk of Sandpoint turn.

This new development is something altogether more subtle and disturbing than invasions by goblins or giants. Had this development come before the events of Goblin Day (as it has come to be called), it's likely it would have been ignored. In light of all the recent troubles, though, several of Sandpoint's leaders—in particular a worried Father Zantus—fear that it portends something dire.

This new development began after the giants raided Sandpoint and were repulsed by the PCs. Several days after the PCs left town to take the fight to Jorgenfist, an earth tremor shook the Lost Coast. No stranger to earthquakes, the folk of Sandpoint weathered the minor temblor with ease, but then, at the earthquake's climax, a sinkhole suddenly yawned in the middle of Tower Street, just north of the Garrison. A few guards were injured and the sinkhole swallowed a chunk of the Garrison's north wall, but fortunately, the cells in the north side were all vacant. It wasn't the sudden sinkhole that alarmed the leaders of Sandpoint, though. What worries them are the sounds that come from the pit's rubble-choked depths every night. After a group of guards sent into the sinkhole's depths vanished, Sheriff Hemlock roped off the pit's perimeter, established sentries, and forbade anyone else from entering the hole. This would be a job for folk better equipped to deal with danger—folk like the PCs.

The sinkhole appears at about the time the PCs defeat Mokmurian, for with this final decisive blow, Karzoug's *runewell* (already gorged on the greedy souls of all the giants the PCs slew on their journey through Jorgenfist) achieved a new level of potency. The well is now charged

enough that Karzoug can begin the final stages of his waking. Just as the initial activation of the *runewell* several years ago caused ripples in other *runewells* scattered throughout Varisia, this one produced a much stronger burst of magical power. Even the *minor runewell* below Sandpoint (area B13 of the Catacombs of Wrath; see page 219) erupted with power, and it was this eruption that caused the destruction of the rock above and the eventual sinkhole in Sandpoint.

The eruption did not go unnoticed by the gods, either. When the sudden rush of magic surged through a site once sacred to her worship, Lamashtu reacted instantly. From her lair in the Abyss, she was able to use the rush of energy as a beacon for her own powers—and when she cast her gaze over the region, she saw the unquiet spirit of one of her greatest (and most ancient) minions—the Thassilonian thaumaturge Xaliasa, known in his final days as the Scribbler. As Lamashtu sensed his troubled spirit haunting the region, the magical eruption began to abate, but before the link vanished, Lamashtu infused the Scribbler with her divine grace. She resurrected him as a divine guardian of her ancient temple, charging the Scribbler not only with its protection, but also with its reawakening.

The Scribbler rose from a pool of unholy water in an ancient shrine to Lamashtu deeper still than the Catacombs of Wrath. Although his resurrection granted him new powers, as a divine guardian he was unable to travel far from the site of his rebirth. He has therefore busied himself with alternative methods of sanctifying the ancient temple, calling forth from Lamashtu's court terrible monsters to serve as the seeds of a new cult.

Of course, the people of Sandpoint know none of this, yet—they know only that a sinkhole has consumed a portion of town, and that the noises coming from that pit indicate something sinister lurks deep within. If the PCs don't return to Sandpoint shortly after their triumph at Jorgenfist, they are contacted by a representative of the town as quickly as possible. If it comes to it, Father Zantus scrapes together enough money to pay for a *sending* spell to invite them back to town.



It's likely, however, that the PCs head back to Sandpoint soon enough on their own, particularly if they found the notes in Mokmurian's lair that spoke of his concern about the chambers below Sandpoint housing a "traitor to Runelord Karzoug." This traitor is, of course, the Scribbler, and while the PCs might hope to find in him an ally against Karzoug (certainly the Scribbler possesses information key to the PCs' success against the runelord), they'll find that in this case, the enemy of their enemy is not necessarily their friend.

MEETING WITH FATHER ZANTUS

Whatever the cause of the PCs' return to Sandpoint, they are greeted by throngs of excited hero-worshippers and grateful citizens. The talk of the town is the Tower Street Sinkhole, although the PCs' return eclipses some of that—most of the citizens assume the PCs have returned to investigate the sinkhole, in any event. Once the initial hubbub of the heroes' welcome wears off, the PCs are approached by a bashful-looking acolyte of Desna who gives them a message: Father Zantus wishes to speak to them about the sinkhole as soon as possible at the Sandpoint Cathedral.

Both Sheriff Hemlock and Mayor Deverin are there waiting for the PCs at the cathedral with Zantus. They ask for a quick recounting of the PCs' adventures in Jorgenfist if they haven't learned of them already, listening wide-eyed to tales of giants, dire bears, headless ogres, and horrors from beyond time itself. Soon enough, Father Zantus clears his throat and speaks upon the matter at hand.



"Of course, we're all very pleased to hear of your successes. Sandpoint owes you a huge debt of thanks for ensuring its safety yet again. And while I'd like nothing better than to let you relax and enjoy a well-earned break from your adventures, you've doubtless heard about our newest problem. A few days ago, the ground collapsed just north of the Garrison, right in the middle of Tower Street. The north wall of the Garrison took some damage, and while fortunately no one was seriously hurt when the sinkhole appeared, that's not the case anymore. The guards Sheriff Hemlock sent into the pit to investigate never returned. That very night, we all heard something horrible down there: dogs howling—like no dogs I've heard before—and bloodcurdling screams. Sheriff's roped the sinkhole off, and so far nothing's come up out of it, but those sounds are growing every night. Whatever's trapped in there wants out, and by the sounds of it, whatever it is isn't too keen on emerging friendly."

The three look at the PCs with hope and expectation— if the PCs don't volunteer to explore the sinkhole and

deal with whatever's awakened in its depths, Mayor Deverin comes right out and asks them to. If the PCs have already set a precedent for asking for payment for saving Sandpoint, Deverin offers a reward of 2,000 gp to be paid to the PCs if they can quiet the howls and screams—a relatively paltry sum for high-level characters, but a fortune for the town of Sandpoint. With a DC 30 Diplomacy check, Deverin can be talked up to a reward as high as 5,000 gp, but if the PCs hold out for more, Sandpoint is likely to look to less expensive adventurers for protection.

BACK INTO THE CATACOMBS

The sinkhole itself stabilized at a width of 30 feet, reaching the diameter of the street and consuming a portion of the Garrison wall to the south—several basement jail cells hang open in the sloping southern wall of the sinkhole. The sinkhole is 15 feet deep—a successful DC 12 Perception check is required to see a narrow opening along its northwest side at the deepest point, which seems to be a tunnel leading underground. Clambering down the steep slopes of the sinkhole requires a successful DC 15 Climb check, unless the route from the exposed jail cells is used. That is the route the first group of guards took into the hole—it's only a DC 10 Climb check there.

Exploration of the tunnel accessed from the sinkhole's depths reveals a short flight of stairs down and a 5-foot-wide passageway beyond. The sinkhole's collapse caused most of area **B13** of the Catacombs of Wrath (see page 219) to cave in. All that remains is a narrow passage that runs along the northeastern wall. The double doors to area **B12** have fallen, allowing easy access to the rest of the catacombs beyond. Eventually, the PCs should reach the stairs at area **B10** of the Catacombs of Wrath—stairs that until recently were blocked with rubble, but have now been cleared by the efforts of the catacomb's new caretaker.

The strange and disturbing sounds that emanate from the sinkhole generally start an hour before midnight and persist for several hours before abating. The sounds consist primarily of eerie doglike howls that seem to echo a bit more than expected, but mixed in with these howls are periodic shrieks of a much more humanoid feel. These howls are mostly from the pack of unusual yeth hounds the Scribbler has called into this world to guard the shrine (using *planar ally* spells)—the more humanoid cries are the shrieks of the Scribbler himself. His screams seem to be nonsensical cries of rage and hatred, amplified by his supernatural fury and distorted by the distance so as to be unintelligible. The howls themselves can be identified as coming from yeth hounds with a successful DC 25 Knowledge (planes) check. As the howls must navigate some winding tunnels, the effects of the yeth hounds' bay only extends to about a 20-foot radius around the sinkhole's upper rim—see the Hound of Lamashtu stat block on page 246 for the effects of this supernatural baying.



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XALIASA'S STORY

Near the end of the Thassilonian Empire, a man named Xaliasa commanded one of Alaznist's Hellstorm Flumes—one of several defensive fortifications along the border between her empire and that of Karzoug. Xaliasa was given much freedom in how he ran his Hellstorm Flume, as long as he continued researching methods of producing and perfecting sinspawn for Alaznist's army and maintained the defensive line against invaders from Shalast to the east. Yet Xaliasa served another—he had succumbed to greed and, in secret, Karzoug bought his allegiance, transforming him into a double-agent of sorts. In his role as defender of the Hellstorm Flume, he also served Karzoug with regular reports on Alaznist's troop movements.

Further complicating Xaliasa's life was his devotion to a third master—Lamashtu herself. As his role as a double-agent grew more demanding, Xaliasa grew more distressed and more insane. His true loyalties increasingly lay with Lamashtu, and he foresaw a point in the near future when his treason between Alaznist and Karzoug would place him in great danger.

Xaliasa's answer was to use, in secret, his contacts with both runelords to discover the way to Runeforge, perhaps the only safe place where he could retreat if either runelord decided he was no longer of use. Discovering the secret to entering Runeforge was no easy task, but only a few days before the empire was destined to fail, Xaliasa made the discovery. When Thassilon collapsed and the world shook and the oceans swallowed Alaznist's empire, Xaliasa's plans for escape proved inadequate. He had planned for the wrath of one, perhaps two runelords, and was ill-prepared for the rage of an entire world. The supportive wards that protected all of Thassilon's monuments and attendant complexes from erosion and decay kept many of the chambers below the Hellstorm Flume intact, but only barely. Xaliasa had the misfortune to be in one of the rooms that collapsed—and with his death he took from the world one of the secret ways to enter Runeforge.

Ten thousand years later, Xaliasa's insane spirit awakened again with the surge of magical energies from the *minor runewell* near his lair. And now that Lamashtu has brought him back fully, the resurrected thaumaturge is eager to reestablish his rule in a world seemingly emptied of runelords. Only the fact that his life is now bound to this shrine has kept him from emerging into Sandpoint above to claim it for his own. Given a short amount of time, however, he can build enough minions to do that job for him.

In his new manifestation as a divine guardian, Xaliasa has become something more than human. Now closely attuned to Lamashtu herself, his mind has become even more warped and twisted. He no longer sees himself as an independent agent of Lamashtu, but instead as her incarnation. His voice speaks her will and his

hands scribe her laws and desires. Yet over the 10,000 years his soul has lain dormant, Xaliasa has fallen far behind on his patron's wishes. He now spends nearly all of his time recording the wisdom of Lamashtu on any surface available. Given his limited mobility and lack of empty pages, Xaliasa has turned to the walls of his shrine, decorating them with countless scriptures and prayers and invocations to the Mother of Monsters. He is transforming her shrine into her holy text, and when he has completed this task, he will turn his attention to the world above.

In his new incarnation, he has become the Scribbler.

THE SCRIBBLER (CR 14)

The Scribbler's ability to use *dimension door* at will in the shrine gives him incredible mobility—as a result, he is not simply encountered in one room in the dungeon, but in many. The Scribbler uses the same hit-and-run tactics against the PCs as he used on the guards Sheriff Hemlock sent into the shrine, but against the party he quickly realizes he'll need more than just a few seconds of combat to defeat them.

At the same time, the Scribbler knows the world above has moved on. He desperately wants to “catch up” so he can more ably direct his minions into the world. He knows that knowledge is power. To that end, he attempts to extract information about the world above from the PCs before attacking them. He becomes aware of their intrusion into his domain as soon as they pass through the secret door in area **A1**, and immediately contacts them. The Scribbler relies on *invisibility*, *nondetection*, *obscuring mist*, and natural darkness and shadows to remain hidden while he speaks to the PCs. Perhaps his greatest defense in this arena is *guards and wards*, which he uses daily to protect the shrine.

The Scribbler's questions should follow along these lines: “What happened to Thassilon?” “What nation has replaced it?” “Who rules the lands above today?” “Where is the seat of their power?” “What became of Runelord Karzoug and Runelord Alaznist?” “Who wields powerful magic today?” Keep asking questions along these lines—if the PCs seem resistant to answering them, or if they demand questions in return, the Scribbler willingly plays along. He answers what questions he can, proposing a one-for-one exchange of information. You can use the Scribbler to fill in the PCs on a lot of the background of Thassilon and Karzoug's role therein and to impress upon them just how powerful and evil the runelords were. The Scribbler obviously knows very little about what caused the fall of Thassilon, but if asked how the runelords can be defeated, he grows coy. He mentions Runeforge, calling it “a place of learning created by the runelords but grown beyond their control.” He admits it was the one place in Thassilon over which the runelords had no direct influence—the one place they could not





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visit, for fear of enraging the other six and causing an immense war. He postulates that a runelord's entrance into Runeforge might have prompted the event that brought Thassilon to an end. Certainly, if any secrets to defeating them existed in ancient Thassilon, those secrets would be hidden still within Runeforge's walls. The Scribbler is eager to brag about how he discovered the key to entering Runeforge, as well as its location, but this is one piece of information he's unwilling to directly share with the PCs. He might, however, note that he has hidden the map to Runeforge and the key to its door in the writings on the walls of this shrine. While this is true, the Scribbler tells the PCs this primarily to lure them deeper into the shrine, so when he feels that he has learned everything he can from them, he'll have an even greater advantage in combat.

Once the Scribbler has satisfied his need for information or the PCs prove unhelpful, he turns his attention to the second stage of his plan—killing them, harvesting their magic and gear, and turning their bodies into undead minions. He announces this shift by declaring, "The time for talk has come to an end, my sucklings!" He prefers to strike at the PCs in area A6, as this room provides him and his minions the most space for moving around in combat, but he certainly won't limit himself to just there. In each of the following rooms, brief notes on the Scribbler's battle tactics (as well as the effects of his *guards and wards*) are given. Since he can be encountered anywhere in the dungeon, his stat block is given below.

1/day—*arcane lock, augury, clairaudience/clairvoyance, commune, dismissal, forbiddance, guards and wards, hold portal*

Domain Spell-Like Abilities (CL 12th; concentration +20)

At will—*master's illusion* (12 rounds/day)

11/day—*copycat* (12 rounds), *strength surge* (+6)

Spells Prepared (CL 12th; concentration +20)

6th—*heal*, quickened *spiritual weapon, stoneskin⁰, summon monster VI*

5th—quickened *divine favor*, extended *greater magic weapon, righteous might⁰*, quickened *shield of faith, spell resistance*

4th—*confusion⁰* (DC 22), *cure critical wounds, divine power, freedom of movement, extended magic vestment, poison* (DC 22)

3rd—*blindness/deafness* (DC 21), *cure serious wounds* (2), *dispel magic, nondetection⁰, protection from energy, summon monster III*



THE SCRIBBLER

XP	CR	HP
38,400	14	150

Male divine guardian Azlanti human cleric of Lamashtu 12/ fighter 2 (*Advanced Bestiary* 60)

CE Medium humanoid (chaotic, evil, human)

Init +7; **Senses** Perception +20

DEFENSE

AC 27, touch 18, flat-footed 23 (+9 armor, +4 deflection, +3 Dex, +1 dodge)

hp 150 (14 HD; 12d8+2d10+82); fast healing 5

Fort +15, **Ref** +7, **Will** +18; +1 vs. fear

Defensive Abilities ability healing, bravery +1, freedom of movement; **DR** 10/adamantine; **Immune** disease, mind-affecting effects, poison; **SR** 26

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft. (60 ft. base)

Melee *fanged falchion* +19/+14/+9 (2d4+9/15-20)

Ranged +1 *cold iron returning dagger* +15/+10/+5 (1d4+5/19-20)

Special Attacks channel negative energy 5/day (DC 18, 6d6), might of the gods (+12, 12 rounds/day)

Divine Guardian Spell-Like Abilities (CL 14th; concentration +16)

At will—*dimension door* (limited to Lamashtu's shrine)

3/day—*alarm, knock*

THE SCRIBBLER

2nd—*bear's endurance*, *bull's strength*, *cure moderate wounds* (2), *gentle repose*, *hold person* (DC 20), *invisibility*^P
 1st—*command* (DC 19), *cure light wounds* (2), *disguise self*^P
 (DC 19), *obscuring mist*, *protection from good*, *sanctuary*
 (DC 19)
 0 (at will)—*bleed* (DC 18), *light*, *guidance*, *read magic*
D Domain spell; **Domains** Strength, Trickery

TACTICS

Before Combat Every day, the Scribbler wards the complex by casting *alarm* and *guards and wards*. He also casts *nondetection*, *extended magic vestment*, and *extended greater magic weapon* every day after finishing his daily prayers to Lamashtu. If he has time just before combat begins, he casts *stoneskin*, *spell resistance*, *freedom of movement*, *bull's strength*, and *bear's endurance*.

During Combat The Scribbler starts combat by casting *summon monster VI* to summon 1d3 babaus. While these summoned monsters engage his foes, he casts *righteous might* and quickened *divine favor*. He then enters combat, casting a quickened *spiritual weapon* on that round to attack a spellcaster or healer.

Morale The Scribbler uses *dimension door* to retreat to the hallway outside of area **A10** if brought below 10 hit points, then hides inside his lair and heals his wounds before returning to continue a fight with intruders. If confronted in area **A10**, he fights to the death.

STATISTICS

Str 18, **Dex** 16, **Con** 19, **Int** 12, **Wis** 26, **Cha** 14

Base Atk +11; **CMB** +15; **CMD** 33

Feats Craft Magic Arms and Armor, Dodge, Extend Spell, Improved Critical (falchion), Iron Will, Power Attack, Quicken Spell, Skill Focus (Bluff), Toughness, Weapon Focus (falchion)

Skills Bluff +15, Intimidate +12, Knowledge (arcana, planes, religion) +11, Perception +20, Perform (oratory) +9, Sense Motive +13, Spellcraft +11

Languages Abyssal, Thassilonian

SQ blessed life, sacred site

Gear +1 *breastplate*, *fanged falchion*, +1 *cold iron returning dagger*, *headband of inspired wisdom* +2, 750 gp in diamond dust

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Ability Healing (Ex) The Scribbler heals 1 point of ability damage per round in each damaged ability score.

Blessed Life (Ex) The Scribbler does not age or breathe and does not require food, drink, or sleep.

Divine Swiftmess (Ex) The Scribbler gains a +4 bonus on initiative checks and his base speed is 60 feet (or 40 feet when wearing his +1 *breastplate*).

Sacred Site (Ex) The Scribbler is bound to the shrine of Lamashtu (areas **A1–A10**), and has been charged by the goddess of nightmares herself with keeping the site sacred and free from intruders and heretics. Should the Scribbler ever move beyond these areas, he loses the divine guardian template and his spellcasting ability until he atones and reenters the site within 1 week. Otherwise, he loses the template permanently and takes 6d6 points of Constitution drain as his body adjusts to the loss.

LAMASHTU'S SHRINE

The shrine itself has the same architectural style as the Catacombs of Wrath above, since these chambers were engineered and constructed by the same sources. Ceiling height averages 8 feet in hallways and 15 feet in chambers. There is no illumination in the shrine itself (with the exception of area **A6**), as the Scribbler relies on light spells and his own memory of the place to get around, and all of his minions can see in the dark. Time has not been kind to many chambers of the shrine, and in several areas rubble has blocked off passageways or parts of rooms. What lies past these collapsed chambers is left to the GM—there could be numerous other chambers farther in, deep below Sandpoint and awaiting discovery, but those chambers are beyond the scope of this book.

The Scribbler maintains silent *alarms* at areas **A1**, **A6**, and **A9**, and has locked every door in the shrine with an *arcane lock* (with the exception of the secret door in area **A1**—he knows well that a magic aura on a secret door ironically makes it easier to discover if any intruders have the ability to use *detect magic*). He's avoided using *forbiddance* in his shrine, since that reduces his ability to use *dimension door* to move about the place, but he has placed an alarm in area **A10** to protect it from intrusion.

The entire shrine is protected by *guards and wards* at all times, warding the complex as follows:

CONFUSION: Every time a character comes to an intersection, there's a 50% chance he takes the route opposite from the one intended.

FOG: Thick fog fills all corridors, reducing vision (including darkvision) to 5 feet and providing all creatures with concealment.

LOST DOORS: All of the doors in the complex (with the exception of the secret door in area **A1**) are covered by *silent images* to make them appear to be plain walls. A creature that interacts with this image can attempt a DC 22 Will save to see through the illusion.

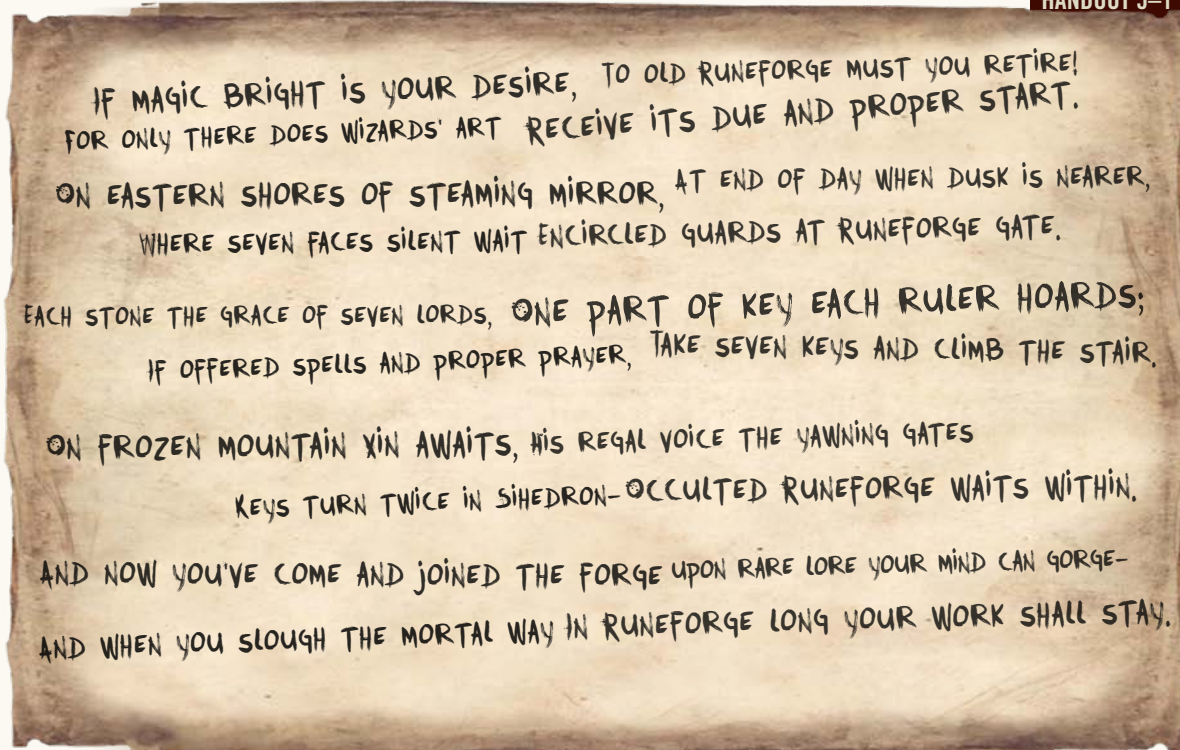
SUGGESTION: The Scribbler has placed a potent *suggestion* beyond the door leading from area **A9** to area **A10**—see area **A9** for more details.

WEBS: Area **A1** is clogged with *webs* from this spell.

The entire dungeon radiates a strong abjuration aura as a result of the *guards and wards* spell—*dispel magic* can remove only one specific effect at a time.

WRITING ON THE WALLS

Thassilonian writing covers nearly every available surface in the shrine—floors, ceilings, and walls. These are the result of the Scribbler's obsession, and most of the words recount prayers, scriptures, and invocations associated with Lamashtu. Among these scribbles are hidden the stanzas of the Scribbler's Rhyme. In his pride over discovering the location of Runeforge, the Scribbler recorded the route to this



location among his writings. In order to determine the route to Runeforge and the means for its entrance, the PCs must discover all five stanzas and arrange them in the proper order. These five stanzas are presented in Handout 5-1. If the PCs can't read Thassilonian or don't have access to magic like *comprehend languages*, they may have to return to these chambers with an expert on the language, such as Sandpoint's local Thassilon expert, Brodert Quink.

DECIPHERING THE SCRIBBLER'S RHYME

In order to understand the Scribbler's Rhyme, the players should puzzle out things on their own. If this becomes problematic, a successful DC 25 skill check can reveal a stanza's correct interpretation. This skill check can be anything associated with poetry, such as Craft (poetry) or Perform (act, comedy, oratory, or sing), Profession (poet). A DC 20 check can arrange the stanzas in their proper order.

The correct interpretation is as follows.

FIRST STANZA: This stanza establishes what the rhyme in total is about, introducing the idea of Runeforge as a place for wizards to perfect and hone their craft.

SECOND STANZA: The word "mirror" is a metaphor for lake (a somewhat common usage in ancient Thassilonian poetry); succeeding at a DC 20 Knowledge (geography) check is enough to note that in Varisia, Lake Stormunder is known for its plentiful hot springs and geysers. The stanza further mentions "seven faces" that are "encircled." A successful DC 20 Knowledge

(geography) check reveals that a mysterious circle of seven stone heads stands upon the western slope of Rimeskull on Stormunder's eastern shore.

THIRD STANZA: The seven stone heads each represent a school of Thassilonian magic, and by extension one of the seven runelords and realms of Thassilon. Casting a spell of the correct school on the correct stone causes a key to manifest in that stone's mouth. This stanza directs the character to gather a key from each stone head in this manner, and then to ascend Rimeskull via an ancient set of stairs.

FOURTH STANZA: After ascending Rimeskull, the PCs are directed to enter the cave and, in a chamber beyond, encounter a similar ring of seven stone faces arranged around the seven-pointed star of the Sihedron. Using the keys in these stones opens a portal to Runeforge, which exists in a pocket dimension of its own existence.

FIFTH STANZA: This stanza simply promises that those who reach Runeforge will be richly rewarded with lore.

A1 SHRINE ENTRANCE



Thick webs clog these stairs. Visible here and there through gaps in the unusually thick webbing are deep scratches along the walls and floors—this, along with the absence of any mold or mildew, suggests the stairway has recently been cleared.

The cobwebs in this stairwell were created by the Scribbler's *guards and wards* spell. The stairs themselves



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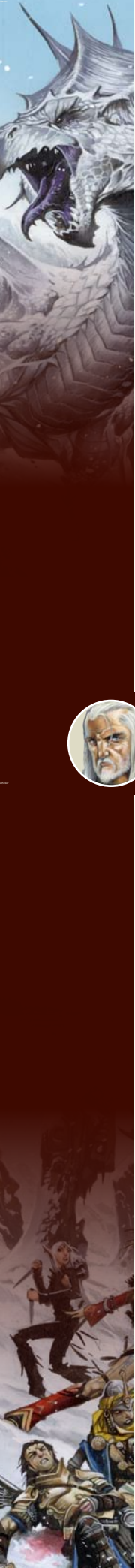
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LAMASHTU'S SHRINE



descend 50 feet from the abandoned Catacombs of Wrath above. They appear to end at a dead end, but a successful DC 30 Perception check of the western wall here reveals a secret door. The door itself is also warded with an *alarm* spell cast by the Scribbler that, if triggered, silently alerts him.

The passageway beyond the door has collapsed, but a narrow tunnel has been cleared through into area **A2**.

A2 ANTECHAMBER



The walls, floor, and even the arched ceiling of this place are covered with writing, the words spiraling and trailing in the ancient language of Thassilon. Some of the phrases are immense, with words nearly three feet high, while others are written in tiny, spidery script. The medium for the writing varies as well—sometimes dark ink, sometimes blood, sometimes carved into the stone itself. Passageways to the north and east lead into fog-filled tunnels, and a pair of stone doors, their faces carved with an immense image of a three-eyed jackal's head, stand to the south. To the west, light flickers in what appears to be an immense cathedral.

Anyone moving around in this room is very likely to be noticed by the guardian of area **A6**, but that creature does not attack immediately upon sensing intruders here, giving the Scribbler time to make his first contact with the PCs. The Scribbler asks them a few questions, likely while invisible or hiding in the fog to the north,

then uses *dimension door* to travel to area **A9** to ruminate for a bit about their answers before seeking them out again elsewhere in the dungeon to ask more questions.

Anyone who can read Thassilonian can quickly deduce that the writing on the walls consists of prayers and scriptures to Lamashtu. A successful DC 20 Perception check reveals four lines of what seems to be a larger poem that has nothing to do with Lamashtu. This is the first stanza of the Scribbler's Rhyme.

A3 BIRTHING POOL



A low stone rim surrounds a shallow pool of water that seems to glow with a soft radiance. The walls around the room are carved with large runes, and the ceiling rises to a dome above.

The pool of water in the middle of the room looks pure but is foul-tasting. This is where those carrying the spawn of Lamashtu were taken to birth their deformed, monstrous children 10,000 years ago, and it was from this pool that Lamashtu returned the Scribbler to life as a divine guardian.

A4 MEDITATION CELL



Small dunes of rubble and dust lie on the floor of this room, disturbed as if by the passage of pacing feet. The walls and ceiling are densely crowded with scribbings and markings. An image of a three-eyed jackal glares from the wall to the east.





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As in area **A2**, the walls here bear prayers to Lamashtu. In the center of the eastern wall, just under the image of the symbol of Lamashtu, is the second stanza of the Scribbler's Rhyme.

A5 COLLAPSED MEDITATION CELL



This room has partially collapsed. Cracks radiate along the walls and ceiling here. An image of a three-eyed jackal glares from the eastern wall, one of the cracks running right across its snout.

This room might seem unstable, but it has done all the collapsing it will do for the time being—there's no real danger of further collapse unless someone attempts to clear the rubble along the southern wall.

A6 SHRINE OF MONSTERS AND MADNESS (CR 13)



Although portions of this cathedral have collapsed, leaving mounds of rubble on the floor and crumbling walls, the chamber retains its sense of menacing awe. Four black stone pillars support the arched roof forty feet above, and on the floor between them the image of a three-eyed jackal seems to glow from striations in the stone itself. This image glows with a soft rusty light that illuminates the entire room from below. Alcoves to the north and south contain statues of a jackal-headed pregnant woman. Each clutches a pair of kukris crossed over her chest, and a reptilian tail winds down around her taloned feet. To the west, what once might have been a stone pulpit featuring other statues seems to have been partially buried under an ancient collapse. The walls of this room are densely decorated with hundreds of scribbles and sprawling runes.

Once the centerpiece of the Scribbler's Lamashtu cult, this shrine now stands empty and apparently deserted. The Scribbler has spent more time decorating the walls here with his prayers and invocations than elsewhere in the complex, and it shows in the more intricate and careful calligraphy he's used for his work. The third stanza of his rhyme is inscribed at the base of the middle statue of Lamashtu in the northern wall.

The Scribbler likely returns here to question the PCs, since if they lash out at him, he can use *dimension door* to retreat while letting the glabrezu demon take care of them.

CREATURE: When the Scribbler first woke from his 10,000 years of death as a divine guardian of Lamashtu's shrine, he knew, as soon as he discovered that leaving the shrine caused him pain, that he needed to build up guardians and minions who were not so hindered. His first attempt to summon such a minion was via a *planar ally* spell—to his great surprise and delight, Lamashtu answered his request for aid by sending a

glabrezu named Yerrin-Ku. The Scribbler took this as a sign that Lamashtu's designs on the region are of great importance, and rightly so, but for now the Mother of Monsters has chosen to keep her ultimate plans for the Lost Coast a secret.

YERRIN-KU	XP 25,600	CR 13	HP 186
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Male glabrezu demon (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 61)

TACTICS

During Combat Yerrin-Ku's first act in combat is to attempt to summon another glabrezu—he does not try to summon vorks, since they're more closely allied with Lamashtu's enemy Pazuzu. On the first round of combat, he uses *reverse gravity* to strand characters who can't fly, then hits whomever looks like the strongest healer with a *power word stun*. He then engages the remaining PCs in melee, saving *confusion* for parties who seem to be working together too well. Yerrin-Ku pursues foes throughout this complex, but does not follow them out of the shrine if they make it that far.

Morale Yerrin-Ku is bound to this shrine for several more days and cannot leave—as a result, he fights to the death, regardless of his own desire to flee when things turn bad.

A7 BATTLEGROUND



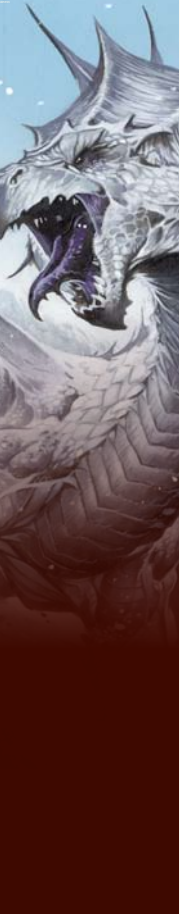
Blood is this cavern's decor; swaths of it lie spattered on the wall, and pools have congealed and begun to rot on the ground. Bits of flesh lie scattered as well—whatever happened here, it ended poorly for many.

