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SHATTERED STAR

CURSE OF THE LADY'S LIGHT

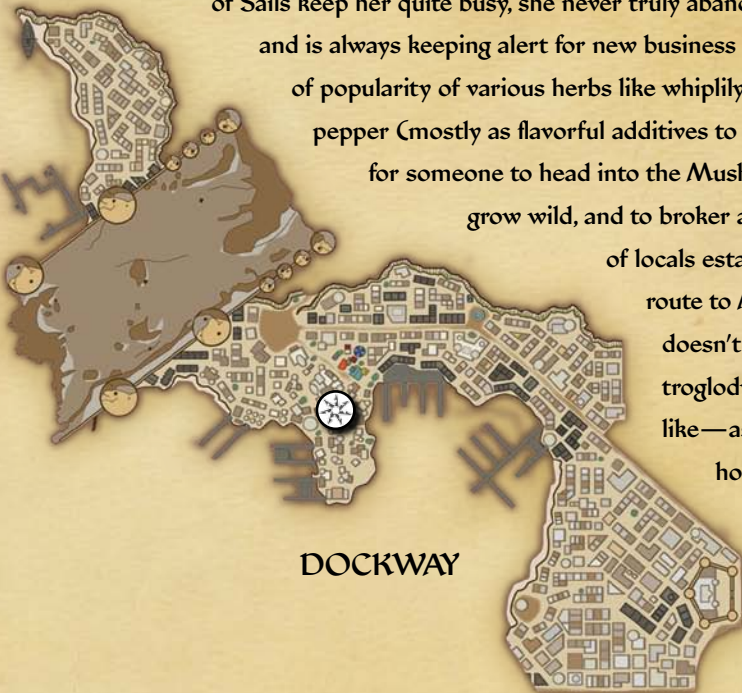
By Mike Shel

STRANGE HERBS FROM THE SWAMP

Although Sabriyya Kalmeralm's duties and responsibilities at Magnimar's Bazaar of Sails keep her quite busy, she never truly abandons her merchant's roots, and is always keeping alert for new business opportunities. With the rise of popularity of various herbs like whiplily, frog's eye, miresh, and fen pepper (mostly as flavorful additives to food and drink), she's looking for someone to head into the Mushfens, where these plants grow wild, and to broker an agreement with a group of locals establishing a regular trade route to Magnimar. Sabriyya doesn't mind if the "locals" are troglodytes or boggards or the like—as long as they're willing to

honor the deal and don't cause trouble. After all, spices taste the same no matter who gathers them!

Reward: 2,400 XP for securing a trade agreement with a friendly tribe in the Mushfens—the troglodytes, once they're on the road to redemption, make for the best choice.



DOCKWAY

SEEKING SALACIOUS RELICS

Eccentric sculptor Ayavah is an unusual artist—her workshop is in one of the Irespan's pilings in Underbridge, for one. For another, the sculptures she makes are of a risqué nature, with her most famous works being small but incredibly detailed sculptures of entwined succubi. Ayavah has many secrets, but her greatest and most dangerous is her heretical belief that the demon lord Nocticula is in fact a fallen empyreal lord who seeks redemption. She has a longstanding arrangement with Heidmarch Manor that if they send adventurers into one of several ruins she suspects hold treasures associated with succubi, she'll pay well for their retrieval—and the Lady's Light is quite high on her list!


Reward: Retrieving and selling the following items from under the Lady's Light earns the PCs full gp value for each item, plus a 1,200 XP reward for each item sold to Ayavah: a minimum of 10 rubbings taken from the door at area K3 (these also net a 250 gp reward), the incense burner from area L18, and the unholy symbol of Nocticula from area L18.



UNDERBRIDGE

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SHATTERED STAR

ADVENTURE PATH  PART 2 OF 6

CURSE OF THE LADY'S LIGHT

SHATTERED STAR

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RISE OF THE CRIMSON DARKNESS II

By setting up the Shattered Star Adventure Path as a sequel to *Rise of the Runelords*, *Curse of the Crimson Throne*, and *Second Darkness*, we opened up some pretty fun possibilities for elements to include in the adventures—specifically, members of groups that don't exist or aren't well known until the events from these Adventure Paths have come to pass. As you'll see soon enough in this volume, the Gray Maidens (first introduced in *Pathfinder Adventure Path #8*) play a significant role in this adventure. It's a lot harder to do much with the Gray Maidens if we don't assume the events of *Curse of the Crimson Throne* have taken place! And since we love the Gray Maidens' look enough to put one on the back cover of

our *Core Rulebook*, it seemed obvious that we should revisit them. (Eva Widemann's original illustration remains one of my favorites of any artwork Paizo has published.)

In "Curse of the Lady's Light" (a title chosen to make long-time readers think of *Curse of the Crimson Throne*), we didn't stop at including Gray Maidens. More than any other adventure in the Shattered Star Adventure Path, this one's a direct sequel to *Curse of the Crimson Throne*.

You can expect more thematic expansions from *Rise of the Runelords*, *Curse of the Crimson Throne*, and *Second Darkness* in the adventures to come—but at the same time, you can also expect a ton of all-new dungeon mayhem to inflict upon your players' characters!

FOREWORD

REINTRODUCING MIKE SHEL

I've been playing RPGs for about 3 decades now. (Yes, that does mean I started playing D&D when I was younger than the recommended starting age of 10—don't tell the cops!) In those 30-some years, I've built up plenty of fond memories of games run and favorite adventures. Two of my favorites from the pages of *Dungeon* stand out: "Sleepless" and "The Mud Sorcerer's Tomb." Both adventures had a delightfully devious mix of cool background and storyline with some really creative encounters. I remember when one PC in "Sleepless," a character who always ended up carrying far more than he should be carrying, got hit by a babau's *ray of enfeeblement* and ended up collapsing under the weight of his own gear, enabling the babau to just climb up on his back and chew on his head. Or the time another character led a group into a large room in the Mud Sorcerer's Tomb that happened to be guarded by four hill giant mummies—which gave that character a perfect chance to finally use the *potion of mummy control* he'd been carrying around forever.

The reason I bring up babaus and mummies is because both of those adventures were written by the same man—Mike Shel. "The Mud Sorcerer's Tomb" was one of the magazine's most well-loved adventures, so when it came time for the anniversary issue back in *Dungeon* #138, I wanted to celebrate by reprinting and revising the adventure for the current edition of the game. The problem was, I didn't have any way to contact Mike to find out whether he'd be interested in helping with the revisions. Before I gave up, I tried a desperate attempt to contact him via our own messageboards in a post dated April 11th, 2006:

"I'm trying to get in contact with Mike Shel, the author of *Dungeon* #37's adventure "The Mud Sorcerer's Tomb." Mike, if you're out there reading this board (or if you know Mike and can get him to contact me), please drop me a line."

Although my post got several other people chatting about "The Mud Sorcerer's Tomb," it failed to bring Mike out of the woodwork—until early 2010, when Mike contacted me out of the blue after he'd somehow stumbled upon my post while doing a search online for his old adventures. I was delighted, and even more so to learn that he was interested in getting back into the adventure-writing scene!

Since then, Mike's written several things for us, from articles about juju to adventures about Iron Medusas to entire books about pirate islands. "Curse of the Lady's Light" is his first Adventure Path installment, though, and judging upon what he came up with, I feel pretty safe in saying it won't be his last!

FREE WEB ENHANCEMENT!

Ever since *Pathfinder Adventure Path* #2, we've been doing articles about the core deities of Golarion—two per Adventure Path, one in the second installment and one

ON THE COVER

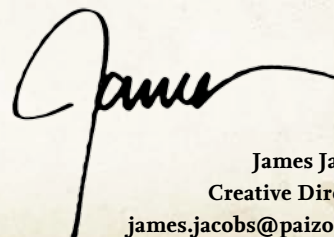
Commander Oriana, leader of the Gray Maidens who came to the Lady's Light in search of treasure and power to aid in the reclamation of Korvosa but found something much more dangerous instead, appears on the cover of this volume.

in the fifth. And we managed to keep that pattern going for pretty much the whole run... until we got to Torag.

Torag's article was originally intended to appear in *Pathfinder Adventure Path* #56, but due to events beyond even the control of the god of strategy (apparently, some things simply cannot be planned for!), the Torag article didn't make it into that adventure. It was frustrating to break our streak of deity articles (and I suspect even more frustrating for Torag fans who've been waiting patiently since *Pathfinder Adventure Path* #2), but he's finally making his appearance in this volume—and in so doing, finishing off Sean K Reynolds's excellent 20-part series on the core deities of the Inner Sea region. We'll continue to do these articles in future volumes, sticking to the formula of at least two deities per Adventure Path, but going forward we'll be focusing on the other deities and demigods of the campaign setting, and their articles will appear in volumes whose adventures are most appropriate for the article.

Unfortunately, that development also meant that we had to cancel the article that was originally supposed to appear in this adventure—an article about the Mushfens focusing on additional encounters you could use to bolster events between the PCs leaving Heidmarch Manor and arriving at the Lady's Cape in this adventure.

So instead, we're giving you that cut content for free in the *Curse of the Lady's Light Web Enhancement*, available at paizo.com. There, you'll find not only a bonus encounter with a swamp-dwelling mantichore and shenanigans aboard the *Wanton Ways* (the ship the PCs may end up taking south to the Lady's Light), but also an extended encounter with a deranged street prophet and cleric of Groetus who may just have something important to tell the PCs about their quest for the Shattered Star! (And of course, if you're looking for even more ways to expand the adventure, don't forget the minor quests on the inside covers!)



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SHATTERED STAR



CURSE OF THE LADY'S LIGHT

PART ONE: THE JOURNEY SOUTH

The PCs have recovered the first two shards of the Shattered Star, but five more remain hidden throughout Varisia. When they learn the next shard in the sequence lies within the Lady's Light, they must prepare for a journey south into the wilds of the Mushfens.

PAGE 8

PART TWO: THE LADY'S CAPE

Armed only with the knowledge that the shard they seek lies within the monument known as the Lady's Light, the PCs must explore the dangerous marshes surrounding the structure—and contend with warring tribes of boggards and troglodytes!

PAGE 9

PART THREE: THE LADY'S LIGHT

The Thassilonian dungeons below the Lady's Light hide the only entrance into the monument itself, and as the PCs soon learn, within those dungeons dwells a dangerous mix of ancient guardians and much more recent additions...

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ADVANCEMENT TRACK

“Curse of the Lady's Light” is designed for four characters and uses the medium XP track.

- 5** The PCs begin this adventure at 5th level.
- 6** The PCs should be 6th level by the time they start exploring the dungeons below the Lady's Light.
- 7** The PCs should reach 7th level by the time they reach the second dungeon level below the Lady's Light.

The PCs should be 8th level by the end of the adventure.



CURSE OF THE LADY'S LIGHT

ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

The construction of monuments to symbolize power long served to assuage the egos of Thassilon's runelords. Several runelords took to the tradition of carving their visages into mountain peaks that overlooked their realms, but Runelord Sorshen wanted the world to remember more than her face—no mere mountaintop bust would serve. Instead, she commissioned the construction of numerous towering statues of herself throughout Eurythnia. Most of these have sunk beneath the waters of the sea or have crumbled today (all that remains of a once-mighty statue of her near Korvosa is a single foot). The so-called Sunken Queen still bears images of Sorshen on its faces, but this pyramid lies deep within the Mushfens today, out of sight of all but the bravest explorers.

But one image remains in full view—the Lady's Light. This towering statue of Sorshen is among Varisia's most famous and most iconic Thassilonian monuments; the statue stands at the southwesternmost point of the region, its glowing scepter raised high against the night. Originally built in -6060 AR, over 750 years before Earthfall, the Lady's Light still stands today, towering nearly 200 feet tall and bearing a torch of blue flame that originally proclaimed the Runelord's power but today serves to warn sea captains away from the hazardous reefs.

Sorshen treated the Lady's Light as a home away from home—it served her as a place to stay when she had to travel west to meet with (or spy upon) agents of Bakrakhan or Shalast, and also as a display of power to the other nations. She even used the Lady's Light to house one of her greatest trophies: the *Shard of Lust*. The chambers within and below the Lady's Light housed an army of sensuous servants both great and small, and while Sorshen was elsewhere, rule of the Lady's Light (and stewardship of the *Shard of Lust*) remained in the capable hands of its majordomo, the succubus Ayandamahla.

Sorshen's hegemony, like all of ancient Thassilon, collapsed in the cataclysm that was Earthfall. The great waves that pounded Thassilon's shores sank vast tracts of southern Eurythnia, but miraculously the Lady's Light survived (in no small part because of its location atop a particularly solid basalt foundation). Many of those who lived in the region fled as the surrounding area was flooded, but not all were afforded this luxury. Ayandamahla, among others, was bound magically to the Lady's Light, enslaved to Sorshen's service as long as the monument stood. Although she could wander short distances away from the Lady's Light during the new moon, Ayandamahla grew increasingly frustrated with what seemed to her to be an eternity imprisoned on a dead world. She needed to find someone related by blood to take her place as mistress of the monument. The perfect dupe was one of her many daughters, an alu-demon

called Ashamintallu whom Sorshen had imprisoned in a glass golem below the Lady's Light. Through a cruel and intricate deception, Ayandamahla tricked her daughter into taking on the mantle of servitude. Ashamintallu vented her rage at this astounding maternal betrayal on those few denizens remaining in the dungeons, but soon she was alone, cursed to serve as guardian of the Lady's Light until it crumbled away. With her was the *Shard of Lust*, Sorshen's fragment of the powerful *Sihedron*. She clung to this potent artifact, and the shard fed on the alu-demon's fury and pain, slowly cooing and caressing Ashamintallu into a state of desperate madness.

Millennia later, in the city of Korvosa of present-day Varisia, upstart Queen Ileosa Arabasti dreamed grand dreams of assuming the long-vanished Runelord of Lust's former glory. She expanded her power through a military order she dubbed the Gray Maidens—female fighters selected for their strength and beauty and then forged into remorseless soldiers via brutal initiations that left them both physically and emotionally scarred. Ileosa might well have succeeded in attaining eternal youth and the power she sought were it not for the efforts of a brave band of adventurers. These stalwart souls foiled and deposed the devilish queen and assisted in restoring order to the proud city-state, to the infinite relief of her oppressed subjects. Efforts were made to rehabilitate the now-leaderless Gray Maidens, but not all welcomed such attentions. One such band, led by a Gray Maiden commander named Oriana, fled Korvosa rather than submit to its new ruler, and for a few years these fugitives eked out lives as bandits and mercenaries. But Oriana remained loyal to Ileosa and her ideals. And so she led her band of Gray Maidens southwest to a site she believed would hold a significant amount of Runelord Sorshen's power. If she and her followers could recover the treasures of the Lady's Light, they could finally wreak vengeance upon those who toppled their beloved queen.

Oriana was correct in her conviction that some of Sorshen's power remained in the Lady's Light, but she found much more than mere echoes of the past. The cursed alu-demon Ashamintallu, long since driven mad by the ineffable energies of the *Shard of Lust*, now believed that she was Runelord Sorshen reborn and had assumed Sorshen's form. She confronted Oriana and her Gray Maidens as they reached the interior of the Lady's Light and bent them to her will. Ashamintallu had been building up an entourage of servants over the past several years, but the addition of the Gray Maidens (and her discovery of how close Ileosa had come to capitalizing on Sorshen's legacy) greatly pleased the demon, and now she uses the Gray Maidens as her personal playthings—chief among them Oriana herself. The guardians of the *Shard of Lust* have not been so numerous or potent since the day Thassilon fell!

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ADVENTURE SUMMARY

The PCs have recovered the *Shard of Greed* and the *Shard of Pride*—and they soon learn that the next shard in the sequence lies within the Lady's Light. They travel south to the monument's hinterlands, a region of the Mushfens known as the Lady's Cape, and must contend with several dangerous denizens in the area before discovering the route into the Lady's Light lies through its dungeons, accessible throughout the area via a number of cave entrances.

As they adventure in the region, they come across more and more disturbing hints that an ancient power may be living still within the Lady's Light—the evidence increasingly points to the possibility that Runelord Sorshen herself lives on within the monument. Yet astute PCs also read between the lines of these clues, and should come to suspect that the true mistress of the Lady's Light is only posing as the powerful Thassilonian; this knowledge may give them an advantage over her when the inevitable confrontation comes.

The PCs run afoul of the Gray Maidens and learn of their plot to secure the treasures of the Lady's Light to fund vengeance against Korvosa—while the fate of Magnimar's rival may not be a compelling concern to the PCs, the fact that the Gray Maidens have entrenched themselves within the Lady's Light does make for a difficulty that must be overcome. The PCs can fight their way through the well-equipped mercenaries, or they can use more diplomatic methods and begin recruiting the Gray Maidens to their side.

Eventually, the PCs reach the apex of the Lady's Light and encounter the alu-demon Ashamintallu, who confronts the PCs in her guise as Sorshen. Only by defeating her in combat or by capitalizing upon the mind-wracking curse she suffers can they earn the object of their quest—the third shard of the *Shattered Star*!

PART ONE: THE JOURNEY SOUTH

As this adventure begins, the PCs have recovered two of the seven shards of the *Shattered Star*—their contact among the Pathfinders, Sheila Heidmarch, is incredibly excited about the PCs' progress and encourages them to continue their quest, if not to help prepare Varisia for possible dangers in the future by securing and rebuilding the ancient artifact, then merely to help bolster the prestige of the Varisian chapter of the Pathfinder Society and to increase their own fame and fortune. As much as Sheila might wish she could join the PCs on this adventure, her responsibilities as a venture-captain prevent her from accompanying them. What she can do, though, is give them a list that summarizes what she knows about the remaining five shards (see *Pathfinder Adventure Path* #61 for this information). In addition, she gives the PCs a *pink and green sphere ioun stone*—they'll need this stone

to deactivate the *Shard of Lust's* curse. Sheila hopes to be able to furnish the PCs with additional *ioun stones* in the future for additional shards, but needs more time to gather the necessary funds to track down the stones and to have them delivered to Heidmarch Manor.

In any event, if the PCs haven't already used the *Shard of Greed* to do so, they should concentrate on the shard to receive a vision of the region surrounding the next shard in the sequence: the *Shard of Lust*. Doing so grants the vision of a towering statue of a beautiful woman holding aloft a stone scepter, standing atop a bluff surrounded by a tangled seaside swampland. This site is relatively well known—a successful DC 14 Knowledge (geography) check is all that's required to recognize that the image is of the Lady's Light.

MAKING THE JOURNEY

The Lady's Light is an unusual monument in that while all of those who have sailed to Magnimar from the south have seen it, very few have actually visited the site. The towering statue looms at the southwesternmost point of mainland Varisia, but approaching it is treacherous, what with the trackless reach of the Mushfens in the land route and the presence of treacherous and numerous reefs in the surrounding waters. The image of the 200-foot-tall statue is one known to many, but the monument itself is relatively mysterious—the presence of numerous tribes of boggards, troglodytes (known as xulgath to their own kind), and other monsters make it all the more dangerous to visit.

The Lady's Light is just over 50 miles away from Magnimar as the crow flies, but approaching it on foot or by sea is a different story. Sheila explains the two most obvious options the PCs have for traveling to the Lady's Light, as detailed below.

Traveling on Foot: The most straightforward method, a journey on foot from Magnimar to the Lady's Cape consists of a 50-mile slog through the Mushfens. Unfortunately, many of those miles are through wide swaths of water or over unstable ground, forcing travelers to wade, swim, or make significant detours. The Mushfens are trackless swampland, and as such the distance a traveler can cover on foot per day is halved. Thus, a group traveling at a speed of 30 feet could cover the distance between Magnimar and the Lady's Cape in about 33 hours (split into just over four 8-hour travel days). Travel by small craft (such as a rowboat, raft, or barge) through the complex twisting tangle of the Mushfens' waterways is more comfortable, but is constrained to the tangled route of navigable waterways, resulting in a much longer journey than the more direct overland route. Portaging small boats and using them to cross deeper channels ultimately doesn't save much time compared to the overland route, while following the deep channels alone actually doubles the travel time.

CURSE OF THE LADY'S LIGHT

Traveling on a Ship: Taking a ship to the Lady's Cape is a much faster and more comfortable method, yet unless the PCs can afford to buy their own ship and pay a crew (unlikely for a 5th-level party), they'll need to secure passage aboard a merchant ship or fishing vessel sailing south. Most captains are reluctant to sail too close to the Lady's Light, because of a combination of superstition about the towering statue and the more physical threat of the numerous reefs that surround the area, but Sheila can supply the PCs with the name of a ship captained by one of her contacts—the *Wanton Ways*. Sheila can draft the PCs a note that'll secure them passage aboard the *Wanton Ways* to the Lady's Cape, but they'll need to put ashore just north of the cape itself and walk the last bit to the region to avoid the treacherous reefs. Taking a ship to the Lady's Cape is a mere day's journey.

PART TWO: THE LADY'S CAPE

The hooklike peninsula that makes up the area around the Lady's Light is a combination of relatively open salt marsh, thickly vegetated swampland, and a few hilly regions. For many years the area has been contested by two tribes: the boggards of Baladab Souko and the troglodytes who call themselves the Children of Zevgavizeb. The two tribes are evenly matched, although the arrival of the Gray Maidens has disrupted the tenuous peace between the two tribes, and they now bicker and skirmish with each other in a steadily growing escalation. In addition, a witch named Maroux has lived in the region for many years. Unlike the boggards and troglodytes, Maroux isn't immediately hostile to visitors; she just doesn't like them. Nonetheless, sighting her hut on its small island should be more than enough of a lure to attract the PCs. (Note: If you're using the "Curse of the Lady's Light" web enhancement, an NPC the PCs can encounter in Magnimar specifically points them toward visiting Maroux—if you aren't using this web enhancement, you could just as easily have them learn of Maroux from someone else if you wish.)

The PCs approach from the north, either while walking or after having been set ashore from the *Wanton Ways* via a rowboat before the ship carries on to Korvosa, but once they set foot on the region depicted in the Lady's Cape map (see page 10), the method by which they travel to the Lady's Light is left to them.

Some of the areas in the Lady's Cape aren't full-fledged encounter areas, but remain important to the region. These areas are detailed briefly below—feel free to expand upon these areas as you wish.

Lady's Lagoon: This large coastal lagoon is only 10 feet deep at its deepest point at low tide—the map depicts the lagoon at this point. At high tide, the areas shown as beaches are underwater (including the sandbar along the lagoon's north side), and the lagoon's depth increases by

another 10 feet. Reefclaws (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 2* 234) are generally the largest and most dangerous predators in the lagoon, but now and then larger sharks get trapped in the lagoon at low tide.

Lake Ghaulos: Separated from the lagoon by a narrow but high rocky ridge, Lake Ghaulos is a 15-foot-deep expanse of murky, boggy water with a 5-foot-deep bed of mud over the underlying bedrock. The water is somewhat foul-tasting but is not saltwater.

Shoals: Treacherous reefs and shoals surround the Lady's Cape—navigating these shoals without running a ship aground requires a successful DC 30 Profession (sailor) check, but even if a sailing ship manages to get inside the shoals, vehicles much larger than a rowboat will need to watch for additional hidden rocks and reefs. Those who wish to approach the Cape are well advised to put ashore just on the northern edge of the shoals (near the top central edge of the map), for these shoals run along the majority of the Mushfens' southern coast.

Slug Creek: One of the countless creeks that drains out of the Mushfens into the sea, Slug Creek has the distinction of a name—but only because its mouth is located near one of the most iconic locations of the swamp. The waters of Slug Creek run relatively slow; the PCs need only succeed at a DC 10 Swim check to cross the creek, which varies in depth from 3 to 15 feet.

A. MAROUX'S ISLE (CR 5)

A PC who succeeds at a DC 15 Perception or DC 12 Survival check notices the narrow trail that connects Maroux's hut to several hills to the east as travelers work their way south. Barring that, the fact that a rickety-looking (but sound) bridge crosses the water should be enough to lure the PCs toward the island. During the day, curls of smoke from the hut are visible, while in the evening, the flickering lights in the hut's windows attract the eye. The bridge leading to Maroux's isle is decorated with bleached humanoid skulls with weird sigils painted on them in crusty, reddish-brown dried blood. PCs who succeed at a DC 12 Knowledge (nature) check identify them as boggard and troglodyte skulls, while the sigils are merely warnings and rants against trespassers written in Boggard and Draconic.

Maroux's hut sits at the center of the small island, a mossy wooden shack with a sagging roof sitting in the shade of a few moss-draped willows. A plume of smoke wafts from a chimney, and cooking smells pervade the area, though the odor is not altogether pleasant. Maroux herself is a foul-tempered and nearsighted half-orc woman with an equally foul-tempered raven familiar named Hosco. Maroux is blind in one eye, but relies on her raven to notice things; unless the PCs approach her hut stealthily, she notices them approaching and steps

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THE LADY'S CAPE



out to confront them. (If the PCs successfully sneak up on her, she panics and automatically attacks them, assuming that they're here to kill her or worse.)

Maroux is an eccentric hermit. She's lived alone in this region for many years, and doesn't take kindly to visitors. She growls angrily, shaking her staff when she spies the party: "Who be you fools? I've always room in my stew pot for more meat, you know. Unless you want to join the turnips in my soup, get off my island!" Though her threats are largely for show, she still starts this encounter with an attitude of unfriendly.

Offering to Help: If the PCs ask Maroux if there's anything they can do to help her, she grows crafty and mentions an old shipwreck off the north coast of the larger isle to the west of her own island. She goes on to mention that several patches of delicious and relatively rare seaweed known as kelpie's hair grow in and around the wreck, and that she's always had a fondness for kelpie's hair soup. If the PCs agree bring her a few handfuls of the stuff, they can automatically get her to open up and speak with them once they return. Maroux waits until the last moment to almost anecdotally warn the PCs that she suspects the shipwreck might be haunted by a few of the sailors who died there.

Dinner with Maroux: Convincing Maroux to open up and talk freely to the PCs is a difficult task. She's naturally suspicious of strangers and not eager to make new friends—she became a hermit for those reasons, in fact. As a result, getting her to talk requires a successful DC 30 Diplomacy check if she's friendly (or DC 20 check if she's made helpful). Magical control (such as *charm person* or *suggestion*) also works to get her to talk, although if the spellcasting attempt fails, she'll immediately attack.

If the party manages to make Maroux open up, she invites the PCs to share a meal with her. Unfortunately, she is a terrible cook—anyone who eats with her must succeed at a DC 12 Fortitude save to avoid becoming sickened for 1 hour. The meal consists of barely edible stew, rough bread, and murky swamp water—the addition of kelpie's hair makes the stew a little tastier, though, and grants a +2 bonus on Fortitude saves to resist becoming sickened. During the meal, Maroux becomes increasingly talkative. If asked about the region, she replies with the following advice.

"The xulgaths (who you city folk know better as troglodytes) and boggards have bickered over control of the Lady's Cape for years. They're pretty evenly matched if you ask me. I've bloodied their noses when they've stuck them in my business, so for the most

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part they've let me be—that's what the skulls and artwork on my bridge are for.

"But then, a few months back, we had some new visitors. A troop of women knights or something, clad in plate and wearing red-plumed helmets. Their leader was a woman named Oriana—pretty enough, at least till she took her helmet off and showed off her scars. She sat down to dinner with me just like you did, only she gave me a fine magic wand as a bribe, so I didn't feel the need to send her off to gather seaweed. Anyway. She told me she and her sisters were from Korvosa, soldiers of the rightful queen who'd been tumbled off the throne a few years back. They'd had to flee the city once their queen wasn't in charge, and fell into mercenary work until Oriana got the idea to plunder the Lady's Light for the treasure they think's hidden inside of it. Made me chuckle a bit, since I've heard there's secret rooms in the Lady filled with treasure too. I've tried to find a way into the place before—there's caves under the area that are supposed to connect to the chambers below the Light, but those caves belong to the trogs and frogs and bigger critters. I didn't get far, and since then I've steered clear of the Light—the bitch gives me the willies, anyway. Some powerful magic going on in there.

"Anyway, Oriana was intent on getting under the Lady's skirts, and she asked me if I knew a way in. I told her about the caves and warned her of the trogs 'n frogs, but that didn't seem to bother her. Unlike me, she had herself a whole group of ironclad soldiers to back her up, after all. So off she goes, and damned if she and her mercenaries don't make friendly with the frogs! Got them some better weapons, gave them some fighting tips, and then helped them launch an attack on the trogs. In return, the frogs gave her permission to use their tunnels.

"But here's the kicker. Oriana found a way inside the Lady—or at least she says so. She came my way ten days ago with a story that she'd found none other than the Runelord of Lust herself in there, and that the runelord had recruited Oriana to help her reclaim her lands and rebuild her kingdom! Oriana asked me to join their crusade! I politely refused and wished her well and she went on her way. Gods above an' below, I couldn't get her out of my hut quick enough!

"The way I see it, there's three possibilities. First, Oriana is lying, for whatever reason. The second, Oriana, sad child, is off her nut. And the third, someone or something in there is masquerading as Sorshen the Grand Whore of Thassilon and has tricked Oriana into being her minion. Well, I suppose there's a fourth possibility—that Sorshen really is alive and well in the Lady's Light, but if you believe that claptrap, there's a bridge across the Straits of Aroden I'd like to sell ya!"



MAROUX

If he's asked to, Maroux can draw a simple map of the region that gives the locations of her hut, the Lady's Light, the boggard village, and the locations of the three caves that lead to the tunnels under the region. She knows the northern cave is the primary troglodyte den, and that the southern one is claimed by the boggards—she's not sure what's living in the cave between them, but it's something big and mean from what she's heard in the region—enough so that she hasn't felt the urge to investigate any more closely. She has no interest in accompanying the party, but if she's been made helpful, she offers her island as a safe place to rest and even offers to cast healing spells on them when they visit in the future.

If the PCs are looking for someone to serve as Sabriyya's Mushfens contact (see inside cover), Maroux declines the offer, saying she's had enough of society and doesn't want back in. She does mention that one of the local tribes of troglodytes or boggards could work well for these purposes—provided the PCs can figure a way out to secure their friendship (perhaps a difficult task, she muses, given that both tribes are vile demon worshippers).

MAROUX	CR 5
XP 1,600	
Female half-orc witch 6 (<i>Pathfinder RPG Advanced Player's Guide</i> 65)	
N Medium humanoid (human, orc)	
Init +1; Senses darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +3	
DEFENSE	
AC 17, touch 12, flat-footed 15 (+4 armor, +1 Dex, +1 dodge, +1 natural)	
hp 35 (6d6+12)	
Fort +4, Ref +3, Will +6	
Defensive Abilities orc ferocity	
OFFENSE	
Speed 30 ft.	
Melee mwk quarterstaff +3 (1d6–1)	
Special Attacks hexes (cauldron, evil eye [–2, 7 rounds], healing [cure moderate], slumber [6 rounds])	
Witch Spells Prepared (CL 6th; concentration +10)	
3rd— <i>dispel magic</i> , <i>fireball</i> (DC 18), <i>stinking cloud</i> (DC 17)	
2nd— <i>blindness/deafness</i> (DC 16), <i>burning gaze</i> ^{APG} (DC 17), <i>cure moderate wounds</i> , <i>flaming sphere</i> (DC 17)	
1st— <i>burning hands</i> (DC 16), <i>mage armor</i> , <i>ray of enfeeblement</i> (DC 15), <i>shocking grasp</i> (DC 15)	
0 (at will)— <i>detect magic</i> , <i>detect poison</i> , <i>read magic</i> , <i>resistance</i>	
Patron Elements	

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TACTICS

Before Combat Maroux casts *mage armor* before emerging from her hut.

During Combat Maroux employs to her quarterstaff only as a last resort, preferring to use her spells on foes. She casts *cure moderate wounds* on herself whenever she falls below 17 hit points.

Morale If reduced to fewer than 5 hit points, Maroux suddenly gives up the fight and transforms into a pitiful sight indeed, dropping to her knees and begging for her life. In this case, she'll promise to help the PCs in any way they wish, although she'd prefer to limit her aid to simply advising them as detailed in *Offering to Help* on page 10. If the PCs force her to accompany them, she serves dutifully until she sees her first chance to try to escape into the swamp—if she manages this, she lies low for several days, hoping to outwait the PCs' presence in the area.

STATISTICS

Str 8, Dex 13, Con 14, Int 18, Wis 12, Cha 10

Base Atk +3; CMB +2; CMD 14

Feats Alertness, Brew Potion, Combat Casting, Dodge, Spell Focus (evocation)

Skills Appraise +7, Craft (alchemy) +17, Handle Animal +6, Heal +10, Intimidate +11, Knowledge (arcana) +13, Knowledge (nature) +13, Perception +3, Sense Motive +3, Spellcraft +13

Languages Boggard, Common, Draconic, Orc, Thassilonian, Varisian

SQ familiar (raven named Hosco), orc blood, weapon familiarity

Combat Gear *potions of cure light wounds* (4), *scrolls of cure moderate wounds* (2), *scroll of remove disease*, *scroll of remove curse*; **Other Gear** masterwork quarterstaff, *amulet of natural armor* +1, spell component pouch

Treasure: Inside her hut, in addition to cooking utensils and other mundane items, Maroux has four rare codices on the wildlife of Varisia worth 100 gp each. A total of 345 gp is hidden in the lumpy mattress of her bed (Perception DC 20 to discover it).

Story Award: If the PCs befriend Maroux or otherwise get her information about current events in the region, award them XP as if they had defeated her in combat.

B. WRECK OF THE IMPDRAKE (CR 5)

A ring of jagged coral surrounds the hull of this sunken ship. Its decks are thick with blooms of seaweed, particularly near the wreck's bow.

The wreck of the sailing ship *Impdrake* lies 30 feet from shore here. The masts have long been torn away by the surging tides, but the ship's hull remains relatively intact (save for an enormous gash along its starboard hull) under 10 feet of water. The ship itself was a Chelish merchant

vessel bound for Magnimar—when her drunk captain ordered the ship to head for the Lady's Light, mistaking it for one of Magnimar's lighthouses during a dark and foggy night, the *Impdrake* sank here and her crew struggled ashore only to be slaughtered over the next 2 days by the region's boggards. The wreck itself isn't obvious from a distance, but from the shore, PCs who succeed at DC 15 Perception checks can make out the ship's vague outline in the seawater. The currents around the wreck are relatively calm—a successful DC 10 Swim check is needed to navigate the waters above and surrounding the *Impdrake*.