When the guards sent by Sheriff Hemlock reached this shrine, the Scribbler hadn't yet begun to shore up his defenses. He was also more curious than enraged about these intruders, and invisibly watched their tentative exploration of the shrine with amusement. By the time the guards reached area **A6**, they'd realized the scope of their discovery and prepared to retreat and report to Hemlock. That was when the Scribbler struck. The yeth hounds have eaten most of the bodies—what remains scattered in this room isn't enough to be subjected to *speak with dead* or *raise dead*, but if the PCs resort to *resurrection* or more powerful magic, they can restore the guards to life. If the PCs do so, you should reward their kindness by having the resurrected guards provide additional information about the denizens of the shrine.

A8 THE SCRIBBLER'S KENNEL (CR 11)



Here three once separate chambers have become one, joined by collapsed walls and the erosion of ages. Bloodstained fragments of chain shirts, shields, swords, and clothing lie strewn about this room haphazardly. The walls are decorated with countless scribbles written sloppily in blood.



The fourth stanza of the Scribbler's Rhyme is inscribed on the northern wall of the southernmost chamber here. The fragments of armor and weapons are all that remain of the Sandpoint guards after the Scribbler fed them to his pack.

CREATURES: A pack of six powerful yeth hounds known as hounds of Lamashtu dwell in these caves. Unlike the more common yeth hound, a hound of Lamashtu is black and has a poisonous stinger at the end of its ratlike tail. As outsiders, they have no need to feed—their consumption of the guards was purely an act of malice. The baying and howling of this pack can be heard throughout the complex (as detailed above) but unless they hear or see intruders, they're content to remain here. Alone among the current denizens of the shrine, these hounds can pursue prey beyond these walls.

HOUNDS OF LAMASHTU (6)	XP	CR	HP
	2,400 each	6	76 each

Variant yeth hound (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 286)
NE Medium outsider (evil, extraplanar)

Init +8; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., scent; Perception +15

DEFENSE

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

hp 76 each (8d10+32)

Fort +10, **Ref** +10, **Will** +6

DR 5/silver

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft., fly 60 ft. (good)

Melee bite +13 (2d6+5 plus sinister bite and trip), sting +13

(1d6+5 plus poison)

Special Attacks bay (DC 16), sinister bite (DC 18)

TACTICS

During Combat The hounds of Lamashtu prefer to surround enemies and attack the same foes. They eagerly attack PCs bearing the symbols of good-aligned deities in favor of other less obviously devoted individuals.

Morale The hounds are relentless and fight to the death.

STATISTICS

Str 21, **Dex** 19, **Con** 19, **Int** 10, **Wis** 18, **Cha** 14

Base Atk +8; **CMB** +13; **CMD** 28

Feats Dodge, Improved Initiative, Power Attack, Skill Focus (Fly)

Skills Acrobatics +12 (+16 when jumping), Fly +22, Perception +15, Sense Motive +15, Stealth +15, Survival +12

Languages Abyssal (cannot speak)

SQ flight

A9 OUTER SANCTUM (CR 7)



The walls, ceiling, and floor of this otherwise empty room are densely packed with writing, in many cases overlapping and tangled to near the point of illegibility. Four short lines stand out on the northern door, carved into the stone but otherwise alone on its face.

The lines of text decorating the door are the fifth stanza of the Scribbler's Rhyme. This room was once a robing chamber for priests preparing for rituals in the shrine itself, but little remains today to denote that



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use—currently, the room serves no other purpose but as a trap.

TRAP: Anyone who passes through the northern door into the foggy hallway beyond hears a whispering voice in his mind suggesting that Lamashtu's influence has tainted his friends, and that they are preparing to capture the victim to sacrifice him to Lamashtu. The *suggestion* encourages the character to do everything in his power to defend himself, hopefully by first finding a safe place where he can escape his supposed allies, and to fight back against them if they try to restrain him. The Scribbler placed this *suggestion* here via his *guards and wards* spell, hoping to sow discord in the ranks of an intruding group. If someone does manage to hide somewhere in the shrine alone, the Scribbler seeks him out as soon as possible to kill him.

THE SCRIBBLER'S SUGGESTION XP 3,200 CR 7

Type magical; **Perception** DC 31; **Disable Device** DC 31

EFFECTS

Trigger proximity; **Reset** automatic

Effect spell effect (*suggestion*; Will DC 22 negates)

A10 THE SCRIBBLER'S LAIR

This entire chamber is warded by a *forbiddance* spell (DC 22 Will save), placed here by the Scribbler. The *forbiddance* is keyed to chaotic evil and does not have a password to bypass its damage.



The walls of this room are decorated with flowing script and runes. To the north slumps a bloody human body, its limbs apparently broken in a dozen places. A low table against the east wall is covered with vials of colored liquid, and sitting in an inkwell is a quill made from a peacock's feather.

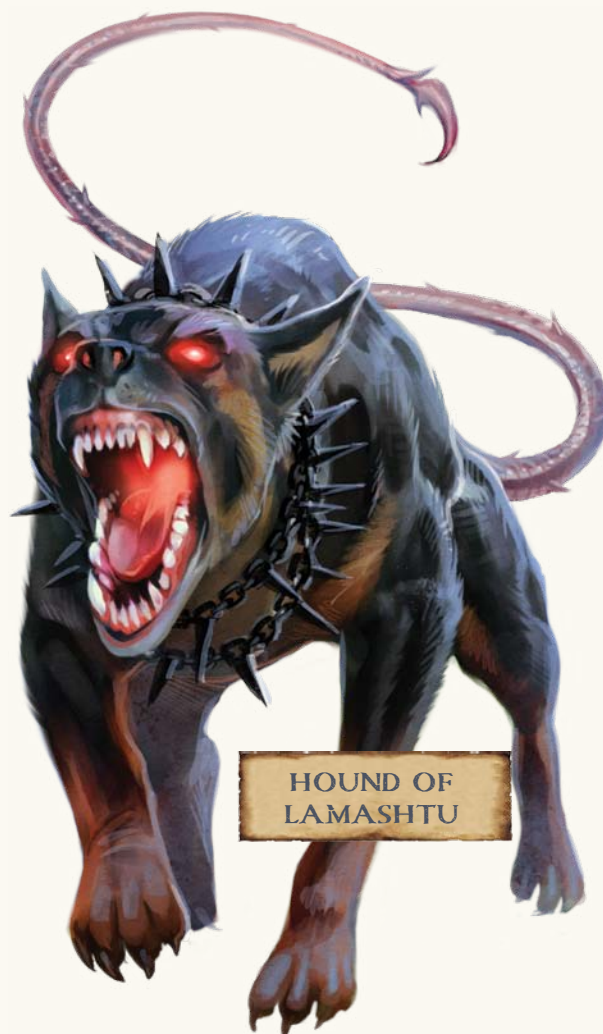
This once served as a guard chamber, and the Scribbler chose it as his lair for its defensibility. As a divine guardian, he has no need for rest or food, and so he uses this room to meditate and as a safe place to retreat to.

The scribbles on the wall of this room contain more than merely invocations to Lamashtu—they consist of notes the Scribbler has taken regarding the state of the world beyond, as reported to him by the various spirits and outsiders he's conjured, as well as via *commune*, *divination*, and *speak with dead* spells that he cast on the dead body he keeps here. The notes impart a feeling of someone from out of time doing what he can to gather intelligence on a world that has moved on. Runeforge is mentioned several times—the Scribbler very much wants to send agents to the dungeon in order to gather supplies and raid it for magic items and texts, since he has grown convinced that the complex has long since been forgotten and abandoned. In particular, his

notes speak of something called *runeforged* weapons—items that the Scribbler believes could be quite useful against the runelords and their allies, yet the methods of creation of which seem to have been lost somewhere in Runeforge itself.

The dead body is that of Jaren Basvear, who in life was a corporal in the Sandpoint militia and who served as the leader of the group of guards Hemlock sent into these chambers. The Scribbler keeps his body fresh with *gentle repose* spells and has been using it as a source of information about the world above via *speak with dead*.

TREASURE: The ink and quill are possessions the Scribbler valued in his previous life, and were returned to him (like his gear) by his patron Lamashtu as a payment for serving her as this temple's guardian. There are 17 vials of ink in all, each worth 8 gp, but the real treasure here is the Scribbler's most valued possession: a *revelation quill*.





PART TWO: SEEKING RUNEFORGE

IF THE PCs HAVEN'T ALREADY BECOME INTRIGUED BY RUNEFORGE BY THE END OF CHAPTER FOUR, WHEN THEY DISCOVERED MOKMURIAN'S CRYPTIC NOTE ABOUT THE LOCATION, THE RIDDLE POSED BY THE SCRIBBLER'S RHYME SHOULD DO THE TRICK. OF RUNEFORGE ITSELF, VERY LITTLE IS WRITTEN. A SUCCESSFUL DC 35 KNOWLEDGE (ARCANA OR HISTORY) CHECK REVEALS THAT RUNEFORGE WAS ONCE A LEGENDARY PLACE OF LEARNING AND DISCOVERY FOR STUDENTS OF THE ARCANE, BUT THAT ITS LOCATION HAS REMAINED A MYSTERY—THASSILONIAN SCHOLARS BELIEVE IT TO HAVE BEEN LOST DURING THE EMPIRE'S FALL.



More information about Runeforge can be divined via spells like *commune* or *contact other plane*—or alternatively, by researching the topic at the Thassilonian library under Jorgenfist. Knowledge (arcana or history) checks made with the library's resources at hand reveal more information, as detailed at the bottom of the page. The table below summarizes the information one can gain by succeeding at such Knowledge checks—remember that using the Jorgenfist library grants a +20 bonus on Thassilon-based Knowledge checks!

The one bit of information missing from this is Runeforge's location. This was one of the most closely guarded secrets of the Thassilonian Empire, and it's why the Scribbler's rhyme is so important. Divination spells can't reveal Runeforge's location due to the potent wards woven into its walls so long ago by the runelords. Once the PCs have uncovered the Scribbler's masterpiece, these same divination spells can be incredibly helpful in deciphering its riddle, organizing its stanzas into the proper order, and verifying theories and interpretations of the poem.

The method by which the PCs travel to Rimeskull is irrelevant—by this point, the PCs should be high enough level that they'll be able to utilize options like *wind walk* or *greater teleport* to reach the shores of Lake Stormunder. As they approach the Sihedron Circle, proceed with the following section.

THE SIHEDRON CIRCLE (CR 15)



From the rocky eastern shoreline of Lake Stormunder, the ground rises into the craggy snow-dappled roots of Rimeskull, casting its long shadow over this area. Yet not all of the ground here is rugged and mountainous. Several hundred feet from the lake's edge, the land suddenly levels off to create a circular hill. Rocks and tenacious shrubs poke through the scattered clumps of snow here, but they are dwarfed by the ring of seven ten-foot-tall stone heads that circle the hill's edge, their faces angled inward at each other, mouths agape. To the east, the sheer mountainside of Rimeskull rises,

RUNEFORGE LORE

CHECK DC	RESULT
DC 33	Runeforge was created as a place where agents of the seven runelords could gather to study magic.
DC 37	The runelords wove wards around Runeforge that barred entrance into the complex to any runelord or his direct agents, in order to keep the research within free from sabotage at the hands of an enemy.
DC 40	Runeforge's magical enhancements sustained those within without the need to eat, drink, or even sleep.
DC 43	The Spires of Xin-Shalast stand upon the mythical mountain of Mhar Massif. This mountain of legendary proportions pierces the skies above the Kodars, and is said to be the highest peak in the entire range of stupendously inhospitable mountains.
DC 50	The final project the runelords set Runeforge on was the development of ways the runelords could escape the imminent fall of their empire. Each faction developed a unique answer for its runelord, based upon the underlying principles of that faction's magical traditions.





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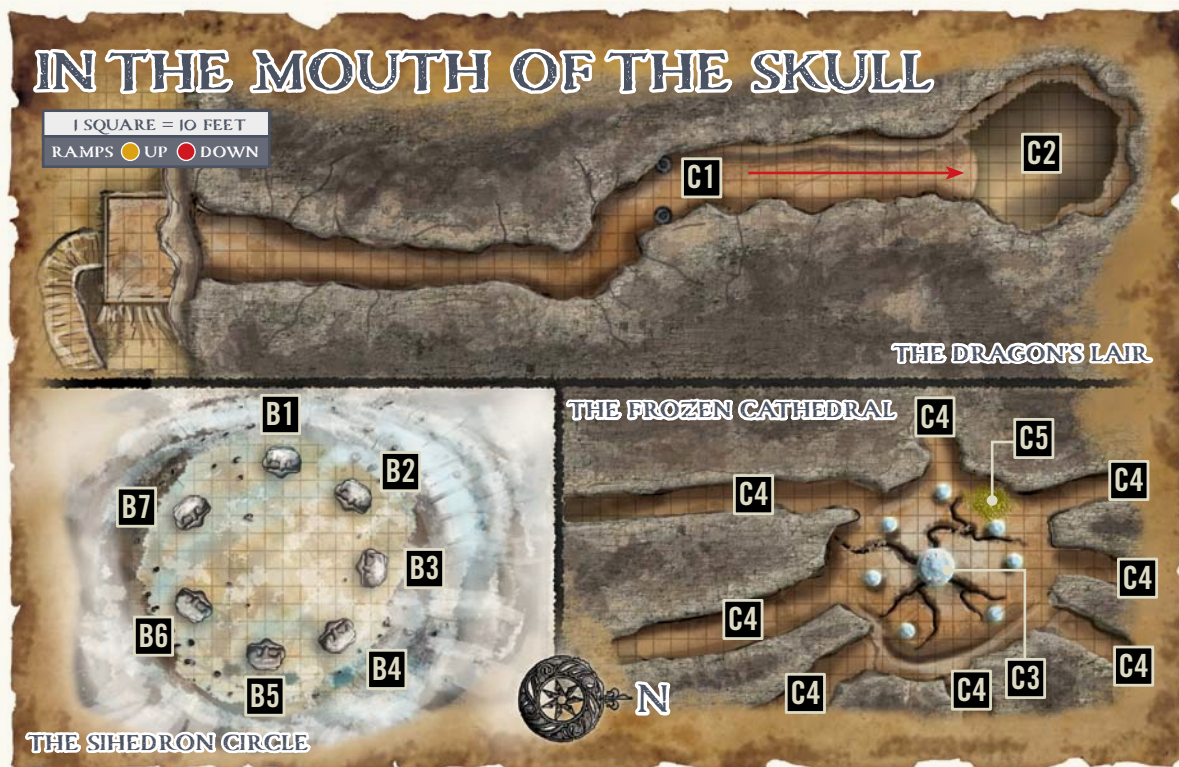
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icy and windblasted—two hundred feet above leers a carving of an ancient face, its gaping mouth forming a large cave entrance in the mountainside. A ten-foot-wide stairway of stone descends from this cave to a ledge only fifty feet to the east of the circle of stone faces.

Looming nearly 16,000 feet above Lake Stormunder at the western tip of the Kodar Mountains, the mountain called Rimeskull gains its fearsome name from a vaguely skull-shaped formation near the mountain's peak, visible for many miles on a clear day. Few know the true story of Rimeskull, and even those sages who claim expertise in the history of Thassilon often have their facts wrong. A DC 40 Knowledge (history) check is enough to note that in Thassilon, the runelords often carved depictions of their visages upon mountaintops or towering statues that watched over their cities. Rimeskull's face, however, overlooked the site of Runeforge itself, and to symbolize that all seven runelords shared this territory, they agreed to mark the location with a carving of the face of their empire's first emperor, Xin. Yet rather than depict the emperor as he appeared in life, the runelords, who overthrew Xin in a violent rebellion, immortalized him in the way they preferred to remember him—as a dead emperor. Furthermore, this monument did not receive the protective wardings most other Thassilonian monuments received, and over the last 10,000 years, the original visage has eroded away to little more than the vague skull shape that remains today.

IDENTIFYING THE STONE HEADS: The seven stone heads have all been warded with protective magic, staving off the effects of erosion as they march through the years. Each night at sunset, the magic infusing these stone heads grows more potent, to the point where it can be observed with *detect magic* or *arcane sight*. In order to manifest a key, a character must subject the stone head to a spell effect of a school identical to the aura shed by the stone. *Detect magic* and *arcane sight* are the simplest methods of determining what schools of magic the stone heads radiate. A successful DC 35 Knowledge (arcana or history) identifies each of the stone heads, correlating them to the visages of the seven runelords (a character who has spent at least a week studying in the library under Jorgenfist receives a +15 circumstance bonus on this check), and thus which school of magic each head relates to.

SECURING A RUNEFORGE KEY: Each stone head guards one of the seven keys needed to enter Runeforge—the proper way to extract each key involves casting specific types of magic on the stone heads. A spell effect need only be cast within 5 feet of a stone head in order for the head to absorb the spell; this occurs whether or not the caster intends the spell to be absorbed by the head. An absorbed spell does not create the desired effect—instead, the head that absorbed the spell glows with energy for a moment and the ground vibrates as a piercing trill emanates from the head. The glow and the sound fade completely after several seconds, at which point a gold key appears in its mouth. These keys are stored on the Ethereal Plane, and are simply brought back into

phase with the Material Plane when the stone head is properly triggered. A character using *true seeing* can see a phantom key sitting in a stone head's mouth while it is still ethereal, and an ethereal creature can easily take the key without repercussion—upon returning to the Material Plane, the key remains with him.

Casting spells of the appropriate school into a stone head or traveling to the Ethereal Plane aren't the only ways to secure keys. A successful DC 35 Use Magic Device tricks the stone into thinking it has been triggered with an appropriate spell. A successful DC 40 Disable Device check can also free the key and cause it to manifest inside the statue's mouth.

DESTROYING A STONE HEAD: Each stone head has hardness 16 and 1,440 hit points. Alternatively, a successful DC 68 Strength check breaks a stone head in a single blow. Each head weighs more than 40 tons and is 10 feet tall. Whenever a stone is destroyed, the resulting explosion of magical energy and light deals 20d6 points of electricity damage in a 60-foot burst. A DC 20 Reflex save halves this damage, but those who fail are also permanently blinded by this blast of searing magic. Note that this explosion could finish the job on nearby stone heads, creating a chain reaction of explosions. In any event, once a stone head is destroyed, the

link to the Ethereal Plane vanishes and that head's key appears in the smoking crater its head once occupied.

The heads and keyed magic are as follows:

- B1:** Karzoug (transmutation)
- B2:** Krune (conjuration)
- B3:** Belimarius (abjuration)
- B4:** Sorshen (enchantment)
- B5:** Xanderghul (illusion)
- B6:** Alaznist (evocation)
- B7:** Zutha (necromancy)

CREATURE: When the first of the stone heads is activated and its sonic pulse echoes through the ground and air, the lord of Rimeskull takes notice. This is Arkrhyst—called Freezemaw by the Shoanti—an ancient white dragon who has lived on Rimeskull for 500 years. In his youth several centuries ago, Arkrhyst was a great and hated enemy of the Shoanti; his raids on the nomads of the Velashu Uplands and the western Storval Plateau were legendary, and many of those tribes still sing of these dark times, and of the countless heroes who sought out his home on Rimeskull to defeat him. None accomplished this goal, but as Arkrhyst grew older, his urge to raid grew less.

Succeeding at a DC 25 Knowledge (history) check allows a character to recall stories of Arkrhyst's raids on the Shoanti, and that 200 years ago, the dragon's raids ceased. Many thought he had been slain, but no sign of his supposedly vast treasure ever appeared—wiser scholars of things draconic believe that Arkrhyst has simply been sleeping for many, many years.

After shaking the sleep from his eyes, Arkrhyst clambers up from his cave and spies the PCs below. Allow the PCs Perception checks to notice him—but in addition to the modifier for the 200-foot distance (+20 to his Stealth check), cover from the cave entrance gives him a further +8 bonus to his Stealth check against anyone observing from below.



ARKRHYST

ARKRHYST	XP	CR	HP
	51,200	15	283

Male ancient white dragon (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 101)

TACTICS

Before Combat As soon as Arkrhyst sees the PCs approach, he casts *resist energy* (fire), *bull's strength*, *displacement*, *see invisibility*, and *shield*. He casts *invisibility* on the round before he enters combat.

During Combat Arkrhyst flies low over PCs (or just above the standing stones) and uses his breath weapon, at the same time relying on his frightful presence to weaken his enemies' morale. If his opponents scatter, he singles a random opponent out in between rounds when he can breathe and makes either a flyby tail slap or a bite so that he can snatch an opponent, carry it aloft, breathe on it, and drop it from at least 200 feet up onto the rocks below. If confronted

with flying foes, Arkrhyst uses *gust of wind* to send smaller foes reeling and retreats to his cave above if he finds that their greater mobility is causing him too much trouble.

Morale If Arkrhyst is reduced to fewer than 100 hit points, he returns to his mountain lair in Rimeskull to heal and rethink his tactics based on the combat abilities displayed by his enemies.

DEVELOPMENT: It's possible that Arkrhyst escapes from the PCs before they enter Runeforge. In this case, the white dragon, intrigued by the portal the PCs opened in his lair and burning with hatred and a need for revenge against them, follows the PCs into Runeforge. In this event, you can use Freezemaw as a fly in the ointment. Most of the tunnels in Runeforge are wide enough that he can navigate them by squeezing, and if the dragon explores the chambers, chances are good that he'll meet up with one of the factions in Runeforge before the PCs do. You can have the dragon ally with this faction, giving one of the groups an additional powerful ally. Alternately, you can have Arkrhyst stalk the PCs and spring him when they're recovering from a particularly harrowing battle. You can even save Arkrhyst for the final battle when the PCs trigger the statue of Karzoug in area **D** (see page 254). Use him as you will to inflict an extra dose of draconic mayhem on your group.

XIN'S STAIRWAY (CR 13)



A massive stairway that looks like it must have been built by giants and taken years, if not decades, to complete is chiseled out of the side of the mountain. A twenty-foot-wide and thirty-foot-tall stone arch frames the first steps, while the final steps lead directly up to a carving of an ancient face, its open mouth a cave entrance. The familiar seven-pointed star is etched deeply into its surface, prominently positioned at the highest section of the arch. Bones lie in iced-over heaps along the visible areas of the stairway.

Each step is approximately a foot and a half high and 3 feet deep, with an average width of 20 feet. The stairway winds back and forth, rising up 200 feet to the entrance to the cavern above (area **C1**). Icy bones litter the long stairway, cast-off remains of the meals consumed by the white dragon lurking near the top of the mountain over the hundreds of years since it began its stewardship. For the most part, the skeletal debris is frozen to the steps, the bones and random equipment of ancient passersby brittle from ages of frost and chill wind.

The landing is approximately 60 feet wide and 50 feet long from the top of the steps to the cave mouth. The strong winds blowing across the mountain at these heights impose a -2 penalty on ranged attacks and Perception checks. Additional effects of strong winds are summarized on page 439 of the *Core Rulebook*. The

surface of the landing is coated in places by a thin layer of rime, but this does not affect movement.

Beyond the stairway is a small cavern that contains not only Runeforge's entrance, but that also serves as the dragon's lair.

CREATURES: A pair of ancient guardians still watches over the stairs leading up to the cave entrance. Anyone who climbs these stairs immediately attracts their attention. These guardians are two elder earth elementals, bound to the stairs by ancient magic. The elementals know to allow anyone openly wearing the Sihedron (whether a tattoo, a *Sihedron medallion*, or whatever) free passage, but all other intruders on the stairs are attacked on sight. Note that those who fly or otherwise avoid setting foot on the stairs can avoid the elementals' wrath entirely.

ELDER EARTH ELEMENTAL (2)	XP 12,800 each	CR 11	HP 168 each
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(*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 123)

TACTICS

During Combat Each elemental uses Awesome Blow and Improved Bull Rush to knock opponents back from the cave mouth. Weapons that cause them significant harm are targeted for Improved Sunder attacks. With each attack, the elementals use Power Attack (-5 on attack rolls, +10 damage). If possible, the elementals push opponents off the landing, either over the stone railing (this gives PCs a +2 on their opposed rolls) or down the steps. PCs pushed down the steep stairs takes 1d6 points of damage and the distance pushed might send them plummeting over the edge—a fall of up to 200 feet, depending on how high up the stairs the victim was.

Morale The earth elementals fight to the death.

C1 DEADLY SLIDE



Two twelve-foot-tall statues flank the large tunnel here. Each holds a hand upraised as if to ward away intruders, and clutches a heavy sword with the other.

The statue on the west side of the tunnel is a *permanent image* (CL 20th, Will DC 19 to disbelieve) that marks the start of an invisible ledge that can be used to safely bypass the dangerous slope and descend into the cavern beyond. Although the ledge is invisible, bits of dust and snow and rubble on its length make it easier to notice with a successful DC 25 Perception check. The slope itself is icy, and any attempt to proceed further to the north on it requires a DC 15 Acrobatics check. Failure by 5 or more indicates a fall, sending the victim sliding down to the north at a speed equal to his land speed and eventually into the open gulf in area **C2**.

DEVELOPMENT: If Arkrhyst flees to his lair to escape the battle outside, he places a *freezing fog* in the tunnel at this point, then casts *alarm* on the fog's eastern edge. He then continues on to area **C3** and awaits the party as detailed in that area's development.



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C2 THE ICE FALLS



The slope ends at the edge of a gaping chasm of darkness. Huge icicles hang from the ceiling and coils of mist rise up from below.

The hidden ledge that started at area C1 becomes a ramp winding around the walls of this chasm, providing a safe route down into area C3 below. The gulf itself is 300 feet deep, eventually opening into area C3. A character sliding down the ramp from area C1 can make a single DC 20 Reflex save to grab onto the edge of the gulf before falling in.

C3 FROZEN CATHEDRAL



The walls of this cavern glitter and sparkle with sheets of ice. Seven twenty-foot-tall pillars, their sides encrusted with ice and engraved with ancient glyphs and runes, surround an eighth pillar twice the size. Tunnels exit the central cavern, winding deeper into the mountain. Yet perhaps the most notable feature is the sparkling mound of coins, works of art, gemstones, jewelry, weapons, armor, and other things poking up from the pile that occupies the northwestern section of the cavern.

This cavern was once the central hub for the original construction of Runeforge, before the wardens completed the last ritual and whisked the complex and much of the surrounding stone away into its own demiplane. All they left behind were the stone pillars—the entrance into Runeforge. Of course, for the last several centuries, the chamber has also served as Arkrhyst's lair.

The seven pillars surrounding the central pillar are each marked with hundreds of Thassilonian runes—arcane formulae describing the basic tenets of one of the seven Thassilonian schools of magic. The seven pillars form the points of a huge Sihedron, and a successful DC 20 Perception check reveals a small keyhole hidden four feet off the ground on each pillar, facing the central monolith. If the proper key from the Sihedron Circle outside is placed in the proper pillar's keyhole and then turned in two complete revolutions (the direction doesn't matter), the pillar begins to hum and glow softly. Once the pillar is glowing, its key vanishes (returning to the Ethereal Plane at a point corresponding to the correct face in the Sihedron Circle outside). The pillar continues to glow for an hour before it fades, at which point the key must be retrieved from its statue again to reactivate it.

If all seven pillars are active at the same time (the order of activation does not matter), the central pillar begins glowing and ripples with a vortex of light that combines all seven of the surrounding colors.

At the pillar's base, the vortex whirls in on itself like a vertically aligned whirlpool, opening into a 7-foot-wide circular portal through which can be faintly seen a long tunnel. Anyone who steps through this portal steps into Runeforge, appearing in area D.

DEVELOPMENT: If Arkrhyst retreats to his lair after a fight with the PCs, he knows they're probably not far behind. He spends several rounds drinking potions from his treasure to heal his wounds. When his *alarm* in area C1 is triggered, he abandons his treasure and retreats down one of the side tunnels to hide and watch. He's barely able to restrain his rage if he sees the PCs looting his treasure, but realizes that it's better to wait for now, recover from his wounds, and ambush the PCs later to regain his hoard. If he sees the PCs activate the portal to Runeforge and enter, he waits for several minutes before following them inside.

C4 TUNNELS

These large and numerous interconnected tunnels once led to dozens of smaller chambers chiseled out of the rock before the Runeforge was whisked away into its own distant demiplane. The chambers beyond are little more than vast, empty caverns that once held the individual Runeforge complexes. Arkrhyst's presence in area C3 has kept other creatures from moving into these empty caverns, but if you wish, you can have some of the further tunnels populated by monsters like purple worms or black puddings.

C5 DRAGON HOARD

TREASURE: This massive pile of treasure consists of 39,500 cp, 9,410 sp, 3,500 gp, and 250 pp. Mixed in with the coins are tapestries, small items of furniture made of precious woods, delicate pieces of jewelry and fine works of art, silverware and candelabras, six everburning torches, and several decorative boxes spilling pieces of jewelry worth an additional 16,000 gp in all. Buried in the coins is a quiver of 14 masterwork arrows and two *greater dragon slaying arrows*, a *belt of giant strength +4*, a teak box holding a felt cushion with six round depressions each containing a thunderstone, an ivory set of *lesser bracers of archery*, a *+3 darkwood buckler* carved with the symbol of Kyonin on its face, a *chime of opening* (5 charges), a *cloak of resistance +3*, a *flametongue*, a masterwork suit of full plate decorated with onyx ravens perched on the shoulders (each raven is worth 200 gp), a suit of *+3 half-plate* with a wolf motif, 6 vials of frozen holy water, a *pearl of power* (1st-level spell), 17 *potions of cure light wounds*, 6 *potions of cure moderate wounds*, 3 *potions of cure serious wounds*, 2 *potions of resist energy 20 (cold)*, two Small *+1 mithral shirts*, a *scroll of globe of invulnerability*, a *scroll of heal*, a *scroll of remove blindness/deafness*, a *wand of bear's endurance* (38 charges), a *wand of cure light wounds* (46 charges), a *wand of magic missile* (CL 5th, 8 charges), and a *+1 adamantite warhammer*.



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RUNEFORGE IS CONSTRUCTED AS A CENTRAL HUB SURROUNDED BY SEVEN WINGS, EACH OF WHICH IS ASSOCIATED WITH ONE OF THE SEVEN THASSILONIAN SCHOOLS OF MAGIC. OF COURSE, IN THE 10,000 YEARS RUNEFORGE HAS BEEN CUT OFF FROM THE OUTSIDE WORLD, THE KEEPERS AND DENIZENS OF THESE WINGS HAVE DESCENDED FURTHER INTO THE SINS ASSOCIATED WITH THOSE SCHOOLS OF MAGIC. RUNEFORGE IS NO LONGER A PLACE OF LEARNING. IT IS A BATTLEGROUND.

The approach from the portal is along a 10-foot-wide stone tunnel. When the portal closes, this tunnel becomes a dead end, with nothing to indicate an exit—the portal cannot be opened from this side. In order to escape, the PCs need to rely on their own magic (*plane shift* and *gate* both work, in this case, as do spells like *dismissal* or *banishment*) or find one of the deactivated return portals in Runeforge, reactivate it, and use it to return to Varisia.

RUNEFORGE FEATURES

Runeforge was created on the Material Plane, yet it does not actually exist there—the complex is a self-contained demiplane. Nonetheless, Runeforge follows many of the “rules” of the Material Plane as if the complex were still a part of it. Gravity works the same, time passes at the same rate, and there are no dominant planar traits. Although the demiplane is not part of the world of Golarion, it retains a shadowy sort of “echo” of the world’s magnetism, and thus compasses still detect and point toward a phantom north pole that doesn’t really exist in this realm. You cannot reach Runeforge from the Material Plane via teleportation, nor can you escape it in that way. There are no wards against planar travel to and from Runeforge, but the tuning fork material component required to travel here using *plane shift* is unknown outside of its walls.

Attempts to move through the surrounding stone, either by magic or legitimate tunneling, reveal that Runeforge is contained in a void of dangerous entropy. The sphere of stone that holds Runeforge has a radius (from the center of area D) of a mile. Beyond is a maelstrom of nothingness, a black void that extends forever and contains nothing but air. A creature incapable of flight falls into the void and continues falling forever. Teleportation can save a PC from this fate as long as she teleports back into Runeforge.

MAGICALLY TREATED STONEMWORK: The walls, floors, and ceilings of Runeforge are made of stone that has been magically treated (hardness 16, 1,080 hp per 3 feet, Break DC 70, Climb DC 20).

SUSTENANCE: Runeforge sustains those within its walls constantly, keeping them nourished and reviving the body and mind. No creature needs to eat, drink, or sleep in Runeforge, except for pleasure. (Spellcasters are still limited to once per day when replenishing their spellcasting potential, even though they do not need to sleep beforehand.) Air is constantly refreshed in Runeforge (with the exception of the air in the Festering Maze)—any spell or effect that creates tainted air (such as *stinking cloud* or a gha’st’s stench) still functions normally, but the air supply in the complex never runs out despite the fact that the dungeon is entirely enclosed.

NO ESCAPE: Visitors to Runeforge today can leave the demiplane by using spells like *plane shift* or even by being subjected to the effects of spells like *holy word* or the violet color of a *prismatic ray* spell. All of the denizens encountered within Runeforge, however, have dwelt so long in this curious realm that they cannot escape via these methods—Runeforge holds them tight, and as a result they all treat Runeforge as their home plane. (Outsiders do not gain the native subtype, though, as a result of this effect.) Spells like *teleport* or *ethereal jaunt* function, and even something like *shadow walk* works, provided at the spell’s end the subjects return to Runeforge. *Astral projection* allows an inhabitant to explore beyond Runeforge’s boundaries, but otherwise a denizen of Runeforge can only escape via *gate* or a freestanding portal (like the one in area K6).

SINNERS IN RUNEFORGE

In addition to being able to ignore some effects and being more susceptible to others, sinners in Runeforge feel more welcome and inspired in an associated wing of the dungeon. Unfortunately, that also means that in two other wings, they feel unwanted and oppressed. Consult Appendix Seven to determine each PC’s sins and opposition sins.

In an allied wing (such as the Vault of Greed for a greedy character), characters gain a +1 bonus on all skill checks, attack rolls, and saving throws. These bonuses are included in all appropriate NPCs encountered in



that area, save for mindless creatures (like golems), who do not gain these bonuses at all (nor do they take penalties in opposition wings, if they move to a different area of the complex).

In an opposition wing (such as the Iron Cages of Lust or the Shimmering Veil for a greedy character), characters gain a -2 penalty on all skill checks, attack rolls, and saving throws. As written, no NPCs are encountered in opposition wings in this adventure, but in the case one moves (such as Delvahine pursuing foes from the Iron Cages of Lust into the Ravenous Crypts), don't forget to remove the bonus and apply the penalties to that NPC as well.

LOOTING SPELLBOOKS

Throughout the various branches of Runeforge, the PCs are destined to encounter a lot of wizards, most of whom are specialists. That equates to a lot of spellbooks. Cataloging the contents of each spellbook found in this adventure would simply take up too much space. Thus, all spellbooks found in Runeforge are left up to you to customize as you see fit. Two simple solutions are to just assume that the spellbooks contain all their authors' prepared spells plus 1d4 additional spells per level, or to assume that the spellbooks have all of the spells from the core rules, excepting those from prohibited schools. The best solution is to take some time to customize each spellbook—this gives you the opportunity to provide your players with exactly the spells you want them to have and add some new spells taken from other sources.

D THE RUNEFORGE



This domed chamber is nearly two hundred feet across. A large pool of bubbling prismatic liquid occupies the center of a raised dais in the middle of the chamber. The spiky flanges of the seven-pointed Sihadron are engraved into the marble floor. Each tip of the enormous rune points at a twenty-five-foot-tall statue facing the pool with its back approximately ten feet from a partially concealed arched opening in the wall directly behind it. Each statue depicts a different figure, but all are imperious and finely detailed.

This is the central hub of Runeforge and the location of its namesake—the runeforge pool. The inhabitants of Runeforge used the runeforge pool as a method to communicate with the runelords, but the pool's primary use was to temper newly created magic items. With the runeforge pool, the wizards could create magic items much more efficiently and rapidly.

The seven statues surrounding the pool are of the seven runelords. When used to contact a runelord, the waters of the runeforge pool flowed out to anoint

the appropriate statue, which could then animate and speak to those gathered within the room. The statues themselves are made of the same magically enhanced stone as Runeforge's walls, and if destroyed are reformed 24 hours later by the runeforge pool.

When Mokmurian woke Karzoug several years ago, the waters of this pool reacted by flaring and bubbling with greater vitality, alerting the occupants of Runeforge that something was afoot. After spending the last several thousand years in growing states of languishing doldrums, the denizens have been revitalized and began carrying out schemes and plots hundreds of years in the making in anticipation of what they believe to be Runeforge's second coming. The scheming began in earnest when the masters of the Abjurant Halls of Envy attempted to claim control of the runeforge pool, an act that mobilized the coordinated retaliation of the other surviving factions. This resulted in the complete eradication and collapse of the Abjurant Halls. The short-lived truce was swiftly broken thereafter, and since then these powerful minions have focused on bolstering their defenses and increasing their power.

The bubbling, prismatic waters of the runeforge pool are alternately painfully hot and freezing cold to the touch, yet not enough to cause damage. Additionally, those who touch the waters receive a tangled collage of memories and visions of events yet to come. All five senses are assaulted by the magical potential of the pool, and each round a person remains in contact with the waters he must succeed at a DC 20 Will save or be nauseated for 1d6 rounds. This is a mind-affecting effect. The waters of the pool have further uses, primarily in the creation of magic items; these details are presented in Part Ten of this chapter.

The seven statues in area D are as follows.

D1 KARZOUG: A towering man with gems set in his forehead and hands, dressed in robes and wielding a burning glaive.

D2 KRUNE: A short smiling man with a hooked nose and beady eyes, wearing robes and wielding a spear.

D3 BELIMARIUS: A heavysset woman with a sneering visage and an imperious stance, dressed in a flowing dress and wielding a halberd.

D4 SORSHEN: A voluptuous woman with a seductive look, large eyes, and long flowing hair; this statue is nude and wields a double-headed guisarme.

D5 XANDERGHUL: A strikingly handsome man adorned with a close-cropped beard and a charming expression; his form is dressed in extravagant clothes and wields a lucerne hammer.





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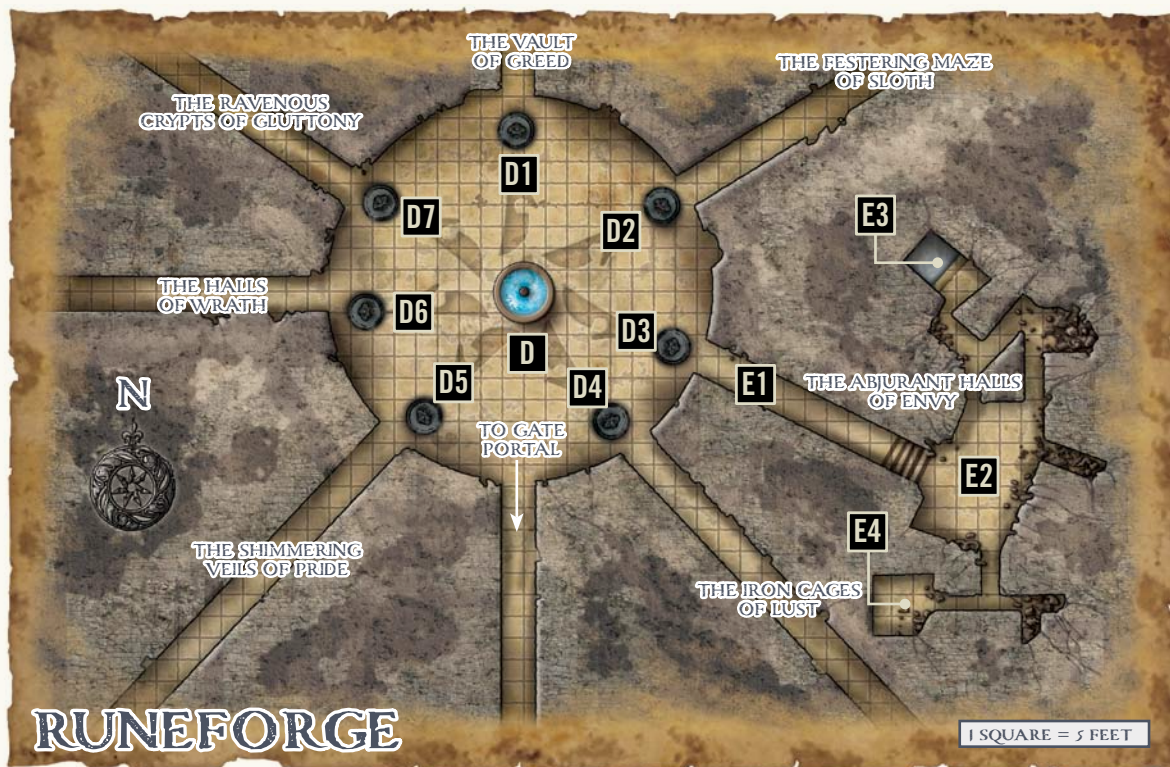
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D6 ALAZNIST: A gothic beauty with wild hair and a somewhat insane expression, this woman wears a long flowing dress and wields a thorny ranseur.

D7 ZUTHA: An obese man, his flesh rotten in places so that the bones show through, wearing a ragged robe and wielding a scythe.

REACHING THE SEVEN WINGS

The seven wings of Runeforge radiate out from the central chamber in the same orientation as the Sihedron. An eighth tunnel extends back to the portal linking Runeforge to the Material Plane, although once that portal closes on the Material Plane, it cannot be opened again from this side. Each of these tunnels extends for 150 feet from the edge of the central chamber before reaching the Runeforge wing located at the far end of the 10-foot-wide tunnel. The one exception to this was the tunnel that once led to the Abjurant Halls of Envy—this tunnel is only half as long before it reaches the first chamber of that wing of Runeforge. This wing's associated runelord who wanted her wing to be "closer" to the central chamber, and the other runelords allowed it if only because the runelord of Envy was traditionally one of the least powerful, and the others thus felt no worries about conceding this demand.

SIN TRIGGERS

Before your players pass beyond the Runeforge hub into the surrounding wings, take a few moments to jot down some notes about each player character's sins on

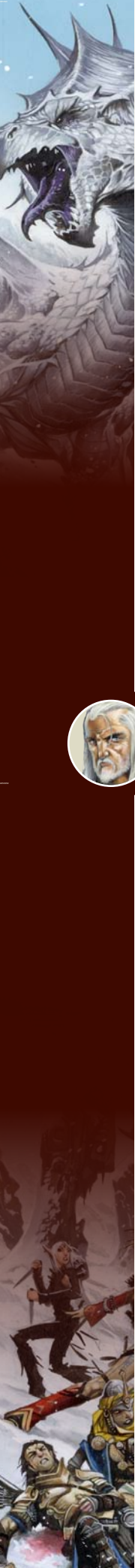
a piece of paper. Several traps, effects, and creatures in Runeforge have the uncanny ability to detect sin on an intruder, and in so doing recognize such intruders as possible allies. Originally, these wards were designed to detect a character's powers in each school of magic, so that, for example, someone skilled in evocation magic would feel welcome and safe in that area whereas others would find the going difficult.

Over the course of the campaign, you've had a chance to get to know your PCs quite well. If you've been keeping track of sin points (see Appendix Seven), determining what each PC's strongest sin is should be simple. On your piece of paper, jot down the name of each PC and, next to his name, record which of the seven deadly sins that character's personality most strongly typifies. These characters gain certain bonuses and penalties while in specific wings of Runeforge. In addition, certain traps don't affect those of allied sins, and some of the creatures herein are likely to react more favorably to those they believe are allies.

It's certainly likely you have characters who aren't sinners, or who are honestly virtuous. In either of these events, simply leave their sins blank—these characters find that while there isn't a wing of Runeforge where they feel particularly welcome, neither do they take penalties for being in a wing that opposes their sin.

THE ABJURANT HALLS

The majority of this area has been destroyed, ruined during a relatively recent war when the Wardens of Envy attempted to seize control of the newly awakened



runeforge pool. The surviving walls of this complex are decorated with murals, and where they are not horribly scorched and soot-stained, they reveal scenes of bejeweled wizards in blue-gray robes adorned with ancient runes quelling magical energy, countering the spells of rival wizards, and combining their powers to tame great scaled dragons and giants.

A PC who studies the murals may make a DC 20 Spellcraft check to identify the somatic gestures of the robed wizards depicted in the murals as components of powerful abjuration spells. If the PCs do not recognize the rune of Envy depicted in the murals, they may make a DC 25 Knowledge (arcana) or bardic knowledge check to identify it.

The surviving tunnels and chambers here are of hewn stone. Those portions of the complex that have collapsed have been absorbed and recycled into the stone surrounding the demiplane—attempts to dig out the collapsed rooms are destined to fail, as these rooms no longer exist.

E1 A WARNING MESSAGE

The approach of a non-envious character triggers a permanent *magic mouth* spell when entering this square from the direction of area D, whether flying or on foot. If the spell is triggered, read or paraphrase the following.



A voice booms out a resounding command: “Stop!” The source is a large disembodied human mouth stretched across the ceiling of this section of the tunnel. It continues, “These are the Abjurant Halls of Eager Striving. Know that your powers will be crushed and you shall die! You are not worthy!”

The Abjurant Lords of Envy despised anyone who had even a hint of personal power that might be construed as a threat to their own. They strived to crush all such beings with powerful abjurations and disjoining spells if they could not wrest their enemy’s power from them. Unsurprisingly, these practices earned them the joint ire of the rest of Runeforge.

E2 THE CHAMBER OF VENGEFUL DISJOINING (CR 10)



A wide staircase of stone descends into a large, partially caved-in chamber. The murals and decorative bas-reliefs on the walls have been blasted and fractured from what must have been a titanic war of magic. Sooty humanoid bones are scattered here and there, and flames sporadically flicker along the walls and floor as if the room still resonates with the power unleashed here. Electrical discharges spark from a silver rod protruding from the floor in the center of the room—it almost looks like the metal rod has fused with the stone of the floor.

TRAP: The silver rod was one of the standard weapons carried by the Abjurant Lords of Envy: a *rod of cancellation*. Unfortunately, this *rod of cancellation* is badly damaged, and the other denizens of Runeforge have learned to avoid this room as a result. The powerful magic stored within it and the energy resonating in this chamber made it unstable and beyond repair. Every 5 minutes, the rod generates a pulse of abjuration energy. This pulse is preceded for 1 round by humming and angry crackling, popping sounds. When the stored energy is released, a *mage’s disjunction* bursts in the room. This disjunction blast radiates from the malfunctioning rod and has no effect upon the surrounding magical qualities of Runeforge itself.

When the PCs first visit this room, the rod is 1d6+4 rounds away from releasing a disjunction pulse. If the malfunctioning rod is disarmed, the magic fades away from the trap harmlessly, but if the Disable Device check fails by 5 or more, it triggers its pulse early. Likewise, the rod triggers a pulse every time it is roughly jostled or targeted by a spell or other effect. *Dispel magic* can render it inert for 1d4 rounds if the roll is successful, otherwise the attempt causes a disjunction pulse. If the trap is triggered before it’s had time to store a charge, all saving throws made to resist it gain a +4 bonus.

DISJUNCTION PULSE

XP	CR	HP
9,600	10	30

Type magical; **Perception** automatic; **Disable Device** DC 34

AC 7 (–5 Dexterity, –2 object, +4 Size)

Hardness 10; **Break** DC 30

EFFECTS

Trigger timed and touch; **Reset** automatic

Effect spell effect (*mage’s disjunction*, 17th-level wizard, DC 23

Will save negates); multiple targets (all magic items or spell effects in area E2)

E3 THE ETHILLION POOL



Decorative lanterns illuminate this otherwise mostly bare room. A tiled path in the granite flagstones leads from the entrance to three steps leading down to a mirrored surface.

The circular depression forms a ring of steps descending to what appears to be a large pool filled with quicksilver. This metallic liquid is a rare substance invented by the Abjurant Lords—they called it ethillion. When properly tended (a process that requires several skilled abjurers and lots of time), ethillion leeches away magic from any object it contacts, storing that magic for harvesting at a later date to aid in the creation of magic items.

Ethillion is also one of the components required to create a *runeforged* weapon in the runeforge pool—see Part Ten for more details.





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TREASURE: The tiny amount of ethillion remaining in the pool can be a potent boon to the PCs. Enough doses of ethillion remain in the pool to fill a dozen flasks—ethillion can be safely transported in anything that can transport water. A character who drinks a flask of the stuff becomes infused with magical potentiality, and gains a +2 bonus on his next skill check made to craft a magic item. In addition, the time required to create the item is reduced by 1 day (to a minimum of 1 hour). Multiple doses of ethillion stack; the effects persist until the first time the drinker attempts to craft a magic item.

Alternatively, a character can use a flask of ethillion as an additional material component for any abjuration spell. Doing so causes that spell to resolve at a caster level 2 higher than the user's actual caster level.

Since the remaining ethillion in this pool has already been "charged," it no longer possesses the capability to drain magic from items it contacts. The secret of creating ethillion died with the Abjurant Lords, but if it could be rediscovered, uncharged ethillion drains magic from an item placed in it over the course of 24 hours. Up until this time passes, an item removed from contact quickly recovers. An item allowed to be drained becomes nonmagical, and results in the creation of 1 use of ethillion per 5,000 gp in the drained item's total value. Items worth less than 5,000 gp must be combined with additional items to bring the cost up to a minimum combined value of 5,000 gp before they can be used to create a dose of ethillion.

A single dose of ethillion is worth 2,500 gp.

E4 BEFOULED CHAMBER (CR 14)



Thick sheets of ooze lie in pools along the floor of this room, and the air carries on it an overwhelming stink of eye-watering mustard and vinegar.

CREATURE: Originally a guardroom, this chamber has become the den of a deadly and vile ooze that slithered up and out of a neighboring wing—the Festering Maze of Sloth. Oozes crawling into other wings of Runeforge from that maze are not an unusual occurrence, but most of them are relatively weak and are quickly slain. The denizen of this room, however, is not only a deadly mustard jelly (a more dangerous and more poisonous variant of the ochre jelly), but one infused with the Abyssal energies that lay so thickly in the Festering Maze itself. The fiendish mustard jelly is much more intelligent than most oozes, yet it isn't particularly ambitious—it desires little more than to wallow and slop in this chamber. The ooze and sludge in this room is waste excreted from the jelly's periodic meals—while Runeforge itself helps to keep the jelly alive, it does enjoy hunting other food now and then—particularly in semi-cannibalistic manners where it hunts other oozes in the Festering Maze of Sloth.

FIENDISH MUSTARD JELLY

XP	CR	HP
38,400	14	230

Fiendish variant mustard jelly (*Tome of Horrors Complete* 385, *Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 294)

CE Large ooze (extraplanar)

Init +5; **Senses** blindsight 60 ft., darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +24

Aura toxic gas (10 ft., DC 23)

DEFENSE

AC 25, touch 15, flat-footed 19 (+5 Dex, +1 dodge, +10 natural, -1 size)

hp 230 (20d8+140)

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

Defensive Abilities divide, energy absorption; **DR** 10/good;

Immune ooze traits; **Resist** cold 15, fire 15; **SR** 22

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft., swim 30 ft.

Melee 4 slams +22 (2d6+7 plus 1d6 acid and grab)

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

Special Attacks acid, constrict (2d6+10 plus 1d6 acid), smite good 1/day (+3 attack, +20 damage)

TACTICS

During Combat The fiendish mustard jelly waits until someone tries to step more than 5 feet into the room to attack.

Morale The fiendish mustard jelly fights to the death.

STATISTICS

Str 24, **Dex** 20, **Con** 24, **Int** 14, **Wis** 17, **Cha** 16

Base Atk +15; **CMB** +23 (+27 grapple); **CMD** 39 (can't be tripped)

Feats Combat Expertise, Dodge, Improved Critical (slams), Improved Natural Attack (slams), Improved Vital Strike, Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes, Mobility, Vital Strike, Weapon Focus (slams)

Skills Climb +28, Perception +24, Stealth +22, Swim +36

Languages Abyssal (cannot speak)

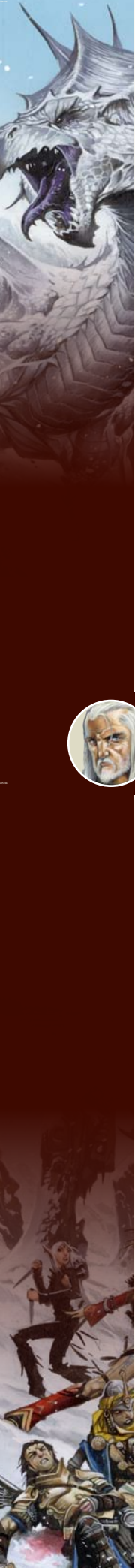
SPECIAL ABILITIES

Divide (Ex) As a standard action, a mustard jelly can split into two identical jellies, each with half the original's hit points (round down). A mustard jelly with 10 hit points or fewer cannot divide itself. When divided, each jelly moves at a speed of 40 feet.

Energy Absorption (Ex) A mustard jelly is immune to electricity and *magic missiles*. If targeted by such an effect, it gains temporary hit points equal to the damage that attack would have normally done. These temporary hit points last for 1 hour.

Toxic Gas (Ex) A mustard jelly exudes an aura of toxic gas in a 10-ft.-radius spread. A creature in this area must succeed at a DC 23 Fortitude save each round or be slowed (as per *slow*) for as long as it remains in the area plus an additional 1d4 rounds. This is a poison effect. The save DC is Constitution-based.

TREASURE: Before the fall of the Abjurant Halls, this room served as a guard chamber for a small contingent of highly trained soldiers. A successful DC 30 Perception check reveals a hidden panel in the northern wall—behind is a lever and a small stash of potions. The lever was used to trigger an alarm throughout the Abjurant Halls (it no longer works), while the potions were kept for emergencies. Many were imbibed, but 3 *potions of cure serious wounds* and a *potion of haste* still remain.



PART FOUR: THE RAVENOUS CRYPTS

THE RAVENOUS CRYPTS OF GLUTTONY WERE COMMISSIONED BY THE RUNELORD OF GASTASH TO SERVE TWO PURPOSES. FIRST, THE CRYPTS WOULD CREATE A PLACE FOR THE GREATEST OF THAT LAND'S NOBLES AND NECROMANCERS TO LIE IN REST. SECOND, AND MORE IMPORTANTLY, IT WOULD SERVE AS A PLACE FOR AGENTS OF THE RUNELORD OF GLUTTONY TO RESEARCH AND PERFECT STRANGE NEW METHODS OF NECROMANCY. DURING THASSILON'S HEIGHT, THE DEAD NOBLES AND NECROMANCERS SENT HERE WERE, IN FACT, ALSO USED AS RAW MATERIALS, YET WITH THASSILON'S FALL, THESE SUPPLY LINES WERE SUDDENLY CUT OFF.



In the thousands of years since the fall of Thassilon, the necromancers of the Ravenous Crypts ran into a problem—without a constant inflow of new bodies, they quickly ran out of fresh dead to work upon. The necromancers initially turned to the other wings, assaulting them and attempting to harvest other students for necromantic supplies, but the other wings proved too well defended. In the end, the necromancers succumbed to their own sin of gluttony and effectively became cannibals, turning on each other for raw materials. It didn't take long for one necromancer to win this war—this was the lich Azaven. Over the past several thousand years, Azaven's advances in necromancy have slowed to a near standstill and the crypts have long since emptied of the dead. His greatest necromantic triumphs dwell in the crypts now, but Azaven himself spiraled into introspective oblivion.

That changed with the wakening of the runeforge well. After taking part in the destruction of the Abjurant Halls, Azaven managed to harvest a fresh supply of dead and is in the process of revitalizing his experiments. He spends all of his time in his laboratory, but the crypts beyond are far from safe.

The Ravenous Crypt is exquisitely crafted. Arches are elaborately carved with stunning artistic patterns. Ceilings are 10 feet high in corridors, all of which are adorned with decorative moldings inlaid with silver angels. Chambers are usually arched or domed to a height of 20 feet and covered with beautiful frescoes and mosaics depicting sleeping men and women tended by cherubim and soothed by angelic singers and musicians. The floors are covered in smooth, fitted flagstones with inlaid ceramic tiles in various decorative patterns. All doors are made of iron.

The extent of the Ravenous Crypts are under the effects of a permanent *desecrate* effect (CL 20th); all undead within the crypts were created here, and thus all gain a +1 profane bonus on attack rolls, damage rolls, and saving throws, and have +1 hit points per Hit Die. These bonuses are included in their stat blocks. This aura is provided by hundreds of wraiths that have been bound into the walls,

ceiling, and floor of the crypts. All stone surfaces in the crypts are cold to the touch as a result. Whenever any effect damages or breaches the stone walls of these crypts (such as *meld into stone*, *passwall*, *transmute rock to mud*, or simple damage applied directly to a wall in an attempt to breach it), 1d6 wraiths are released into the area and immediately attack any living creatures they sense. Note that area effect damaging spells are not enough to trigger the release of wraiths—only spells directly targeting the walls in an attempt to destroy them or bypass them trigger the release of these undead guardians.

WRAITHS (1D6)	XP	CR	HP
	1,600 each	5	47 each

(Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 281)

F1 CRYPTS OF THE BUILDERS (CR 12)



The ceiling of this circular domed chamber rises to a height of thirty feet. The walls are decorated with ten grinning skulls, each gripping what appear to be bits of flesh in their teeth. A flight of steps leads up via a corridor in the far wall.

Each of the carved skulls is in fact a secret door that hides a narrow burial bier—all are empty save for a few silk funeral shrouds and scented herbs, preserved by Runeforge for eternity. These chambers once contained the bodies of the laborers responsible for the creation of these crypts. When their jobs were completed, the laborers were sealed alive into these biers, while the architects were animated as mummies and set to guard the entrance. These mummies remain to this day.

CREATURES: The six Thassilonian mummies that stand eternal guard in this room are desiccated and dried monsters clad in strips of ragged linen and silk. Their undead flesh is black and shiny, and shiny black beetles clatter over (and in places through holes in) their frames—these beetles are a physical manifestation of these mummies' more potent despair auras, constantly dropping off and turning to dust and being reborn in





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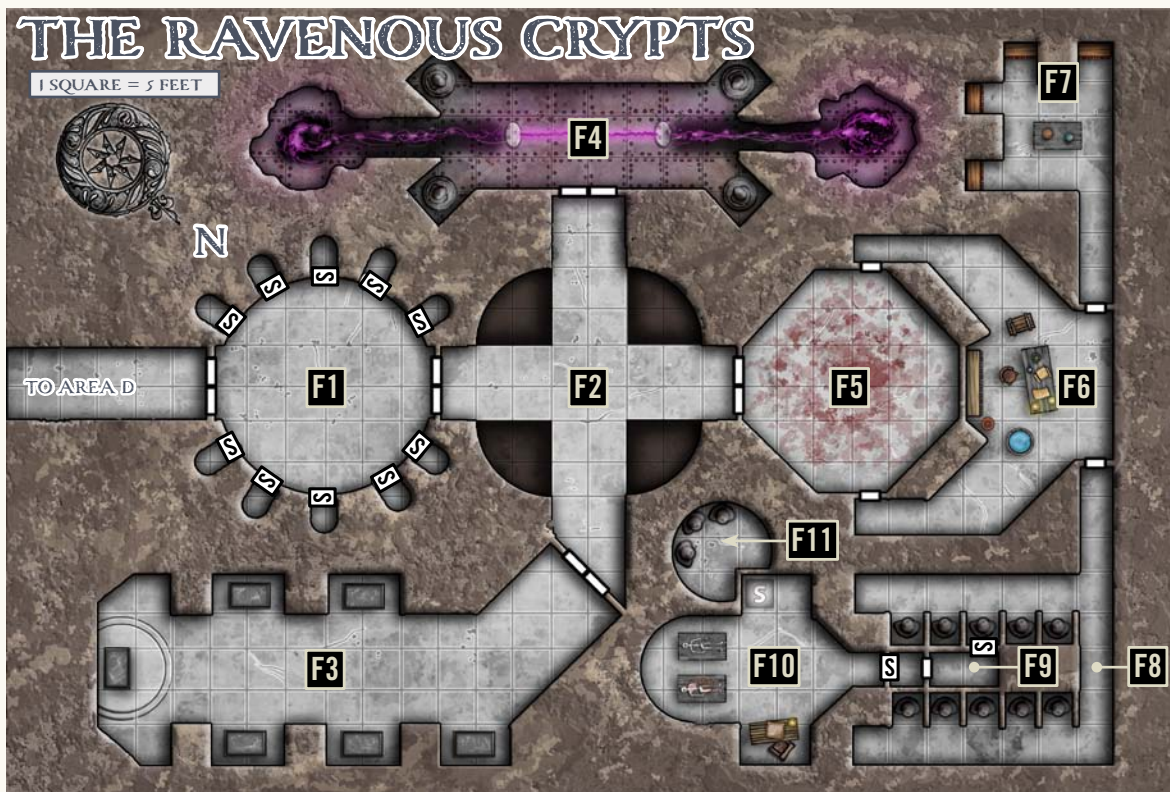
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the desiccated flesh, but are themselves harmless. The mummies rise up to attack most intruders on sight, but allow those who are gluttonous free passage.

One of these mummies bears a permanent *telepathic bond* with Azaven and immediately notifies the lich if intruders enter the room, going as far as to provide the lich up-to-the-second reports on the PCs' tactics and apparent weaknesses. In this manner, the lich should have plenty of time to prepare for the PCs' arrival.

THASSILONIAN MUMMIES (6)	XP 3,200 each	CR 7	HP 95 each
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Variant mummy (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 210)

LE Medium undead

Init +6; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception 18

Aura despair (30 ft., paralyzed for 1d4 rounds, Will DC 19 negates)

DEFENSE

AC 22, touch 12, flat-footed 20 (+2 Dex, +10 natural)

hp 95 each (10d8+50)

Fort +9, **Ref** +9, **Will** +13

DR 5/—; **Immune** undead traits

Weaknesses vulnerable to fire

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee slam +19 (1d8+14 plus mummy rot)

Special Attacks mummy rot (DC 19)

TACTICS

During Combat These mummies focus their wrath on any envious or lustful characters in the group. They do not attack gluttonous characters unless such characters attack them first.

Morale The mummies fight until destroyed, pursuing foes throughout the crypts but not back into the Runeforge hub.

STATISTICS

Str 28, **Dex** 14, **Con** —, **Int** 10, **Wis** 19, **Cha** 19

Base Atk +7; **CMB** +18; **CMD** 30

Feats Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes, Power Attack, Vital Strike, Weapon Focus (slam)

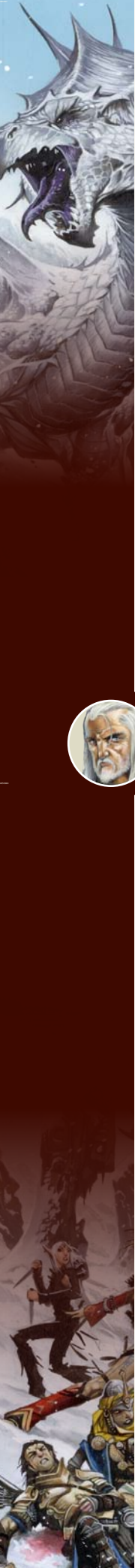
Skills Acrobatics +13, Perception +18, Sense Motive +18, Stealth +16

Languages Thassilonian

F2 THE HOUSE PATRIARCHS



The ceiling rises to a dome thirty feet above, while the floor drops away into a dizzying pit. A cross-shaped bridge of marble stretches across this pit, allowing access to four sets of iron double doors. Four bas-relief carvings of incredible detail have been carved into the curved walls in the four corners of the room, each under a word written in spiky runes. One holds aloft a sprig of grapes and a loaf of bread, one holds a wedge of cheese and a huge haunch of meat, another wields a platter heaped with candies, and the last simply stands with arms crossed, his mouth wide and grinning to display teeth that have been filed to points. Below each carving, the wall drops away into darkness, yet along these depths dozens of burial niches containing stone sarcophagi are visible.



In ancient Gastash, four noble houses counted themselves as senior among the aristocracy. These four bas-reliefs symbolize those families. Each of these families had a different specialty, as indicated by their carving's adornments and pose. The names of the patriarchs are etched in Thassilonian above each carving. These names are Inib (wine makers and bakers, east), Gorryan (cheesemakers and butchers, south), Aanstrin (confectioneries, west), and Xerriock (cannibals, north). Each embraced the sin of gluttony in his own way.

The walls of the pit below contained the dead of nobles rich enough to be buried here—or at least, they did once upon a time. The hundreds of sarcophagi that line the walls of this 150-foot-deep shaft are all now empty, their contents long ago scavenged for necromantic supplies.

F3 THE CRYPT OF LORD MANKRAY (CR 11)



A single sarcophagus of gold sits atop a white marble plinth at the far western end of this wide hall. The bas-relief lid depicts a handsome man holding a sprig of grapes and a bottle of wine crossed over his chest. The eyes are large star sapphires and the grapes appear to be individual gemstones that could be worked free with the right tools. Five wide alcoves in the room are carved with dozens of narrow niches, each of which contains a different bottle of what appears to be wine.

An investigation of the marble plinth reveals an engraved inscription written in Thassilonian: “Lord Anklerios Mankray Inib of the House of Inib: master vintner and beloved husband and father. An assassin’s blade accomplished what hundreds of duels could not.” Of course, the sarcophagus itself is empty, Anklerios’s body long since taken away for necromantic needs. Anklerios Mankray was Inib’s greatest winemaker, and the bottles buried in these walls constitute a sample of each vintage produced under his direction.

CREATURE: The Inibs did not want to send their greatest patriarch into the Ravenous Crypts unprotected and paid to have a clay golem, crafted by a sect of allied clerics of the rune goddess Lissala, installed as the crypt’s guardian. Unfortunately for Anklerios’s body, the golem was programmed to protect only against intruders to the crypts themselves, and thus did nothing when Azaven himself came to take the body away for his work. The golem remains, eternally guarding an empty sarcophagus.