Creatures: Maroux's suspicions are correct—the *Impdrake* is indeed haunted by its dead captain and several unfortunate sailors. Their unquiet spirits have animated their bodies as skeletal undead (for a time they existed as zombies until fish and crabs ate away all their flesh). The skeletons lie tangled amid the seaweed, but rise to attack any living creatures that approach the site of their deaths. They do not pursue foes more than 100 feet from the wreck. The captain, a man named Linus Halfclasper in life, fights on in death with his +1 rapier, the hilt of which is encrusted with barnacles.

OLD CAPTAIN LINUS HALFCLASPER

CR 2

XP 600

Human skeletal champion warrior 1 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 252)

hp 17

Melee +1 rapier +7 (1d6+4/18–20)

HUMAN SKELETONS (7)

CR 1/3

XP 135 each

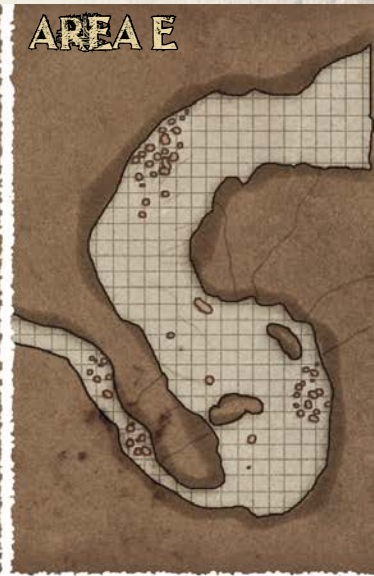
hp 4 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 250)

C. BATTLEFIELD

Scattered upon the ground are obvious signs of carnage, and the vile reek of rot mixed with a pungent reptilian stink assaults the nostrils like a hammer's blow. Buzzards wheel in the sky above while clouds of flies buzz below. At least three dozen decomposing humanoid bodies lie strewn across the ground here, reptilian and amphibian in form. The reptilian bodies have all been decapitated—the heads are nowhere in evidence.

Here lie the gruesome remains of the latest battle between the boggards and the troglodytes. If Maroux has not told the PCs about the local boggard and troglodyte tribes, a successful DC 10 Knowledge (nature) check is required to identify the amphibian bodies as boggards. With their heads missing, a successful DC 14 Knowledge (nature) check is needed to identify the reptilian corpses as those of troglodytes. The troglodyte stench has grown no more pleasant after several days decomposing in the sun, and the bodies have been ransacked of most valuables.

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If the party insists on searching, a few primitively made and damaged arrows, spears, and clubs are found, as well as a broken dagger of decidedly finer craftsmanship—a successful DC 20 Knowledge (local) check reveals that the broken masterwork dagger was forged for the city guard of Korvosa. The dagger itself has been caked in a foul concoction of rancid blood, mud, and filth, and a successful DC 15 Heal check is enough for a PC to note that anyone stabbed by such a weapon would certainly grow sick with filth fever. A DC 20 Perception check reveals a crude religious talisman beneath one of the reptilian bodies that depicts a twisted tentacle terminating in an oversized talon. A PC who succeeds at a DC 20 Knowledge (religion) check identifies it as a holy symbol of Zevgavzeb, demon lord of caverns, reptiles, and troglodytes.

D. TROGLODYTE CAVES

The Children of Zevgavzeb are in bad shape—they've suffered greatly in the escalation of violence with the boggards, primarily as a result of the intervention of the Gray Maidens giving the boggards excellent tactical advice on how to defeat the troglodytes. Ever since their latest grisly defeat, the troglodytes have remained here in their cave, hunkered down as they try to regroup and rebuild their bravery for a second attack on the boggards.

The tribe's chieftain and all of his young have been killed, leaving the caves in a terrible state of disarray—there is no plan for an organized defense of the chambers, so aggressive PCs can simply fight their way through the chambers and proceed on into the caverns below the Lady's Cape without worrying that the troglodytes will make a coordinated defense.

The caves themselves, though, are exceedingly foul smelling—all saving throws made to resist troglodyte stench while in these caves take a –4 penalty as a result. The troglodytes rely on darkvision to navigate the caves, and therefore these chambers remain completely dark. Water drips from the walls to gather in frequent puddles on the floor, with ceiling heights averaging at 7 feet in tunnels and 15 feet in the caverns themselves.

Unless otherwise noted in the text, all of the troglodytes in these caves are armed with a club and five javelins, wear leather armor, and carry 1d4 tiger-eye gemstones worth 10 gp each.

D1. CAVE ENTRANCE (CR 4)

A wide cave entrance opens in the side of a rocky hillside here. The cave's exterior shows clear signs of habitation, with much foot traffic in and out of the entrance, which has been barricaded crudely with mounds of brush and branches. The interior is dark, and a deeply unpleasant odor issues forth like the exhalation of some carrion-fed beast.

The troglodytes made a half-hearted attempt to barricade the entrance to their cave—while the mound of branches and uprooted shrubbery won't block intrusions into the cave for long, it does make the first 15 feet into the cave entrance difficult terrain. Perhaps more importantly, a successful DC 15 Perception check is enough for a PC to notice the reek of oil among the barricade—the branches have been soaked in lantern oil. (The stink of the cavern imparts a –10 penalty on this check for any creature that doesn't have the scent ability.)

Creatures: Although the troglodytes are disorganized and demoralized, a few of them retain enough shreds of tribal pride that they've taken up a defensive position here. They've soaked the barricade in oil, and each troglodyte is armed with a single vial of alchemist's fire—if they notice anyone entering the cavern, they'll emerge from their hiding places along the walls to throw their fire at foes. The oil-soaked barricade ignites immediately, creating a 15-foot-deep swath of fire across the entrance—any creature that enters this fire takes 1d6 points of fire damage (Reflex DC 15 negates), and an additional 1d6 points of fire damage (no save) if it end its movement for the turn in one of these burning squares. The fire burns for 5 minutes once lit.

The three troglodytes follow this up by throwing javelins at intruders, moving to attack in melee if anyone makes it into the cave itself. These troglodytes are tired of running—they fight to the death.

TROGLODYTES (3)

CR 1

XP 400 each

AC 17, touch 8, flat-footed 17

hp 13 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 267)

D2. PITFALL (CR 3)

Trap: To casual observation, this large cavern may look empty and unremarkable, but a keen eye notes that the ground lacks any puddles. In fact, the "ground" is a thin layer of woven reeds covered with a layer of dirt to make it look solid—this mat covers a large pit that takes up much of the central area. The reed mat is held up by 10-foot-high stakes driven into the dirt floor, which is lined with hundreds of smaller sharpened stakes, all poisoned with spider venom. The pit's simplicity is such that there's really nothing to disable with this trap—if the PCs notice it, they can either avoid it by staying near its edges while crossing the room, or simply climb down into the pit and move slowly through its field of spikes. A character can move through the spikes at half speed—if he moves at full speed, 1d4 spikes make attacks against him as he passes through the area.

PIT TRAP

CR 3

XP 800

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Type mechanical; Perception DC 16; Disable Device —

EFFECTS

Trigger location; Reset manual

Effect 10-ft.-deep pit (1d6 falling damage); Reflex DC 20 avoids; pit spikes (Atk +10 melee, 1d4+2 spikes per target for 1d4+2 damage each plus Medium spider venom); multiple targets (all targets who step into the pit's area)

D3. WARRIOR'S PYRE (CR 5)

The air in this long cavern is much drier than elsewhere, and the thick tang of smoke fills every breath. A large fire pit burns brightly to the north.

Once a communal feasting cavern, this room now serves the troglodytes as a place to burn their dead. Since the boggards have been using filthy weapons deliberately caked in diseased sludge, many troglodytes who survived the battle against the frogs ended up growing sick with filth fever—those who die are dragged here for disposal.

Creatures: Four troglodytes are gathered around a pyre where the corpse of a fifth who recently died of filth fever is being burned in a funeral ceremony. The troglodytes are chanting and croaking morosely as their fallen kin burns, giving them a –2 penalty on Perception checks. Cornered, they fight to the death.

TROGLODYTES (4)

CR 1

XP 400 each

AC 17, touch 8, flat-footed 17

hp 13 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 267)

D4. FEVER VICTIMS (CR 4)

The floor in this cavern is slightly sunken, forming a shallow pool of filthy water. Mounds of swamp plants and branches are heaped here and there to form crude, nestlike beds.

Creatures: Once the primary sleeping quarters for the tribe, this room is now used to house the sick and dying. The bulk of the (barely) surviving troglodyte tribe can be found here—there are 14 troglodytes suffering from filth fever sprawled about this room. The troglodytes are all in the late stages of the sickness, and are in no condition to defend themselves—all are essentially helpless, as they all possess enough Dexterity damage to effectively immobilize them.

Every full minute a PC who's currently suffering any amount of hit point damage is in this room, she must succeed at a DC 15 Reflex save to avoid accidentally exposing her wounds to filth fever—which is thick indeed in this room's occupants and furnishings. Filth fever is detailed on page 557 of the *Pathfinder RPG Core Rulebook*.

SIDE QUEST: A BENEVOLENT OPTION

The troglodytes that dwell in these caves are remorselessly evil and worship a demon—but they're also in bad shape. With the exception of the encounter in area D6, the battles in here are unlikely to give the PCs much cause for concern.

But there's another option other than murder. The troglodyte's only remaining leader of note is the cleric Uggilo—if he's slain, the tribe well and truly is cast adrift. Once Uggilo is out of the picture, the fight goes out of the troglodytes. Those who can flee do so, but the 14 troglodytes laid up in area D4 are at the PCs' mercy.

If the PCs take the time to heal the troglodytes and cure them of their disease, and if Uggilo has been defeated, the surviving troglodytes have a crisis of faith. Obviously, their previous lifestyle didn't do them any favors. The troglodytes might even look to the PCs themselves as new leaders or even as saviors—redeeming the tribe is certainly a strong possibility if the PCs work at it. A redeemed and healed band of troglodytes could be handy in numerous ways—they can assist the PCs in exploring the region, guard campsites, or provide valuable scouting information, for example. Just how helpful the troglodytes get is left to you to determine, but if the PCs do manage to save the tribe, they should gain some benefit. A redeemed tribe of troglodytes could certainly serve well as gathering agents for Sabriyya (see inside cover). They can certainly confirm to the PCs that there are underground tunnels that lead to the Lady's Light, and can warn them about the dangers that wait in areas E and I, and that the boggards have some sort of "juice" they use to render the vermin in area I docile.

Reward: Grant the PCs 2,400 XP if they defeat Uggilo and cure the 14 sick troglodytes in area D4.



D5. DEVASTATED NURSERY (CR 5)

The ground in this cavern is a slimy mess of mud and fungus. Several trampled mud nests mixed with fragments of leathery eggs lie around the room.

During the most recent attack against the boggards, while this cavern was left relatively unguarded, a small group of boggards crept in here and smashed all of the troglodyte eggs—an assault that has done more to demoralize the troglodytes than anything else.

Creatures: Two groups of troglodytes argue bitterly here—bickering over whether it's a better idea to stay here under Uggilo's protection or whether they should abandon the cave and flee east into the Mushfens to start

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a new tribe. The argument is in Draconic, and is easy to hear—the troglodytes here take a –4 penalty on Perception checks. If they spot the PCs, two of the troglodytes hiss in rage and attempt to escape to area D6 to alert their master, Uggilo. If the PCs block the main exit, these two squeeze through the narrow northern tunnel (which may slow them down enough for the PCs to catch them). The other two troglodytes stand their ground and fight, but if one of them is killed, the other surrenders and begs for mercy in Draconic.

TROGLODYTES (4) CR 1

XP 400 each

AC 17, touch 8, flat-footed 17

hp 13 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 267)

Development: If one of the troglodytes surrenders and begs for mercy, it is a nervous creature named Sulgesh. He's lost his faith in Zevgavizeb, and now wants nothing more than to escape into the Mushfens to the east to find a new life and, if possible, a new mate (his current mate is a prisoner of the boggards—see area F7). If the PCs can communicate with Sulgesh, the troglodyte reveals much of the tribe's recent ordeal; you can use him to encourage the PCs to take out Uggilo or to indicate to them that the troglodytes in area D4, if cured, could become allies. If the PCs ask Sulgesh for advice on how to reach the Lady's Light, he admits that there's a tunnel in the back of these caves that leads there, but warns that the way is guarded by a nest of "giant snapping grabber bugs" (the solifugids in area I), which are quite adept at eating troglodytes. He goes on to further state that the boggards have some sort of "magic juice" they use to make the grabber bugs docile. The troglodytes have tried many times to duplicate this juice, but failed every time and eventually just cultivated the dangerous fungi in area D7 to serve as a barricade against grabber bug invasions. At your discretion, Sulgesh might agree to accompany the PCs as a minion—despite his chaotic evil ways, Sulgesh (as with the troglodytes in area D4) is ready for a change of heart, and given the right support, could eventually be redeemed.

D6. SHRINE TO ZEVGAVIZEB (CR 6)

An overwhelming reptilian stench mixes with the foul putrescence of rotting flesh in this cave. Between two rocky outcroppings, both smeared with blood, are the remains of a foul ritual—heaps of decaying limbs, bones, and viscera. A symbol depicting a spiraling clawed tentacle has been crudely carved into the rock on the right.

This room was once the chieftain's chamber, but since his death it's been converted into the tribe's shrine to their

cruel demon-god Zevgavizeb (which was previously located in area D4). A successful DC 20 Knowledge (religion) check reveals this fact—while casual observation is enough to reveal that many of the remains that have been offered here are not of boggards or animals, but of troglodytes. The rocky outcroppings serve as an altar. Searching through the filth and decay heaped between them exposes the searcher to filth fever if the searcher has any hit point damage (*Core Rulebook* 557).

Creatures: The last remaining authority figure among the tribe is the cleric Uggilo. He dwells here, and has spent the days of late praying fervently for Zevgavizeb's intervention against the boggards, periodically offering up a sick troglodyte from area D4 as a sacrifice. Uggilo is greatly feared by the other troglodytes, who believe him to be the immortal son of their demonic god—for how else could Uggilo have lived this long in the face of boggard aggression when other champions and even the tribe's chieftain did not?

Uggilo is attended by two fanatical troglodytes who believe that their servitude to the cleric will earn them special roles in the afterlife, but Uggilo's closest companion is an enormous alligator he raised from a hatchling. The alligator is nameless but loyal, and is never far from Uggilo's side in this chamber. The two troglodytes maintain posts near the entrance to this cavern, hidden against the walls—if they notice any intruders, they shriek a warning and step out to attack the PCs before the intruders can fully enter the room, giving Uggilo time to cast his two preparatory spells before combat (if the cleric has not already been warned of the intrusion).

UGGILO CR 3

XP 800

Male troglodyte cleric of Zevgavizeb 3 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 267)

CE Medium humanoid (reptilian)

Init +0; Senses darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +5

Aura stench (30 ft., DC 12, 10 rounds)

DEFENSE

AC 20, touch 12, flat-footed 20 (+2 armor, +6 natural, +2 deflection)

hp 30 (5d8+8)

Fort +9, Ref +1, Will +5

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee +1 heavy mace +7 (1d8+6), bite +1 (1d4+1), claw +1 (1d4+1)

Ranged javelin +3 (1d6+3)

Special Attacks channel negative energy 3/day (DC 11, 2d6)

Domain Spell-Like Abilities (CL 3rd; concentration +5)

5/day—battle rage (+1 damage), touch of darkness (1 round)

Spells Prepared (CL 3rd; concentration +5)

2nd—bull's strength, spiritual weapon^D, weapon of awe^{APG}

1st—cure light wounds (2), obscuring mist^D, shield of faith

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o (at will)—*guidance, read magic, resistance, virtue*
D Domain spell; **Domains** Darkness, War

TACTICS

Before Combat Uggilo augments his warhammer with *weapon of awe* and casts *bull's strength* on himself.

During Combat Uggilo is a bloodthirsty fighter, reveling in hand-to-hand combat. He prefers to use magic to augment himself in combat, relying upon spiritual weapon to attack foes who manage to evade him in melee. He prefers to channel negative energy when he's surrounded by foes, or when several of his foes look wounded. He casts *cure light wounds* on himself whenever he drops below 10 hit points.

Morale Uggilo fights to the death.

STATISTICS

Str 16, **Dex** 11, **Con** 12, **Int** 10, **Wis** 15, **Cha** 11

Base Atk +3; **CMB** +6; **CMD** 16

Feats Combat Casting, Great Fortitude, Power Attack

Skills Handle Animal +5, Knowledge (religion) +4, Linguistics +4, Perception +5, Stealth +7 (+11 rocky areas)

Languages Common, Draconic

Combat Gear *scroll of cure moderate wounds*; **Other Gear**

leather armor, +1 *heavy mace*, javelins (5), spell component pouch, unholy symbol of Zevgavizeb

TROGLODYTES (2)

CR 1

XP 400 each

AC 17, touch 8, flat-footed 17

hp 13 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 267)

ENORMOUS ALLIGATOR

CR 3

XP 800

Advanced crocodile (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 51, 294)

hp 28

Treasure: The troglodyte tribe's now-dead chieftain kept a stash of treasure in this room behind a rock in a cleverly hidden hollow in the westernmost corner. A PC can discover this niche with a successful DC 25 Perception check. Inside are a small stack of pearls (a dozen in all, each worth 100 gp), a jade unholy symbol of Zevgavizeb worth 150 gp, a masterwork bolas, and a *lens of detection* (the magical nature of which went unnoticed by the chieftain).