The golem itself resembles a woman with the lower torso of a serpent and a Sihedron rune for a head, identifiable with a successful DC 30 Knowledge (religion) check as the image of Lissala, goddess of runes. Indeed, countless runes (prayers to the goddess)

are etched on its red clay body. The golem is also plated in iron—it’s effectively wearing full plate armor, and its CR is 1 higher than normal as a result.

ARMORED CLAY GOLEM

XP	CR	HP
12,800	11	101

Variant clay golem (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 159)

AC 30, touch 8, flat-footed 30 (+8 armor, -1 Dexterity, +14 natural, -1 size)

TACTICS

During Combat The golem does not attack gluttonous characters, even in self defense, but attacks all others on sight.

Morale The golem fights until destroyed but does not pursue foes from this chamber.

TREASURE: The sarcophagus itself is only gold plated—with 8 hours of work, a dedicated thief can scrape 800 gp of gold off the stone. Of greater value are the two star sapphire eyes (each worth 1,000 gp) and the dozen amethyst grapes (each worth 300 gp). The wine stored in the alcoves remains delicious to this day, preserved by Runeforge’s aura. In all, there are 68 bottles in this room, each of which is worth 100 gp—and each of which could serve as components to make gluttonous *runeforged* weapons.

F4 INFUSION CHAMBER (CR 14)



The walls of this room have been plated in iron, each plate of which bears a single rune—the upside-down, hooked “U” shape. What appear to be two ten-foot-tall smooth crystal pylons stand in the middle of the room. A rippling curtain of blackness shimmers between these crystals. On the opposite side of each crystal, strange tendrils of black energy—reverse lightning crackling in extreme slow-motion—extend out from the crystals into spheres of roiling blackness in circular caverns to the left and right of the entrance. The air in the room is shockingly cold.

This chamber is where the wardens of gluttony opened a portal to the Negative Energy Plane to infuse this wing of Runeforge with the wraiths that suffuse the walls. The portal itself manifests as the curtain of black energy between the two crystal pylons—this portal allows only negative energy from that plane to pass—creatures (be they living or undead) cannot travel to the Negative Energy Plane via this portal. Anyone who touches the portal immediately takes 10d6 points of damage from negative energy and gains 1 negative level—a successful DC 20 Fortitude save halves the negative energy damage and negates the negative level. An undead creature that touches the curtain instead heals 10d6 points of damage. The effects of contact with this curtain of negative energy happen no more than once per round per creature. The negative energy



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sparkling to the left and right of the pylons is less potent—these only deal 5d6 points of negative energy damage (or healing to undead) and do not impart negative levels (Fort DC 15 half).

The crystal pylons themselves are powerfully infused with negative energy—any living creature that touches a pylon gains a negative level (no save). A successful DC 15 Fortitude save removes this negative level 24 hours later.

The portal can be destroyed by shattering one of the crystal pylons. Each pylon has hardness 10 and 100 hit points. A DC 32 Strength check is enough to break one of the pylons as well. Positive energy damages these pylons as if they were undead creatures—the pylons gain no saving throw to resist or reduce damage caused by positive energy, and such damage bypasses the crystal's hardness. When a crystal pylon is destroyed, it explodes, dealing 8d6 points of piercing damage to all targets within a 30-foot burst (Reflex DC 15 half). Note that this damage could be enough to cause the second crystal to explode as well if it's taken enough damage from other sources. Once either crystal is destroyed, the negative energy portal vanishes.

Destroying this portal immediately negates the negative energy that infuses the walls—this has two effects. First, it immediately slays the wraiths bound in the walls—from this point onward, any attempt to manipulate the walls of the Ravenous Crypts may be attempted without fear. Second, it negates the *desecrate* aura that infuses the crypts—all undead creatures lose the +1 profane bonus on attack rolls, damage rolls, and saving throws this aura granted (they retain bonus hit points, though).

CREATURE: If this portal is destroyed, it yawns open into the negative energy plane for a brief moment—this doesn't directly harm any creatures in the room, but it does allow a powerful monster from that deadly realm to manifest in this chamber—a nightwing nightshade. This creature looks like an immense bat made of roiling blackness with two glowing red eyes. The nightwing is furious at being siphoned into this world, and immediately attacks any living creatures it can. Note that this room's dimensions don't allow the nightwing a large amount of mobility—something the PCs can capitalize upon.

NIGHTWING	XP 38,400	CR 14	HP 195
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(Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 2 203)

TACTICS

During Combat The nightwing has a hard time moving around in the confines of this dungeon, and that makes it particularly foul-tempered. It focuses its wrath on those who wield positive energy (be it healing or channeled energy) first, trusting its defenses to protect it from foes who wield weapons or use other forms of magic.

Morale The nightshade fights until destroyed.

TREASURE: A secret niche in the westernmost alcove of this room can be discovered with a successful DC 30 Perception check. In the small area beyond is a tiny cache of books and magical supplies geared toward the process of infusing a complex with wraiths and negative energy. The books here are similar in nature to those found in area **F6**. In addition, there are two *scrolls of plane shift* and a *scroll of binding* sitting near the back of the cache, held down by a slender wooden box. Within this box rests a tuning fork attuned to Runeforge—the material component necessary to *plane shift* into this demiplane.

F5 ABATTOIR

The scene in this room is appalling—a half-dozen brutally savaged human bodies dressed in light blue, bloodstained robes lie sprawled about the place. Several of the bodies seem to have had limbs or organs removed.

These six bodies are all that remains of the 15 that Azaven managed to claim for his research after the raid on the Abjurant Halls. The magical gear possessed by these dead wizards was mostly destroyed in the battle—Azaven was happy to take just the bodies under his care. The bodies themselves are preserved from decay by the crypt's aura, and although it's been years, Azaven works slowly and carefully. He's unsure when another boon like this might arrive and has rationed the bodies accordingly.

A character who examines the bodies and succeeds at a DC 20 Knowledge (arcana) check recognizes the work of a skilled necromancer in the patterns and methods of missing limbs and organs.

F6 RESEARCH ROOM

This chamber appears to be some sort of laboratory. Tables made of stacked sarcophagi support alchemical apparatuses, books, carved bones, scrolls, and various pieces of anatomy that have been dissected and preserved in dozens of ways.

This well-stocked research room is capable of supplying a gifted necromancer with all of the base materials necessary to craft magic items, research spells, or create undead creatures. Since Azaven prefers to use his own laboratory (area **F10**), this chamber has gone unused for thousands of years, but the supplies remain fresh thanks to Runeforge's preservative aura.

TREASURE: An alchemist's lab sits atop one table. The books are both interesting and horrifying in their subject matter of the dead, and the collection grants a +2 circumstance bonus on a Knowledge (religion) check made about undead. The collection is worth 400 gp and weighs 100 pounds.



F7 XYODDIN'S LABORATORY (CR 13)



The bookshelf-lined walls of this room contain a large collection of dog-eared tomes, manuals, and scrolls, as well as jars of fluid in which float humanoid organs and bits of flesh. A dissected human torso sits atop the room's stone table.

CREATURE: This room is inhabited by an undead monster fashioned from a man named Xyoddin—once the Xerriock family's most esteemed patriarch. His appetites were matched by few, making him one of his nation's most reprehensible members, for the Xerriocks were cannibals.

Azaven's success with Xyoddin resulted in a ravenous undead monster who could not only serve the lich as a laboratory assistant but who retained enough charm to engage the lich in conversation—what Xyoddin lacks in wits and intellect, he more than makes up for with the gift of telling Azaven what he wants to hear. In many ways, the ravenous dread zombie is the perfect necromantic sycophant.

Currently, Xyoddin is in the process of meticulously dissecting one of the wizards harvested from the Abjurant Halls. In life, this wizard had treated his own flesh with strange magic that rendered him difficult to animate into undeath.

Azaven has tasked Xyoddin with the gruesome duty of cataloging every tiny bit of the man's body, business the ravenous zombie has been at for nearly a decade now. Every year, Azaven rewards Xyoddin's work by allowing him to eat a portion of the dissected body.

XYODDIN XERRIOCK

XP	CR	HP
25,600	13	218

Male Azlanti ravenous dread zombie human aristocrat 4/rogue 9
(*Advanced Bestiary* 105, 211)

CE Medium undead (human)

Init +8; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Perception +26

Aura unnatural aura

DEFENSE

AC 26, touch 15, flat-footed 21 (+7 armor, +4 Dex, +1 dodge, +4 natural)

hp 218 (13 HD; 9d8+4d8+156); fast healing 10

Fort +17, **Ref** +14, **Will** +11

Defensive Abilities cannibalistic healing, channel resistance +2, evasion, improved uncanny dodge, trap sense +3; **DR** 5/—;

Immune undead traits

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee +1 *human bane dagger* +20/+15 (1d4+9/19–20), bite +18 (1d4+11)

Ranged mwk dagger +17/+12 (1d4+8/19–20)

Special Attacks brain consumption, command zombies, favored prey (humans), hungry special attacks, sneak attack +5d6, sprint

TACTICS

Before Combat Xyoddin tears free a portion of the torso's liver and eats it before combat begins if he has a chance, gaining the benefits of fast healing 10 for the fight to come.

During Combat If faced with enemies that include humans in their ranks, Xyoddin's terrible hunger pulls him to them, causing him to ignore all non-human targets. He's able to hold back his ravenous urgings enough to resist taking the time to feast on a slain human if other enemies remain to defeat, but only barely.

Morale Xyoddin fights until destroyed.

STATISTICS

Str 24, **Dex** 18, **Con** —, **Int** 13, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 30

Base Atk +9; **CMB** +18 (+20 grapple);

CMD 33 (35 vs. grapple)

Feats Blind-Fight, Combat Expertise,

Combat Reflexes, Dazzling Display,

Dodge, Greater Feint, Improved

Feint, Improved Grapple,

Improved Initiative, Improved

Unarmed Strike, Mobility,

Shatter Defenses, Toughness,

Weapon Focus (dagger)

Skills Acrobatics +28, Bluff +27,

Climb +15, Diplomacy +27, Escape Artist +24,

Intimidate +31, Knowledge (nobility) +18,

Perception +26, Perform (string) +20, Sense

Motive +18, Stealth +24, Survival +10

Languages Giant, Thassilonian

SQ rogue talents (bleeding attack +5,

combat trick, surprise attack, weapon

training), trapfinding +4

Gear +3 *chain shirt*, +1 *human bane dagger*,



XYODDIN
XERRIOCK



masterwork dagger, *amulet of natural armor* +2, *cloak of resistance* +1, 146 gp

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Brain Consumption (Ex) When Xyoddin makes a successful grapple check to deal damage with his bite against a pinned or helpless living foe, the victim takes 2d4 points of Intelligence drain as Xyoddin consumes portions of his brain. A successful DC 23 Fortitude save halves this Intelligence drain. A creature reduced to 0 Intelligence by this attack is slain. Creatures immune to critical hits and those with multiple heads are not killed by this attack. The save DC is Strength-based.

Cannibalistic Healing (Ex) So long as Xyoddin has fed on human flesh within the last 24 hours, he gains fast healing 10.

Command Zombies (Su) Xyoddin can automatically command all normal zombies within 30 feet as a free action. Normal zombies never attack him unless they are compelled.

Favored Prey (Ex) Xyoddin gains a +2 bonus on damage rolls against humanoids and a +2 bonus on Bluff, Perception, Sense Motive, and Survival checks when using these skills against humanoids. Against humans, these bonuses increase to +4.

Hungry Special Attacks (Ex) Humans take a -2 penalty on saving throws against Xyoddin's special attacks.

Ravenous Body (Su) Normally, Xyoddin must eat human flesh at least once every 3 days or he begins to starve, but the sustaining presence radiated by Runeforge prevents this.

Sprint (Ex) Once per day, Xyoddin can move at a speed of 300 feet when he makes a charge.

Telepathic Bond (Sp) Xyoddin has a permanent *telepathic bond* with Azaven.

Unnatural Aura (Su) Any animal within 30 feet of Xyoddin must succeed at a DC 26 Will save or become panicked, remaining so for as long as it remains within this proximity. This is a mind-affecting fear effect.

TREASURE: The various lenses and magnifying glasses built into the contraption around the examination table are worth 100 gp each—there are 10 lenses in all. The research books are worth a total of 10,000 gp. They detail various experiments, summoning rituals, chemical concoctions, and steps that Runelord Zutha's minions followed to attain their various states of undeath. They provide a +5 circumstance bonus on all Knowledge (arcana) and Knowledge (religion) checks made regarding necromancy and undead creatures.

A character who spends at least a few hours looking through these books quickly comes across a fairly significant section detailing Runelord Zutha's final task for the Ravenous Crypts—the development of a place and method for him to retreat from the world into stasis, should Thassilon come to a sudden end. Zutha asked his agents in Runeforge to develop a way to split his phylactery, a book entitled *The Gluttonous Tome*, into three pieces, which could then be hidden in the world far from Thassilon. Then, after the dust of the empire's fall had settled, these three fragments could be brought

back together to call him back from the beyond. That Azaven and the other (now destroyed) necromancers accomplished this goal is recorded, but no indication of where the three parts of the phylactery were sent can be found. In fact, if the PCs take the time and effort to try to learn more about this phylactery, even the use of powerful effects like *commune* or *contact other plane* fail—for the current status of this phylactery is beyond even the gods to divine.

DEVELOPMENT: If Azaven becomes aware of the fact that the Ravenous Crypts have been invaded, he orders Xyoddin to begin patrolling the crypts to look for intruders. Before Xyoddin sets off on this patrol, Azaven allows Xyoddin to feast on some human flesh to activate his fast healing. Xyoddin keeps the lich regularly updated via their telepathic link—if Xyoddin encounters the PCs, he attacks them at once, but during the fight keeps Azaven updated on the PCs' capabilities, tactics, and weaknesses.

F8 CRYPT GUARDIANS (CR 12)

Numerous five-foot-wide burial niches line the inner walls of this “U” shaped catacomb. Each niche contains a stone burial urn, large enough to contain a crouching human body within the ancient stone container. **CREATURES:** The urns, as with all others in this crypt, are all empty, yet the hall itself is not. Another six Thassilonian mummies stand guard here, ready to attack any intruders. As in area F1, one of these mummies bears a permanent *telepathic bond* with Azaven, and alerts him to intruders at the start of combat. The narrow confines of this crypt force the mummies to fight foes one at a time, so any mummy without a target uses the aid another action to increase the AC of any adjacent mummy in combat.

THASSILONIAN MUMMIES (6)	XP	CR	HP
	3,200 each	7	95 each

(see page 259)

F9 SECRET CRYPT

The back wall of this niche, as well as the entrance into area F10 itself, is hidden by secret doors. A successful DC 30 Perception check reveals the locations of both hidden doors.

F10 ASSEMBLY ROOM (CR 15)



Lanterns hang from hooks over three large tables scattered throughout this chamber. Two tables are covered with preserved human body parts stitched together with thick thread to partially form a pair of patchwork human corpses. Stools and small steel work trays covered in slender knives, clamps, hooks, saws, screws, needles, and other less identifiable tools surround each of the large tables.



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This is where Azaven the lich performs the bulk of his work and research, and likely where he's encountered by the PCs. Stone boxes under the worktables contain caches of more dismembered body parts. The two stitched-together corpses on the tables are nearly completed subjects that Azaven has prepared from leftover body parts—his hope is to create undead from reconstructed parts rather than simply limiting himself to whole bodies, but many of his previous experiments along these lines proved gruesomely and spectacularly unstable.

In the northwestern corner of the room is a hidden trap door that can be discovered with a successful DC 30 Perception check—it opens through the roof of area F11, the floor of which is 10 feet below.

CREATURE: Azaven sits on a stool at a worktable opposite from the entrance, stitching together the last pieces of one of the prospective patchwork undead minions. Although Azaven takes the time to cast several defensive spells once he knows the Ravenous Crypts have been invaded, he's not initially looking for a fight. In fact, similar to the Scribbler earlier in the adventure, Azaven is quite curious what has become of the outside world, and

when the PCs arrive he bids them answer questions like those the Scribbler asked. Azaven has very little interest in responding to the PCs' questions, though, and if they demand answers or resist him, he decides to kill them and extract the knowledge he seeks from their soon-to-be-undead bodies.

AZAVEN

XP	CR	HP
51,200	15	179

Male Azlanti human lich necromancer 14 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 188)

CE Medium undead (augmented humanoid, human)

Init +8; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., life sight; Perception +29

Aura fear (60-ft. radius, DC 23)

DEFENSE

AC 27, touch 17, flat-footed 22 (+5 armor, +2 deflection, +4 Dex, +1 dodge, +5 natural)

hp 179 (14d6+128)

Fort +10, **Ref** +10, **Will** +14

Defensive Abilities channel resistance +4, rejuvenation;

DR 15/bludgeoning and magic; **Immune** cold, electricity, undead traits

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee touch +9 (1d8+8 plus paralyzing touch)

Special Attacks channel negative energy (DC 21, 11/day)

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 14th; concentration +22)

11/day—grave touch (7 rounds)

Spells Prepared (CL 14th; concentration +22)

7th—quicken *displacement*, *finger of death* (DC 27), *prismatic spray* (DC 25), quickened *vampiric touch* (2)

6th—quicken *blindness/deafness* (DC 26, 2), quickened *cat's grace*, *chain lightning* (DC 24), *disintegrate* (DC 24), *mislead* (DC 24)

5th—*fabricate*, quickened *magic missile*, *telekinesis* (DC 23), *wall of force*, *waves of fatigue* (2)

4th—*bestow curse* (DC 24), *contagion* (DC 24), *dimension door*, *enervation* (2), *fear* (DC 24), *mass reduce person* (DC 22), *stone shape*

3rd—extended *false life*, *fly*, *gaseous form*, *ray of exhaustion* (2), *slow* (DC 21), *stinking cloud* (DC 21), *tongues*

2nd—*blindness/deafness* (DC 22, 2), *ghoul touch* (DC 22), *glitterdust* (DC 20), *invisibility*, *mirror image*, *scorching ray*, *spectral hand*

1st—*chill touch* (DC 21, 2), *grease* (DC 19), *magic missile* (3), *obscuring mist*, *reduce person* (DC 19)

0 (at will)—*arcane mark*, *light*, *mage hand*, *mending*, *prestidigitation*

Thassilonian Specialization necromancy;

Opposition Schools abjuration, enchantment

TACTICS

Before Combat Once he knows interlopers have invaded the crypts, Azaven casts extended *false life* and

AZAVEN



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tongues on himself. He then calls a devourer—a proud being named Vioidzhain, scarred with symbols only it knows the otherworldly source of—to guard him using his *staff of hungry shadows*. As soon as he can before combat, he casts quickened *cat's grace*.

During Combat Azaven opens battles by casting *finger of death* at a spellcaster and quickened *displacement* on himself. He then casts *wall of force* to seal himself off from the PCs, giving him time to cast *fly*, *mirror image*, and *spectral hand*. During this time, he lets the conjured devourer keep the PCs busy. If the PCs haven't breached his wall by the time he's done casting preparatory spells, he uses *dimension door* to return back into their midst and begins casting offensive spells. If he needs more minions, Azaven casts *stone shape* on a nearby wall to release several wraiths, hoping they provide additional distractions.

Morale Azaven values his own immortal existence too much to stick around in a fight he's losing. If reduced to fewer than 30 hit points, he uses *mislead* to escape by casting *gaseous form* and retreating to area **F11**, where he gathers his phylactery before triggering the trap in the room to heal his damage. Given time, he recovers his spells and then seeks revenge on the PCs. If confronted there, Azaven has little choice but to fight until destroyed, but he makes sure to trigger the trap in the room before a fight begins.

STATISTICS

Str 10, **Dex** 18, **Con** —, **Int** 26, **Wis** 17, **Cha** 18

Base Atk +7; **CMB** +9; **CMD** 26

Feats Combat Casting, Command Undead, Craft Staff, Craft Wondrous Item, Dodge, Extend Spell, Greater Spell Focus (necromancy), Improved Initiative, Quicken Spell, Scribe Scroll, Spell Focus (necromancy), Toughness

Skills Craft (alchemy) +26, Knowledge (arcana, dungeoneering, engineering, nobility, planes, and religion) +26, Perception +29, Sense Motive +29, Spellcraft +26, Stealth +30

Languages Abyssal, Aklo, Draconic, Elven, Giant, Ignan, Infernal, Nocril, Thassilonian; *telepathic bond*, *tongues*

SQ arcane bond (*staff of hungry shadows*), life sight (20 feet, 14 rounds/day)

Combat Gear *staff of hungry shadows* (10 charges); **Other Gear** *bracers of armor +5*, *headband of vast intelligence +4* (grants ranks in Knowledge [nobility] and Spellcraft), *ring of protection +2*, *contingency* statuette worth 2,000 gp

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Contingency (Sp) If Azaven is grappled, a *dimension door* spell activates on him. Azaven uses this to merely reposition himself in combat if the battle is going well—if it is going poorly, he uses it to flee to area **F11**.

Telepathic Bond (Sp) Azaven has a permanent *telepathic bond* with his minion Xyoddin and with one of the Thassilonian mummies in areas **F1** and **F8**.

TREASURE: The surgical equipment here was created from silver jewelry and decorations looted from nearby crypts via *fabricate* spells. The entire collection in this room is worth 1,200 gp.

F11 AZAVEN'S PHYLACTERY (CR 13)



This crypt contains three stone sarcophagi, each bearing detailed carvings of hundreds of capering skeletons and dancing corpses.

These three sarcophagi contain Azaven's three greatest treasures. All three are protected by a dangerous trap.

TRAP: If any of these three stone coffins are opened or molested in any way, the skeletons and corpses carved on the sides of all three suddenly animate and begin shrieking in a bloodcurdling manner. Hundreds of little bony arms point out into the room, and from their hundreds of outstretched fingers spring beams of necromantic fury. The trap continues to fire every round once it is first triggered (it needs a round to recharge its energies before firing again)—it ceases only after all creatures leave the room, or automatically after a full minute of use, after which it requires a full hour to recharge its energy.

NECROMANTIC DEATHTRAP

XP	CR
25,600	13

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

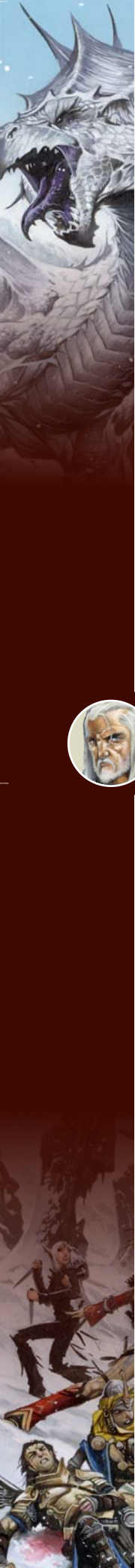
EFFECTS

Trigger touch; **Reset** automatic after 1 round delay (for 1 minute, after which automatic after a 1 hour delay)

Effect All creatures in the room take 14d6 points of negative energy damage every other round (Will DC 25 half)—undead creatures are instead healed for a like amount (they do not gain excess healing as temporary hit points). Every even-numbered round, the trap becomes inert as it recharges its energy from the surrounding walls, firing again automatically every odd-numbered round until the room is deserted or the trap is disabled. If the portal in area **F4** has been destroyed, this trap cannot recharge and only triggers once before going forever inert.

TREASURE: One of the sarcophagi contains 11 spellbooks Azaven has claimed from enemies and fallen allies. Each of these spellbooks bears the occasional notation written in Thassilonian, but the actual spells within—a wide range of 1st- to 8th-level spells—can be identified as normal. All of the spells Azaven has prepared can be found among these aged tomes, as can any other potent or rare spell you wish to include in the campaign. The second coffin contains 7,000 gp in mixed jewels, gems, and fine linens Azaven stores for *fabricate* spells, an *eversmoking bottle*, a *golembane scarab*, and all of the lich's personal spellbooks. The final coffin is itself Azaven's phylactery (hardness 20, hp 150, Break DC 50), a fortified magic item in its own right. Azaven opted for a stronger, sturdier phylactery rather than a small portable one, since he is bound to Runeforge and cannot leave its halls.





PART FIVE: THE VAULT OF GREED

THIS WAS THE RESEARCH CENTER AND LAIR OF A GROUP OF RUNELORD KARZOUG'S MOST TALENTED AND GIFTED FOLLOWERS. THEY SPENT YEARS PERFECTING THE RUNE MAGIC OF GREED FOR THEIR MASTER, AMASSING TREASURES FOR THEMSELVES, AND STEALING A FEW THINGS FROM THEIR ENEMIES. THE GREATEST AMONG THEM WAS A POWERFUL TRANSMUTER BY THE NAME OF IZOMANDAKUS—AT HIS HEIGHT, ONE OF RUNEFORGE'S MOST POWERFUL WIZARDS. WHEN THE WARDENS OF ENVY ATTEMPTED TO SEIZE CONTROL OF THE RUNEFORGE POOL ITSELF, IZOMANDAKUS WAS AMONG THE FIRST TO FIGHT BACK.



During the attack on the Wardens of Envy and the ensuing, short-lived battle that followed, most of the Lords of Greed (including Izomandakus) were slain, leaving behind a half-dozen bickering apprentices. One of these apprentices turned out to be more scheming and backstabbing than the others—a gifted wizard who had long ago turned his flesh into mithral. This man, a transmuter named Ordikon, murdered, transformed, and defeated the other apprentices, but his rampage was somewhat short-sighted. He now commands a nearly empty vault, and while he has great wealth, there is no one to lord it over, and nothing to spend it on. The only thing that has prevented him from descending fully into madness is whispers from his lord Karzoug. Ordikon realizes that Karzoug's near-awakening is what reactivated the runeforge pool, and he knows his master is nearing a return to power.

Many parts of this branch of Runeforge have been transmuted into gold or festooned with precious gems, most of which have been magically treated to revert to stone and lead if taken from the vault. Only the items listed in each area's individual treasure sections can be looted from this wing. All areas are lit with *continual light* spells cast upon gems set high on the walls, unless noted otherwise in a room's description.

G1 PILFERER'S BANE (CR 10)



A large iron door studded with dozens of colorful gemstones stands in the eastern wall at the end of this corridor. Although the door appears to have no latch, a depression in the center contains a keyhole.

The door is in fact a trap intended to lure trespassers to their death. The actual entrance into the Vault of Greed is hidden at the end of the corridor, just to the left of the trapped door—this secret door can be found with a successful DC 30 Perception check.

TRAP: The door is actually a thick iron plate set in the wall. It has a nonfunctional internal lock, but no

handle. The iron slab is attached to a metal piston in a recessed area behind it. When any part of the fake door is touched, the piston thrusts forward with incredible force, smashing anything in its path against the opposing wall. A chamber behind the piston houses complex counterweights and gears that retract the piston and resets the trap.

CRUSHING DOOR

XP	CR
9,600	10

Type mechanical; **Perception** DC 28; **Disable Device** DC 24

EFFECTS

Trigger touch; **Reset** automatic

Effect crush (12d10 bludgeoning, DC 24 Reflex save to avoid); multiple targets (all creatures standing opposite to the door when it falls)

TREASURE: The precious stones embedded in the fake iron door are only worth a total of 50 gp in all—hardly worth the trouble of prying them out.

G2 MORPHIC MIST (CR 10)



A beautiful tunnel of polished wood inlaid with silver and gold runes stretches for at least a hundred feet before ending at a wall of greenish mist sparkling with silver motes of light.

The wood that lines the walls here is an inch thick, beyond which is solid stone. The Thassilonian runes carved into the walls describe the works of Karzoug and extol his gifts in the art of transmutation. A character could study these runes and learn much of Runelord Karzoug—consult page 233 for the information that can be gained with a successful Knowledge check.

HAZARD: The mist acts as a secondary defense against intruders, starting at this location and continuing north all the way to the entrance to area G3. Greedy characters can pass through the mist without undue effect, but any other living creature who enters it must





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MAP FIVE: THE VAULT OF GREED

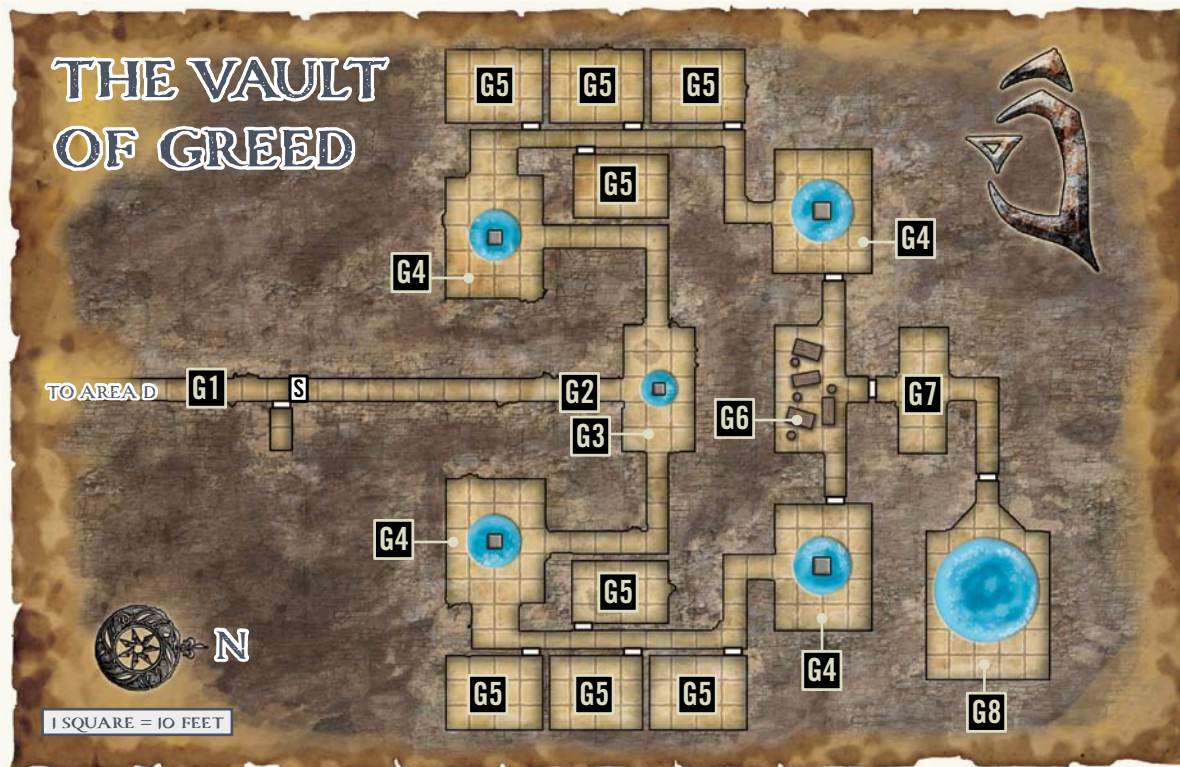
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succeed at a DC 22 Fortitude save or suffer the effects of a *baleful polymorph* to resist being transformed into a goldfish and then teleported into one of the pools in area G4. Holding one's breath grants a +4 bonus on the saving throw against the morphic mist. The mist can be dispersed by any strong blast of wind, but 1d4 rounds after the wind ceases, the mist refills the area. The mist functions at CL 13th, and can be temporarily suppressed via effects like *dispel magic*. A character who studies the mist can identify its dangerous properties with a successful DC 28 Spellcraft check, as if identifying the properties of a magic item.

The mist can be permanently removed from the Vault of Greed via the method described in area G4, but other powerful effects, such as *mage's disjunction*, can serve to permanently destroy this magical hazard as well, at the GM's discretion.

STORY AWARD: Award the PCs 9,600 XP the first time they manage to navigate the mist into the Vault of Greed beyond.

G3 TROUBLE WITH MEPHITS (CR 7)



This chamber is paved with ivory tiles, each one engraved with a silver rune depicting what appears to be a claw gripping a gemstone. The walls and ceiling are of polished marble. A large silver basin in the center of the room contains an icy sculpture of a whale spraying crystal-clear water from its blowhole. The water cascades around it to keep the basin full, but never quite overflowing.

This fountain acts as a tiny portal to the Plane of Water, created as much as a display of ostentatious opulence as much as anything else. The water itself is cool and refreshing, but hardly required for those dwelling in the complex.

CREATURES: The portal to the Plane of Water attracts water mephits for some reason its creators have never been able to decipher. No matter how many times the Lords of Greed have killed the mephits off or driven them away, more mephits always eventually appear. At any one time, four mephits frolic in the waters of this pool. If the PCs return at a later time, more mephits have arrived—feel free to adjust the total number of mephits appearing here as you wish. Despite their small stature and relative weakness, the mephits are brave to the point of being foolhardy.

Initially hostile, the mephits nonetheless don't initiate attacks on intruders, instead hurling insults ("Oh look! Another group of fleshies come to slobber in our pool!"). If the PCs can make the mephits at least friendly, the creatures can be conversed with. The water mephits complain that while they enjoy playing in the fountain, a "mean silver man" keeps coming and casting hurtful spells at them. They know a little bit about his combat tactics (each mephit knows at least a dozen others of its kind who were killed by Ordikon), and if the PCs ask the right questions, the mephits can give them a few tips on how to fight the "silver man." At some point, the mephits also volunteer that they know of a lot more fountains in this complex, particularly that the goldfish pools are all linked to each other and

the morphic mist in area **G2**, and that the biggest of the pools (area **G8**) is “made of magic.”

WATER MEPHITS (4)	XP 800 each	CR 3	HP 19 each
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(Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 202–203)

TACTICS

During Combat The mephits recently had a run-in with Ordikon and take the PCs for more enemies. Half of them spit acid at the PCs while the others attempt to summon more water mephits to aid them. They prefer to use their *acid arrows* and breath weapons over melee.

Morale If more than half of the water mephits are slain, the rest dive through the ice whale’s blowhole to flee back to the Elemental Plane of Water.

STORY AWARD: If the PCs manage to learn something useful from the mephits, grant them a 3,200 XP award.

G4 FOUNTAINS (CR 11 TO 15)



A fountain sprays water toward the ceiling, thirty feet above. The water cascades back into a pool in which colorful goldfish swim. The fountain features a nine-foot-tall stone statue of a human wizard holding a staff in one hand. The other hand is raised over his head, and it’s from this hand’s palm that the water issues.

The water in each fountain is normal and the flow is magically sustained, siphoned from the pool in area **G3** via narrow underground runnels. The goldfish in the pools are mostly that, but any PCs who succumbed to the morphic mist in area **G2** can be found in one of these fountains, determined at random. Of course, correctly identifying the goldfish for what they are might be difficult. If you wish, some of these goldfish could be other NPCs who have fallen victim to the morphic mist in the past—these should be adventurers who stumbled into Runeforge years ago and have been trapped here ever since.

CREATURES: The statues that stand within each of these fountains are in fact all stone golems. These golems are magically linked—what one sees and hears, the others see and hear as well. The golems ignore greedy intruders, but any non-mephit creature larger than Tiny immediately attracts the attention of the golems and it attacks at once. When one golem attacks, the other three stationed in the other fountain rooms activate as well and move as quickly as possible to converge on the room where the fight is taking place—the golems never move through area **G6** to reach their target, instead taking the long way through the vault. If the PCs work quickly to defeat the golems, they’ll not need to face multiple golems at once. The golems, once activated, continue to pursue foes throughout the vault (even into area **G6** if their prey attempts to

flee there)—they give up pursuit and return to their fountains once all obvious targets have fled from the vaults to the Runeforge hub (area **D**).

Each golem that is destroyed reduces the save DC of the morphic mist in area **G2** by 2 points. If all four golems are destroyed, the morphic mist vanishes and any characters who had been transformed into goldfish immediately return to their true forms in whatever pool they had been swimming in.

STONE GOLEMS (4)	XP 12,800 each	CR 11	HP 107 each
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(Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 163)

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Linked Senses (Su) These golems share the same senses, and whenever any two golems are within line of sight of each other, those golems are treated as having all-around vision—they can see in all directions at once and cannot be flanked.

G5 FABRICATION CHAMBERS

Each of these rooms served as living quarters for Izomandakus and his apprentices—although they had no need to sleep or eat, each wizard could retire here to relax or entertain himself. Each room is empty, save for a scattering of raw materials like sheets of cloth, stacks of lumber, blocks of stone, metal bars, and bones.

These rooms radiate strong transmutation magic, and any greedy character who enters one immediately understands how to use it. A character may use the room to cast *fabricate* at will as a spell-like ability. The rooms themselves do not provide the raw materials for the spell—those must be provided by the character. Items created in these rooms cannot exist outside of them—an object created in here reverts to its base materials if brought outside into the hall. Likewise, an object left in here for 24 hours reverts back to its base materials, explaining the raw materials in each of these rooms.

G6 RESEARCH CENTER (CR 14)



Rows of thick wooden worktables occupy the center of this long chamber. Bookcases lining the walls hold hundreds of books and scrolls. Crates next to or pushed under the worktables appear to be filled with an odd variety of mundane items, such as rope, sticks, sacks, tools, and cookware. A dog on one of the tables looks dead, though its hind end appears to be made of some kind of metal. A few other animals pace back and forth in small metal cages—a house cat, a few rats, a snake, and a small white-faced monkey.

This is where the Lords of Greed experimented with their craft. The dog was used in an experiment in which Ordikon was attempting to create another





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mithral creature. His experiment killed the animal and transmuted part of it into iron. The other animals are living creatures Ordikon caught in the Festering Maze—he often uses *baleful polymorph* to change centipedes, spiders, and other vermin into creatures more suitable for his current needs.

CREATURE: Ordikon is here, endlessly studying books on metallurgy and trying to figure out how to enhance his greatest triumph. Unfortunately for him, the transition from flesh to metal unhinged his mind—ever since his change, he's lost the ability to learn and grow. Ironically, this transformation also granted him immortality, yet although he's existed for 10,000 years, Ordikon hasn't expanded his knowledge since his triumphant (and cursed) transformation. He retains his intelligence and capacity for logic, yet no longer has the drive and creativity he once possessed, his mind having grown more like that of a construct over the centuries. He endlessly reads the same texts, grasping detail piecemeal, but unable to reconcile it with past information.

While Ordikon has no problem studying his spells and retaining knowledge of magical traditions, his mind has difficulty retaining memories of less technical natures. He thus has only vague memories of the time before his transformation. He can remember, at times, that other wizards worked with him, and that he once served a man named Izomandakus. His memories today tell him these others were like him, metal men who deserved to rule over the lesser realm of transient flesh. Arguments to the contrary only confuse him and gradually raise his anger. His warped memories make him a poor subject for interrogation about Thassilon.

- 9/day—telekinetic fist (1d4+6 bludgeoning)
- Spells Prepared** (CL 13th; concentration +19)
 - 7th—*prismatic spray* (DC 23), *reverse gravity* (2)
 - 6th—*disintegrate* (DC 24, 2), *flesh to stone* (DC 24), *greater dispel magic*, *quicken mirror image*
 - 5th—*baleful polymorph* (DC 23, 2), *cone of cold* (DC 21), *dismissal* (DC 21), *quicken shield*, *wall of force*
 - 4th—*dimension door* (2), *fear* (DC 20), *mass reduce person* (DC 22, 2), *stoneskin*
 - 3rd—*dispel magic*, *fireball* (DC 19), *fly*, *extended false life*, *slow* (DC 21, 2), *protection from energy*
 - 2nd—*acid arrow*, *cat's grace* (2), *glitterdust* (DC 18), *extended mage armor*, *scorching ray* (3)
 - 1st—*expeditious retreat*, *grease* (DC 17), *magic missile* (3), *reduce person* (DC 19, 2), *true strike*
 - 0 (at will)—*acid splash*, *arcane mark*, *mage hand*, *open/close*, *prestidigitation*



ORDIKON, THE MITHRAL MAGE	XP 38,400	CR 14	HP 169
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Male Azlanti mithral-clad human transmuter 13 (*Advanced Bestiary* 169)

NE Medium humanoid (human)

Init +4; **Senses** Perception +16

DEFENSE

AC 31, touch 15, flat-footed 26 (+4 armor, +4 Dex, +1 dodge, +8 natural, +4 shield)

hp 169 (13d6+121)

Fort +11, **Ref** +12, **Will** +12

Defensive Abilities medium fortification (75%); **Resist** electricity 30, fire 15

Weaknesses vulnerable to electricity

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft., fly 60 ft. (good)

Melee *staff of mithral might* +11/+6 (1d6+5), *slam* +9 (1d6+3)

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 13th; concentration +19)

At will—change shape (*beast shape III/elemental body II*, 13 rounds/day)

ORDIKON, THE MITHRAL MAGE

Thassilonian Specialization transmutation; **Opposition Schools** enchantment, illusion

TACTICS

Before Combat Ordikon starts every day by casting extended *false life*, *mage armor*, and *unseen servant*. In the event that he hears combat nearby (or if he hears any of the golems in area **G4** activate), he takes the time to cast the following spells before investigating: *shield*, *stoneskin*, *fly*, *protection from energy* (*electricity*), *cat's grace*, and *expeditious retreat*.

During Combat If caught off guard, Ordikon uses *dimension door* to travel to area **G8**, casts his short-term defensive spells as outlined above, then returns to **G6** to confront the PCs. He always opens by casting *disintegrate* on any obvious clerics, along with a quickened *mirror image*.

Morale Ordikon fights until reduced to 20 hit points or fewer, whereupon he uses *dimension door* to travel to area **G8**. If confronted there, he fights to the death.

STATISTICS

Str 14, **Dex** 18, **Con** 21, **Int** 22, **Wis** 15, **Cha** 14

Base Atk +6; **CMB** +8; **CMD** 23

Feats Craft Magic Arms and Armor, Craft Rod, Craft Staff, Craft Wondrous Item, Dodge, Extend Spell, Greater Spell Focus (transmutation), Lightning Reflexes, Scribe Scroll, Spell Focus (transmutation), Toughness

Skills Appraise +23, Craft (metalworking) +23, Fly +15, Knowledge (arcana, nature, nobility, planes) +23, Perception +16, Sense Motive +16, Spellcraft +23, Swim -1

Languages Aklo, Abyssal, Draconic, Infernal, Giant, Terran, Thassilonian

SQ arcane bond (staff), physical enhancement +3 Con

Combat Gear *staff of mithral might*; **Other Gear** *cloak of resistance +1*, *pearl of power* (2nd level), *rod of metal and mineral detection*, 500 gp in diamond dust

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Medium Fortification (Ex) Whenever a sneak attack or critical hit is scored against Ordikon, there is a 75% chance that the extra damage is negated.

Vulnerable to Electricity (Ex) Ordikon takes 150% normal damage from electricity attacks.

TREASURE: The research books scattered around this room are worth a total of 10,000 gp. They detail various experiments and partial notes on the conundrum of transmuting lead into gold. They provide a +5 circumstance bonus on all Knowledge (arcana) and Knowledge (religion) checks made regarding transmutation and constructs. A character who spends several hours reading through these books discovers notes and descriptions of the solution the Lords of Greed hit upon to protect Karzoug from the fall of Thassilon. By building a *runewell* larger than any before, Karzoug could place himself in stasis between realities, suspended between Golarion and a hostile plane called Leng. Once the dust settled, the plan was for one of Karzoug's apprentices to release him. The details of this process are not recorded in the books—the wizards of

runeforge were focused only on aiding in the *runewell's* construction, not what came after it was completed.

Also present here are Ordikon's spellbooks; a wizard who examines these finds them to be particularly unusual in that many of the notes and formulae within are redundant. Spells generally take up twice as much room as they need to in these books, as if the wizard who recorded them had a habit of repeating himself in various ways without realizing it.

G7 HALL OF GOLDEN REPOSE (CR 14)



This wide hall is floored in polished wooden planks, its walls covered in colorful jade tiles. The ceiling is made of lustrous stone that reflects the light of three decorative lanterns that brightly illuminate ten gleaming golden statues of men and women in various poses of combat readiness that stand along the walls.

All 10 of the statues in this room were once soldiers and consorts in service to the Lords of Greed. These unfortunate souls were painfully gilt while still alive but paralyzed, then posed in pleasing shapes as the gold coating their bodies hardened. A close examination of the statues reveals looks of surprise, anger, and fear on their faces. Each statue is effectively hollow, containing a leathery, brittle corpse. Unfortunately, like the extravagant decor, the gold of these statues cannot exist beyond this wing of Runeforge.

CREATURE: A nalfeshnee demon named Zuvuzeg guards this room, due to a *binding* spell placed by one of Izomandakus's now long-dead allies. The nalfeshnee knows that Izomandakus is now dead, and has fallen into a fit of despair. The wording of the particular binding spell that keeps him stuck within this room and serving as a lowly guardian for the powerful magical pool in the room beyond was constructed such that Zuvuzeg would escape the term of his permanent servitude only after he successfully made Izomandakus laugh, cry, shriek, and cheer by using nothing more than the power of nalfeshnee's storytelling ability. Over the years, Zuvuzeg had finished three of these tasks with jokes, parables, and tales, but had yet to manage to make the stoic transmuter shriek. And now that Izomandakus is dead, the nalfeshnee realizes that it will never be able to escape from its servitude except via death, or by being freed by another.

None of the other wizards here are particularly keen to release the demon, and so it sees the PCs as its latest (and perhaps last) chance at freedom. It promises them a great reward if they can dismiss the CL 20th binding effect that keeps it here, or otherwise manage to banish it back to the Abyss—if the PCs do manage to do so, the demon chuckles and tells them their great reward is nothing more than its indifference to them—it won't attack or prevent them from entering the chamber



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RECHARGING RESULTS

Use this table to determine the results of recharging items in the pool of elemental arcana.

d% ROLL	RESULT
01–03	EXPLOSION: The item explodes and is destroyed. The explosion is a 30-foot-radius burst of a random energy type that deals 1d6 points of damage per charge in the item when it exploded (Reflex DC 15 half).
04–25	BACKFIRE: The pool drains 1d10 charges and deals 1d6 points of damage (of a random energy type) per charge drained to the character (Reflex DC 15 half).
26–50	NO EFFECT: The item glows as a torch for 1d4 hours, but gains no charges.
51–90	RECHARGE: The item glows and regains 1d10 charges.
91–99	FULL RECHARGE: The item glows twice as bright as a torch and becomes fully charged.
100	SUPERCHARGE: The item now permanently glows twice as bright as a torch, and automatically regains 1d10 charges every 7 days on its own.

beyond, which it assures them contains a great treasure indeed. The demon, once freed, begins to make its own way through Runeforge looking for a method of escape—you can use it as a recurring (if untrustworthy) ally or foil against the PCs as you see fit. If the PCs aren't able to free the demon, or if they attack him or mock his so-called great reward, he fights to the death.

ZUVUZEG	XP 38,400	CR 14	HP 203
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Nalfeshnee demon (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 65)

STORY AWARD: Award the PCs experience as if they had defeated Zuvuzeg if they instead merely free him.

G8 POOL OF ELEMENTAL ARCANA



Silver beams support a domed ceiling covered in polished darkwood panels inlaid with spiky glyphs. Most of the chamber's floor ripples in an immense, forty-foot-diameter pool of deep blue liquid. Flashes of lightning and goutts of flame dance along its surface, punctuated by thunderclaps, hisses, and cacophonous shrieks. Vague shapes writhe in the currents below the pool's surface.

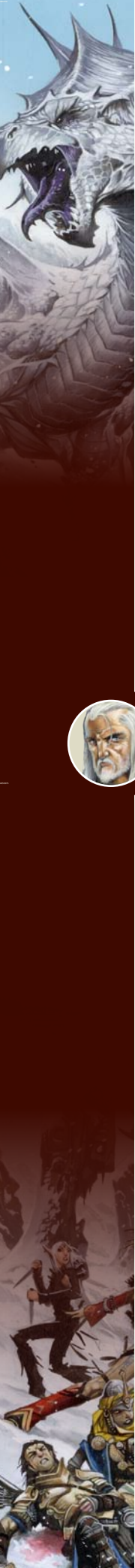
This is the pool of elemental arcana, a powerful magical pool created by the Lords of Greed in an attempt to build a second runeforge well that they alone could use, unhappy as they were with sharing the one at Runeforge's center. Their skills, however, could not match what the Runelords themselves had created, and the pool of elemental arcana is a flawed creation. A successful DC 30 Knowledge (arcana) check reveals that the waters of the pool are infused with raw magic, and that they could possibly be used to repair or recharge magic items.

The pool itself is only 2 feet deep, but is dangerous nonetheless. The pool's presence causes non-greedy souls to quickly grow disoriented and confused—such creatures must make a DC 18 Will save each round they remain within 10 feet of the pool's edge. Failure results in 1d6 points of Intelligence, Wisdom, and Charisma drain as the character's soul is siphoned away and converted into raw magic by the pool. Physical contact with the pool's waters imparts a –4 penalty on the save. Any creature drained to 0 Intelligence, Wisdom, and Charisma is absorbed mentally and physically into the water, his body and soul converted to raw magic. A creature killed in this manner leaves behind his gear, but nothing of the victim's physical body remains, greatly limiting options to restore the victim from death.

TREASURE: The pool of elemental arcana has the capability of recharging magic items, yet it draws the power to do so from those nearby. Immersing a magic item in the waters causes it to glow brightly for 1d4 hours—unless the item uses charges, this is the only effect the pool imparts. If an item with charges is dipped in the pool, roll on the table above to determine what occurs. Each time an item is dipped more than once a day, apply a cumulative –5 penalty on the d% roll.

A character who attempts to recharge an item or gather water from the pool must succeed at a DC 10 Reflex save to avoid touching the water. Once taken from the pool, the water becomes pure water that radiates faint transmutation magic but is otherwise unremarkable (except for its value as a component for forging *runeforged* weapons—see Appendix Eight).

The pool itself can be rendered inert for 1d4 rounds by casting a successful *dispel magic* spell against CL 15th. Water harvested from the pool while it is inert still works as a *runeforged* weapon component.



PART SIX: THE IRON CAGES OF LUST

THIS WING WAS INTENDED AS A PLACE FOR THE BREAKING AND TRAINING OF SLAVES. ORIGINALLY TENDED BY A SISTERHOOD OF ENCHANTERS, THESE WIZARDS WERE ALSO CALLED UPON BY RUNELORD SORSHEN TO AID IN DEVELOPING METHODS FOR HER TO ACHIEVE IMMORTALITY, AND ULTIMATELY, A METHOD OF SURVIVING BEYOND THE FALL OF THASSILON. UNLIKE SEVERAL OTHER WINGS, THOUGH, NO INFORMATION ON HOW THESE GOALS WERE MET REMAINS, FOR NOT LONG AFTER THASSILON'S FALL, THE SISTERS WERE BETRAYED BY ONE OF THEIR OWN SERVANTS, A SUCCUBUS NAMED DELVAHINE.



After she orchestrated the betrayal and murder of her mistresses, Delvahine was enraged to find that she was unable to escape Runeforge and return to the Abyss. For several hundred years her rage continued, until finally she accepted her fate and set to making her new home something more befitting her desires. She transformed much of this wing into one immense room, recruiting aid from the other wings by secretly dominating or otherwise manipulating the denizens found therein.

Today, Delvahine rules the Iron Cages, a dominant mistress in charge of a small army of enslaved and supplicant minions. Her four favorite followers are her children, alu-demons who serve her needs as guardians and lovers as she demands. Alu-demons are the offspring of a succubus and a human—in this case, Delvahine and four long-dead apprentices abducted from other wings of Runeforge. Delvahine has no real ties to Thassilon or the runelords, but the chambers she guards are keys (along with those of pride) to Karzoug's defeat.

Aging functions unusually in the Iron Cages. Creatures cease aging once they become adults, and as long as they remain in the cathedral, they are immortal. This immortality does not extend beyond this wing, though, and a creature that exits it is suddenly subjected to the weight of years and ages accordingly. All of the denizens of the Iron Cages are thousands of years old, and if they were to leave, they would immediately crumble to dust—the only exception to this is Delvahine herself. Already immortal, the succubus can come and go as she pleases—under the limits imposed by Runeforge.

a gargantuan mural depicts men and women engaged in all manner of carnal acts. Numerous plain ten-foot-by-ten-foot cubes line the outer ring of the cathedral, while at its center stands a pavilion of opaque silk sheets. Near the walls of the cathedral stand several delicate-looking cages, their sides more decorative than practical. Some of them contain what appear to be long-dead bodies, although one body in a cage in the chamber's northern corner seems to be clinging to life.

This wing consists of one room—an immense cathedral lined with ivory pillars carved into the likeness of Sorshen, the Runelord of Lust. The pillars are made of iron inlaid with ivory, depicting her in various lewd positions. The cages are display cases of a sort for several of Delvahine's conquests; they're detailed in areas **H2–H4**.

CREATURES: Delvahine's alu-demon children are the caretakers of this chamber. Allowed to enter their mistress's palisade only when invited or under the gravest of emergencies, they spend long hours out here, either on guard—tormenting what prisoners they have—or otherwise whiling away the hours. The four sisters are named Eryalla, Lelyrin, Voivod, and Zevashala. They resemble strikingly beautiful human women, save for the horns on their brows, their fangs, their taloned feet, and their batlike wings. Each wears little more than a few pieces of magical jewelry and flimsy garments, but before they come to investigate intruders, they take care to retrieve their ranseurs. They react to the arrival of PCs with excitement, flying into the air and circling overhead, making lewd and frank appraisals of each PC's appearance and possible sexuality. The alu-demons keep their mistress Delvahine apprised of the situation via telepathy, and until the PCs attack, try to enter the pavilion, or attempt to interact with any of the cages, the alu-demons are content to cruelly mock and flirt with the invaders. As soon as any of these conditions occur, though, the alu-demons swoop down to attack. If the PCs have already explored the

H1 CATHEDRAL OF SEDUCTION (CR 14)



This grand cathedral can be called nothing less than opulent. The floor is covered in polished red and white tiles. Thick pillars carved into the likenesses of the same beautiful nude woman with long flowing hair circle the room and support a ninety-foot-high domed ceiling, where





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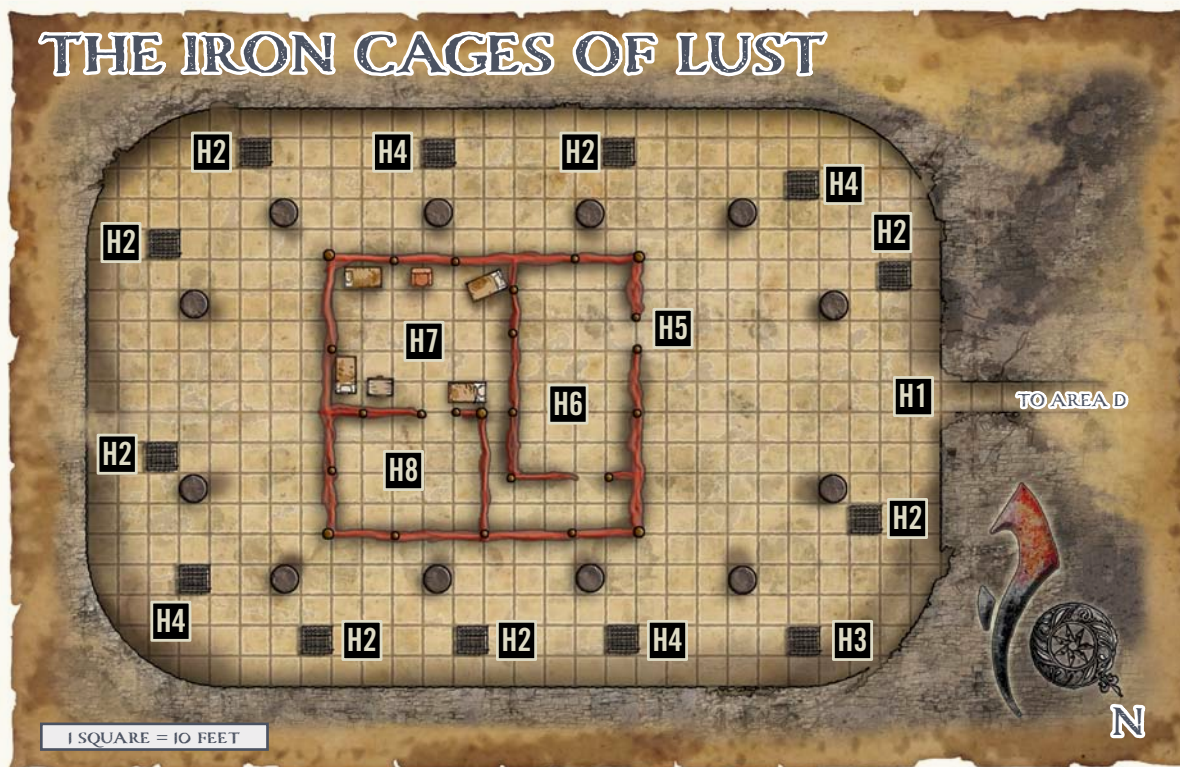
MAP SIX: THE IRON CAGES OF LUST

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Shimmering Veils of Pride and mention Vraxeris (see page 280) by name or indicate that they have some information from him that Delvahine might wish to see, the alu-demons hold their attack long enough to telepathically alert Delvahine that she has guests. The succubus then contacts the PCs via the same means, asking them to state their purpose. Her initial attitude is unfriendly in this case, rather than hostile. If the telepathic conversation can make her at least friendly, she grants permission for the PCs to enter her pavilion to speak with her. In this case, the PCs themselves are escorted by all four alu-demons.

All four alu-demons are submissives, a prestige class that focuses on fanatically protecting and serving a chosen mistress.

ERYALLA, LELYRIN, VOIVOD, AND ZEVASHALA	XP 9,600 each	CR 10	HP 124 each
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Female alu-demon submissive 5 (*Tome of Horrors Complete* 154, *Plot & Poison* 73)

CE Medium outsider (chaotic, demon, evil, extraplanar)

Init +3; **Senses** darkvision 120 ft.; Perception +17

DEFENSE

AC 23, touch 14, flat-footed 19 (+3 armor, +3 Dex, +1 dodge, +6 natural)

hp 124 each (11 HD; 6d10+5d10+66)

Fort +14, **Ref** +13, **Will** +10; +5 vs. sleep and fatigue

Defensive Abilities beauty of blood, evasion, mock obedience, pain is pleasure, tirelessness; **DR** 5/cold iron or good; **Immune** electricity, poison; **Resist** acid 10, cold 10, fire 10; **SR** 16

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft., fly 50 ft. (average)

Melee mwk ranseur +19/+14/+9 (2d4+9/×3) or 2 claws +19 (1d6+6 plus vampiric claws)

Special Attacks shield the mistress

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 8th; concentration +12)
3/day—*charm person* (DC 15), *detect thoughts* (DC 16),
disguise self (DC 15), *suggestion* (DC 17)
1/day—*dimension door*

TACTICS

During Combat The alu-demons start combat by using *suggestion* on heavily armored foes, suggesting that those foes take off their armor and gear so the demons can “get a better look at them.” They then attempt to use *charm person* against any foes who resist this initial *suggestion*. They avoid melee as long as they can, hovering just out of reach of non-flying foes and using their ranseurs. If one alu-demon is forced into melee, the others join their sister, one flanking the foe and the others standing directly behind their sisters to attack with the ranseur via reach so all four can attack one target at a time.

Morale If reduced to fewer than 50 hit points, an alu-demon uses *dimension door* to travel to area H7 and takes up a protective position at her mistress’s side. If that alu-demon has a charmed PC, she takes that PC with her when she retreats. Delvahine may or may not offer her children and their new pets healing.

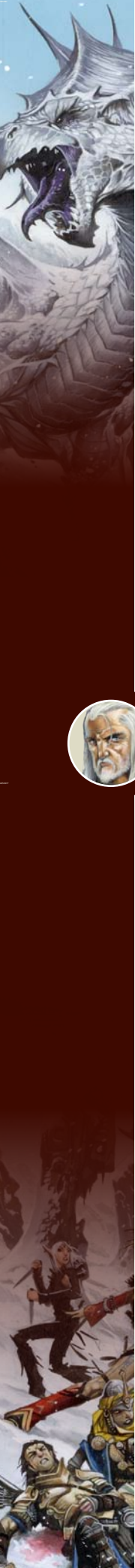
STATISTICS

Str 22, **Dex** 16, **Con** 21, **Int** 14, **Wis** 13, **Cha** 18

Base Atk +11; **CMB** +18; **CMD** 34

Feats Dodge, Endurance, Great Fortitude, Mobility, Spring Attack, Toughness

Skills Bluff +20, Escape Artist +19, Fly +19, Knowledge (planes) +18, Perception +17, Perform (sing) +10, Sense Motive +17, Stealth +19



Languages Abyssal, Celestial, Draconic; telepathy 100 ft.

SQ mistress (Delvahine), mistress said so

Gear masterwork ranseur, *belt of mighty constitution +2*, *bracers of armor +3*, jewelry worth 8,000 gp

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Beauty of Blood (Ex) Submissives are immune to bleed damage, and take 1 fewer point of damage from all slashing attacks.

Mistress (Ex) The succubus Delvahine is the mistress to all four of these alu-demon submissives. If any of these alu-demons ever willingly disobeys Delvahine or willingly allows her to come to harm, they lose all of their supernatural abilities save for their vampiric claws, and take a permanent -6 penalty on all saving throws against enchantment effects. If Delvahine dies, these penalties apply as well.

Mistress Said So (Su) The alu-demon submissives gain a +1 morale bonus on all attack rolls, saving throws, skill checks, and ability checks.

Mock Obedience (Su) Any time an alu-demon submissive is affected by a charm or compulsion effect, she may make a second saving throw to break its hold at any time as an immediate action.

Pain is Pleasure (Ex) An alu-demon submissive has damage reduction 5/— against nonlethal damage.

Shield the Mistress (Ex) Whenever Delvahine would be hit by a ranged attack or melee attack and the alu-demon submissive is within 5 feet of Delvahine, the submissive may make a DC 20 Reflex save to be hit by the attack instead. If Delvahine is forced to make a Reflex save against an effect that normally allows a Reflex save for half damage, the submissive may make that Reflex save against the effect to take the full damage from the effect while preventing any of that damage from harming the mistress. Evasion does not protect the submissive from this particular damage. The submissive must be aware of the attack and cannot be flat-footed in order to use this ability. She can attempt to shield the mistress against up to 8 attacks per round.

Tirelessness (Ex) A submissive gains a +5 bonus on saving throws against sleep and fatigue effects.

Vampiric Claws (Su) Each time an alu-demon damages a foe with her claw attack, she gains temporary hit points equal to the amount of damage she inflicted. She cannot gain more hit points in one strike than her target's current hit points + the target's Constitution score (which is enough to kill the target). These temporary hit points vanish in 1 hour.

H2 EMPTY DISPLAYS



A human-sized birdcage with flimsy silver bars decorated with delicate golden birds and flowers stands on four slender legs here. The cage doesn't seem to have a door.

These cages are in fact much more solid than they appear, for each is a permanent *forcecage* (CL 15th) with a decorative metal shell built around it. The *forcecages* themselves are solid cubes, and the air inside refreshes

as it does elsewhere in Runeforge. No practical way to enter or exit these cubes exists. When a new victim is captured, Delvahine typically renders him unconscious and then has two of her children, carrying the prisoner's body between them, use *dimension door* to enter the cage, leave the prisoner, then use *dimension door* to get out. Once the trophies are caged, Delvahine can visit them as she wills.

TREASURE: The gold and silver cages are worth 1,000 gp each if the PCs can devise a method to remove the immobile *forcecage* inside of each. Each cage weighs 250 pounds.

H3 MR. MUTT



The inside of this birdcage contains a shivering man wearing little more than a set of chains and a thick leather collar. A pair of clay bowls occupies one corner and a pile of straw sits in another.

CREATURE: A young Thassilonian soldier named Nelevetu Voan earned the enmity of one of the caretakers of the Cathedral of Lust a few weeks before the fall of Thassilon. He was imprisoned here as punishment, and for the last 10,000 years has remained a prisoner. Over those years, Delvahine and her daughters have visited him countless times, to the extent that he's little more than a shuddering animal, energy drained to the brink of death yet unable to die as long as the cathedral sustains him and the demons don't push him too far. The alu-demons have taken to calling him Mr. Mutt and think of him as their pet.

Nelevetu is a broken shell of a man, and his madness is so profound that he's little more than a toy for the sadistic temptresses now. His reaction to the PCs should they free him should be pitiful and disgusting, perhaps shocking. Powerful magic can restore his sanity, but with 10,000 years of memories weighing on him, sanity might be a crueler fate than death. If the PCs cure him of his madness and can soothe his fears with a successful DC 50 Diplomacy check (or any kind of mental control), they might be able to learn much of Thassilon—he was a commander in Sorshen's army, after all. You can use Nelevetu to instill in the PCs the gravity of the situation—his tales of the cruelties of the runelords should be enough to convince the PCs that having even one of them return would be a disaster for Varisia. At the very least, Nelevetu can inform the PCs of a fair amount of the information about Shalast and Karzoug presented on page 233.

Nelevetu will only continue living as long as he remains here in the Cathedral of Lust. His life has been preserved by the cathedral's magic, and if he leaves, he immediately crumbles to dust as the years finally claim him. Nelevetu's statistics below present him in this weakened, traumatized, and insane state; he'll



still need equipment if he's going to be able to help the PCs, and even then he can't leave this room without immediately crumbling to dust.

NELEVETU VOAN	XP 1,200	CR 4	HP 81
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Male Azlanti fighter 11
CN Medium humanoid (human)
Init +6; **Senses** Perception -2

DEFENSE

AC 13, touch 13, flat-footed 10 (+2 Dex, +1 dodge)
hp 81 (11d10+16)
Fort +1, **Ref** -3, **Will** -6; +3 vs. fear
Defensive Abilities bravery +3
Weaknesses energy drained, schizophrenic

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.
Melee unarmed strike +5/+0/-5 (1d3+4)
Special Attacks weapon training (pole arms +2, close +1)

TACTICS

During Combat If attacked, Nelevetu shrieks and cries, but does his best to fight back to defend himself—although it's more likely he'll become confused due to his schizophrenia. The noise he makes, if outside of his cage, is enough to alert all of the inhabitants of the Iron Cages, who come to investigate at once. If cured of his madness, Nelevetu is grateful and agrees to aid those who saved him in fighting against his oppressors—particularly if they remove his negative levels and give him equipment he can use.