D7. BACK TUNNEL ENTRANCE (CR 6)

A crude fence of tree branches lashed together by lengths of sinew blocks the entrance to this cavern. Beyond the fence, the chamber is filled with all manner of strangely colored fungal growths.

The profusion of fungi in this chamber helps to obscure the 4-foot-high entrance to the tunnel leading north—noticing this tunnel requires a successful DC 18 Perception check because of the fence that blocks easy entry along the southern entrance. This fence can be torn down quickly (or smashed through with a successful DC 14 Strength check)—it exists primarily to prevent the dangerous fungi within the cave from wandering south into the troglodyte caverns. The cave to the north leads to area I.

Creatures: Among the fungi in this room are three violet fungi, kept here by the troglodytes as deterrents to anything (particularly solifugids) that might try to wander into the caves from the northern route. Mindless, the



UGGILO

fungi do not attempt to pursue foes south unless the fence is destroyed or they are attacked from the far side of it.

VIOLET FUNGI (3)
CR 3
XP 800 each
hp 30 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 274*)

E. CAVERN OF MANY MOUTHS

A wide cave entrance yawns at the base of a stony outcropping overlooking a wide bog. The cave is nearly forty feet wide and twenty feet high, and slopes up into darkness. A wide assortment of bones lies scattered about in front of the cave itself, and here and there something shiny glitters among the bones.

This cavern is one of three that lead to the tunnels that connect under the lagoon and lead to the dungeons under the Lady's Light. A pyrohydra inhabits this large cave, but has grown indolent after several years of serving as the troglodytes' religious symbol. Uggilo became convinced long ago that this beast, which he named Gegganallag ("many mouths" in Draconic), was a divine creature sacred to his bloody demon patron, Zevgavizeb. Since that time, he has urged the tribe to sacrifice victims to the beast, making it lazy but no less deadly. It has not ventured out of its cave in months, content to wait for fresh meals delivered to its proverbial doorstep, but since the boggards devastated the tribe, Gegganallag has started to grow hungry. The cave is somewhat humid and a vague odor of sulfur floats on the air. An investigation of the bones reveals that most are boggard or animal bones, and all have bite marks from sharp fangs and scorch marks as if they've been burnt.

The cave curls to the south, rising nearly 30 feet above the surrounding bog. A tunnel at the far end that's too small for the hydra to navigate slopes back downward, and leads eventually to area I.

Creature: The pyrohydra that the troglodytes call Gegganallag spends much of its time slumbering just beyond the first curve in the tunnel—but it's a light sleeper. It takes only a –4 penalty on Perception checks while sleeping as a result. If it notices anything, it quickly rouses and slithers forth to investigate, attacking anything it finds (including troglodytes) on sight. It employs its breath weapon immediately if the party hangs back to use ranged attacks. If attackers flee, the hydra pursues them beyond its cave for no more than a minute before giving up and slithering back to wait once more for food to come to it. If it survives a few more days after the first visit, the hydra's hunger grows strong enough that it returns to its typical predatory hunting nature and can, at your discretion, be encountered thereafter as a wandering monster.

GEGGANALLAG
CR 6
XP 2,400

 Five-headed pyrohydra (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 178*)

hp 47

Treasure: Several bits of treasure lie amid the remains of the hydra's past meals, strewn about the cave mouth haphazardly. Most of the treasure is hidden in the shallow mud or water—finding it all requires 2d4 minutes of searching and a successful DC 20 Perception check. (Remember to let the sleeping pyrohydra make Perception checks, modified by a –10 penalty for distance, if the PCs are particularly noisy while searching for treasure here!)

In all, the hydra's treasure consists of 2,400 sp, 1,230 gp, 91 pp, a gold ring worth 250 gp, a silver necklace worth 100 gp, a crystal *wand of acid arrow* (25 charges), an *amulet of mighty fists +1*, and a *ring of swimming*.

F. BOGGARD VILLAGE

The boggards of the tribe known as the Baladab Souko dwell here on the shores of a large marshy pond in a village of thatch-roofed huts. This is, in fact, a particularly opportune time for the PCs to visit the tribe, for after the boggards' recent battle with their hated troglodyte enemies, the surviving boggards are bickering and squabbling. While the tribe definitely got the better of the troglodytes, they suffered significant casualties in the fight. Killed in the action along with fully a third of the tribe were their cleric of Gogunta and his acolyte, the tribe's only source of magical healing, and many of the boggards still suffer slight injuries from their battle.

The troubles among the boggards increase only a few hours before the PCs' first arrival in the village, when a raucous tribal assembly around the campfire drives a crippling wedge between two factions. The tribe's brood mother, Mama Beballa, was the primary proponent for agreeing to an alliance with the "metal-wearing she-humans" (the Gray Maidens), something that the tribe's chief, the belligerent Daghop, had been opposed to from the start. He only agreed to the alliance because he believed at the time that the Gray Maidens would provide the tribe more aid than they did, but now that they're nowhere to be seen and aren't helping the boggards recover from their war, he's grown more and more angry and even blames the Gray Maidens and Mama Beballa for causing all this trouble. The tribe itself is split roughly down the middle, and for now has divided into two separate groups—the boggards who remain here in the village are loyal to Mama Beballa, while those who are loyal to the chieftain have relocated to the tribe's temple cavern a hundred yards west of the village (area G). Mama Beballa, somewhat shaken by her recent and unexpected victory over Daghop, has been

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spending time in her hut (area F6). New to leadership, she has failed to post guards in the wake of the contentious debate—thus, the PCs should be able to approach the fringes of the village without being detected if they use at least a modicum of stealth.

The village itself is built in shallow swamp, with the boggard huts partially submerged so that only the top halves of the mud-and-twig structures poke out of the mire. Firm trails wind through the area as depicted on the map, but all areas off these trails consist of deep bog (*Core Rulebook* 427). The majority of the huts in the village once served as homes to 2–3 boggards each, but many are now empty; their inhabitants either are dead or have joined the chieftain in the sacred cave to the west. The unnumbered huts are empty; while they still contain a few decorations that indicate they were inhabited recently, they contain nothing of interest or value now.

F1. INHABITED HUT (CR 2)

Creature: Each of these huts is currently inhabited by a single boggard. These creatures lurk in their homes, either sleeping or eating bugs or brooding about their choice to ally with Mama Beballa and not Chief Daghop, but are ready to emerge from their huts and raise the alarm if they're attacked. If the PCs can defeat the boggard before it gets an action in combat, it can't raise the alarm. Otherwise, the boggard's first action here is to use its terrifying croak, a loud sound that immediately alerts the other boggards that trouble has come to the village. In all, there are eight boggards dwelling in huts scattered throughout the village; all together, fighting eight boggards would be a CR 8 encounter, but the distances involved make it unlikely that the PCs will face this many at the same time—once the alarm is raised, it takes the other boggards in the other huts 1d3 rounds to wake up and gather weapons and emerge to join the battle. The denizens of areas F3 and F5 join the battle only if combat spills over into those areas, and Mama Beballa deliberately avoids joining the fight until at least half of the boggards here are defeated—once she hears enough boggard death-croaks, she lumbers out of her hut (area F6) to join the fight as detailed in her tactics.

Note that each boggard has a chance of still suffering some injuries—roll 1d6–1 for each boggard to determine how many points of damage it's currently still suffering. All of these boggards are armed with three masterwork daggers given to them by the Gray Maidens from their extra stores; as with the broken dagger from area C, a PC who succeeds at a DC 20 Knowledge (local) check recognizes these weapons as having been forged for the city guard of Korvosa. The boggards caked these daggers in the diseased filth they're keeping in area F7—anyone who is damaged by one of these weapons is exposed to filth fever.

BOGGARD

CR 2

XP 600

hp 22 each (minus 1d6–1; *Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 37)

Melee morningstar +5 (1d8+3 plus filth fever), tongue –1 touch (sticky tongue)

Ranged mwk dagger +5 (1d4+2/19–20 plus filth fever)

F2. VILLAGE CAMPFIRE

A large campfire located at the center of a patch of firm ground sits here, surrounded by huts.

Traditionally, this area was used as a gathering place for the boggards to share meals—it was also used recently by the boggards in the argument that split the tribe. The campfire still smolders slightly when the PCs first visit the village, but no boggards can be found here. Those in neighboring huts are withdrawn and pay no attention to anything that happens here unless the PCs make an unusual amount of noise.

F3. BOGWID PIT (CR 5)

A patch of firm ground on the shores of a larger pond serve as a sort of village square, although a ten-foot-diameter pit filled with muddy water mars the center of the area. A fence of sticks surrounds the hut, and sharp wooden stakes have been attached to the fence to point inward, making any attempt to climb out of the pit treacherous indeed.

The fence surrounding the pit is relatively easy to smash (hardness 5, hp 10, break DC 18), but any attempt to do so with light weapons, natural weapons, or unarmed strikes causes 1d4 points of damage per attempt from the numerous sharp wooden spikes. Creatures take no damage from falling into the soggy, muddy pit, but climbing out of the pit requires a successful DC 15 Climb check. In addition, the climber takes 1d4 points of damage from the spikes fixed into the surrounding fence if she fails a DC 12 Reflex save.

Creature: Many strange creatures dwell in the Mushfens, and the boggards have captured and partially tamed one of them here—a creature known as a bogwid. The monster is a hideous being that mixes the features of a frog and an octopus, resulting in a beast with a visage that the superstitious boggards could hardly help but regard with a somewhat reverent awe. The tribe's now dead priest of Gogunta believed the bogwid was one of the Swamp Mother's spawn, and after convincing the monster to live here in this pit (through a series of rewards and punishments), the tribe has used the bogwid pit as a convenient place to dispose of prisoners or to punish boggards.

The bogwid is barely intelligent—it's smart enough to know boggards are friends, but not quite smart enough to know why the boggards were yelling at each other. If it sees any non-boggards looking into its pit, the monster croaks and roars for 1 round before it starts launching some of its ravenous young at the obvious intruders. If it's attacked, the monster clambers up and out of the pit to return the favor.

BOGWID **CR 5**

XP 1,600

hp 47 (see page 84)

F4. CHIEFTAIN'S HUT (CR 6)

This is the largest hut in the village. A curtain of brightly colored beads hangs over the hut's entrance, further emphasizing the building's importance.

Creatures: This is the home of the tribe's nominal chief, Daghop, although he's currently skulking about in the tribe's onetime temple cavern to the west. Daghop fully intends to return to the village soon and reclaim control once he gets his head wrapped around the situation and can organize a coup, but until that point, he's ordered his three bodyguard-wives to remain here and guard the hut from Mama Beballa and her supporters. These three boggards take no part in attempting to defend the village should the PCs attack. If the PCs attempt to enter the hut, the boggards within croak out (in Boggard), "Begone from this hut, intruders, lest you incur the wrath of mighty Daghop!"

If the PCs respect this command, they can actually converse with the boggards within—they even thank the PCs for cleaning out the "rabble" if they've already killed Mama Beballa and her supporters. If the PCs have done so, the three suggest the PCs bring news of their triumph to Chief Daghop in the sacred cave to the west, implying that the boggard leader may well reward them for their service.

The three boggards quickly react with violence if the PCs enter the hut, attacking at once and fighting to the death to defend their husband's home.

ADVANCED BOGGARDS (3) **CR 3**

XP 800 each

hp 28 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 37, 294)

Melee morningstar +7 (1d8+6 plus filth fever), tongue +1 touch (sticky tongue)

Ranged mwk dagger +7 (1d4+4/19–20 plus filth fever)

Treasure: Inside the hut lies a woven basket, half submerged, containing that portion of Daghop's personal hoard that he didn't bother bringing with him. This stash includes 950 gp and six chrysoberyls worth 100 gp each.

F5. THE BREEDING SHALLOWS (CR 5)

A placid pond, the water choked with algae and pond scum, stretches to the south of the village here. Clouds of gnats and other insects buzz above the water, while now and then the ripples of larger creatures in the murky depths disturb the pond's surface.

The boggards use this large pond as a breeding ground, and large clutches of boggard eggs lie in the shallows near the shore. These eggs aren't going to hatch anytime soon, and as such they need protection. While Mama Beballa and the boggards of the village do their best to keep predators from approaching the shallows along the shore, the creatures dwelling in the pool are capable guardians as well.

Creatures: If a growing boggard tadpole's maturation process is tampered with in the right way, the creature continues to grow but never quite makes the full transformation into boggard, instead remaining stuck in its more aquatic form. These creatures are known as bogwiggles, and are often used by boggards as guardians and pets. The pond is swarming with bogwiggles, as any non-boggard who enters the pond swiftly finds out. The bogwiggles attack in groups of four swarming in to fight and chew intruders and going as far as to pursue foes for a few rounds after they flee the water.

BOGWIGGLES (4) **CR 1**

XP 400 each

hp 16 each (see page 86)

F6. BROOD MOTHER'S HUT (CR 5)

This is the second-largest hut in the village, a bulging, misshapen structure draped with all manner of strange seaweed and bone charms and fetishes.

Creature: With the death of the tribe's priest, Mama Beballa has gone from being merely the tribe's Brood Mother to its religious center. Although incapable herself of using divine magic (yet) and barely educated in the facets of religious lore, Mama Beballa has nonetheless stepped up to the role. She didn't expect to win her argument with the chieftain in defending the tribe's decision to ally with the Gray Maidens, and now she's wracking her brain for a plan to contact the human mercenaries and prove to the tribe that this allegiance was not merely one of convenience by the humans in order to gain the boggards' aid in securing a route into the Lady's Light. The leader of the Gray Maidens has passed back through the caves to the west a few times since the original alliance, but she has not returned for several days, and Mama Beballa fears

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they've been abandoned. The fact that the chieftain and his loyalists have chosen the caves (and thus the most convenient entrance into the tunnels leading to the Lady's Light) frustrates Mama Beballa, for this is keeping her from mounting an expedition into the tunnels to try to make contact with the Gray Maidens. The arrival of the PCs in her village is, as a result, a welcome distraction, and as soon as she's aware of trouble in the village, she emerges from her hut to help the other boggards defend the place.

MAMA BEBALLA CR 5

XP 1,600

Female boggard ranger 3

(*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 37)

CE Medium humanoid (boggard)

Init +1; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; **Perception** +13

DEFENSE

AC 17, touch 11, flat-footed 16 (+3 armor, +1 Dex, +3 natural)

hp 50 (6 HD; 3d8+3d10+21)

Fort +9, **Ref** +5, **Will** +4

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft., swim 30 ft.

Melee mwk morningstar +8 (1d8+2 plus filth fever), tongue +2 (sticky tongue)

Ranged +1 composite longbow +8 (1d8+3/x3 plus filth fever)

Special Attacks favored enemy (reptilian humanoids +2), terrifying croak

TACTICS

During Combat Mama Beballa hates reptilian humanoids more than anything else, but gnomes and halflings are a close second, and she targets those foes first if possible. She prefers to fight with her longbow, and if confronted on her own, attempts to make her way into the village to get help.

Morale Mama Beballa fights to the death when defending her village, but confronted elsewhere she flees back to her village if she can once reduced to fewer than 10 hit points.

STATISTICS

Str 15, **Dex** 13, **Con** 16, **Int** 6, **Wis** 15, **Cha** 12

Base Atk +5; **CMB** +7; **CMD** 18

Feats Deadly Aim, Endurance, Point-Blank Shot, Rapid Shot, Weapon Focus (composite longbow)

Skills Knowledge (religion) +0, Perception +13, Stealth +7, Survival +9, Swim +13

Languages Boggard

SQ favored terrain (swamp +2), hold breath, swamp stride, track +1, wild empathy +4

Combat Gear +1 reptilian humanoid bane arrows (5); **Other Gear** studded leather, +1 composite longbow with 20 arrows, masterwork morningstar



MAMA BEBALLA

F7. FILTH FARM

An almost visible miasma of hideous decay hangs about this hut, cloaking the building in a cloud of buzzing flies and the stench of rotting flesh.

The interior of this hut is where the boggards have started storing all of their waste and garbage, mixed with the butchered remains of dead bugs and wild animals. The resulting mound of filthy, rotting stuff is horribly vile-smelling. Any creature that enters this room must succeed at a DC 16 Fortitude save to resist becoming nauseated as long as it remains in the hut, plus an additional 2d4 rounds after it exits. Further, anyone currently suffering from any hit point damage who enters this hut is exposed to filth fever. The boggards have been cultivating this “farm of filth” to cake their weapons so wounds caused by them fester and become infected—a

hideously effective tactic taught to them by the Gray Maidens (who, several years ago, aided Queen Ileosa and other groups in using disease to help bring the city of Korvosa to its knees). So far, the boggards have managed to avoid catching the sickness themselves by taking care to only enter the hut when they're healthy.

Creature: A single female troglodyte named Azoresh is bound hand and foot in this hut, slumped against the far wall in a semiconscious haze. She is suffering from late-stage filth fever, and is helpless as a result—she'll die of the disease 24 hours after the PCs first visit the boggard village. Azoresh is the last surviving prisoner from those taken by the boggards after the last attack on the troglodytes. Before the schism, she was repeatedly interrogated for information on the troglodyte defenses, but now, the boggards have other things on their mind and she'll simply be left here to die of her illness unless she's rescued by the PCs. As with many of the other troglodytes in the local tribe, showing her any amount of kindness results in a change of heart, and she thanks the PCs profusely (in Draconic) for saving her. If the PCs rescue her, she promises to put in a good word for the PCs among her kind back in the caves to the northeast (area D), but warns them that their only remaining leader is a fanatic named Uggilo who won't tolerate intruders. She fears that if Uggilo isn't slain, he'll drive the tribe

SHATTERED STAR

IGNORING THE BOGGARDS

There are other routes into the Lady's Light, and therefore the PCs could progress into the next part of this adventure without interacting with the Boggards at all. In this case, Mama Beballa makes a move against the chieftain and leads her loyal boggards and the bogwid on an attack against the chieftain in area G. She's successful, killing the chief and earning the alliance of the boggards in the cave, and soon leads a group of eight boggards and the bogwid into the caves to try to contact the Gray Maidens. These events should occur as the PCs are exploring the dungeons below the Lady's Light for the first time, and they should at some point encounter Mama Beballa and her group when they're backtracking or perhaps attempting to exit the dungeon to rest and regroup. Tailor Mama Beballa's group so that it is an encounter of a CR equal to the average party level (or one or two above that if you feel that the PCs need a bigger challenge).



into the ground in his zeal. You can use Azoresh as a link to the troglodyte caves and to encourage the PCs to seek a route of redemption for the tribe. If the PCs simply save her and let her return on her own before they actually visit the troglodyte caves, when they arrive, they'll find Azoresh again, now a captive of Uggilo and scheduled for sacrifice.

AZORESH

CR —

XP 0

Diseased troglodyte (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 267)

hp 1 (normally 13)

Diseased Azoresh currently suffers from filth fever; she has taken 9 points of Dexterity damage and 12 points of Constitution damage.

Story Award: If the PCs rescue Azoresh, grant them 400 XP.

G. TEMPLE OF GOGUNTA

While the boggards of Baladab Souko have dwelt in their village for several generations, this cavern, located 200 yards west of the village at the base of a rocky outcropping, has served as a sacred site for the worship of the boggard goddess Gogunta for much longer. Serving at times as shelter during violent storms, the caves became a secondary home for Chief Daghop and his loyal boggards after they left the village in disgust at Mama Beballa's convictions that allying with the Gray Maidens was the right choice. With no remaining priests in their tribe (one of Chief Daghop's primary arguments for why allying with the humans was a bad choice), the boggards now dwell here, on constant guard against the possible

return of the Gray Maidens—if any dare show their faces, Daghop hopes to kill them to send a message to the group. Left unsaid are Daghop's plans to hopefully retake his village by killing Mama Beballa—but his carefully concealed fear of the brood mother has, to date, kept him from acting on these desires.

G1. OUTER SHRINE (CR 6)

This large cavern has a cathedral-like ceiling that rises to a height of forty feet above. The ground is smooth and clear of debris, save for a few large boulders and rocks here and there. Along the western wall, flanked by passageways to either side, menaces a frightful wall-carving of an enormous multiheaded frog demon crouched on a mound of skulls and bones. Four crude nests of mud and reeds lie on the floor here and there.

Once the primary place of worship for the boggards, this room now serves as the barracks for Chief Daghop's remaining loyal followers. A successful DC 20 Knowledge (religion) check reveals that the multiheaded frog demon is a depiction of Gogunta, the demon god of the boggards.

Creatures: Apart from his three bodyguard-wives (whom he specifically left behind to guard his hut back in the village), Daghop's loyal followers number only four. These boggards can be found in this room, squatting around the largest rock in the room, which they're using as a table to gamble with a large stack of coins and gemstones (the contents of one of Daghop's bags of loot, given to these four by the chief to ensure their continued loyalty). The game the boggards are playing involves the tossing of colored stones and a fairly simple set of rules (whoever ends up with the most stones on the table wins) that, nevertheless, are causing more arguments than enjoyment.

As soon as these three boggards notice the PCs, one of them unleashes a terrifying croak—more to alert the chief than anything else. The boggards immediately attack the intruders, and Chief Daghop joins the battle from area G2 after 1 round, coming around the corner in a rage. Unlike the boggards in the village, these boggards are not armed with daggers given them by the Gray Maidens, nor do they fight with diseased weaponry.

BOGGARDS (4)

CR 2

XP 600 each

hp 22 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 37)

Treasure: In three separate piles on the largest rock (along with nine colored gambling stones) are 800 cp, 420 sp, 150 gp, 35 agates worth 350 gp in all, nine bloodstones worth 450 gp in all, two violet garnets worth 500 gp each, and a necklace made of platinum links worth 900 gp.

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G2. THE SULKING CHIEFTAIN (CR 6)

The floor of this cavern is muddy and damp. Moisture runs from the walls and drips from the ceiling to gather in pools on the ground. To the south, a carving of a multiheaded frog looms between two smaller passageways. A pair of pottery jars caked with sticky orange fluid sit on a niche below this carving—more of this stuff is smeared over the walls and floor of both the smaller southern passageways.

The southern tunnels rejoin only a few feet beyond this carving, curving first west and then back north and eventually leading to area I. The orange stuff is a potent alchemical concoction originally brewed by the tribe's now-dead high priest—for further details, see Treasure, below.

Creatures: After losing control of over half his tribe, Chief Daghop now sulks silently in this rearmost chamber of the tribe's sheltering cave, mulling over his ill luck and slowly building his courage up to strike back against the brood mother (although, as noted in the Ignoring the Boggards sidebar, he won't find that courage before Mama Beballa comes after him. The always-comforting presence of his three pet giant frogs soothe his anger only slightly. If he hears battle in area G1, he roars in rage and brings his frogs with him to join the fight; otherwise, he stands his ground here, eager for something new to think about other than his own fear of the tribe's brood mother.

DAGHOP	CR 4
XP 1,200	
Boggard barbarian 2 (<i>Pathfinder RPG Bestiary</i> 37)	
CE Medium humanoid (boggard)	
Init +1; Senses darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Perception +10	
DEFENSE	
AC 17, touch 10, flat-footed 15 (+4 armor, +1 Dex, +1 dodge, +3 natural, -2 rage)	
hp 53 (5 HD; 3d8+2d12+27)	
Fort +11, Ref +2, Will +4	
Defensive Abilities uncanny dodge	
OFFENSE	
Speed 30 ft., swim 30 ft.	
Melee +1 warhammer +11 (1d8+7/x3), tongue +5 (sticky tongue)	
Special Attacks rage (9 rounds/day), rage powers (animal fury), terrifying croak	
TACTICS	

During Combat Daghop rages, then charges in to attack in melee. He uses his terrifying croak on the first round of combat, trying to focus on characters who are already visibly shaken from previous croaks from his minions. He uses his powerful blow rage power on his first attack in the battle (increasing his damage if he hits by +1), then uses

Power Attack for the rest of the fight (taking a -1 penalty on attacks in order to gain a +3 bonus on damage rolls when using his warhammer, which he wields two-handed).

Morale Daghop fights to the death.

STATISTICS

Str 23, **Dex** 13, **Con** 20, **Int** 8, **Wis** 13, **Cha** 8

Base Atk +4; **CMB** +10; **CMD** 20

Feats Cleave, Dodge, Power Attack

Skills Handle Animal +5, Perception +10, Survival +7, Swim +16

Languages Boggard

SQ fast movement, hold breath, swamp stride

Gear masterwork hide armor, +1 warhammer



DAGHOP

SHATTERED STAR

GIANT FROGS (3)

CR 1

XP 400 each

hp 15 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 135*)

Treasure: The orange goop caked on the walls and filling the two jars is all that remains of a potent pheromone-like concoction invented by the now-dead boggard priest. This stuff smells quite bitter (like rotting lemons), but is in fact something of a sedative against solifugids. The boggards used this material to keep the denizens of area I from entering their cave, but also to keep the creatures docile whenever they needed to venture deeper into the tunnels—they were originally going to use the stuff to mount a surprise attack from behind on the troglodyte cave, but abandoned that tactic for a more open battle in the swamp where they could use their swamp stride ability to great advantage.

Only two jars of the stuff remain. Each jar is worth 50 gp to an alchemist. A single jar smashed on the ground is enough to lull all solifugids (but not other vermin) within a 60-foot spread into a state of lethargy for 1d4 hours (a successful DC 18 Fortitude negates, but a new save must be made each round the solifugid remains in the area). Alternatively, a jar used to coat a swath of ground makes that area into a region that any solifugid resists crossing for 2d4 days. A lethargic solifugid does not initiate attacks, but is not helpless—if the solifugid is attacked, it fights back but functions as if sickened. The properties of this strange concoction can be identified with a successful DC 20 Craft (alchemy) or Knowledge (nature) check and 2d4 minutes of examination and experimentation.

H. THE LADY'S LIGHT (CR 6)

The Lady's Light stands atop a rocky bluff overlooking the mushfens to the north and east and the ocean to the west and south. The statue towers nearly two hundred feet in height, its upraised scepter reaching much farther into the sky than that, while the sea cliffs that drop a further 40 feet give the monument an even greater impression

of looming over the sea. Carved of basalt, the towering monument has weathered the passage of the years quite well, and still depicts a beautiful woman dressed in a long, revealing gown. The monument itself stands on a massive slab of stone.

The Lady's Light has chambers within and below, but the only physical means of entering those chambers lie under the ground in area J—back in the time of Thassilon, Runelord Sorshen and her most trusted minions simply teleported to come and go from the monument's interior. Climbing the monument is dangerous; the surface has few handholds and is quite slick from sea spray, so scaling it requires a successful DC 20 Climb check, and with no entrances to be found in the heights, such a task is a needless risk at best.

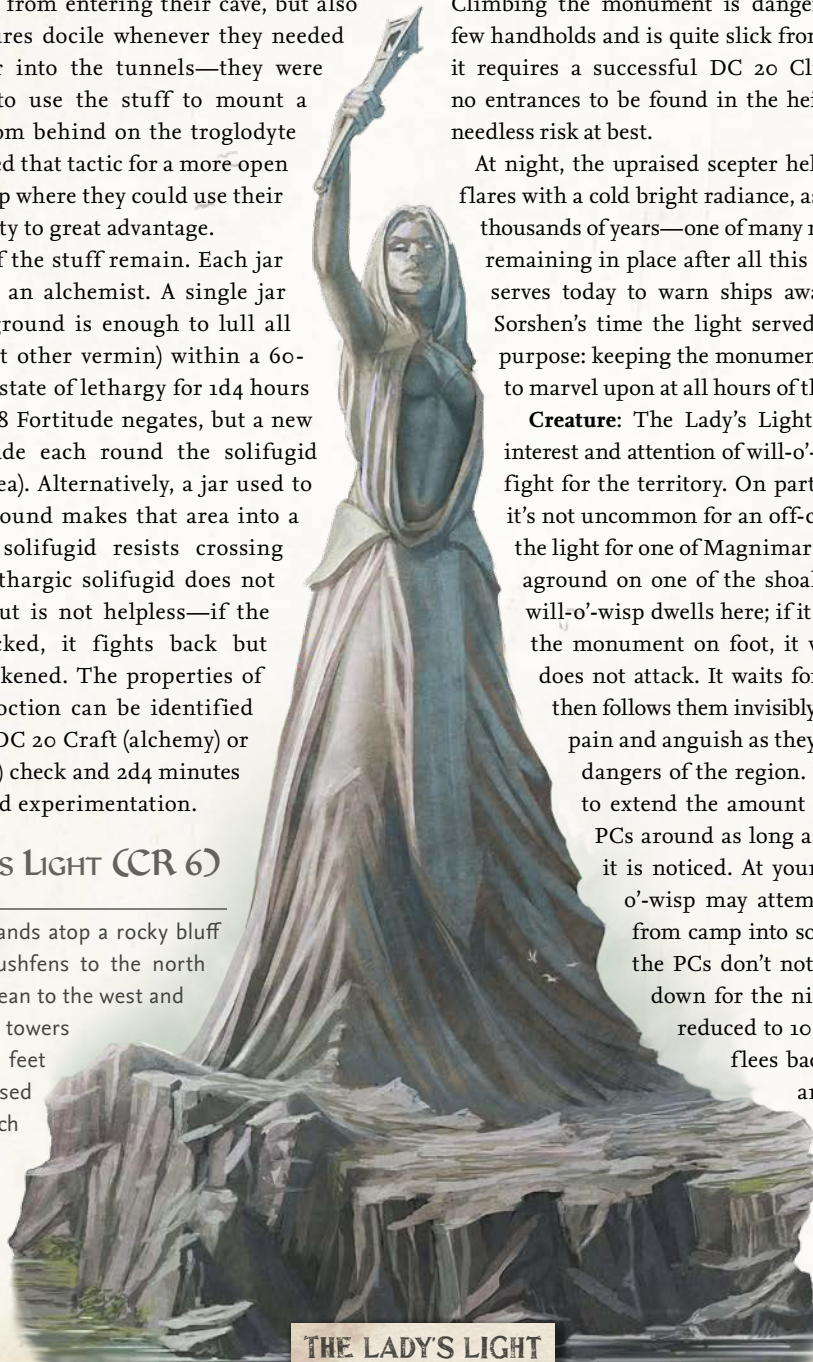
At night, the upraised scepter held by the Lady's Light flares with a cold bright radiance, as it has every night for thousands of years—one of many magical enhancements remaining in place after all this time. While this light serves today to warn ships away from the reefs, in Sorshen's time the light served an altogether vainer purpose: keeping the monument lit and visible for all to marvel upon at all hours of the day and night.

Creature: The Lady's Light has long drawn the interest and attention of will-o'-wisps, who bicker and fight for the territory. On particularly foggy nights, it's not uncommon for an off-course ship to mistake the light for one of Magnimar's lighthouses and run aground on one of the shoals. Currently, a single will-o'-wisp dwells here; if it sees anyone approach the monument on foot, it watches curiously but does not attack. It waits for the visitors to leave, then follows them invisibly, eager to feed on their pain and anguish as they endure the trials and dangers of the region. The will-o'-wisp tries to extend the amount of time it follows the PCs around as long as it can, but attacks if it is noticed. At your discretion, the will-o'-wisp may attempt to lure a PC away from camp into something dangerous if the PCs don't notice it before they bed down for the night. If the creature is reduced to 10 or fewer hit points, it flees back to the Lady's Light and does not bother the PCs any further.

WILL-O'-WISP CR 6

XP 2,400

hp 40 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 277*)



THE LADY'S LIGHT

CURSE OF THE LADY'S LIGHT

I. SOLIFUGID NEST (CR 7)

The intersection of four tunnels forms a sizable cave here. The domed ceiling rises to a height of twenty feet, while near the center of this cave stands a monument made of polished black basalt, seven-sided with the same great rune carved on each face. The top portion of the monument has broken away, revealing what appears to be a hollow space within in the shape of a female figure. An astounding number of strange albino insectoid creatures, each the size of a man's finger, scuttle and scurry along the walls.

The monument is of ancient Thassilonian pedigree, and the rune carved on its seven faces is the ancient rune of lust and enchantment. The monument's surface is warm to the touch and seems to pulse with energy—*detect magic* reveals a faint aura of enchantment. A successful DC 28 Knowledge (arcana) check allows a PC to identify the monument as the remnants of an unusual variation of the binding spell—until the monument was broken, it kept something imprisoned within. The hollow left by this once-imprisoned creature appears to be that of a beautiful winged human woman—a successful DC 22 Knowledge (planes) check reveals that the previous occupant was a succubus. A DC 15 Knowledge (engineering) check confirms that the monument broke many months ago. The succubus who was imprisoned within was a minion of the demon lord Shax, who was finally able to escape her prison after a curious team of troglodytes tried to smash the monument open with picks in hopes of finding treasure within. This succubus, an assassin named Avalex, woke from millennia-long imprisonment with her memories hazy but her anger intact. Avalex has no role to play in this adventure, but as she's settled into Magnimar, she may well encounter the PCs later—see *Pathfinder Module: Dawn of the Scarlet Sun* (available at paizo.com) for details on Avalex and her plans for Magnimar. If you don't wish to run this short adventure and you think including this monument would only distract your players, feel free to remove it from this chamber and leave things to the cave's current denizens.

Creatures: The finger-sized creatures that swarm the floors and walls here are harmless solifugids, but the three larger albino cave solifugids who dwell here pose a serious threat. These human-sized, spiderlike arachnids have enormous claws and frightening vertically aligned maws, and scuttle quickly forth along the walls to attack any intruders. Use of the alchemical mixture from area **G2** can make this cave relatively safe to traverse, but without it, the PCs must deal with the hungry vermin. The monstrous vermin pursue foes relentlessly once they attack, but will not chase people into area **G2** because of the presence of the alchemical mixture smeared on the walls there.

ALBINO CAVE SOLIFUGIDS (3)

CR 4

XP 1,200 each

hp 45 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 2* 253)

J. ENTRANCE CHAMBER (CR 7)

The rough cave walls give way to a chamber of worked stone, with walls made of blue-veined white marble. The ceiling is supported by columns masterfully sculpted to depict voluptuous warrior women wielding two-headed guisarmes, with each column unique and strikingly detailed. At the center of the room, a ten-foot-square shaft leads down into the darkness below.

This chamber lies under the headlands that support the Lady's Light itself, although the chamber itself does not lie directly under that monument. The shaft descends 50 feet into area **K1**. Three permanent spell effects fill the shaft: *deeper darkness*, *silence*, and *feather fall*. Descent into the lower chamber is safe but unnerving as a result. Scaling the shaft's walls is possible but difficult (they're smooth, so it requires a successful DC 25 Climb check)—the PCs may need to leave a rope to facilitate their exit if they don't have access to levitation or similar magic.