Morale Nelevetu fights to the death, regardless of the state of his mind and soul—he's not suicidal, but after as long as he's lived, he certainly no longer fears death.

STATISTICS

Str 17, **Dex** 15, **Con** 18, **Int** 10, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 14
Base Atk +11; **CMB** +4; **CMD** 17
Feats Dodge, Greater Weapon Focus (halberd), Improved Bull Rush, Improved Critical (halberd), Improved Initiative, Improved Unarmed Strike, Lightning Reflexes, Mobility, Power Attack, Toughness, Vital Strike, Weapon Focus (halberd), Weapon Specialization (halberd)
Skills Intimidate +2, Perception -2, Sense Motive -2
Languages Thassilonian
SQ armor training 3

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Energy Drained Nelevetu currently suffers from 10 permanent negative levels, courtesy of encounters with Delvahine. The penalties to his stats and hit points from these negative levels have been calculated into the stats above.
Schizophrenic Nelevetu suffers from madness—specifically, from a potent case of schizophrenia (see *GameMastery Guide* 251). This debilitating condition makes him take a -4 penalty on all Wisdom- and Charisma-based skill checks. In addition, it prevents him from ever taking 10 or 20 on any roll. In addition, he must make a DC 16 Will save each round he's in a stressful situation (such as combat) to resist becoming confused for 1d6 rounds.

STORY AWARD: If the PCs restore Nelevetu's mind and convince him to help, award them 9,600 XP.

H4 CORPSE CUBES



The interior of this cube is thick with the stink of death. A nearly skeletal human corpse lies in the middle of the cell, surrounded by a stain of corruption and ancient rot.

These bodies are all at least hundreds of years (in a few cases thousands of years) dead, past victims of the succubus whose bodies were left to rot after they died. (Within each cube, the strange energies that grant immortality to those who live in this wing of Runeforge override the preservative effects of the dungeon, allowing dead flesh to decay normally.) Each of the four was father to one of the alu-demons, and they treat these cubes with a near-holy respect, averting their gaze from the bones within out of fear that their mother might think they were lusting for them. It is not good to displease the mistress or arouse her jealousy.

H5 DELVAHINE'S PAVILION



This huge pavilion is made of silk sheets of various colors—crimson, lavender, ochre, cobalt blue, and purple. The sides ripple softly, as if a breeze were gently caressing the fabric. The entire structure looks unabashedly glamorous and out of place, yet here and there, splashes of what can only be blood mar its beauty.

This pavilion serves Delvahine as a pleasure palace. She often invites some or all of her children in to assist in her depravities, but just as often relies on the charmed and dominated creatures she's collected from other wings of Runeforge. Her reputation as a dangerous and unpredictable harlot is more than deserved.

The pavilion, contrary to its looks, is not a fragile thing of fabric. The sheets of cloth are fashioned of tough silk harvested from behemoth spiders that dwell in the Outer Rifts of the Abyss. Each of the pavilion walls takes a great deal of effort to push through or break down and is resistant to most physical and energy attacks—bludgeoning and piercing attacks deal no damage at all to them, and they are immune to electricity and cold attacks. Fire deals half damage—only acid and sonic deal normal damage, and even then the not-inconsequential hardness of the fabric applies (hardness 10, hp 60 per 5-foot square, Break DC 32). Note that while this exotic fabric would normally be worth dozens of gp per square yard, portions of the stuff harvested and brought beyond the Iron Cages swiftly crumble to worthless flakes of dust only 1d6 rounds after leaving the preservative influence of this wing of Runeforge.



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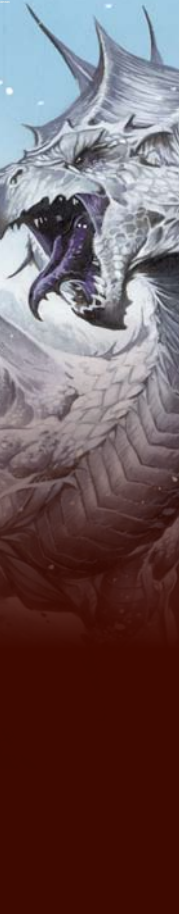
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H6 PAVILION ENTRANCE (CR 13)



Numerous thick rugs, cushions, and tasseled pillows cover the floor of this decadent chamber. Strange, exotic scents are in the air, likely coming from several smoldering braziers and censers balanced on elegant silver stands in the corners of the room.

CREATURES: A group of long-dominated stone giants stands guard here. Delvahine received them as gifts from Vraxeris thousands of years ago when he first began to approach the succubus with talk of a treaty (see the Shimmering Veils for more information). The stone giants themselves have been Delvahine's slaves for so long that they have no memories of their lives before, or even the concept that they're not the only members of their kind in the world.

ENSLAVED STONE GIANTS (5)	XP	CR	HP
	4,800 each	8	102 each

(Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 151)

TACTICS

During Combat The stone giants move to block entrance into the room if anyone enters, and bellow out a warning to their mistress. If she doesn't reply to them telepathically in 1 round to allow the visitors entrance, the giants attack at once. Their primary goal is to prevent anyone from entering the pavilion, and they'll abandon targets as necessary to do just that.

Morale The giants fight to the death.

TREASURE: The four incense burners are minor magical devices that never go out or run out of fuel; they can be commanded to emit any number of pleasant and mildly narcotic scents. Each is worth 500 gp.

H7 MISTRESS DELVAHINE'S CHAMBERS (CR 15)



The air in this room is unusually close—seeming almost to shimmer with pleasant-smelling mist. Pillows, cushions, and throw rugs cover the floor, and four beds sit in the corners of the room. Each bed has an iron frame to which numerous ropes and leather straps are attached. A large padded throne sits against the far wall, between two beds, while opposite it in another corner, a tall, spindly censer sits on a low wooden table—it's from here that the faint mist seems to be issuing.

This chamber is Delvahine's personal playground, a place where she can satisfy all of her deviancies and desires. The censer on the darkwood table is part of a trap to weaken the will of those who enter—the unusual magic item's power is tied to the magic of this wing of Runeforge, and if taken from this area, it ceases to function until it is returned. The censer's fumes constantly emit a *mind fog* effect (CL 15th) in a 60-foot spread—this room and area H8 are filled with the mist. Unlike normal *mind fog*, the mist produced by this censer does not affect outsiders. Any other creature that enters the area must succeed at a DC 17 Will save





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or take a –10 competence penalty on Wisdom checks and Will saves as long as he remains in the mist and for 2d6 rounds thereafter. A moderate wind disperses the mist, but the mist refills the area immediately once the wind passes.

CREATURE: Delvahine spends equal amounts of her time lounging and engaged in all matter of debauchery involving her daughters, the giants, summoned demons, participants called in via *summon monster III*, or just herself. She reacts poorly to interruptions, and if the PCs haven't already made contact with her and secured an audience, she calls out telepathically for aid from any surviving giants or daughters and attacks immediately.

If the PCs have secured an audience with the succubus by mentioning Vraxeris, she's curious to know why he hasn't visited or contacted her in years. If she learns of his death, her mirthful reaction plays to the PCs' favor—her amusement at his failure to keep up with his clones puts her in a good mood. As long as the PCs don't insult her, she agrees to give the PC with the highest Charisma score one of her toys from area **H8** for use in the runeforge pool—all she asks in payment is that one of the PCs accompanies her into her boudoir for a few minutes of fun... alone. She'll also accept payment in jewelry or magic items worth at least 5,000 gp—a better option, since anyone left alone with Delvahine for even a few minutes is in deep trouble. Such characters are typically energy drained to death. If they're lucky.

DELVAHINE	XP	CR	HP
	51,200	15	249

Female succubus bard 6/dominant 5 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 68, *Plot & Poison* 66)

CE Medium outsider (chaotic, demon, evil, extraplanar)

Init +6; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., *detect good*; Perception +33

DEFENSE

AC 29, touch 16, flat-footed 23 (+6 armor, +6 Dex, +7 natural)

hp 249 (19 HD; 8d10+11d8+158)

Fort +15, **Ref** +20, **Will** +17; +4 vs. bardic performance, language-dependent, and sonic

DR 10/cold iron or good; **Immune** electricity, fire, poison; **Resist** acid 10, cold 10; **SR** 18

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft., fly 50 ft. (average)

Melee *sadist's lash* +22/+17/+12 (1d3+5/19–20), *+1 dagger* +21/+16/+11 (1d4+5/19–20) or

2 claws +22 (1d4+4 plus 1d3 nonlethal) or agonizing touch +22 (1d3 nonlethal)

Special Attacks agonizing touch, binding whip, deadly whip, energy drain, penetrating whip, profane gift, bardic performance 27 rounds/day (countersong, distraction, fascinate, inspire competence +2, inspire courage +2, suggestion)

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 12th; concentration +25)

Constant—*detect good*, *tongues*

At will—*charm monster* (DC 27), *detect thoughts* (DC 25),

ethereal jaunt (self plus 50 lbs. of objects only), *greater teleport* (self plus 50 lbs. of objects only), *suggestion* (DC 26), *vampiric touch*

1/day—*dominate person* (DC 28), *summon* (level 3, 1 babau 50%)

Spells Known (CL 11th; concentration +24)

4th (5/day)—*dominate person* (DC 29), *freedom of movement*, *greater invisibility*

3rd (7/day)—*confusion* (DC 27), *dispel magic*, *displacement*, *haste*

2nd (7/day)—*blindness/deafness* (DC 25), *cure moderate wounds*, *eagle's splendor*, *hold person* (DC 26), *mirror image*

1st (9/day)—*alarm*, *animate rope*, *cure light wounds*, *grease* (DC 24), *hideous laughter* (DC 25), *unseen servant*

0 (at will)—*ghost sound* (DC 23), *mage hand*, *mending*, *message*, *prestidigitation*, *read magic*

TACTICS

Before Combat Delvahine is unlikely to be caught off guard by the PCs since her daughters keep in telepathic contact with her. Once she knows the PCs are approaching (either at her permission or otherwise), she casts *freedom of movement*, *eagle's splendor*, and *mirror image*.

During Combat Delvahine prefers to fight with allies, particularly her submissive daughters, who are well trained at protecting her. She uses her bardic performance to inspire courage on the first round of combat, then moves on to use *dominate person* and *confusion* against her foes. If forced to fight in melee, she fights with dagger and *sadist's lash*, using Arcane Strike each round to deal an additional 3 points of damage with each hit.

Morale Delvahine teleports to area **12** if brought below 20 hit points—as distasteful as it is to her, she hopes to seek aid from Vraxeris. When she discovers he is dead and only his simulacra remains, she assumes his form, allies with his simulacra, and awaits the PCs' arrival in that wing to seek revenge.

STATISTICS

Str 18, **Dex** 23, **Con** 26, **Int** 16, **Wis** 14, **Cha** 36

Base Atk +15; **CMB** +19; **CMD** 35

Feats Arcane Strike, Combat Reflexes, Dazzling Display, Double Slice, Greater Two-Weapon Fighting, Improved Two-Weapon Fighting, Spell Focus (enchantment), Two-Weapon Fighting, Weapon Finesse, Weapon Focus (whip)

Skills Acrobatics +36, Bluff +37, Diplomacy +36, Escape Artist +29, Fly +36, Heal +11, Intimidate +36, Knowledge (arcana, planes) +20, Perception +33, Perform (dance) +36, Perform (oratory) +36, Sense Motive +36, Stealth +29

Languages Abyssal, Celestial, Draconic, Thassilonian; telepathy 100 ft.

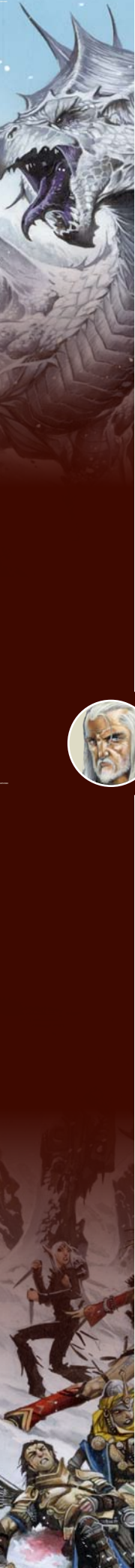
SQ change shape (Small or Medium humanoid; *alter self*), enchantment specialization, bardic knowledge +3, lore master 1/day, versatile performance (dance, oratory)

Gear +2 *glamered mithral chain shirt*, *sadist's lash*, +1 *dagger*, *belt of physical might* +4 (Dex, Con)

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Agonizing Touch (Su) Delvahine can deal 1d3 points of nonlethal damage with a touch attack at will as a standard action. She deals an additional 1d3 points of nonlethal damage with her natural attacks.





Binding Whip (Ex) Delvahine does not provoke attacks of opportunity when she uses a whip in melee. She can also attempt to entangle a Large or smaller foe with a whip—to do so, she makes a touch attack against a target. If she hits, the target is entangled. If she succeeds at an opposed Strength check against the target, the target can not move farther than 15 feet away from Delvahine. An entangled creature can escape with a successful DC 20 Escape Artist check (a full-round action) or DC 25 Strength check, or by sundering the whip. As long as she entangles a foe with her whip, Delvahine cannot use that whip to make additional attacks. Delvahine can release a foe from her binding whip as an immediate action.

Deadly Whip (Ex) Delvahine can choose to deal normal damage with a whip rather than nonlethal damage.

Enchantment Specialization (Ex) Delvahine gains a +1 bonus to overcome SR when she casts *dominate person*, and the save DC of any *dominate person* spell she casts increases by 1.

Penetrating Whip (Su) Delvahine can harm any foe with her whip, regardless of the foe's armor or natural armor bonuses.



With a successful DC 35 Diplomacy or Intimidate check, the succubus agrees to let the PC spend 1d3 rounds preparing for the payment with spells or other protective magic. Delvahine may be disappointed if her lover doesn't perish as a result of their time together, but for well-spoken companions she's willing to make exceptions! If at any point a PC attacks her, the succubus calls out for her daughters to teleport in to aid her, then fights as detailed in her tactics above. In such a case, she is immediately joined by the two creatures that guard this chamber.

CREATURES: Delvahine's boudoir is far from undefended. Two shining children, originally summoned by one of the previous mistresses of this wing of Runeforge, now serve Delvahine as charmed minions. Delvahine is quite fond of the two creatures, particularly their spell-like abilities to cast *mirage arcana*—at her command, the shining children use this ability to completely change the appearance of this room. The primary reason the chamber has no furniture is that

the blankets, cushions, pillows, and sheets often mix well with the pastoral glens, nightmarish hellscape, decadent boudoirs, or intimidating dungeons that the succubus enjoys as window dressing for the room.

Delvahine has kept the two shining children under the effects of a *charm monster* spell for many, many years. But in truth, even if these effects are dispelled, the monsters themselves don't really mind serving the succubus—they feel no lust for the creature, but have still, in their own strange ways, come to look upon her as a mother figure of sorts. As a result, they fight any intruders to the death if they're not accompanied by their succubus mistress. The shining children themselves stand silent and motionless in the corners of the room at all other times, waiting to serve at the succubus' command.

TREASURE: A DC 20 Perception check reveals something hidden under the southernmost bed: a *handy haversack* that contains a *tome of understanding* +1, six *potions of cure moderate wounds*, a *potion of remove disease*, and a *potion of remove paralysis*.

STORY AWARD: If the PCs manage to get a *runeforged* weapon component from Delvahine without sacrificing one of their own or starting a fight, grant them XP as if they had defeated Delvahine in battle.

H8 DELVAHINE'S BOUDOIR (CR 14)



This smoky chamber has no furniture, but mounds of blankets, pillows, and sheets lie heaped on the floor, in some places built into nests.

This chamber is Delvahine's personal room—her boudoir. While the opening between this room and area H8 is normally left open, Delvahine can cause a curtain to swing down to seal off this room completely at a touch. Other creatures may attempt to do so as well, but locating the small spot that triggers the curtain requires a successful DC 35 Perception check—opening the curtains without locating this requires a successful DC 40 Disable Device check.

Any PC foolish enough to accompany her into this room to make a payment for one of her devices (see the previous area) is subjected to the succubus's energy drain and her agonizing touch for 2d4 minutes—that's a minimum of 20 rounds, and is likely enough to kill anyone.

SHINING CHILDREN (2)	XP	CR	HP
	19,200 each	12	152 each

(*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 2* 245)

TREASURE: Strewn about the chamber are a dozen exotic, bejeweled toys and devices of decidedly erotic natures that Delvahine uses in her debauches. The functions of some of these devices are salaciously obvious in some cases, but in others isn't always clear at first glance. As a collection, they are worth 2,400 gp, but not all merchants would publicly admit to an interest in purchasing them, requiring the merchant to be helpful (or bluffed as to the true nature of the devices before they can be sold. In any event, any one of these toys works as a component for a *runeforged* weapon.





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ALTHOUGH THE VAULTS OF GREED ARE MORE DECADENT, AND THE IRON CAGES MORE DEVIANT, THE SHIMMERING VEILS OF RUNEFORGE HOUSED THE WIZARDS WHO TOOK THE GREATEST PRIDE IN THEIR ROLES HERE. THEIR LEADER, VRAXERIS, WAS HANDPICKED BY RUNELORD XANDERGHUL, AND HIS APPRENTICES WERE THE MOST LOYAL OF ALL IN RUNEFORGE. ALTHOUGH ALL SEVEN WINGS WORKED TOGETHER AND, IN THEORY, WERE EQUAL, IN TIME IT BECAME APPARENT THAT VRAXERIS AND HIS ILLUSIONISTS WERE THE BEST SUITED TO LEADERSHIP AND INNOVATION.

As a result, in the thousands of years after Thassilon fell, Vraxeris was the only one of the original runelord apprentices to survive. In other wings, apprentices like Ordikon or Azaven inherited control, or non-apprentice minions like Delvahine or Athroxis took command. In the Shimmering Veils, Vraxeris retained control. Even after his apprentices died of old age, he remained, for Vraxeris had mastered the art of creating clones. Yet Vraxeris's skill at cloning himself went beyond even what the spell itself allowed, for each time he aged and died, he was reborn in a fresh, young body. As long as he could maintain his studies and experience (since each clone wakens with two permanent negative levels), Vraxeris was effectively immortal.

It took the awakening of the runeforge well to disrupt this cycle. Vraxeris aided the others in defeating the Abjurant Halls, then turned his considerable mind to the question of why the well had awakened. It didn't take him long to determine that Karzoug was the source. Enraged that it wasn't his lord, Xanderghul, who was wakening, Vraxeris began to research a method by which he could escape Runeforge and defeat Karzoug before he had fully emerged back into the world. With Karzoug's wealth and power, Vraxeris could then awaken his own master with ease.

Vraxeris was nearing the solution for these conundrums when tragedy struck. Always before, he had managed to accumulate enough power to create a new clone before his current body perished. Yet in his efforts to create a portal out of Runeforge, he delayed his advancement just enough that when he was seized with a sudden, unexpected recurrence of the same hereditary dementia responsible for the majority of his previous deaths, he was unprepared. In this growing dementia, he lost the ability to tell the difference between reality and his own illusions. He locked himself in his meditation room and spent nearly every day clothing himself in illusions of beauty, and staring at himself in his mirror. Eventually, as he had countless times before,

the dementia in his brain spread deeper, and as he sat in front of his mirror bedecked in kingly raiment believing that he was a god, he quietly passed away when the basic life-giving functions of his brain failed. Yet this time, there was no clone waiting to return his soul to life.

This wing of Runeforge is a grand cathedral decorated with peacock motifs and massive chandeliers hanging from the ceiling to brightly illuminate it with hundreds of *continual flames*.

11 REFLECTED ENMITY (CR 14)



This brightly lit corridor is lined with floor-to-ceiling mirrors. The reflections give the dizzying impression that the corridor opens up to each side, extending infinitely into the distance.

Although most of the mirrors in this hallway are not magic, two mirrors at either end of the junction are *mirrors of opposition* built into the walls. Any character coming between them who turns to face his reflection in one also sees his reflection in the other, triggering two exact duplicates of that PC to attack him. The same thing happens up to three more times each time a PC sees his reflection. The *mirrors of opposition* are not portable magic items, unfortunately—their construction depends as much upon Runeforge's magical properties as anything else.

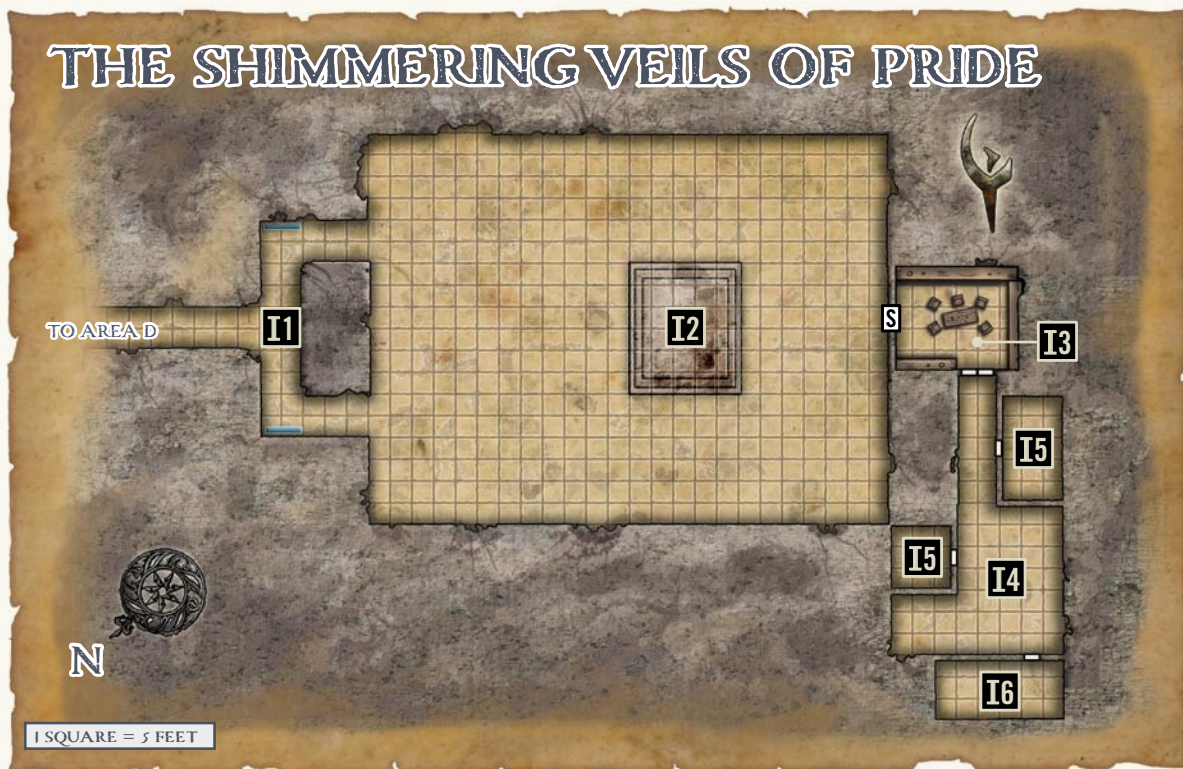
STORY AWARD: Award the PCs 38,400 XP for surviving this encounter against their own duplicates.

12 THE PEACOCK SHRINE (CR 13)



The corridor opens into an immense cathedral of polished ivory flagstones. Mirrored walls rise to a height of nearly a hundred feet, where the vaulted ceiling arches majestically. Four immense chandeliers hang from golden chains and brightly illuminate the entire room. At the center of the cathedral, a three-step dais of polished wood

THE SHIMMERING VEILS OF PRIDE



supports a peacock the size of a wyvern, its feathers spread regally behind it. The creature's eyes seem to hold a great depth of wisdom and intelligence.

The peacock is a heightened *permanent image* (Will DC 23 to disbelieve). A secret door behind a section of mirrors in the far wall may be located with a DC 30 Perception check. Fragments of any of the wall mirrors here function as *rune-forged* weapon components.

CREATURES: Before he moved on to perfecting and improving the *clone* spell, Vraxeris experimented on himself often with *simulacrum*. Today, only six of these simulacra remain. Without the capacity to grow more powerful or the drive to improve themselves, these effectively immortal duplicates were used by the real Vraxeris as assistants. Now that Vraxeris is dead, the six simulacra continue to carry out his last orders: to keep anyone from disrupting his studies in area **I3**. Each simulacrum is identical: an immaculately dressed human man with shoulder-length blond hair. When they detect intruders, they speak with one sonorous voice in Thassilonian: "The master is in study—he is not to be disturbed. Please keep your screaming to a minimum while you are punished for daring to venture this close to his magnificence."

FALSE VRAXERISES (6)	XP 4,800 each	CR 8	HP 93 each
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Male Azlanti human simulacrum illusionist 9
NE Medium humanoid (human)
Init +2; **Senses** Perception +11

DEFENSE

AC 17, touch 13, flat-footed 15 (+1 deflection, +2 Dex, +4 shield)

hp 93 each (9d6+59)

Fort +9, **Ref** +8, **Will** +10

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee mwk dagger +6 (1d4/19–20)

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 9th; concentration +13)

At will—invisibility field (9 rounds/day)

7/day—blinding ray

Spells Prepared (CL 9th; concentration +13)

5th—*feeblemind* (DC 19), *shadow evocation* (DC 21, 2)

4th—*confusion* (DC 18), *greater invisibility*, *phantasmal killer* (DC 20, 2), empowered *scorching ray*

3rd—*dispel magic*, *displacement*, extended *false life*, *fireball* (DC 17), *major image* (DC 19, 2)

2nd—*invisibility* (2), *minor image* (DC 18, 2), *mirror image*, *resist energy*, *scorching ray*

1st—*charm person* (DC 15), *magic missile* (2), *ray of enfeeblement* (DC 15), *shield*, *silent image* (DC 17, 2)

0 (at will)—*arcane mark*, *ghost sound* (DC 14), *mage hand*, *mending*, *prestidigitation*

Thassilonian Specialization illusion; **Opposition Schools** conjuration, transmutation

TACTICS

Before Combat If the simulacra suspect trouble is coming (such as if they hear combat in area **I1**), they cast *false life*, *invisibility*, and *shield* on themselves.

During Combat The simulacra do their best to rely on invisibility and ranged spells to keep foes from being able to directly engage them with ease.



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Morale The simulacra fight until destroyed.

STATISTICS

Str 10, **Dex** 14, **Con** 16, **Int** 19, **Wis** 13, **Cha** 16

Base Atk +4; **CMB** +5; **CMD** 18

Feats Combat Casting, Empower Spell, Eschew Materials, Extend Spell, Greater Spell Focus (illusion), Scribe Scroll, Spell Focus (illusion), Toughness

Skills Diplomacy +13, Knowledge (arcana, nobility, religion) +17, Perception +11, Sense Motive +11, Spellcraft +17

Languages Aklo, Draconic, Giant, Necril, Thassilonian

SQ arcane bond (dagger), extended illusions +4 rounds

Gear masterwork dagger, *ring of protection +1*, *cloak of resistance +2*, *headband of vast intelligence +2*, noble's outfit worth 200 gp, spellbook (contains only spells prepared)

I3 MEDITATION ROOM



Bookcases full of tomes and scrolls line this cozy chamber's walls and a reading table with several matching chairs sits atop a thick rug in its center. A peacock made of gold sits upon the table, holding a single stick of incense cleverly positioned in its tail feathers. A heavy wooden door exits the room through the wall to the northwest. A figure lies slumped in the chair in the far corner—the body of a man wearing rich robes and a cloak made of peacock feathers. An elegant mirror is clutched in his hand, and a book and quill sit on the table before him.

This room is filled with religious essays on the subject of the Peacock Spirit, one of the more popular faiths during Thassilon's height. Unfortunately, the books kept here are maddeningly vague and coy in revealing actual details about the Peacock Spirit, made all the worse by the large volume of material at hand. Very little here can be of use in bringing to light more facts about this maddeningly obscure ancient cult.

The body in the chair has been dead for well over 2 years, yet it looks as if it had only died a moment ago. These are the remains of Vraxeris himself, magically preserved by Runeforge. The book in his lap is an extensive journal written in Thassilonian. Reading the journal takes a day of study, although a character who skims the journal and succeeds at a DC 25 Linguistics check can glean the important entries relating to Runeforge and relatively recent events.

The bulk of the journal catalogs Vraxeris's studies and the development of an improved version of *clone* that effectively granted him immortality. The drawback was that each time he switched bodies, he lost a portion of his own knowledge and experience, forcing himself to relearn much with each incarnation. At several points in the

book, he also speaks of how with each new clone, the debilitating dementia that lurks at the end of his life manifests a little sooner—with each new body, his effective lifespan shrank. It seems obvious that the dementia finally struck soon enough to prevent him from creating a new clone, and thus finally, death claimed him. A wizard could use the journal to rebuild Vraxeris's version of *improved clone*, but the research for creating this powerful 9th-level spell is particularly onerous and would itself consume most of a lifetime. Nevertheless, the journal is worth 15,000 gp for this information alone, and if word of its contents were to spread, all manner of unscrupulous wizards would doubtless do much to claim it by more violent means.

Of more immediate interest to the PCs are the journal's notes on more recent events. These key



VRAXERIS

The runeforge pool awoke! I first took this as a sign that Runelord Xanderghul had risen. When I arrived at the pool to investigate, it seemed that the others had come to the same conclusion. The foolish Wardens of Envy thought to disrupt the recrudescence, and with the aid of Azaven, Ordikan, Athraxis, and that lovely creature Delvahine, we were able to defeat them utterly. Their Abjuration Halls lie in ruins. Our treaty was short-lived, though. Azaven absconded with the bodies and that treacherous wench Athraxis nearly burned me to death before I made it back here.

I was mistaken. Runelord Xanderghul still slumbers. It is that monster Karzoug who quickens and nears rebirth. Damnation! He must not be allowed to precede Xanderghul into the world, for he would rebuild Thassilon in his own inferior image, a testament to his own greed rather than one of pride in the work. He must be delayed or defeated!

I have managed to escape this place, to a certain extent. By astral projection I can explore what the world outside has become. It is a brutish place, yet it pleases me to see Thassilon's mark endures in the shape of our monuments. Still, the wilderness of the world vexes me. Gone is the empire I knew. Karzoug's city of Xin-Shalast is now hidden high in the mountains, and when I finally discovered it, I found the spires where his body is hidden to be inaccessible, warded against astral travelers by the occlusion field around the peak of Mhar-Massif. As long as his runewell is active, I fear even a physical approach would be impossibly deadly. I must determine a way to pierce these wardings, and to send an agent in my place. No need to risk my own life before my clone is ready.

excerpts are reproduced in Handouts 5-2 and 5-3. Alternatively, some of the information in the journal can be gleaned from *speak with dead* used on the remains themselves—attempts to raise Vraxeris from the dead automatically fail, though, for his soul has already been judged by Pharasma and has gone on to its final punishment.

TREASURE: The golden peacock is worth 800 gp. The books weigh just over 200 pounds, but as a collection is worth 1,500 gp to a scholar of Thassilonian lore. Vraxeris's spellbooks sit on the shelves to the north, and contain a wealth of spells between their covers, including all of the wizard illusion spells in the *Core Rulebook*—there are no conjuration or transmutation spells in these books.

The gear remaining on Vraxeris's body is worth a small fortune. He wears an *evil robe of the archmagi*, a *headband of vast intelligence +6*, a *ring of wizardry II*, and a *cape of the mountebank*.

I4 VRAXERIS'S LIBRARY

Once a fine library, the books held in this large chamber—along with the bookshelves that once held them—have been destroyed by fire and force. The devastation seems complete—although it's possible something may survive somewhere under all of the ruin. To the north, a sizable alcove extends from the room into what may have once been a large reading area, but this too has been ruined.

As Vraxeris neared his end, he experienced a short moment of dreadful lucidity—a half-hour only in which he realized he had allowed his dementia to slip too far and would soon be dead forever. Struck with rage and despair, he destroyed the once-priceless contents of this room before lapsing back into madness, retreating to area I3, and finally dying.

TREASURE: A successful DC 30 Perception check reveals one single, intact book amid the destruction—a *tome of leadership and influence +2*.