Creatures: The four sculpted columns that stand to the north of the shaft are actually guardian constructs known as caryatid columns that animate and attack as soon as anyone approaches within 10 feet of the shaft. These constructs work ferociously to prevent anyone from entering the shaft, but do not pursue foes out of this room. These statues do not attack anyone who prominently displays the rune of lust—a fact that Oriana had learned well before entering the dungeon, but that the PCs are unlikely to be privy to. The caryatid columns do not pursue foes who manage to make it into the shaft, but attack any who emerge without presenting the rune of lust.

CARYATID COLUMNS (4)

CR 3

XP 800 each

hp 36 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 3* 46)

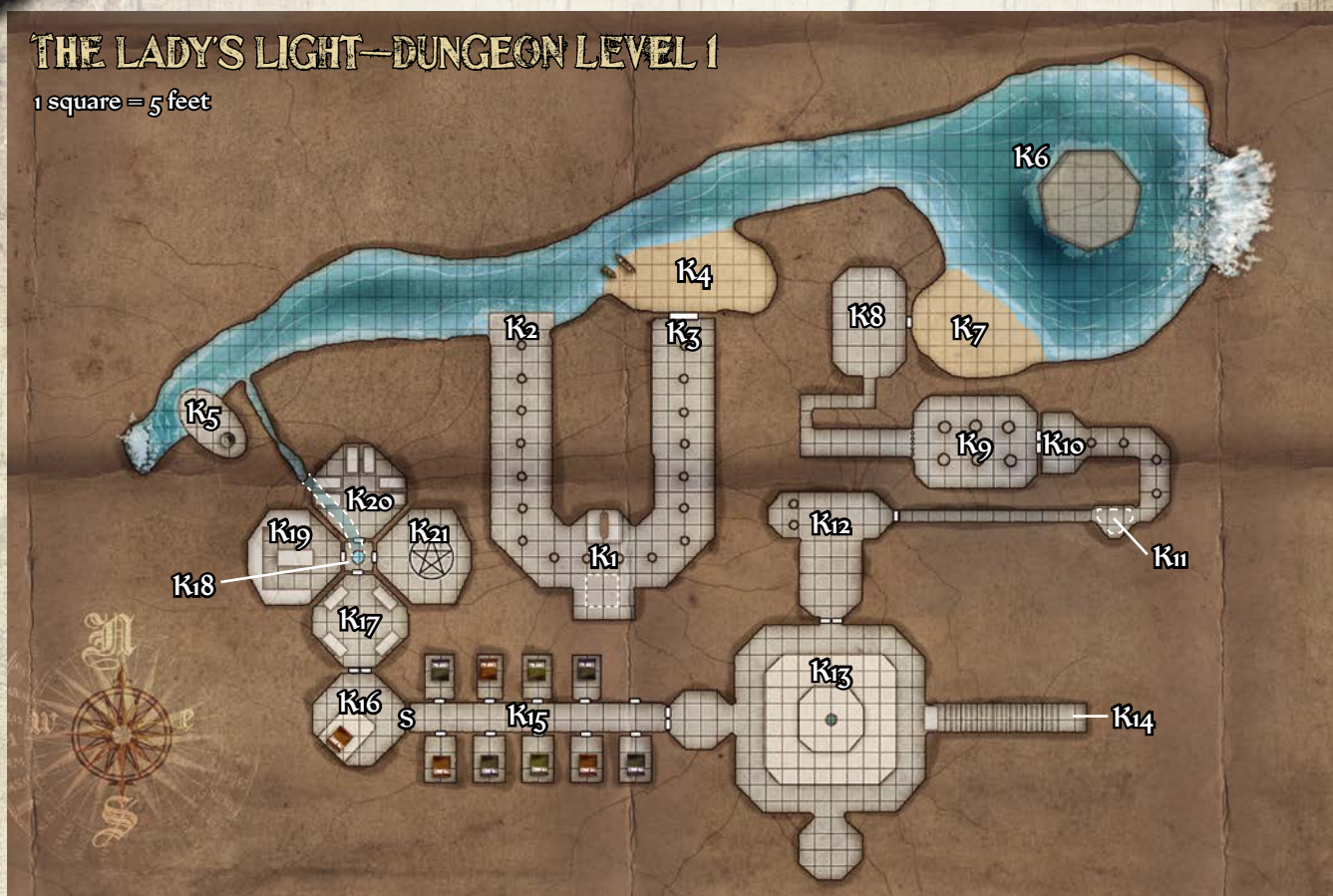
PART THREE: THE LADY'S LIGHT

The dungeons below the Lady's Light once served as Sorshen's home away from home. In her time, many powerful guardians and valuable treasures were kept here, but when Sorshen realized Thassilon was coming to an end, she relocated the majority of these to fortifications farther east (she left behind a few precious items within the Lady's Light, such as the *Shard of Lust*, more out of necessity than desire—the end came more quickly than she'd anticipated). Those legacies of Eurythnia that remain are mere shadows of their former power in most

SHATTERED STAR

THE LADY'S LIGHT—DUNGEON LEVEL 1

1 square = 5 feet



cases, but remain dangerous obstacles and wondrous treasures for the PCs to find.

The architecture of these ancient dungeons is both beautiful and awe-inspiring. In many cases, such as the magnificent waterfalls at areas **K5** and **L1** (see page 37), the addition of such beautiful sights represented a fantastic expense for very little material gain—save for aesthetic glory. Sorshen enjoyed beauty in all things, after all, and the grandeur of a cascade of water or of pillars of shimmering crystal were important additions in her eye. The preservative magic that enhances most Thassilonian complexes has kept these features pristine through the ages (including the majority of the doors and furniture in the room), save in some places where more recent denizens have left their marks.

Unless otherwise noted, worked stone chambers are lit by *continual flames* that flicker in glass spheres hanging from the ceiling on short chains, filling each room with normal light. Caverns are generally unlit. The ceiling height in hallways averages at 8 feet, while in chambers it averages 15 feet unless otherwise mentioned in the text. Images of Runelord Sorshen are common throughout this dungeon—they can be identified with a successful DC 25 Knowledge (arcana or history) check. The upper

dungeon level lies at 10 feet below sea level, while the lower level is 70 feet below sea level.

K1. THE FALSE SEPULCHER (CR 7)

The ceiling of this grand hall is made of polished gray marble. It rises to a height of twenty-five feet, supported by ornate columns whose central eight-foot-sections have been carved to resemble a beautiful woman. A ten-foot-square platform sits in a wide alcove on the north wall, atop which lies a white marble sarcophagus with a painted lid. The sound of gently running water echoes along the hall to the west.

Both the figures represented in the columns and the painted lid of the sarcophagus depict a beautiful dark-haired, lithe woman sleeping with arms crossed over her chest—a detailed depiction of Runelord Sorshen. The lid weighs 600 pounds, but isn't locked. Within the sarcophagus lies the perfectly preserved body of a woman identical to the one depicted on the lid, clad in diaphanous flimsy robes and an enormous amount of splendid jewelry. She looks almost as if she's sleeping, not dead. The body is warm to the touch and emanates an overwhelming necromantic aura, and a successful

CURSE OF THE LADY'S LIGHT

DC 28 Knowledge (arcana) check correctly identifies this as a *clone* of none other than Sorshen herself, held in preservation by a permanent *gentle repose* effect. The fact that this clone still exists and hasn't been activated yet poses some significant implications—primarily that, somewhere, Runelord Sorshen is still very much alive.

It's a simple matter to destroy the clone, although ultimately this is but one of many clones Sorshen kept in secure locations throughout her realm. Nevertheless, destroying this clone ensures that should the Runelord of Lust rise again and then die, she will not be using this particular body to come back to life.

Trap: If anyone attempts to harm the clone or loot its jewelry, a devious but malfunctioning trap triggers. Originally, attempting either of these actions simply struck the grave robber with the overwhelming sensation of Sorshen's clone animating, growing to enormous size, and then crushing the grave robber in her fist—with an effect similar to that created by a *phantasmal killer* spell. Over the millennia, though, this trap has interacted with the clone's magic in strange ways, such that anyone killed by the spell treats the Sorshen clone as his own clone, provided the clone is undamaged. In this case, the victim immediately awakens after being slain in his new body, although with the customary two permanent negative levels that result from coming back to life. This link persists even if the victim succeeded at the saving throw to resist death from the *phantasmal killer* effect—if at any time thereafter the victim dies, he is immediately reborn in the clone. This lingering effect (which can be correctly identified with a successful DC 35 Spellcraft check) can be dispelled, although it functions at caster level 20th. The new body does not alter the character's statistics in any way, with the exception that the character's race becomes Azlanti. All of the character's racial traits are lost, replaced by human racial traits (you should give the player some time to choose his bonus feat and apply his bonus skill ranks as the player sees fit). In addition, the character loses his racial ability scores from the previous race, replacing them with the standard +2 bonus to all six ability scores that Azlanti humans get.

SORSHEN'S FURY

CR 7

XP 3,200

Type magic; Perception DC 24; Disable Device DC 24

EFFECTS

Trigger touch; Reset none

Effect spell effect (*phantasmal killer*; CL 20th; DC 16 Will and Fort save; slain victim revives in clone's body)

Treasure: The clone wears a necklace of lapis lazuli worth 325 gp, a pair of emerald-studded earrings worth 1,500 gp as a pair, seven rings worth 500 gp each, and a silver and pink pearl anklet worth 400 gp.

A BRAND-NEW BODY

The possible ramifications of having a new body that's physically identical to Runelord Sorshen could be wide-reaching—although perhaps not as far as the character might hope. Here in the Lady's Light, certain characters and guardians may well react differently to someone they perceive to be Runelord Sorshen, as mentioned in the text. Beyond the Lady's Light, however, very few others in the Shattered Star Adventure Path will react unusually, beyond those whom the PC had a previous relationship with being shocked at the change in appearance. At your discretion, NPCs who recognize the PC's new body may react with varying degrees of shock, disbelief, or even fear, but most who recognize the body simply assume that the PC has affected Sorshen's appearance via magic for reasons of vanity or madness. Usurping Sorshen's clone presents a wealth of roleplaying opportunities, as well as a not insignificant boost to the character's ability scores, but the player must pay in the short term by enduring the two permanent negative levels until they can be removed. Restoring the character's previous body is difficult but not impossible—a *wish* or *miracle* can achieve this change, as can a *true resurrection* spell.

As a short aside, those curious as to how Sorshen managed to create clones of herself despite the fact that, as the Runelord of Lust, she could not cast necromancy spells, should recall that Sorshen not only had vast amounts of wealth at her disposal, but also unparalleled mastery over mind-controlling effects—it was thus no problem for her to engage the talents of any number of enslaved or bribed necromancers to create her clones for her.

K2. RIVER BALCONY

The hall opens here onto a balcony overlooking a subterranean river flowing to the east. The waters of the river are dark, while the walls and ceiling above are a breathtaking array of earth-tones, the natural stone polished and smooth.

The water below is cool and fresh, flowing to the east in a leisurely current. The water is 3 feet deep, although the dark waters are heavy with sediment and obscure the actual depth. The current isn't strong enough here to upset someone wading, and a successful DC 10 Swim check is needed to swim in the water. The walls are quite smooth and damp—navigating them by climbing requires a successful DC 25 Climb check. The river is mundane, but its source to the west is anything but (see area K5). The river itself picks up speed as it flows east, eventually cascading down into the second level in a waterfall at area K6.

K3. THE RED DOOR

The hallway ends at an immense panel of reddish metal is nearly twenty feet tall and ten feet wide. Dozens of scenes have been carved into individual one-foot-square frames on the panel. These scenes chronicle a beautiful woman engaged in a magical incantation involving some sort of winged creatures.

The lack of visible hinges or a handle might obscure the fact that this immense metal wall is in fact a door. The door itself is made of a djezet alloy that's as hard as steel (djezet is a skymetal—see *Pathfinder Adventure Path* #61 for more details). A successful DC 25 Perception check reveals that the metal wall is in fact a door, and that each of the panels on the door can be depressed as if they were buttons. One of these buttons (the central one) causes the door to swing open silently; at one point, pressing the other buttons summoned powerful succubus guardians who were bound into the door, but over time, all of the succubi who guarded this area have escaped.

The buttons themselves depict Runelord Sorshen conjuring succubi and binding them into all matter of objects, structures, and carvings. A successful DC 20 Knowledge (arcana) check is enough to confirm that the images depict a powerful wizard infusing objects and locations within the Lady's Light with succubi, likely to power magical effects and traps, to serve as guardians, or simply to punish the succubi. The central panel depicts Sorshen binding a particularly powerful-looking succubus into what would seem to be the scepter held aloft by the Lady's Light. When this panel is pushed, it glows softly as Thassilonian writing appears along the panel's upper edge, spelling the phrase "Ayandamahla is bound to the Light for all ages" as the door itself swings open.

Note that while the PCs might not initially recognize the significance, the lower left panel depicts Sorshen binding a succubus-like creature into a statue of herself upon a stone platform in the middle of a lake—this depicts the Runelord of Lust binding Ashamintallu to the glass golem at area K6.

K4. THE SANDY CAVE

A sloping sandy beach extends down from the cave walls here to the edge of a slowly flowing underground river. Two wooden skiffs are moored to four-foot-tall stone posts protruding from the sand near the river's edge. Each boat is relatively narrow and has room to seat three, and each contains a long wooden pole.

Each of these rowboats radiates strong conjuration magic, as they are in fact magical creations linked to

their respective mooring posts. If a boat is taken from its post, the post recalls the taken boat after the boat has been idle and unused for an hour, teleporting the skiff back to the post for future use. Destroying a stone post (hardness 8, hp 20, break DC 22) renders its associated boat nonmagical.

Each boat can seat up to three Medium or Small creatures (smaller creatures do not count toward this limit); exceeding that total causes a boat to sink low enough that water starts sloshing over the sides, and the boat sinks in a mere 2d6 rounds. The poles can be used to guide the boats at a speed of 20 feet—no skill check is required for simply moving around in slow-flowing shallow water like this stream, but trickier movement (as detailed elsewhere) requires Profession (sailor) checks.

K5. THE OVAL PLATFORM (CR 7)

A churning cascade of water pours from a circular hole in the highest part of the wall here. A metal grate covers the hole, and glowing runes surround the hole's rim. Along the south face of the watery tunnel, an oval stone platform protrudes from the wall, forming a sort of balcony over the river. At the back of the platform's alcove stands a twelve-foot-tall stone statue of a beautiful woman, her arms raised up in the air.

The statue's eyes are empty sockets, leading into a hollow interior. Close inspection reveals that the statue is indeed hollow and seems to be filled almost to eye-level with water. The statue radiates moderate enchantment magic—a successful DC 28 Knowledge (arcana) check correctly identifies the effect as a *binding* spell (CL 20th).

The grated hole in the ceiling is the source of the water in the sunken river, and an examination of the runes surrounding it reveal that they are magical. The grating and hole itself radiates strong conjuration magic—a successful DC 35 Spellcraft check is required to correctly identify it as a fixed portal to the Plane of Water. This portal is one-way, and only allows water to pass through. Sorshen created this portal merely because she enjoyed the sights of waterfalls and wanted a few of them here in the dungeon. Destroying the portal is difficult—it's essentially a fixed magic item (CL 20th) that can be shut off by smashing the grate, which is made of magically reinforced metal (hardness 16, hp 120, break DC 48).

The passageway leading to area K18 opens just underwater into the river 10 feet northeast of the platform—a successful DC 25 Perception check is needed to notice this opening because the water is murky and silty.

Creatures: A pair of large water elementals are bound into the statue—set here as guardians should anyone attempt to damage the portal to the Plane of Water. Any attempt to damage the portal or the statue allows the two

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water elementals to swiftly issue from each of the statue's eyes. The elementals quickly flow into the river to gain the advantage if possible, and fight to the death to protect the portal.

LARGE WATER ELEMENTALS (2)

CR 5

XP 1,600 each

hp 68 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 126)

K6. UNDERGROUND LAKE (CR 8)

This immense cavern is a breathtaking sight. Dozens of tiny colored motes of light flit and dance in the air, illuminating a vast, cathedral-like cavern. A forest of delicate stalactites hangs down from the ceiling 30 feet above a dark pool of water. To the east, the water foams as it cascades down into a lower cavern, while to the southwest, a low beach of white sand slopes up from the shore to a single stone door set in the wall. A seven-sided stone platform sits in the middle of the lake—an artificial island whose surface sits a mere six inches above the water level. A three-foot-tall stone mooring post protrudes from each of this island's seven points. A single glass statue of a beautiful woman stands atop this platform, one leg poised before the other as if she were preparing a running leap into the water.

The floating motes of light are permanent *dancing lights* (CL 20th).