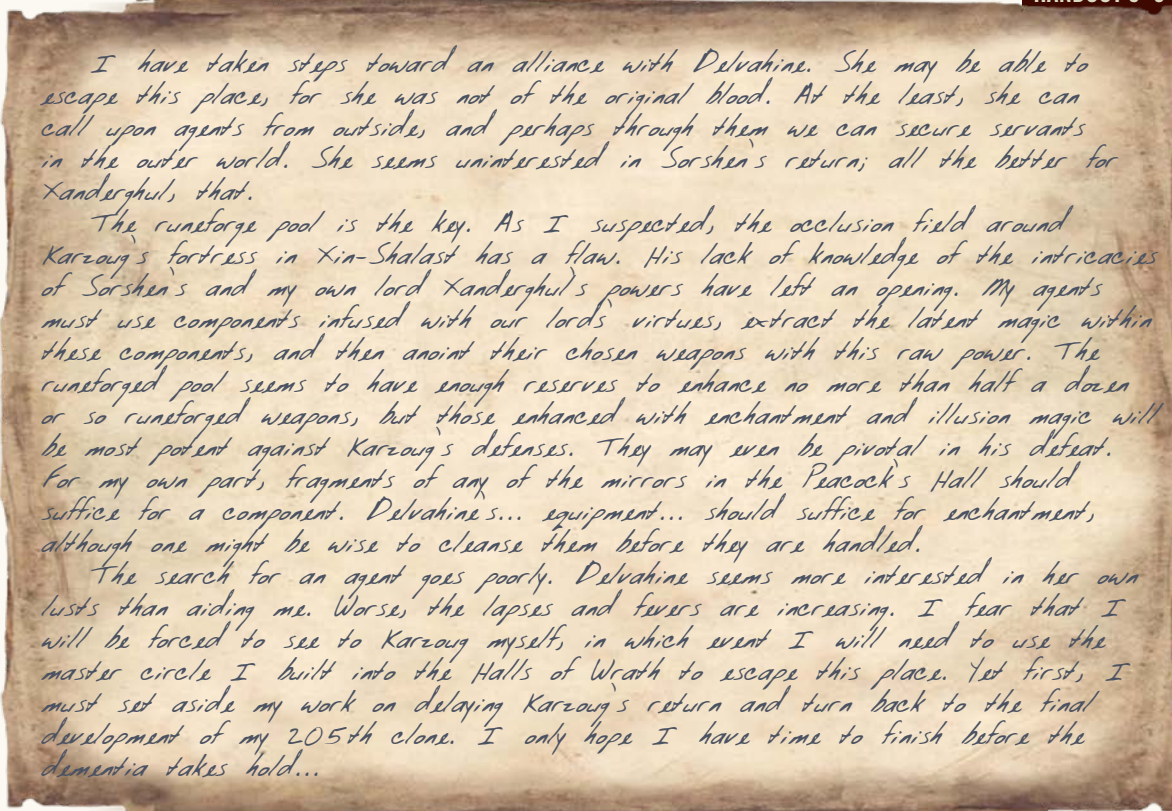
I5 CLONE REMAINS

This room is empty—save for a grisly heap of identical-looking dead bodies stacked in a well-organized heap.

This immense pile of bodies are the remains of Vraxeris's previous clones—all elderly versions of the body found in area I3, magically preserved by Runeforge. Between these two rooms, just over 200 dead clones are present—Vraxeris was too full of pride and too stubborn to simply dispose of the bodies.

I6 VRAXERIS'S BEDROOM (CR 13)

This long room contains only three plain items of furniture—a large bed strewn with silk ropes, a writing desk, and a freestanding armoire.



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- PART TEN: WEAPONS OF POWER

Ever frugal, Vraxeris's bedroom was appointed with relatively mundane furnishings that the wizard often changed the appearance of with his illusions. Since his death, these illusions have faded, leaving behind the plain, miserly truth for anyone to see.

CREATURES: While Vraxeris was fond of the succubus Delvahine, he wasn't always fond of her demanding personality. She rarely visited him in this wing, and never visited his bedroom—so she never learned that the wizard had created six simulacra of her to keep in his bedroom for his pleasure. If she were to somehow learn of this somewhat disturbing fact, she'd make her way into this room as soon as possible to destroy them.

The six false Delvahines in this room are relatively vacant in personality, yet Vraxeris left one final command for them—they shriek and howl if intruders enter the room, attacking on sight unless the intruders are accompanied by the true Delvahine, in which case all six simulacra go a little mad and function as if confused as long as the real Delvahine remains in sight.

FALSE DELVAHINES (6)	XP 4,800 each	CR 8	HP 103 each
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Female simulacrum succubus bard 1 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 68)
CE Medium outsider (chaotic, demon, evil, extraplanar)
Init +4; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., *detect good*; Perception +22

DEFENSE

AC 21, touch 14, flat-footed 17 (+4 Dex, +7 natural)
hp 103 each (9 HD; 8d10+1d8+55)

Fort +8, **Ref** +12, **Will** +10

DR 10/cold iron or good; **Immune** electricity, fire, poison; **Resist** acid 10, cold 10; **SR** 18

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft., fly 50 ft. (average)

Melee 2 claws +12 (1d4+3)

Special Attacks bardic performance 14 rounds/day (countersong, distraction, fascinate, inspire courage +1), energy drain, profane gift

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 12th; concentration +22)

Constant—*detect good*, *tongues*

At will—*charm monster* (DC 24), *detect thoughts* (DC 22), *ethereal jaunt* (self plus 50 lbs. of objects only), *greater teleport* (self plus 50 lbs. of objects only), *suggestion* (DC 23), *vampiric touch*

1/day—*dominate person* (DC 25), *summon* (level 3, 1 babau 50%)

Bard Spells Known (CL 1st; concentration +11)

1st (4/day)—*animate rope*, *hideous laughter* (DC 22)

0 (at will)—*mage hand*, *mending*, *message*, *prestidigitation*

STATISTICS

Str 17, **Dex** 19, **Con** 22, **Int** 16, **Wis** 14, **Cha** 31

Base Atk +8; **CMB** +11; **CMD** 25

Feats Arcane Strike, Dazzling Display, Spell Focus (enchantment), Weapon Finesse, Weapon Focus (whip)

Skills Acrobatics +35, Bluff +30, Diplomacy +35, Escape Artist +16, Fly +35, Intimidate +22, Knowledge (arcana, planes) +16, Perception +22, Perform (dance, oratory) +22, Sense Motive +35, Stealth +16

Languages Abyssal, Celestial, Draconic, Thassilonian; telepathy 100 ft.

SQ change shape (Small or Medium humanoid; *alter self*), bardic knowledge +1



PART EIGHT: THE FESTERING MAZE

THIS AREA WAS ONCE A SERIES OF CANALS AND POOLS—FOR MEDITATING, REFLECTING, BATHING, AND JUST SOAKING—AS WELL AS DIVANS, PADDED BENCHES, AND SOFT BEDS WHERE THE VIRTUE OF REST WAS PURSUED. IT WAS A REWARD FOR THE FAVORITES OF KRUNE, THE RUNELORD OF SLOTH AND RULER OF HARUKA. OF COURSE, THE VIRTUE OF REST BECAME CORRUPTED LIKE ALL OF THE OTHERS, DEGENERATING INTO THE BASEST FORM OF INDOLENCE. WHAT COULD HAVE BEEN A BEAUTIFUL HAVEN HERE INSTEAD BECAME A COLLECTION OF CESSPOOLS SURROUNDED BY STAGGERING PILES OF FILTH AND REFUSE.



The wardens of sloth were the first to succumb in the centuries after the fall of Thassilon—none of this wing's masters survived more than a decade, in fact, and today the Festering Maze is ruled by the least and last of their minions, an obese wizard named Jordimandus who traded his heart and soul for immortality from his foul patron Jubilex—as long as Jordimandus doesn't stray too far from the magical humors that both revitalize him and pollute the waters of the maze itself. These fluids, infused as they are with Abyssal energies, have transformed the maze over the past thousands of years into something more akin to a demonic sewer than anything resembling the relaxing retreat and bathing facility that it was originally designed to be. Members of the other Runeforge wings have taken to calling the place the Festering Maze and using it as a farm of sorts for creatures to experiment on, although the unpleasant stench and foul conditions in the maze ensure that these visits never last too long.

FOUL VAPORS: The air in the Festering Maze is foul and slightly toxic—the magic that replenishes air elsewhere in Runeforge helps to keep the air in this wing from becoming downright poisonous, but only just barely. Any visitors to the maze must succeed at a DC 15 Fortitude save once per hour (the DC increases by +1 each hour) to avoid becoming sickened for as long as they remain in the maze plus an additional hour after they leave the complex. This is a poison effect—creatures that do not breathe, or that have dwelled in the maze for at least a week (as have all the denizens of the maze) are immune to this effect.

TAINTED WATER: To call the slimy liquid that slowly flows through the Festering Maze “water” is, to put it mildly, charitable. The stuff is foamy, foul-smelling, cloudy, and riddled with disease. Anyone who drinks it is immediately exposed to blinding sickness, while anyone who enters the water while wounded is exposed to filth fever—rules for both diseases are presented on page 557 of the *Core Rulebook*. Creatures that have dwelled in the maze for at least a week are immune to these effects, as are creatures that are immune to disease entirely.

J1 RUNEFORGE SEWERS



The air grows thick and foul-smelling in this chamber, yet the vaporous stink here is nothing compared to the insult to the senses elsewhere. Slime encrusts the walls in swaths of sickly brown and noxious green. A foamy sewage channel runs along a slippery walkway, the thickly shuddering skin atop the slowly churning fluid seeming to hint that, despite its repulsive appearance and smell, something lurks in those depths.

Although they bear a striking resemblance to sewers, both in appearance and scent, the tunnels of the Festering Maze were not designed for that intent. Regardless, today these chambers have all the charm of a poorly maintained septic system. The walls and waters of this maze are alive with relatively harmless but nonetheless disturbing vermin: fist-sized spiders, deformed rats, pallid foot-long centipedes, and glistening tangles of worms wriggle in the corners of all these rooms.

Two types of passageways exist in this wing of Runeforge: walkways and waterways. Each presents its own dangers. Walkways are exceptionally slippery—it costs 2 squares of movement to enter any walkway square, and the DC of Acrobatics checks increases by 5. A successful DC 10 Acrobatics check is required to run or charge here. In places, narrow bridges span the waters; these bridges are only 2 feet wide, and require a successful DC 15 Acrobatics check to cross. Failure by 5 or more indicates a fall into the foul waters below.

The waterways aren't much better. The water level rises to within an inch of nearby walkways, and is generally about 10 feet deep. The current flows toward area J4, but isn't strong enough to make the stuff particularly tricky to swim in. At several places along these tunnels, metal grates block progress. Omox demons can slither through these grates, but other creatures must either smash through the grates or force





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them open (hardness 10; hp 60; DC 25 Strength check to force open). Alternatively, all of the gates can be opened by throwing the appropriate lever in area J2. Note that in some cases, the grates have been destroyed by previous visitors—these grates can be passed through with ease.

CREATURE: The lord of this wing is an obese wizard named Jordimandus. While he never leaves his lair in area J5, he does keep an eye on his realm via his quasit familiar, Sobloch. The quasit patrols the maze while invisible—if he spots the PCs, he quickly flies back to his master to report, after which Jordimandus prepares for battle. There's a 30% chance that Sobloch is in this room when the PCs arrive. If he's not here at that point, there's a cumulative 10% chance per 10 minutes of the quasit encountering the PCs on his ceaseless patrol—this chance rises to 100% the first time the PCs get into a significant combat.

SOBLOCH

HP 95

Quasit familiar (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 66)

J2 SLUICE CONTROLS (CR 14)

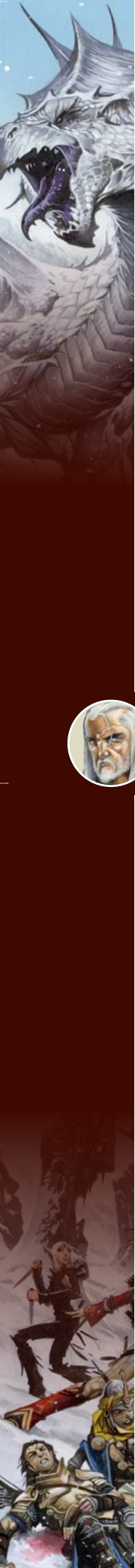


A slippery walkway connects four platforms running down the room's center to a station of some sort at the far end of the chamber—there, three large and filthy levers protrude from the dripping wall. To the north, four metallic pipes protrude from the wall, ten feet above the level of

the sewage—fresh foulness runs from these pipes in thick streams. Every now and then, something larger and hideously more substantial than mere fluid strains through the bars blocking these pipes to drop with a turgid splash into the foulness rippling below.

The reservoir itself is 20 feet deep. The pipes in the north wall once connected to one-way portals to the Plane of Water, similar to those that feed the fountains in the Vault of Greed, but not long after Jordimandus took control of the Festering Maze, he refocused these portals to much more distant points in the Great Beyond. Today, these tubes instead siphon in tainted water from the Abyssal realm of Undersump—the domain of Jordimandus's patron, Jubilex. Omox demons periodically slip through these portals into the Maze, and the fluids have caused other creatures in the maze to mutate (see the denizens of area J4), but the portals do not allow escape from Runeforge in the other direction. If a character climbs up one of these tubes, he'll find it comes to an apparent dead end 100 feet to the north of the room, with the foul waters seeming to seep directly out of a blank wall.

All of the levers protruding from the western wall are massive, 3-foot lengths of pitted iron. A slime-encrusted plaque above each lever bears a word or short phrase in Thassilonian—before this word can be read, though, the slime covering it must be cleaned away. In fact, the slime is so thick that unless someone succeeds



at a DC 15 Perception check, the three plaques could well go entirely unnoticed. The left and right levers are in the “up” position, while the middle one is in the down position. The first time any of these levers are used, a successful DC 20 Strength check is required to move them.

Left Lever: This lever’s plaque reads “Access Control.” Lowering this lever causes all of the gratings in the Maze to retract up, granting increased mobility through the Maze. Raising it again lowers the grates back into place.

Middle Lever: This lever’s plaque reads “Portal Control.” Pushing this lever up closes off the portals to Undersump at the far end of the pipes. Fluid ceases to flow from the pipes, and over the course of an hour, the remaining water drains into area **J4**, leaving a 10-foot-deep pool in this room, a much deeper pool at **J3**, and several slippery but navigable tunnels in between. Pushing the middle lever back down opens the portals again—if at least an hour has passed, the backed-up sludge carries with it 1d3 omox demons that slop into this chamber and immediately attack any creatures they find within. Note that Jordimandus immediately notices if this lever is manipulated, and prepares for battle as detailed in his tactics.

Right Lever: This lever’s plaque reads “Warning: Cleaning Cycle.” If the right lever is pulled down, an explosion of water erupts from the ceiling above the central platform—this deluge knocks anyone on that platform into the surrounding waters if they fail a DC 15 Reflex save. This blast of water carries with it a single elder water elemental, summoned from the Plane of Water (see Creatures, below) before closing automatically 1 round later. This effect may only be activated once per day.

CREATURES: Beyond the vermin that infest the maze and the more dangerous creatures that live in some of the larger rooms, several particularly noxious demons make their home in the Festering Maze—omoxes, known to some as ooze or sloth demons. With gelatinous bodies topped by powerful humanoid arms and frightening skull-like faces, these demons swim and cavort in the Maze’s waterways and take exception to intruders.

Two omox demons lurk in the waters of this chamber—faced with a group of intruders, they wait until the group is spread out in the room before rising up from the filthy waters to attack. If the water elemental is released, it focuses all of its attention on any omox demons in the room. Once any omoxes present are slain, the elemental begins scrubbing away the filth in the wing—an impossible task unless the PCs close the portals to Undersump, and even then a task that could keep the elemental occupied for weeks. The elemental does not attack the PCs unless it is attacked first, but enterprising PCs could lure it into

encounters with other creatures in this wing—all the PCs need to do is get the elemental to follow them and its hatred of filth will do the rest!

OMOX DEMONS (2)	XP 19,200 each	CR 12	HP 162 each
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(Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 2 79)

ELDER WATER ELEMENTAL	XP 12,800	CR 11	HP 152
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(Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 127)

STORY AWARD: If the PCs conjure the elemental and manage to use it to combat the denizens of this wing, award them XP as if they’d defeated the elemental in combat once it dies or once the PCs finish with this wing of Runeforge.


J3 A FILTHY GRAVE

 The worked stone of the tunnel gives way here to a natural cavern. A twenty-foot-wide gap breaks the walkway, while the rough stone walls are caked with a riot of color—ooze and fungi of all colors in the rainbow grow thick here in a foul-smelling profusion of beauty.

In some parts of this maze, century after century of exposure to the foul energies from Undersump have eaten away at the preservative magic, resulting in a long period of slow decay culminating in several partial collapses. These energies also caused a deep sinkhole to develop, although the tainted water hides the true extent of the hole. The pool here is 150 feet deep, coming to an end finally amid a tangled pile of debris and bones.

TREASURE: Several years ago, one of Ordikon’s minions entered the Festering Maze to capture a batch of creatures for use as experimental subjects, only to end up dead at the bottom of this pit. The wizard’s remains lie at the bottom of the pool today—most of his gear has long since been ruined by the waters, but his *rod of extend metamagic* and *bag of holding I* remain. The wizard’s spellbooks are in the bag. Feel free to fill these spellbooks as you see fit, but within the book’s margins are notes on how the morphic mist and the golems in areas **G2** and **G4** function—if the PCs haven’t yet encountered these dangers, these notes should help prepare them for that eventuality.

J4 INFESTED SUMP (CR 14)

 The surrounding stone has fallen away into a large, curved cavern. Here and there, foul water cascades into the room from intersecting tunnels, tumbling ten feet to the frothy surface of liquid below.



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As with area J3, this cavern was created when the caustic nature of the tainted water ate away at a particularly weak section of stone, resulting in this chamber. The rest of the Maze drains into this chamber, which has stabilized at a depth of about 20 feet before the overflow sifts away through narrow fissures in the stone, eventually draining into the eternal void that surrounds Runeforge.

CREATURES: Over the ages, countless strange and foul monstrosities have found their way through the portals in area J2 into this complex. This room contains a pair of such creatures—two tentacled, gray monsters from the deepest crevices of the Abyss: chernobue qliploth. The two vaguely tadpole-shaped monsters have chosen this cavern as their lair, and for many years have been wallowing within its walls. Their ability to use *air walk* at all times allows them to come and go as they will, as does their *plane shift* ability. As *plane shift* is a spell-like ability, the chernobues can come and go from Runeforge as they will, and often spend weeks at a time infesting and befouling other realms. For now, though, the two repulsive monsters have been resting here in their lair for many weeks—they do not take well to intruders, and fight to the death to defend their home.

CHERNOBUES (2)	XP 19,200 each	CR 12	HP 150 each
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(Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 2 220)

J5 JORDIMANDUS'S THRONE (CR 15)



This room reeks of strange chemicals. A five-foot-wide metal walkway looks out over a large pool of foamy, filthy water ten feet below, from which five metallic pipes emerge through the walkway above. Four of these pipes are five feet in diameter and extend up in the four corners of the room to a height of about a foot above the balcony; each is filled with a different colored bubbling fluid. The fifth pipe is twenty feet wide and extends up to the north—this pipe is filled nearly to the rim with shuddering, glowing green sludge. Thin streams of fluid flow through the air from the four corner pipes to drain into the central one. A stone throne floats in the air above this slime.

The glowing contents of the pipe fill this room with normal (if unusual) light. As with other surfaces in the maze, the balcony that encircles this room is slippery. The pool of filthy water below is 30 feet deep, while the ceiling is 20 feet above balcony level.

While the water below is no different from the water elsewhere in the maze, the fluid contained in the five pipes is quite different. Each of the smaller pipes in the four corners of the room contain magically replenished supplies of the four bodily humors—magical alchemical

fluids distilled from blood, phlegm, yellow bile (cholera), and black bile (melancholy). These fluids steep in their pipes, then flow through the air to mix in the central pipe, forming a magical fluid that sustains and bolsters this room's most dangerous occupant. Contact with any of these four humors has specific effects—a character who drinks any of these humors takes a –6 penalty on the saving throw to resist the humor's effect. All but cholera have mind-affecting effects.

Blood (Red, northwest pipe): Blood fills those who touch it with overwhelming joy and mirth (DC 15 Will save or be affected by *hideous laughter* for 1d4 rounds).

Phlegm (Brown, northeast pipe): Phlegm drives those who touch it momentarily insane (DC 15 Will save or be affected by the confused condition for 1d4 rounds).

Cholera (Yellow, southwest pipe): Cholera dissolves flesh at an alarming rate, inflicting 6d6 points of acid damage to anyone who touches it (DC 15 Reflex half).

Melancholy (Black, southeast pipe): Melancholy overwhelms the target with paralyzing remorse (DC 15 Will save or be paralyzed for 1d4 rounds).

CREATURES: Bloated Jordimandus, the only surviving Warden of Sloth, rules from this chamber—although “rules” is perhaps not the most accurate term, since he’s content to let events in the Festering Maze unfold without his intervention. Once a mere servant to the original Wardens of Sloth, when those wizards expired not long after Thassilon’s fall, Jordimandus found himself the only remaining wizard amid a vast collection of research materials. In the first several years of his lonely new life, Jordimandus was unusually productive—not only did he manage to change the focus of the portals in area J2, but he even managed to secure a potent demonic enhancement from his shapeless patron, Jubilex—a magical heart of slime. This heart, which beats slowly in his forever-opened chest, grants Jordimandus great defensive powers, but has also turned him over the years into a paragon of sloth—an obese monstrosity who wants little more than to spend his hours sitting on his levitating throne above the alchemical soup that is now the sole thing keeping him alive.

While Jubilex’s gift grants Jordimandus immortality, that gift persists only as long as the wizard remains in this room, in range of the magical humors that mix in the open pipe below his floating throne. The humors in each of the pipes themselves are alive, and move to attack anything that comes within reach. Each humor is effectively an immobile advanced ochre jelly—but each has a reach of 15 feet. The ochre jellies do not have the split ability, but do possess significant spell resistance. Worse, the touch of each ochre jelly inflicts an effect dependant upon which pipe it dwells within—see the effects above for the four humors. If one of these ochre jellies is slain, that stream of humor splashes to the ground and Jordimandus immediately gains a negative level. If all four jellies are slain, Jordimandus

can survive for no longer than a week—unless he can repair the damage done (which is unlikely, due to his now almost overwhelming slothfulness).

JORDIMANDUS

XP	CR	HP
51,200	15	190

Male Azlanti conjurer 15

CE Medium humanoid (human)

Init +0; **Senses** see invisibility, Perception +16

DEFENSE

AC 26, touch 12, flat-footed 26 (+4 armor, +2 deflection, +6 natural, +4 shield)

hp 190 (15d6+135)

Fort +16, **Ref** +8, **Will** +15

Defensive Abilities demonically obese, heart of slime; **DR** 10/adamantine; **Immune** critical hits, sneak attacks

OFFENSE

Speed 10 ft., fly 60 ft. (good)

Melee unarmed strike +9/+4 (1d3+2)

Spell-Like Abilities

(CL 15th; concentration +20)

At will—dimensional steps (450 feet/day)

8/day—acid dart (1d6+7 acid)

Spells Prepared

(CL 15th; concentration +20)

8th—quickened *dimension door*, *summon monster VIII* (2)

7th—quickened *dispel magic*, *power word blind*, *summon monster VII* (2)

6th—quickened *acid arrow* (2), *disintegrate* (DC 21), *greater dispel magic*, *summon monster VI*

5th—*cloudkill* (DC 22, 2), *dismissal* (DC 20), *feeblemind* (DC 20), quickened *shield*, *summon monster V*, *telekinesis* (DC 20)

4th—*confusion* (DC 19), *dimension door* (2), *mnemonic enhancer*, *screaming* (DC 19), *stoneskin*, *summon monster IV*

3rd—*dispel magic* (2), *fly*, *stinking cloud* (DC 20, 2), *suggestion* (DC 18), *summon monster III*

2nd—*acid arrow* (2), *false life*, *glitterdust* (DC 19), *hideous laughter* (DC 17), *resist energy*, see invisibility

1st—*charm person* (DC 16), *grease* (DC 18, 2), *mage armor*, *obscuring mist*, *ray of enfeeblement* (DC 16), *summon monster I*, *unseen servant*

0 (at will)—*acid splash*, *detect magic*, *mage hand*, *open/close*, *prestidigitation*

Thassilonian Specialist

conjuration; **Opposition Schools**

evocation, illusion

TACTICS

Before Combat Jordimandus casts *mage armor* and *unseen servant* daily. Once he realizes his maze is invaded, he casts *stoneskin*, see invisibility, *false life*, *fly*, and quickened *shield*.

During Combat Jordimandus starts combat by summoning monsters, using quickened *acid arrows* while he does. He resorts to offensive spells only once there's a nice group of summoned monsters to protect him from melee. He stays in his throne until menaced in melee, at which point he uses flight, dimensional steps, and *dimension door* to stay away from the PCs. Jordimandus carries his *rod of absorption* at all times—he does not carry a weapon at all, relying entirely on magic in combat.

Morale Jordimandus is something of a coward—if he's brought down to fewer than 30 hit points, he drops to his knees and begs for his life. While he can't leave this room without dying, he's learned quite a lot about Runeforge and its inhabitants—information that the PCs can use to their advantage (see Treasure, below).

STATISTICS

Str 14, **Dex** 10, **Con** 22, **Int** 20, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 15

Base Atk +7; **CMB** +9; **CMD** 21

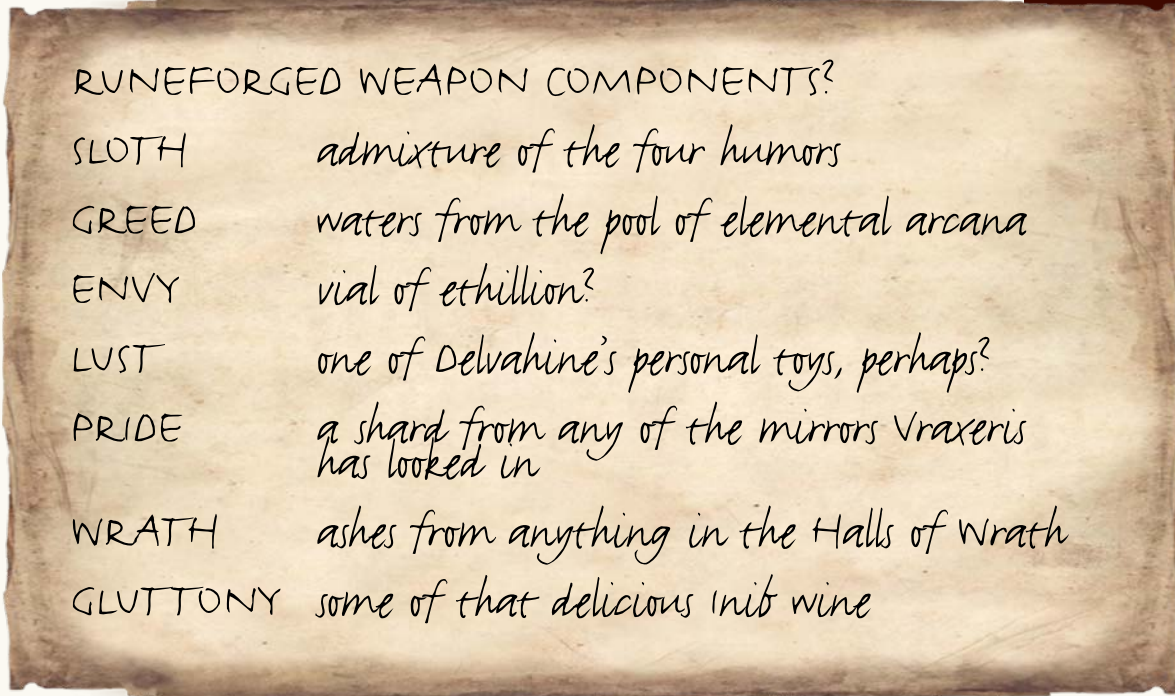
Feats Combat Casting, Craft Rod, Craft Wondrous Item, Eschew Materials, Great Fortitude, Greater Spell Focus (conjuration), Improved Familiar, Improved Iron Will, Iron Will, Quicken Spell, Scribe Scroll, Spell Focus (conjuration), Toughness

Skills Bluff +17, Fly +30, Intimidate +17, Knowledge (arcana) +23, Knowledge (planes) +23, Knowledge (religion) +23, Perception +16, Spellcraft +23



JORDIMANDUS





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Languages Abyssal, Aklo, Draconic, Elven, Necril, Thassilonian
SQ arcane bond (quasit), summoner's charm (7 rounds)
Combat Gear *rod of absorption*; **Other Gear** *cloak of resistance +3, handy haversack, ring of protection +2, diamond dust worth 500 gp, ivory plaque worth 50 gp, silver mirror worth 1,000 gp, spellbooks*

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Demonically Obese (Ex) While Jordimandus's fat grants a +4 natural armor bonus, it reduces his base speed to 10 feet.
Heart of Slime (Su) Jordimandus's heart grants a +6 profane bonus to Constitution and renders him immune to critical hits and sneak attacks. The heart also effectively makes him immortal by ceasing his aging and nourishing him. Oozes do not attack Jordimandus as a result of his unholy heart. If all four of the variant ochre jellies in the surrounding pipes are slain, Jordimandus's access to the life-giving humors ceases and his heart begins to decay. He immediately loses all the benefits granted him by the heart, and furthermore takes 1d6 points of Constitution drain each day until he perishes.

SOBLOCH

HP 95

Quasit familiar (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 66)

VARIANT OCHRE JELLIES (4)

XP	CR	HP
2,400 each	6	75 each

Advanced ochre jelly (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 218, 294)
SR 24
Space 10 ft., **Reach** 15 ft.

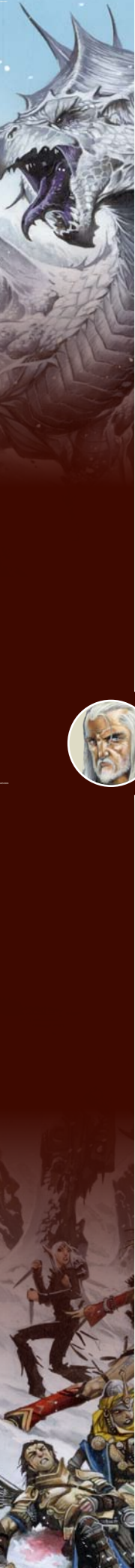
TREASURE: Jordimandus's "floating" throne doesn't precisely float at all. The 6-ton throne is in fact supported by two *immovable rods* fitted into its

base—removing these rods sends the throne plunging into the liquid below. A successful DC 30 Perception check reveals a hidden latch on the throne's left arm; depressing it causes a hidden drawer to open on the right side. Jordimandus keeps his spellbooks in here, along with a few magic scrolls (a *scroll of planar ally*, a *scroll of teleport*, and a *scroll of stone to flesh*) and a *manual of gainful exercise +2* that Jordimandus has never had the energy to read.

An investigation of Jordimandus's spellbooks reveals far more than spells—while Jordimandus hasn't left this room in well over 9,000 years, he's spent a significant amount of time using scrying to spy on Runeforge's other inhabitants. While most of what Jordimandus has scribbled in his margins is useless gossip, anyone who can read Thassilonian and spends 2d4 hours reading the notes can learn the names and basic roles of most of the named NPCs in Runeforge (subject to GM discretion).

Perhaps more importantly, though, Jordimandus has scrawled on the inside cover of his largest spellbook a significant bit of information—his suspicion on what components would work best for the crafting of *runeforged* weapons (see Handout 5-3). Jordimandus hopes someday to forge multiple *runeforged* weapons, arm summoned champions with them, and take over all of Runeforge—he's done most of the research needed to make the weapons and frequently mentions these plans elsewhere in his spellbook, but, fortunately for Runeforge's inhabitants, lacks the energy and drive to follow through on the plan.

Fluid from the central pipe in this room suffices as a *runeforged* weapon component.



PART NINE: THE HALLS OF WRATH

RUNELORD ALAZNIST TASKED HER FINEST (AND MOST DESTRUCTIVE) WIZARDS AND SOLDIERS WITH THE CARE OF THE HALLS OF WRATH. TO AID THEM, SHE GAVE THEM THE SECRET OF CREATING THE HORRIFIC SOLDIERS KNOWN AS SINSPAWN, AND WITH THAT KNOWLEDGE, THE KEY TO FLESHWARPING. UNFORTUNATELY, THE WIZARDS OF WRATH DID NOT TAKE WELL TO WORKING TOGETHER. AFTER THE WARDENS OF SLOTH DECLINED, THE WIZARDS OF WRATH WERE NEXT. YET WHERE THE WARDENS OF SLOTH LEFT BEHIND ONLY ONE TO CARRY ON THEIR WORK, SEVERAL APPRENTICES REMAINED IN THE HALLS OF WRATH.



Centuries have since passed, and in that time, these heirs grew less interested in developing new magic and more interested in maintaining their own brutal society of warfare and training. The inhabitants of the Halls of Wrath have prepared endlessly for Runelord Alaznist's return, yet have made no attempt to hasten that event. The sinspawn are used for training human soldiers, who themselves have developed a closed but highly successful society. Hundreds of generations have passed, each led by a new highlord or highlady ascended from their own ranks. The current leader of these halls is a brutal woman named Athroxis, and the PCs are destined to give her what she's longed for her entire life—a chance to test the training of her soldiers against true invaders.

The Halls of Wrath are made up of several isolated chambers attached to each other via permanent *teleportation circles*—gifts from one of the Wardens of Sloth before Thassilon fell. None in the Halls of Wrath could hope to understand or duplicate the creation of a teleporter, so close-minded are they to conjuration magic, yet they value these *teleportation circles* beyond all else, since the circles' destruction would isolate them forever and turn their homes into tombs.