Although the water in this room seems calm, the current is actually much stronger here as the water flows west toward the cascade. A successful DC 15 Swim check is needed to navigate the waters here, and the current moves anyone in the water 15 feet toward the eastern cascade at the end of each round. The waters of the stream to the west drop away swiftly as they flow into this lake, reaching a depth of 20 feet, far deeper than the boats' poles can reach. A PC must succeed at a DC 12 Profession (sailor) check to navigate one of the boats without using oars—doing so grants the boat a speed of 10 feet for that round. A character or boat that is pulled into the cascade plummets 60 feet over the edge into the waters of area L2 below. This fall is into deep water, and thus deals 2d3 nonlethal and 2d6 lethal points of damage to any who make the unfortunate journey. This damage isn't enough to destroy the rowboats, but they certainly do sink (but eventually return to their posts at area K4 after an hour). It's possible to use a rope to lasso a mooring post on the island as a boat floats by—a mooring post has an AC of 4, but remember that a lasso is essentially an exotic weapon with a range increment of 10 feet, and any character not trained in its use takes a -4 penalty on attacks with a lasso.

The seven-sided stone island was once a powerful magical item that served

to transport boats (along with their passengers) tied to the stone posts to other points in Eurythnia. However, when the succubus Ayandamahla extracted her daughter Ashamintallu from servitude here as a guardian in order to use the alu-demon as a replacement for herself, the magic of this transport unraveled. An examination of the platform's surface reveals a narrow band of Thassilonian runes around its perimeter—reading these runes not only reveals the platform's ancient purpose, but warns those who would use the platform to obey the commands of the glass guardian Ashamintallu, who once served as a sort of gatekeeper and guardian of the area.

Creature: During Sorshen's time, this platform was guarded by a powerful symbiotic creature—a glass golem infused with the essence of an alu-demon sorcerer named Ashamintallu. This alu-demon now dwells in the Lady's



GLASS GOLEM

SHATTERED STAR

Light, but the glass golem itself remains here, forever guarding a broken transport device. The golem remains motionless until anyone attempts to step onto the island or tie a boat to a post—if this occurs, the golem animates and attacks. If it has no specific foe to strike, it instead cuts ropes anchoring boats to the posts. The golem has the ability to walk on water, but retains no other additional abilities from its previous symbiotic relationship with the alu-demon. It uses its waterwalking ability to pursue foes who attack it from range, but doesn't chase enemies out of sight of this island. The golem itself still bears some damage from a recent fight with the Gray Maidens.

GLASS GOLEM

CR 8

XP 4,800

hp 76 (normally 96 but currently damaged; *Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 2 138)

Development: As a result of its unusual history, this glass golem will not attack any creature that looks like Sorshen—including a character who has been restored to life in the clone at area **K1**. Further, the golem obeys the verbal commands (as long as they are spoken in Thassilonian) of anyone who appears to be Sorshen. If a PC can secure control of the golem in this manner, it will serve that PC until it is destroyed—this is the only condition under which the golem will leave its post behind.

Story Award: If the PCs gain control of the glass golem, award them XP as if they had defeated it in combat.

K7. MAIDENS' GRAVES

The sand of this beach slopes up toward a door in the cave wall. To the south, two seven-foot-long mounds of sand break the otherwise smooth contours of the beach. A long oval shield painted with a strange symbol sits atop each mound.

The two mounds in the sand are graves for two of the Gray Maidens who died in a fight against the glass golem after one boat full of the mercenaries attempted to moor to the island. The remaining Gray Maidens avoided the island and the golem, and buried their two fallen members here. Digging up either grave reveals the body of a human woman clad in distinctive full plate armor—both bodies are quite decayed, but a successful DC 15 Knowledge (local) check enables a PC to recognize the infamous design of the armor and identify the bodies for what they are.

Speak with dead can tell the PCs much here, depending on the questions they ask. Both Gray Maidens can confirm they were once sworn to protect Queen Ileosa Arabasti, but now serve Commander Oriana and came to the Lady's Light to seek powerful magic to aid in retaking Korvosa from the pretender on the throne.

Treasure: Each grave is covered by a heavy steel shield (emblazoned with the symbol of lust), while both bodies still wear their suits of full plate and clutch their masterwork longswords.

K8. LASCIVIOUS MURAL

The walls of this room are covered by detailed murals depicting wanton acts involving otherworldly beings of every description. The murals cover every vertical surface, but stop abruptly after turning down the hallway to the south, as though abandoned by the artist.

Sorshen once planned on having this entire wing covered in such lascivious scenes, but the artist (a particular favorite of the runelord) was killed on one of her capricious whims. The artist was truly gifted, and careful observers who succeed at a DC 18 Perception check note his signature—"Amivadeus Yasrin." The keen observer also notes the subtext of the work: subtle suggestions of deep spiritual rot and decadence are apparent in throughout. The name of the artist could prove useful in area **L18**.

K9. A SPURNED CONSORT (CR 7)

Entry into this room is barred from the west by a wide, locked iron gate. The gate's lock can be picked (Disable Device DC 30) or it can be forced open (hardness 10, hp 60, break DC 25)—in either case, this should give the room's occupant time to react (see Creature, below).

The stone walls, floor, and ceiling of this hall are polished to an almost mirrorlike sheen. The arching ceiling is supported by twin rows of columns, all of which have been carved to resemble the same beautiful woman dressed in revealing robes.

Creature: The guardian of this room is one of Ashamintallu's charmed minions—a deathly pale man with long, bone-white hair woven into a long braid, dark eyes, and well-fitting and revealing clothes. This is Gnaeus Gnaru, a dhampir who was, until recently, "Sorshen's" champion. Gnaeus is a native of the city Pangolais in Nidal, but his work as a sellsword saw him traveling across Avistan as different jobs took him different places. Several months ago, he took a job as a bodyguard for a Korvosan wizard who had uncovered a map of the chambers below and within the Lady's Light, and wanted to loot the infamous ruin. The expedition went well, with the wizard's use of *dimension door* to enter the caves without interacting with the troglodytes or boggards at all, but soon after they reached the interior of the Lady's Light, things went bad as they were confronted by Ashamintallu herself, disguised as Sorshen. The wizard panicked and fled, and Ashamintallu swiftly

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charmed Gnaeus and sent him off to kill his previous employer. For many months thereafter, Gnaeus served “Sorshen” as a lover, guardian, and pet, always under the thrall of her enchantment magic. She forbade him from wearing his breastplate, telling him “it was a shame to cover up that incredible body.” But when the Gray Maidens arrived, “Sorshen” cast Gnaeus aside in favor of a new plaything—Oriana.

Now, Gnaeus has been all but discarded. He suspects his mistress commanded him to guard this room from further intruders as much to get him out of sight as anything else. He’s still under the lingering influence of a *charm monster* spell, but this does nothing to blunt the jealousy and depression he’s suffering at having been cast aside by the woman he has come to love. Madness has begun to eat away at him, and he’s been spending a fair amount of time lately brooding over his fate.

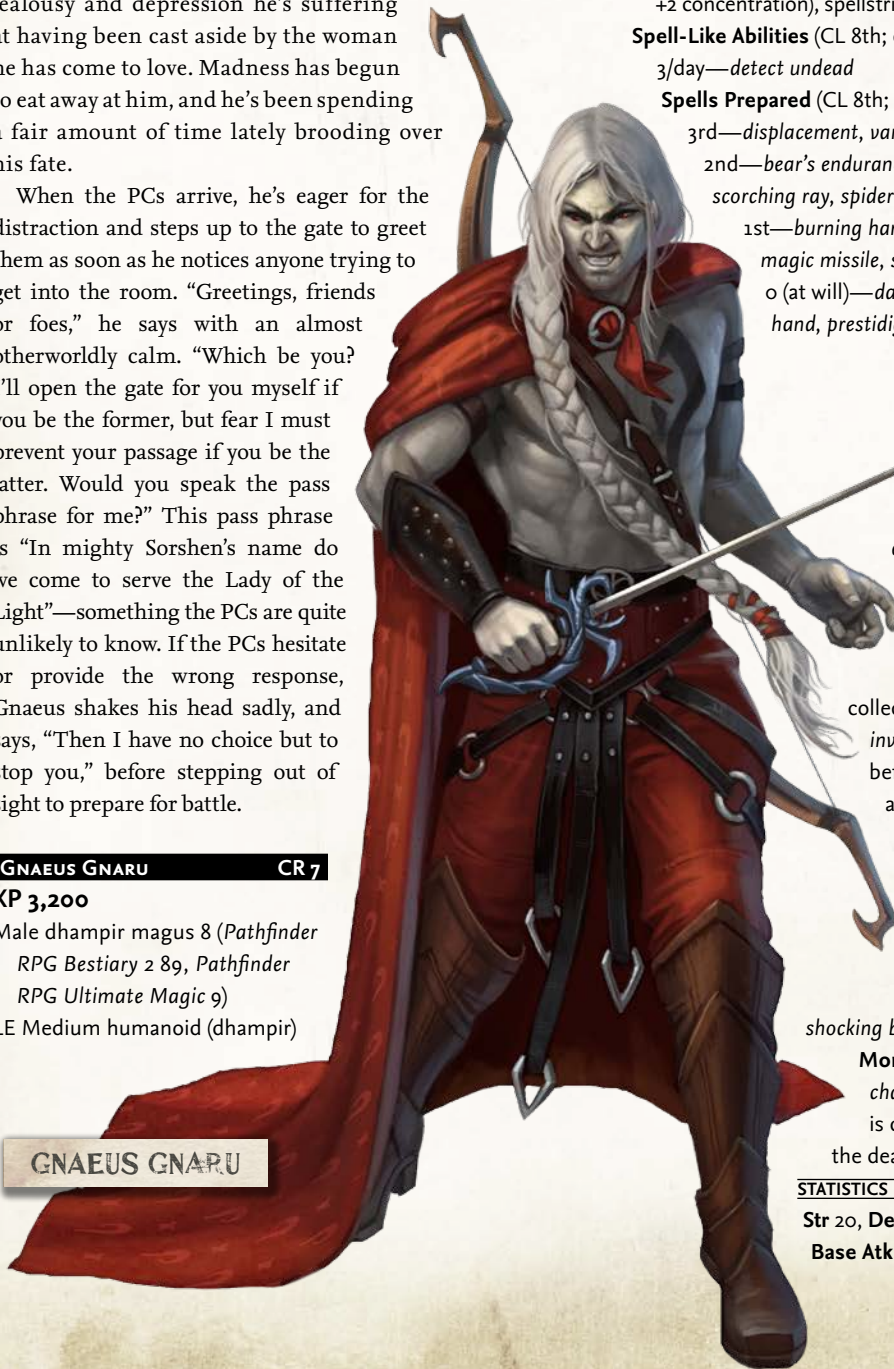
When the PCs arrive, he’s eager for the distraction and steps up to the gate to greet them as soon as he notices anyone trying to get into the room. “Greetings, friends or foes,” he says with an almost otherworldly calm. “Which be you? I’ll open the gate for you myself if you be the former, but fear I must prevent your passage if you be the latter. Would you speak the pass phrase for me?” This pass phrase is “In mighty Sorshen’s name do we come to serve the Lady of the Light”—something the PCs are quite unlikely to know. If the PCs hesitate or provide the wrong response, Gnaeus shakes his head sadly, and says, “Then I have no choice but to stop you,” before stepping out of sight to prepare for battle.

GNAEUS GNARU CR 7

XP 3,200

Male dhampir magus 8 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 2 89, *Pathfinder RPG Ultimate Magic* 9)
LE Medium humanoid (dhampir)

GNAEUS GNARU



Init +2; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; **Perception** +10

DEFENSE

AC 17, touch 13, flat-footed 14 (+2 Dex, +1 dodge, +4 shield)

hp 79 (8d8+40)

Fort +10, **Ref** +7, **Will** +7; +2 vs. disease and mind-affecting effects

Defensive Abilities negative energy affinity, resist level drain

Weaknesses light sensitivity

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee *Silverfang* +12/+7 (1d6+6/18–20)

Ranged mwk composite longbow +9/+4 (1d8+5/x3)

Special Attacks improved spell combat, spell combat (–2 attack, +2 concentration), spellstrike

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

3/day—*detect undead*

Spells Prepared (CL 8th; concentration +10)

3rd—*displacement*, *vampiric touch*

2nd—*bear’s endurance*, *bull’s strength*, *invisibility*, *scorching ray*, *spider climb*

1st—*burning hands* (DC 13), *chill touch* (DC 13),

magic missile, *shield*, *shocking grasp*

0 (at will)—*dancing lights*, *detect magic*, *mage hand*, *prestidigitation*, *ray of frost*

TACTICS

Before Combat

Gnaeus casts *bear’s endurance*, *bull’s strength*, and *shield* if he can before combat.

During Combat Gnaeus feels vulnerable without his armor (which remains in his mistress’s collection for now), so he casts *invisibility* and then *displacement* before he sets himself up for a good attack against the least-armored target. If he’s not been able to cast his three preparatory spells, Gnaeus casts them as well before making his first attack. He uses arcane pool to enhance his first attack with *shocking burst*.

Morale Gnaeus surrenders if the *charm monster* effect in place on him is dispelled; otherwise, he fights to the death.

STATISTICS

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

Base Atk +6; **CMB** +11; **CMD** 24

Feats Arcane Strike, Dodge, Lightning Reflexes, Power Attack, Toughness

Skills Bluff +2, Knowledge (arcana) +9, Knowledge (nobility) +6, Perception +10, Spellcraft +13, Use Magic Device +11

Languages Common, Infernal, Shadowtongue

SQ arcane pool (6 points, +2), knowledge pool, magus arcana (arcane accuracy, empowered magic), medium armor proficiency, spell recall

Combat Gear *wand of detect secret doors* (11 charges); **Other Gear** *Silverfang*, masterwork composite longbow with 20 arrows, *cloak of resistance* +1, spell component pouch, spellbook, 1 week of iron rations and water

Development: If captured, Gnaeus refuses to divulge any information as long as he remains charmed by “Sorshen.” The spell effect has only 2 days left of its duration from the first time the PCs encounter him, though. If the effect ends or is dispelled, the dhampir is ashamed at how long he’s been under his mistress’s control—he has no desire to confront her again, and writes off his armor as a lost cause as he wants nothing more at this point but to flee the area. Before he flees, though, he’ll certainly be willing to reward the PCs with what he knows of the area and his mistress. He can confirm that a group of Gray Maidens led by a woman named Oriana now serves the Lady of the Light, whom he has started to believe may not actually be Sorshen—he’s caught glimpses of what he believes is her “true form” three times, that of a beautiful but frightening demonic woman with bat wings and horns.

If asked about the layout of the dungeons and what dangers lie ahead for them, Gnaeus can tell the PCs that the route he and his previous employer took led them down the waterfall at area **K6** to the lower level. They navigated the lake to the beach at area **L7**, and followed the wizard’s maps into areas **L12** and beyond through the secret door, but were attacked by “Sorshen” before they made it much farther into the complex. Gnaeus spent most of the time since then in area **M3** with Ashamintallu or standing guard in area **M2b**. She brought him there and then back down to this room via *dimension door*, so he’s not quite sure where in the dungeon he’s currently located (he was under orders to stay here until told otherwise), but he can certainly give the PCs a good idea of the dangers they might face in the areas he has visited (although he warns them that he’s not sure what changes the Gray Maidens may have made in the meantime). He can also warn the PCs that there are many secret doors in the dungeon—the wizard’s map included several, but alas, he cannot remember their locations. As thanks for being saved by the PCs, though, he’ll give them his *wand of detect secret doors*. This piece of equipment was given to him by his doomed employer so long ago to aid in

navigating the dungeon. He admits that he had trouble getting it to work, but suggests that perhaps a PC might be able to use it more easily than he could.

K10. PILLARED HALL (CR 7)

A row of marble pillars, each carved to resemble a beautiful woman, supports the ceiling of this long curving hallway, although the pillar closest to the western door seems to be missing its head.

Creatures: The PCs’ previous experiences in area **J** might prepare them mentally for a fight against constructs in this room, but the actual guardians here are not caryatid columns. Rather, they are unusual constructs known as Thassilonian sentinels. These constructs consist of a statue’s head connected to a number of limber legs and claws—when the PCs approach within 10 feet of one of the columns (save for the westernmost one, whose sentinel was destroyed long ago), that column’s head thrashes and detaches, crawling down the column like a spider to attack the PCs. Once activated, a Thassilonian sentinel pursues foes as long as they remain in sight of this area, but not beyond. These marble sentinels are keyed to Ashamintallu—when they activate, they mentally alert her that intruders are in the dungeons below her lair.

MARBLE SENTINELS (3)

CR 4

XP 1,200 each

hp 43 each (see page 90)

K11. PIT TRAP (CR 6)

An incredibly realistically rendered mural decorates an alcove here. The painting depicts a grand assembly hall thronged with hundreds of adoring spectators focused on a beautiful woman who stands upon a dais, arms outstretched as she addresses those gathered. Behind her, several nude men and women are chained between upright pillars.

Trap: This mural is a depiction of area **L20**, and to a certain extent is meant to distract intruders into stepping upon the hidden pit that fills the room. This pit can be bypassed by pressing a hidden switch in the southern wall near the floor on either side of the pit’s edge—a successful DC 30 Perception check reveals this hidden button. The pit trap triggers 1 round after a Medium or larger creature first steps upon the dotted outline.

SPIKED PIT TRAP

CR 6

XP 2,400

Type mechanical; Perception DC 25; Disable Device DC 25

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EFFECTS

Trigger location; **Reset** automatic (after 1 minute); **Bypass** Perception DC 30

Effect 40-foot-deep pit (4d6 falling damage); pit spikes (Atk +10 melee, 1d4 spikes per target for 1d6+2 damage each); Reflex DC 20 avoids; multiple targets (all targets in area **K11**); 1 round onset delay

K12. BATTLE SITE (CR 6)

A pair of columns carved to resemble a beautiful woman flank a fifteen-foot-wide alcove in the west wall of this forty-foot-long hall. A mural of the same woman standing atop a towering pyramid is painted on the wall of the alcove, but it, like the walls and floor of the hall, is splashed with blood.