Teleportation Circles: Each of these measures 10 feet in diameter and is represented by a complex rune carved into the ground surrounded by a deep circular groove. Up to four Medium creatures may enter a teleportation circle at once. Those who do are immediately teleported to the destination keyed to it: always a specific circle with the rune of wrath engraved in the ground within it. The *teleportation circles* are one-way only.

K1 IRON GUARDIAN (CR 13)



A wide corridor of polished marble opens into a brightly lit and extremely tall chamber. The upper portion of the far wall is entirely covered in a mural of an armored woman with crimson hair holding a burning ranseur and riding on the back

of a massive red dragon. A square outcropping of smooth marble juts out from the far wall, rising from the floor to a height of thirty feet. An opening in the wall directly behind the flat top of the stone column leads deeper into this section of the vault. A twelve-foot-tall iron statue stands on this platform, an enormous iron bow gripped in its metal fists and a strange rune that looks almost like a pair of fangs decorating its chest.

This immense hall was used to receive visitors to the Halls of Wrath—those who were turned away were executed by the room's guardian if they didn't immediately leave. The marble surfaces of this chamber are too smooth to climb without magic—when a visitor was granted an audience, the room's guardian was commanded to carry the visitor up to area K2.

CREATURE: As many PCs will doubtless suspect, the iron statue is a golem. What they might not expect is that this iron golem is a variant known as an iron archer, and is capable not only of making devastating ranged attacks, but of *air walking* as well.

When the iron archer detects intruders, it sounds a thunderous alarm that triggers other alarms throughout the Halls of Wrath—metallic clanking that vibrates the stones. This alarm alerts all of the denizens of the Halls of Wrath—Highlady Athroxis uses her *wand of clairaudience/clairvoyance* to observe the battle in this room.

IRON ARCHER	XP	CR	HP
	38,400	14	151

Variant iron golem (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 162)

N Large construct

Init +1; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision, *see invisibility*; Perception +0

DEFENSE

AC 32, touch 10, flat-footed 31 (+1 Dex, +22 natural, -1 size)

hp 151 (22d10+30)

Fort +7, **Ref** +8, **Will** +7

DR 15/adamantine; **Immune** construct traits, magic





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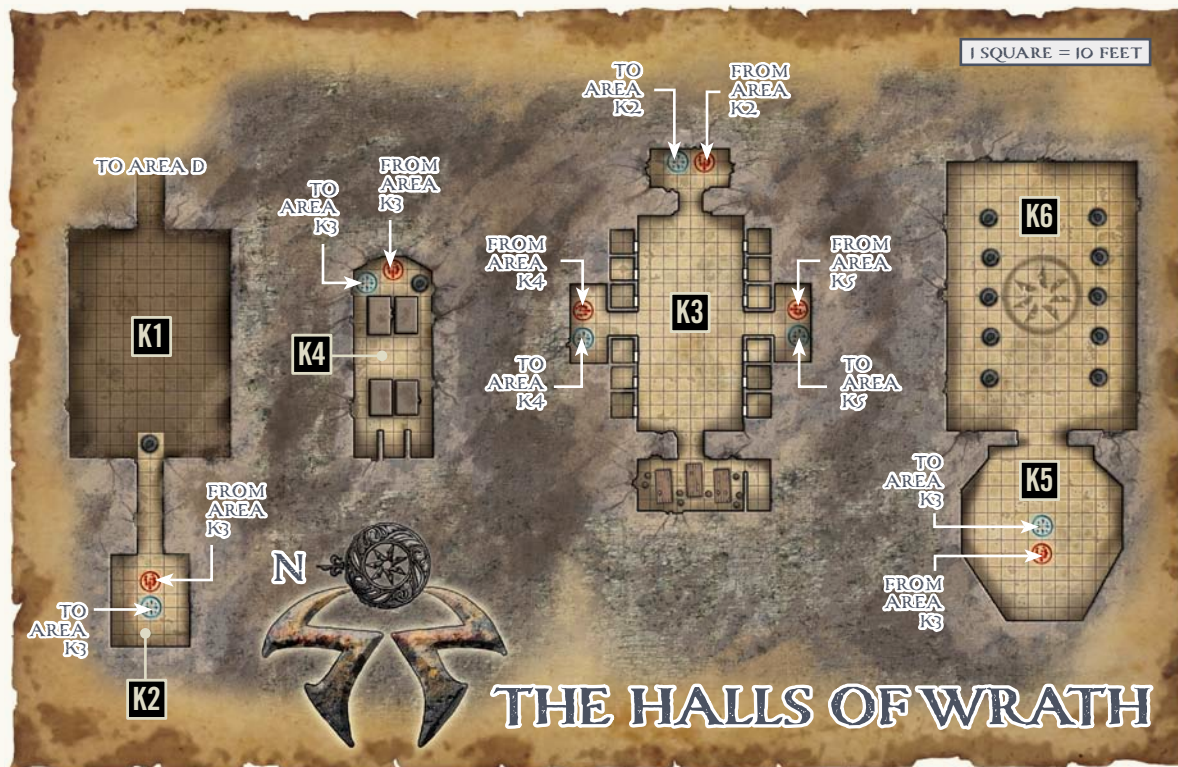
PART SEVEN: THE SHIMMERING VEILS

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OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee 2 slams +34 (2d10+19/19-20)

Ranged arrows of wrath +22/+17/+12/+7 touch (3d6/x3)

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

Special Attacks arrows of wrath, breath weapon (DC 21), powerful blows

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 20th; concentration +15)

Constant—*air walk*, see *invisibility*

TACTICS

During Combat The iron archer focuses its attacks on opponents who get past it into the corridor to the exclusion of all others, until the target is dead or flees. If no opponent gets past it, the iron archer focuses on flying foes.

Morale The iron archer fights until destroyed.

STATISTICS

Str 36, **Dex** 13, **Con** —, **Int** —, **Wis** 11, **Cha** 1

Base Atk +22; **CMB** +36; **CMD** 47

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Arrows of Wrath (Su) When the iron archer attacks with its bow, it fires arrow-shaped bolts of energy. These arrows deal 3d6 points of damage on a hit. On the first round of combat, these arrows deal fire damage. On the second round, they deal electricity damage. On the third they deal cold damage. On the fourth round, they switch back to fire and the cycle repeats. If the iron archer ceases to use its arrows (to make a melee attack, for example), the cycle restarts with fire arrows the next time it fires.

TREASURE: Both of the golem's eyes are valuable gemstones—the left is a diamond worth 5,000 gp,

while the right is in fact a *gem of brightness* (13 charges; the golem cannot use this item).

K2 TELEPORT ROOM



Two engraved circles in the ground surround large runes in their center. The one to the east is red, while the one to the west is blue.

These are *teleportation circles*. The eastern circle is the arrival point from area K3, while the western one is the departure circle to area K3. They can be identified as *teleportation circles* with a successful DC 29 Knowledge (arcana) check, although determining where they go or lead from can only be discovered by trying them out.

K3 BARRACKS AND TRAINING HALL (CR 14)



This long chamber is filled with practice dummies dressed in battered and scorched suits of armor and a few contraptions bearing sharp implements. Several doors and two open corridors exit the chamber along each side wall. An opening in the opposite wall leads to what appears to be a meeting hall.

Several *continual flames* on the walls provide light for this chamber, which is the primary training hall for the denizens of the Halls of Wrath. No matter how battered the training dummies get, the room itself repairs them every 24 hours so they're good to go for the next day's work.

Despite the fact that the warriors stationed here need not eat or sleep, their training demands they take time to do so. This prevents them from falling into habits that could be problems once the call for war is heard and they must return to Golarion. Each of the 20-foot-square side rooms contains bunks for humans to the west, sinspawn to the east.

CREATURES: After the first few generations of warriors of wrath grew too inbred, steps were taken to ensure that only the most desirable traits were passed on to the children of this insular community. Using the fleshwarping labs (area K4) to aid in the shaping of both human and sinspawn offspring alike, the denizens have even regulated the cycle of birth and death in the Halls of Wrath. Each generation of soldier is allowed to breed at age 24, and then when they reach the age of 44, a new Highlord is selected and the older generation

is sent to the flesh forges for transformation into sinspawn. Fortunately for the PCs, the recent war with the Abjurant Halls resulted in the deaths of many of the warriors here. Their numbers depleted, and having not yet reached the age where they are traditionally allowed to reproduce themselves, several warriors of wrath now toil in the fleshwarping labs, seeking a way to reverse the sinspawn transformation in hopes of reclaiming lost numbers. As a result, only six warriors of wrath and six sinspawn are here to stand against the PCs.

As combat begins here, Highlady Athroxis observes via her *wand of clairaudience/clairvoyance*.

WARRIORS OF WRATH (6)	XP	CR	HP
	3,200 each	7	74 each

Azlanti fighter 1/evoker 5/eldritch knight 2

LE Medium humanoid (human)

Init +2; **Senses** Perception +10

DEFENSE

AC 18, touch 12, flat-footed 16 (+6 armor, +2 Dex)

hp 74 each (8 HD; 3d10+5d6+37)

Fort +7, **Ref** +4, **Will** +6

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee +1 *greatsword* +11 (2d6+5/19–20)

Special Attacks intense spells (+2 damage)

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 6th; concentration +10)

7/day—*force missile* (1d4+2)

Spells Prepared (CL 6th; 10% spell failure; concentration +10)

3rd—*displacement*, *fireball* (DC 19, 3), *haste*

2nd—*bull's strength*, *mirror image*, *scorching ray* (3), *shatter* (DC 16)

1st—*burning hands* (DC 17), *magic missile* (3), *shocking grasp*, *true strike*

0 (at will)—*acid splash*, *dancing lights*, *flare* (DC 14), *light*, *ray of frost*

Thassilonian Specialization evocation; **Opposition Schools** conjuration, abjuration

TACTICS

During Combat The warriors of wrath allow the sinspawn to initially engage the PCs, giving themselves time to cast *bull's strength*, *mirror image*, *haste*, and *displacement*. They step in to replace fallen sinspawn on a one-for-one basis, using spells like *fireball* and *scorching ray* to hit PCs who hang back from the melee.

Morale The warriors of wrath fight to the death.

STATISTICS

Str 16, **Dex** 14, **Con** 16, **Int** 18, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 10

Base Atk +5; **CMB** +9; **CMD** 21

Feats Arcane Strike, Combat Casting, Craft Magic Arms and Armor, Greater Spell Focus (evocation), Scribe Scroll, Spell Focus (evocation), Toughness, Weapon Focus (greatsword)

Skills Acrobatics +11, Craft (armorsmith or weaponsmith) +16, Intimidate +12, Knowledge (arcana) +16, Knowledge (engineering) +16, Perception +10, Spellcraft +16

Languages Aklo, Draconic, Elven, Giant, Thassilonian

SQ arcane bond (greatsword)

Gear +2 *mithral shirt*, +1 *greatsword*, spellbook (contains prepared spells only)



WARRIOR OF WRATH



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SINSPAWN AXEMEN (6)

XP 3,200 each	CR 7	HP 69 each
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Male sinspawn fighter 5 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 2* 246)
NE Medium aberration

Init +5; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., sin-scent; Perception +11

DEFENSE

AC 22, touch 12, flat-footed 20 (+8 armor, +1 Dex, +1 dodge, +2 natural)

hp 69 each (8 HD; 3d8+5d10+29)

Fort +8, **Ref** +4, **Will** +6; +1 vs. fear

Defensive Abilities bravery +1; **Immune** mind-affecting effects; **SR** 13

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee +1 *greataxe* +13/+8 (1d12+7/×3), bite +5 (1d6+1 plus wrathful bite)

Special Attacks weapon training (axes +1)

TACTICS

During Combat The sinspawn move to intercept intruders and prevent anyone from engaging the warriors of wrath for as long as they can hold the line. They always use Power Attack in combat (taking a -2 penalty on attacks to deal +4 damage).

Morale The sinspawn fight to the death.

STATISTICS

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

Base Atk +7; **CMB** +10; **CMD** 22

Feats Cleave, Dodge, Improved Initiative, Power Attack, Toughness, Weapon Focus (*greataxe*), Weapon Specialization (*greataxe*)

Skills Intimidate +13, Perception +11, Stealth +11

Languages Thassilonian

SQ armor training 1, martial proficiency

Gear +2 *breastplate*, +1 *greataxe*

K4 FLESHWARPING LAB (CR 13)



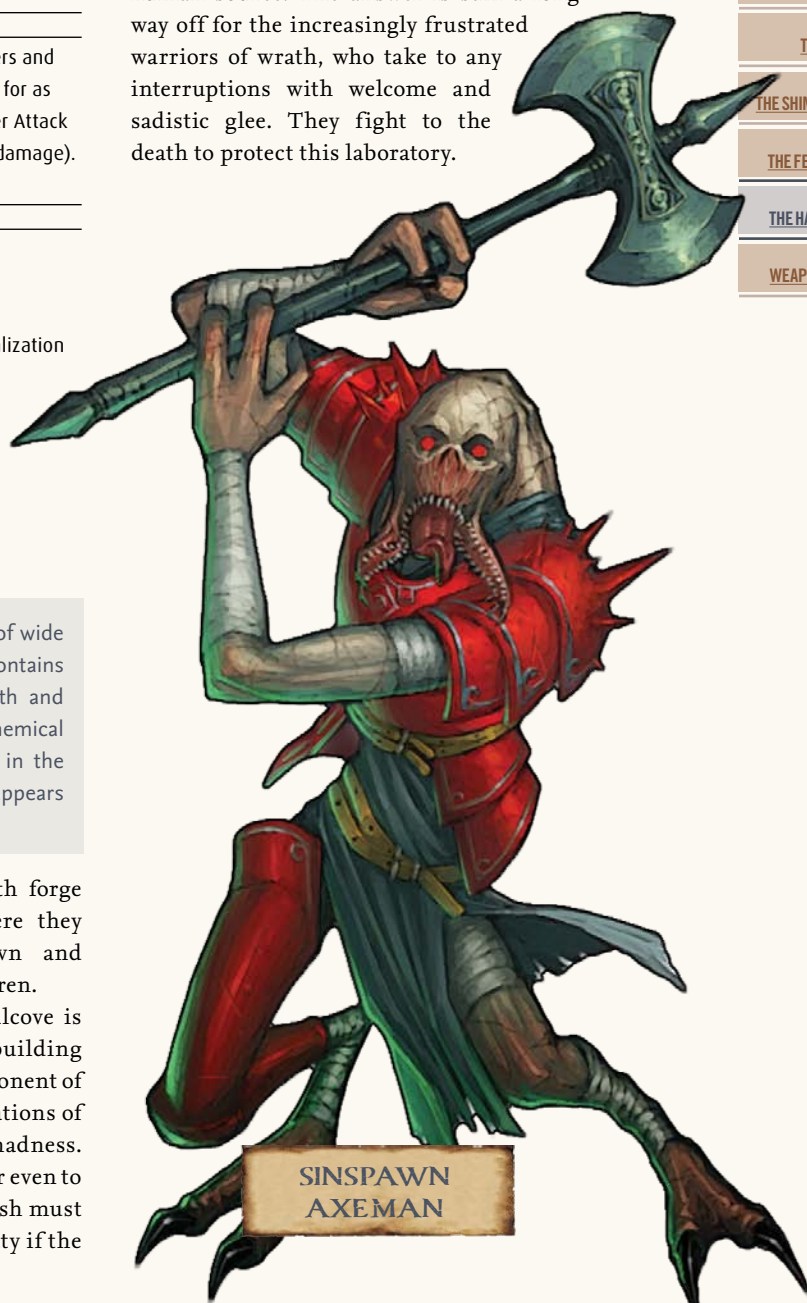
This long chamber is filled with two rows of wide worktables. The far end of the chamber contains three wide alcoves. The ones to the north and south are each filled with all manner of alchemical supplies and large barrels, while the one in the middle contains a single huge vat of what appears to be twitching, foul-smelling flesh.

This chamber is where the Lords of Wrath forge magical weapons and armor, and also where they transform older generations into sinspawn and engineer the proper growth of their own children.

The vat of bubbling flesh in the central alcove is a semi-living mass of protoflesh—the raw building material for growing sinspawn and a key component of much of the work done here to keep the generations of wrath from descending into deformity and madness. The stuff smells foul, and is dangerous to eat or even to touch. A living creature that contacts protoflesh must succeed at a DC 13 Fortitude save (at a -4 penalty if the

protoflesh is actually consumed or injected) or suffer a painful and unfortunately permanent mutation. These mutations can be vestigial limbs, twisted feet, sightless and hideous eyes, or anything else—feel free to get creative in describing them. The effects are the same—one randomly determined ability score is reduced by 2 points. This is not drain or damage, but a permanent reduction to the score. This reduction may be removed by excising the mutated part and then casting *regenerate*, via *greater restoration*, or with a *miracle* or *wish*. Protoflesh dies quickly if removed from a vat—it remains dangerous only for 1 round after being removed from the vat itself.

CREATURES: This room is currently occupied by nine warriors of wrath, all toiling diligently on a complex problem—a method to revert a sinspawn back into its human source. The answer is still a long way off for the increasingly frustrated warriors of wrath, who take to any interruptions with welcome and sadistic glee. They fight to the death to protect this laboratory.



SINSPAWN AXEMAN



WARRIORS OF WRATH (9)

XP	CR	HP
3,200 each	7	74 each

(see page 292)

TACTICS

During Combat Anytime a warrior of wrath is next to a fleshwarping vat and not engaged in melee, she'll attempt to splash a glob of protoflesh on a PC by dipping a weapon and flipping the glob from the tip. This resolves as a ranged touch attack (with a -4 penalty on the attack roll for it being an improvised weapon, of course); it does not deal splash damage and only endangers the poor creature struck.

K5 CHAMBER OF READINESS



The polished granite walls of this large chamber are covered in spidery glyphs. The ceiling rises twenty-five feet high, where a mural depicts a redheaded woman holding a flaming ranseur standing atop a burning tower of stone. Swords and ranseurs rest inside shallow depressions in the walls, glowing faintly to illuminate the chamber. The east side of the room is a solid wall of billowing black smoke.

This room is where initiates who wish to test themselves and make the attempt to become a new highlord or highlady of wrath prepare themselves for the grueling combat that awaits them beyond the veil of smoke at the far side of the chamber. To advance, an initiate need only defeat the current highlord or highlady.

A successful DC 20 Knowledge (arcana) check or *read magic* spell determines that the glyphs on the walls represent various forms of evocation magic, particularly those involving fire or the creation of magic weapons.

The wall of smoke separating this room from area K6 is a very decorative *illusory wall* (CL 15th, Will DC 17).

TREASURE: The weapons embedded in the walls include two +1 *greatswords*, two +1 *ranseurs*, and two +1 *longswords*. Each of them glows continuously, providing light equal to a torch. The weapons may be removed with a *stone shape* spell, excavation, or a DC 30 Strength check.

K6 HALL OF TESTING (CR 16)



A wide avenue flanked by crimson stone pillars runs down the center of this chamber—the ceiling arches sixty feet above and seems to be made of fire. At the center of the room, a huge seven-pointed star made of silver is engraved into the floor and surrounded by a circle of low-burning flames.

This enormous chamber serves as a training ground for the current highlord or highlady of wrath and as an arena for the testing of new applicants. The fire burning above is quite real—treat it as a permanent *wall of fire* (CL 15th) covering the extent of the ceiling. Ash resulting from objects burnt in the flames of this *wall of fire* (or any magical fire effect generated in this room, for that matter) function as the component for *runeforged* weapons.

The Sihedron Rune in the middle of the room is in fact an immense portal—this is the “master circle” that Vraxeris wrote about in his journal. The master circle has two functions, but Highlady Athroxis can only activate the first of them.

Calling: Once per day, the master circle can be commanded to call a single creature, functioning as a *planar binding* spell (CL 15th)—only one called outsider

may be active at a time via this effect. It is this use that Highlady Athroxis can utilize.

HIGHLADY
ATHROXIS



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Travel: If any teleportation effect is used while the caster is standing within the circle, the teleportation energy is instead absorbed by the master circle, which then opens a gate to the center of the Sihedron Circle on the lower slopes of Rimeskull. The gate is a two-way portal, and remains open for 1 hour before closing.

CREATURES: Highlady Athroxis awaits the PCs here, likely having already watched them in battle several times with her magic wand—her frustration with her servants' failures increasing to rage with each of the PCs' victories. She has little in the way of social graces, and when the PCs enter the room she shrieks a battle cry in Thassilonian—something to the effect of "For fury and hellfire!"—and attacks at once. Unfortunately for the PCs, Athroxis is not alone—she is accompanied by a glabrezu demon she called up from the Abyss (using the room's Sihedron Rune portal) to serve as a guardian.

HIGHLADY ATHROXIS

XP	CR	HP
51,200	15	193

Female Azlanti human fighter 1/evoker 5/eldritch knight 10
LE Medium humanoid (human)

Init +3; **Senses** Perception +17

DEFENSE

AC 28, touch 16, flat-footed 25 (+10 armor, +2 deflection, +3 Dex, +1 insight, +2 natural)

hp 193 (16 HD; 1d10+5d6+10d10+116)

Fort +17, **Ref** +11, **Will** +13

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft., fly 60 ft. (good)

Melee +3 *adamantine flaming ranseur* +22/+17/+12 (2d4+10/19–20/x3 plus 1d6 fire)

Special Attacks spell critical, intense spells (+2 damage)

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 14th; concentration +19)

8/day—force missile (1d4+2)

Spells Prepared (CL 14th; 15% spell failure; concentration +19)

7th—*mage's sword*, *prismatic spray* (DC 24, 2), *project image* (DC 22)

6th—*chain lightning* (DC 23, 2), still *cone of cold* (DC 22, 2), *flesh to stone* (DC 21)

5th—*cone of cold* (DC 22, 2), *feeblemind* (DC 20), maximized *scorching ray*, empowered *vampiric touch*, *wall of force*

4th—*confusion* (DC 19), still *fireball* (DC 20, 2), still empowered *magic missile* (2), empowered *scorching ray*, *shout* (DC 21)

3rd—*fly*, *greater magic weapon*, *haste*, *keen edge*, *lightning bolt* (DC 20, 2), empowered *magic missile*

2nd—*blindness/deafness* (DC 17), *false life*, still *magic missile* (2), *mirror image*, *scorching ray*, *see invisibility*

1st—*burning hands* (DC 18), *expeditious retreat*, *magic missile* (2), *ray of enfeeblement* (DC 16), *shocking grasp*, *true strike* (2)

0 (at will)—*detect magic*, *light*, *flare* (DC 17), *ray of frost*, *read magic*

Thassilonian Specialization evocation; **Opposition Schools** abjuration, conjuration

TACTICS

Before Combat Athroxis casts *greater magic weapon* and *keen edge* on her ranseur daily, and *false life* on herself. When she sees the PCs reach area **K3**, she casts *fly* and *mirror image* on herself as well.

During Combat Athroxis casts *haste* immediately before combat begins, and then uses her *cone of cold* spells. She favors spells like *blindness/deafness* and her still spells, since they aren't impacted by her spell failure chance. When she engages in melee, she uses Combat Expertise—this penalizes her attack rolls by –4 but increases her AC by +4.

Morale Athroxis fights to the death. If reduced to 15 or fewer hit points, she willingly sacrifices herself, centering a *fireball* on herself if doing so catches a number of PCs in the blast.

STATISTICS

Str 18, **Dex** 16, **Con** 20, **Int** 20, **Wis** 10, **Cha** 12

Base Atk +13; **CMB** +18; **CMD** 35

Feats Arcane Strike, Combat Expertise, Craft Magic Arms and Armor, Craft Wand, Craft Wondrous Item, Empower Spell, Greater Spell Focus (evocation), Improved Critical (ranseur), Iron Will, Maximize Spell, Power Attack, Scribe Scroll, Spell Focus (evocation), Still Spell, Toughness

Skills Acrobatics +20, Climb +24, Craft (weaponsmith) +25, Fly +15, Intimidate +21, Knowledge (arcana) +25, Perception +17, Sense Motive +17, Spellcraft +25

Languages Abyssal, Aklo, Draconic, Elven, Giant, Thassilonian
SQ arcane bond (ranseur), diverse training

Combat Gear *wand of clairvoyance/clairaudience* (32 charges), *wand of lightning bolt* (CL 10th, 25 charges); **Other Gear** +4 *mithral breastplate*, +1 *adamantine flaming ranseur*, *amulet of natural armor* +2, *belt of physical perfection* +2, *cloak of resistance* +3, *headband of vast intelligence* +2, *ring of protection* +2, spell component pouch, spellbook

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Mark of Wrath (Su) Highlady Athroxis wears the mark of her rulership on her flesh—a faintly glowing tattoo-like rune on her forehead that moves through the generations from one ruler to the next. The mark of wrath provides her with a +1 insight bonus to AC and on attack and damage rolls. Once per day as a swift action, she can call upon the mark to protect her with a *fire shield* (CL 15th). If she is slain in combat, the mark of wrath transfers to the brow of her defeater. It can only be transferred again on that character's death at the hands of another, but can be removed with a successful *break enchantment* against CL 20th. Once removed in this manner, it vanishes forever.

GLABREZU (TREACHERY DEMON)

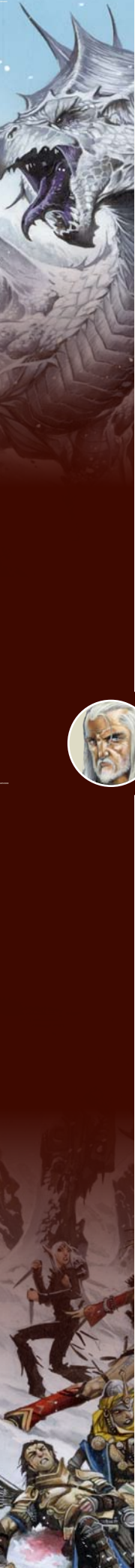
XP	CR	HP
25,600	13	186

(Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 61)

TACTICS

During Combat The glabrezu demon follows Highlady Athroxis's commands when she gives them, serving as a bodyguard and helping to prevent foes from flanking her. As it was called, it can use its summon demons ability, doing so on the first round to attempt to summon vrocks.

Morale The demon fights to the death.



PART TEN: WEAPONS OF POWER

ONCE THE PCs REACH RUNEFORGE, THE ADVENTURE DOESN'T IMMEDIATELY TELL THEM WHAT TO SEEK OUT AND ACCOMPLISH, BUT THEIR TRUE GOAL SHOULD EVENTUALLY BE TO CREATE RUNEFORGED WEAPONS FROM THE RUNEFORGE POOL IN THE HEART OF THE COMPLEX. THE MOST LIKELY PLACE THEY CAN LEARN ABOUT THESE WEAPONS IS FROM VRAXERIS'S OR JORDIMANDUS'S JOURNALS, BUT YOU CAN JUST AS EASILY DROP HINTS THAT THE CENTRAL POOL CAN BE USED TO CRAFT WEAPONS IF THE PCs CHARM POWERFUL NPCs OR PERFORM MAGICAL DIVINATIONS UPON THE RUNEFORGE POOL ITSELF.



In order to infuse a weapon with power from the pool and transform it into a *runeforged* weapon, a character must gather components that have themselves been infused with magic over the past several centuries. Not any component will do—these must be items that are themselves icons of sin. Each of these items detects as very faint magic of the appropriate school, and when brought within 10 feet of the runeforge pool, these items glow brightly and seem to buzz with energy. Full rules for creating *runeforged* weapons, as well as what they can do, can be found in Appendix Eight.

In the final chapter of this campaign, certain wards and creatures the PCs encounter are susceptible to *dominant* weapons (those enhanced by lust and pride magic, the opposition to greed). If no PC forges a *dominant* weapon, the next chapter becomes more difficult—yet not completely impossible. You may wish to take advantage of any divination spells the PCs cast, or perhaps reward a successful DC 25 Knowledge (arcana) check with clues to this effect—or you might not.

Note that you may have players in your group who balk at the concept of infusing their favorite weapons with sin. Although sin itself is not directly tied to evil in the context of alignment, the idea of embracing sin can work at odds to certain player character sensibilities. In this case (and by this point in the adventure, you'll know if you have PCs for whom this might be a problem), feel free to not refer to *runeforged* weapons by their sinful name, but rather by their virtuous name. The difference between wielding a *dominant* weapon and a *commanding* weapon are entirely semantic—both weapon types are identical in game terms, and in how well they work against Karzoug and his minions. The remainder of this book assumes the players choose to refer to their *runeforged* weapons by their sinful names, but if your players opt for the virtuous route, don't forget to adjust the names as appropriate!

STORY AWARD: Grant the PCs 51,200 XP when they successfully build their first *dominant* weapon. No experience points are awarded at all for building any other type of *runeforged* weapon.

A RUNELORD ENRAGED (CR 16)

Although he's not yet fully awakened, Karzoug has reestablished his link with the runeforge pool, and when the pool is used to craft *runeforged* weapons, he feels it. Karzoug knows that *dominant* weapons in particular are a threat to him, and as soon as the first one of these is crafted, he acts. From deep within the Eye of Avarice high above Xin-Shalast, Runelord Karzoug reaches out to use the runeforged pool himself. With a sudden explosion of water, a beam of golden light bursts from the pool to bathe the statue of Karzoug. Immediately, the towering statue animates, transforming into an enormous stone golem. It stares down at the PCs and speaks, the voice the same they heard issuing from Mokmurian at the end of the previous adventure. "You. Again. I can't help but be inspired by your optimism, but alas, your weapons will never reach Xin-Shalast. Your fate is death, here in Runeforge."

KARZOUG STATUE

XP	CR	HP
76,800	16	205

Variant stone golem (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 163)

N Huge construct

Init +0; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Perception +2

DEFENSE

AC 31, touch 8, flat-footed 31 (+23 natural, -2 size)

hp 205 (30d10+40)

Fort +10, **Ref** +10, **Will** +12

DR 15/adamantine and bludgeoning; **Immune** construct traits, magic

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee 2 slams +43 (3d10+15 plus petrification)

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

Special Attacks shattering blow, slow (DC 25)

TACTICS

During Combat The stone golem uses its slow ability on the party every chance it gets, moving to place itself in an optimal position before activating this power. It focuses its physical attacks on the character who created the *dominant* weapon. Fortunately for that character, this newly enhanced weapon





bypasses all damage reduction possessed by the stone golem.

Morale Karzoug can maintain the golem's animation for only 4 rounds. If the PCs still live on the fifth round, the statue spends a round just speaking: "This... this is not the last... come then, heroes. Seek me atop Mhar Massif, if you value life so poorly. You should be honored to be the first fools executed under the banner of Shalast in ten thousand..." Karzoug is unable to finish his taunts, though, and the golem reverts to inanimate stone. It does not attack again.

STATISTICS

Str 40, **Dex** 11, **Con** —, **Int** —, **Wis** 15, **Cha** 5

Base Atk +30; **CMB** +47; **CMD** 57

Feats Power Attack⁸

SPECIAL ATTACKS

Petrification (Su) A creature struck by the statue's slam attack must succeed at a DC 25 Fortitude save or take 1d10 points of Dexterity drain. A creature drained to 0 Dexterity becomes petrified. The save DC is Constitution-based.

Shattering Blow (Su) If the Karzoug statue ever damages a petrified creature with its slam attack, that creature must succeed at a DC 25 Fortitude save or be shattered into fragments. This essentially kills the PC, but also deals 3d10 points of slashing damage to all creatures within a 5-foot radius of the shattered statue. The save DC is Constitution-based.

CONCLUDING THE CHAPTER

This adventure's chapters are organized roughly in escalation of power; Part Eight contains tougher challenges and greater rewards than Part Seven, for example. Yet the PCs are free to tackle Runeforge's seven

wings in any order they wish. Likewise, they have plenty of time to explore the dungeon, and if they can travel the planes, they can even retreat back to Golarion to rest and recover. Runeforge's environment has remained what it is for thousands of years, and while the invasion of a band of heroes certainly stirs things up, Runeforge will be waiting for their return.

Once the PCs manage to forge at least one *dominant* weapon, they're ready to make the journey to Xin-Shalast. Yet the prospect of escaping Runeforge and returning to Golarion may not be apparent to some parties. Those who lack access to methods of escape like *plane shift* must discover the method of escape via the Sihedron Rune in area **K6**, or use a *scroll of plane shift* from area **F4**. You may need to include other methods for your players to return to Golarion as well, especially if none of them can activate the Sihedron Rune or use a *scroll of plane shift*. Using the *cape of the mountebank* from area **I3** while standing in the Sihedron Rune in area **K6** can trigger the exit portal, for example.

Even if the PCs emerge from Runeforge without any *dominant* weapons, the experience and gear they accumulate within its various dungeons can help to prepare the PCs for the challenges that await them high in the Kodar Mountains. Even though things might seem to be coming to a head, and it might feel as if Karzoug's about to emerge into the world, feel free to give your PCs time to rest and recover from their ordeal in Runeforge.

For Karzoug has a few final surprises for the PCs before they can finally confront him in the fabled Spires of Xin-Shalast.