The mural depicts Sorshen standing atop the Grand Mastaba of Korvosa—a successful DC 12 Knowledge (local) check is enough for a PC to recognize the structure that, today, serves as a foundation for Castle Korvosa.

Creature: This room represents the limit of how far the Gray Maidens made it into the dungeons. Originally, a dozen incubi stood guard in this room, but over time their numbers have dwindled. When the Gray Maidens arrived, two of the remaining incubi confronted them while the third teleported up to Ashamintallu's side to inform her that the dungeons had been invaded. By the time the alu-demon got to this room, the Gray Maidens had defeated the other two incubi, but several of their number had been critically wounded—they were easy prey for the alu-demon, who swiftly controlled Oriana and took command of the group. The surviving incubus has since resumed his post here.

INCUBUS

CR 6

XP 2,400

hp 76 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 3 73)

K13. CHAMBER OF THE GRAY FLAME (CR 6)

The air in this large octagonal chamber is dreadfully hot—the very air shimmers with heat and almost drips with humidity, leaving every surface within shiny with condensation. The walls, floor, and thirty-foot-high domed ceiling are of polished white marble. Ten feet into the room, the floor rises up in a three-foot-high step, then again at twenty feet in. At the center of the room, a strange gray flame dances in a central firepit. Two smaller octagonal chambers lie to the south and west, while to the east a ten-foot-square section of wall is a dull gray, contrasting with the white of the walls surrounding it. A single torch in a sconce protrudes from the middle of this gray square on the wall.

The humidity in this room is unpleasant, but causes nothing more than moderate discomfort. The slippery

floor is a bit more dangerous, and increases the DC of Acrobatics checks here by 5.

The torch in the sconce on the wall radiates faint transmutation magic. It's not lit, but the end is charred as if it had been lit at one point in the past. If this torch is removed, lit in the gray flame in the middle of the room, and then replaced in the sconce, the block of stone barring access to area **K14** pivots outward like a huge gray door—this stone remains open for 10 minutes, at which point the torch gutters out and the door closes on its own.

Creatures: If anyone who isn't prominently displaying something emblazoned with the rune of lust steps on the raised central area of this chamber, four cacodaemons, shrieking spherical creatures made mostly of mouth, burst forth from the gray flame and attack, fighting until destroyed. These creatures ignore anyone who displays the rune of lust unless that person attacks one of them, in which case all daemons turn their attention to that character.

CACODAEMONS (4)

CR 2

XP 600 each

hp 19 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 2 64)

K14. SHRINE OF SUPPLICATION

A long stairway of polished stone steps descends nearly forty feet before ending at a ten-foot-square landing with no apparent way onward. The wall opposite the final step depicts a lascivious painting of a beautiful woman, arms outstretched as if to welcome one into an embrace, lips twisted in a faintly cruel smile. A phrase in a foreign tongue is inscribed in gold across the top of the mural.

This image of Sorshen radiates strong conjuration magic. The writing above her reads, in Thassilonian, "Prostrate thyself and demonstrate proper devotion, my sweet slave, if you wish to enter my domain." An examination of the mural and a successful DC 20 Perception check reveals that the image's feet display more wear than anywhere else. By kissing Sorshen's feet, a person is immediately teleported away to appear on the platform at area **L1**.

If the slab of stone that normally blocks access into this area from area **K13** closes, it opens again automatically if its inner surface is touched by exposed flesh.

Treasure: The gold leaf from the lettering can be pried out of the wall with several minutes of work—it's worth 250 gp in all if scavenged completely.

K15. HALL OF BEDCHAMBERS (CR 6)

A total of ten wooden and iron doors line the walls of this long hall—five doors to a side. Each door bears an identical inscription on its face, as does the blank wall at the western

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end. Only the easternmost door to the north seems to have a different inscription on it—this door is also caked with a sheen of frost.

Most of the doors in this hallway open into bedrooms once used by those of Sorshen's students and apprentices she deemed talented or attractive enough to deserve the honor of studying and living below the Lady's Light. The door to each room swings open silently at a mere touch of bare skin, and the contents of each room, like the doors themselves, are well preserved by Thassilonian magic. Floral scents linger in the air, sheets are soft and warm, and the temperature is always just right in these chambers, although all of them are currently abandoned.

The inscriptions on most of the doors and on the wall at the end of the hall reads, in Thassilonian, "Thou wouldst enter? Then thou must touch!" The secret door at the end of the hall can be found with a successful DC 30 Perception check, or can be opened by touching the word "touch" inscribed upon the wall with bare, living skin.

Trap: The easternmost door to the north bears a different inscription from the other doors: "Thou wouldst enter to enjoy the company of the Runelord of Lust herself? Then thou must touch!" This door is, in fact, Sorshen's way of saying none can choose to be with her—she's the only one who chooses her lovers and pets. Anyone audacious enough to touch the false door or otherwise attempt to open it sets off a trap. Fortunately, the trap's magical energies have decayed somewhat over the years, resulting in a less deadly effect and a more obvious danger as the cold magic stored within seeps out to give a distinctive visual clue (the ice on the door) of the danger.

SORSHEN'S DISDAIN

CR 6

XP 2,400

Type magical; Perception DC 15; Disable Device DC 26

EFFECTS

Trigger touch (opening the door); **Reset** automatic (once the door is closed)

Effect spell effect (*freezing sphere*, 10d6 cold damage, Reflex DC 19 for half); multiple targets (all creatures in a 40-foot-radius burst centered on the door)

K16. MISTRESS'S BEDCHAMBER

This opulent marble chamber is dominated by an enormous bed that sits on a raised dais. The walls bear frescos of a woodland scene, with leering satyrs chasing nubile nymphs. A domed ceiling inlaid with mother-of-pearl rises twenty feet above the opulent bedchamber.

This room was one of many once used by Sorshen to indulge her carnal appetites—favored students or

apprentices were the typical guests of this particular boudoir. The room's placement between the laboratories and the apprentice bedchambers is intentional—Sorshen wanted each of her students to be aware of the proximity of this room and its use each and every day.

K17. PREPARATION ROOM

The erotic frescos in this domed chamber have faded, but their intent to inflame the passions of those occupying the room is still plain. Four marble benches sit against the walls and a complex mosaic of thousands of colored chips form a huge starburst on the floor.

This chamber was once used by Sorshen or a senior apprentice to lecture to students, who would sit upon the benches along the walls and observe the lecturer who stood at the center upon the starburst. This starburst radiates moderate magic—anyone who stands upon it can use *suggestion* once per hour as a spell-like ability (Will DC 14 negates, CL 20th). A successful DC 35 Spellcraft check is enough for a PC to determine how this magical pattern on the floor functions—but at the GM's whim, a PC who stands on it and issues an order could unknowingly activate the effect.

A study of the paintings on the walls reveals that the figures depicted in them are engaged in more than just acts of passion—they are also engaged in the three forms of magic with which Sorshen herself was the most fascinated by when she built the Lady's Light: alchemy, enchantment, and conjuration.

K18. CLEANSING ROOM

A simple pool of pure, clear water fills the central area of this room. Doors lead out of the room in all four cardinal directions

The pool is 3 feet deep, with a 2-foot-diameter grating in the center that connects to a tunnel that winds northwest to connect to the river near area K5. The grating is made of brass, and can be wrenched open with a successful DC 24 Strength check.

The pool itself magically enhances the waters within it (but not the water in the tunnel below) so that anything that is completely submerged in the water is subjected to a *dispel magic* effect (caster level 20th). The alchemists used this pool's effects to end unwanted magical effects, either to purify things for further experimentation in a nearby lab or to remove unwanted side effects on themselves. Water transported from the pool is nonmagical, as it's the location that bears the enhancement—likewise, removing the pool itself causes the magic effect to end.

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K19. ALCHEMY LAB (CR 6)

Stone counters line the walls of this chamber. An additional work slab sits in the center of the room—all of these countertops are cluttered with beakers, jars, tubes, tools, and all manner of ancient alchemical equipment, many of them caked with strange encrustations of crystals, stains, or other residues. A particularly large urn of corroded-looking metal sits in the center of the westernmost countertop.

The substances that remain in this alchemist's lab, sealed in airtight flasks and such, have been sitting here for thousands of years. Most of the substances have long since become inert or have even evaporated away, but a few of the items here retain their magical effects. The large metal urn contains something else entirely—a thick mass of gray protoplasm that, if exposed to air, immediately self-organizes into a pair of ravenous gray oozes. The contents are exposed to air if anyone pries open the lid atop the urn (doing so is a full-round action), but this is more likely to occur if one of the unstable chemicals in the room explodes (see *Treasure*, below). Once released, the gray oozes attack all living foes at once, pursuing victims as far and as long as they are able if their prey flees. If the PCs attempt to transport the urn, it (and its inert-for-the-moment contents) weighs 300 pounds.

GRAY Oozes (2) **CR 4**
XP 1,200 each
hp 50 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 166)

Treasure: *Detect magic* can quickly sort out which containers may be of value, but it also indicates which containers are dangerous—without necessarily revealing that danger. In all, there are seven containers of magical fluids and powders in the room, of which three are dangerously unstable. Each of the three unstable containers can be identified as dangerous with a successful DC 25 Craft (alchemy) or DC 30 Spellcraft check. Each round one of these contents is jostled, examined, or carried, there's a flat 25% chance the chemicals within explode. If one of the unstable containers is opened, it also explodes. A container can be thrown as a splash weapon as well; doing so causes it to automatically explode upon hitting its target. Each of the containers explodes in a 20-foot-radius burst, and all deal 5d6 points of damage (Reflex DC 15 halves). The type of damage varies: one container does fire damage, one acid damage, and one cold damage. You should keep track of where each container is located—if an unexploded container is caught in the blast area of another container, it automatically explodes as well. Likewise, any explosion that catches the metal urn in the area causes it to burst open as well, releasing (and damaging) the gray oozes.

The other four containers are stable and valuable magical items. They include a *potion of displacement*, an *elixir of love*, 1 dose of *stone salve*, and an urn containing 10 doses of *wax of defiance*.

K20. ENCHANTMENT LAB

Six stone platforms draped with white sheets stand in this room, with manacles affixed to the four corners of each. What appears to be a metallic bookstand stands at the foot of each platform—one of these stands still holds a large leather tome. The walls are painted a soft, soothing blue.

This room was used by Sorshen's apprentices to experiment upon willing or (more often) unwilling subjects with various enchantment magics. The subjects were usually bound to the slabs for the duration of the experiment, to prevent unwilling test subjects from disrupting the proceedings.

Treasure: The book on the stand is an ancient Thassilonian text called *Dreams and Desires* that explores the mysterious link between dreams and enchantment magic. The book itself is magically preserved, and if used as an aid in any question involving dreams or enchantment magic, it grants a +2 circumstance bonus on Knowledge (arcana) checks. The book is worth 400 gp, but the three arcane scrolls slipped in between the pages are worth more—these include a *scroll of dream*, a *scroll of symbol of sleep*, and a *scroll of mind fog*.

K21. CONJURATION LAB (CR 7)

The center of this domed chamber is dominated by a complex design painted on the floor in dozens of colors, which is oddly unsettling. Broken furniture and other debris is scattered across the room and a faint acidic odor tickles the nostrils, while an overturned bookstand with a large black tome sits near the far wall.

Sorshen's apprentices used this chamber to practice conjurations—and at times, Sorshen herself used the room to summon creatures to bind into the Lady's Light or simply to pleasure her. The complex magical circle in the floor augments all conjuration spells cast in this room, increasing the save DC to resist them by +2 and increasing the spell's effective caster level by +1. A successful DC 25 Spellcraft check is enough for a successful PC to identify these effects, but perhaps more worrisome is the results of a DC 20 Knowledge (arcana) check, which reveals the magic of the circle is unstable—as if it's mid-conjuration.

Creature: In fact, a strange and sinister monster from the depths of the underground Abyssal realm of

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Sekatar-Seraktis has been trapped in mid-conjuration in this room for thousands of years by a strange defect in a partially finished spell interrupted by the fall of Thassilon. This monster is a foul, wormlike monstrosity—a fiendish seugathi. Sorshen was fascinated by the strange powers possessed by seugathi (particularly their ability to drive victims mad and command confused creatures) and often had her apprentice conjure fiendish examples of the race from the Abyss to dissect and examine.

If anyone steps within 5 feet of the summoning circle's edge (such as to retrieve the fallen book at the far end of the room), the presence of life in close proximity triggers the long-delayed effect, and with a blast of smoke, the fiendish seugathi appears in the middle of the room. The monster is not aware that any time has passed, nor does it know it was being summoned by a Runelord's apprentice, but it certainly is furious at being called away from the Abyss. As no protective wards are in place, it can immediately attack any living creatures it sees, and does so at once. This fiendish seugathi has

been called to the Material Plane, not summoned, and it is thus trapped here. The monster brings with it two potent items—a *+1 keen longsword* and a *wand of cure critical wounds* (10 charges), both of which it wields in combat (using the wand on itself whenever it's reduced to 20 or fewer hit points).

FIENDISH SEUGATHI

CR 7

XP 3,600

hp 67 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 2 243, 292)

Treasure: Apart from the items carried by the seugathi, the book at the far end of the room is valuable. Titled *From the Minds of Monsters*, the book is an incredibly well-preserved investigation of the nature of many monsters that are capable of strange mind-controlling powers. The truly astounding thing, though, is that the book is penned by Sorshen herself, written in her hand in an elegant script. The book is in fact a minor artifact—it functions as a *tome of clear thought +1* that automatically

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recharges its power a month after it is used, although a single creature can benefit from the book only once. In addition, if it is referenced, it grants a +10 circumstance bonus on all Knowledge checks made about monsters that utilize significant mind-affecting attacks (subject to the GM's approval).

L1. ARRIVAL PLATFORM

This stone platform overlooks an enormous watery cavern, whose walls are covered by phosphorescent lichen that provides modest, yet eerie illumination. Three rowboats are tied to stone posts on the dock's northwestern side, while a carving of a leering demon extending a hand in greeting decorates the stone wall just to the north of the platform. A word has been carved into the stone wall just below the demonic carving.

This platform is where travelers from the teleporter in area **K14** arrive. The word carved under the statue is in Thassilonian, and reads, "Farewell." The carving itself radiates moderate conjuration—anyone who grips the carving's offered hand is immediately teleported back to area **K14**.

Both rowboats are equipped with oars and can accommodate three Medium creatures—unlike the boats in the level above, these and their mooring posts are nonmagical. If the PCs take rowboats into the lake, note that the unstable footing is enough to impart a -2 penalty on all attack rolls made while in the boat.

L2. THE PHOSPHORESCENT LAKE (CR 7)

The walls of this level's huge central lake-cavern are covered with phosphorescent lichen that produces illumination equal to dim light throughout the area. The water itself is shallow near all beaches, but its depth averages 30 feet everywhere else. Although this water is fed by the river on the level above via the magnificent waterfall along the eastern wall, the lake itself is also connected to the sea via an underwater tunnel in area **L6**, making the water here increasingly brackish and salty the farther west one travels. There's very little current here—swimming in this water only requires succeeding at DC 10 Swim check. As with the water above, the water here is quite silty—Perception checks made to notice things in the water take a -5 penalty.

Close examination along the walls of this cavern (and a successful DC 30 Perception check) reveals tiny clusters of runes carved into the wall at water level that radiate strong conjuration magic—these are magical enhancements placed ages ago by Sorshen that not only help to preserve the cavern itself but also maintain a constant water level. Excess water from the sea or the river above is siphoned back through microportals

leading back to the Plane of Water, keeping this entire cavern pristine and beautiful, just like Sorshen wanted. There are hundreds of these runes; destroying them all would take hours, if not days, of work and would cause the water level here to rise steadily until areas **L1–L3** and **L5–L11** are completely underwater—the doors into areas **L4** and **L12** being airtight, the rooms beyond remain dry as long as those doors remain closed. An expensive way to maintain a chamber, but child's play for one of Thassilon's most powerful wizards!

Creatures: The waters here hide a group of eight lacedons—undead horrors who have dwelt here for many years after wandering into the area via the sea tunnel in area **L6**. The sound of boats splashing through the water is more than enough to attract their attention, and they start peeking out of the black water near the edges of the cavern to watch the PCs if they use boats to navigate the place. They wait until the PCs are in the middle of the lake before swimming out to attack. The lacedons start their attack by grabbing onto a boat from the sides and shaking it violently in an attempt to capsize it. Each round on their initiative, one of the lacedons shaking the boat attempts a DC 25 combat maneuver check, and any others also shaking the boat make combat maneuver checks to aid another on the first roll. On a successful check, the lacedons capsize the boat. Each round the lacedons shake the boat, penalties for attack rolls made from within the boat double to -4. The shaking counts as violent motion for the purposes of spellcasting and concentration checks. A lacedon who takes damage immediately switches tactics and stops shaking the boat, instead attacking the PCs within from the water. The hungry undead fight to the death, but do not pursue PCs beyond sight of the water.

LACEDONS (8)

CR 1

XP 400 each

hp 13 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 146)

L3. STONE PLATFORM

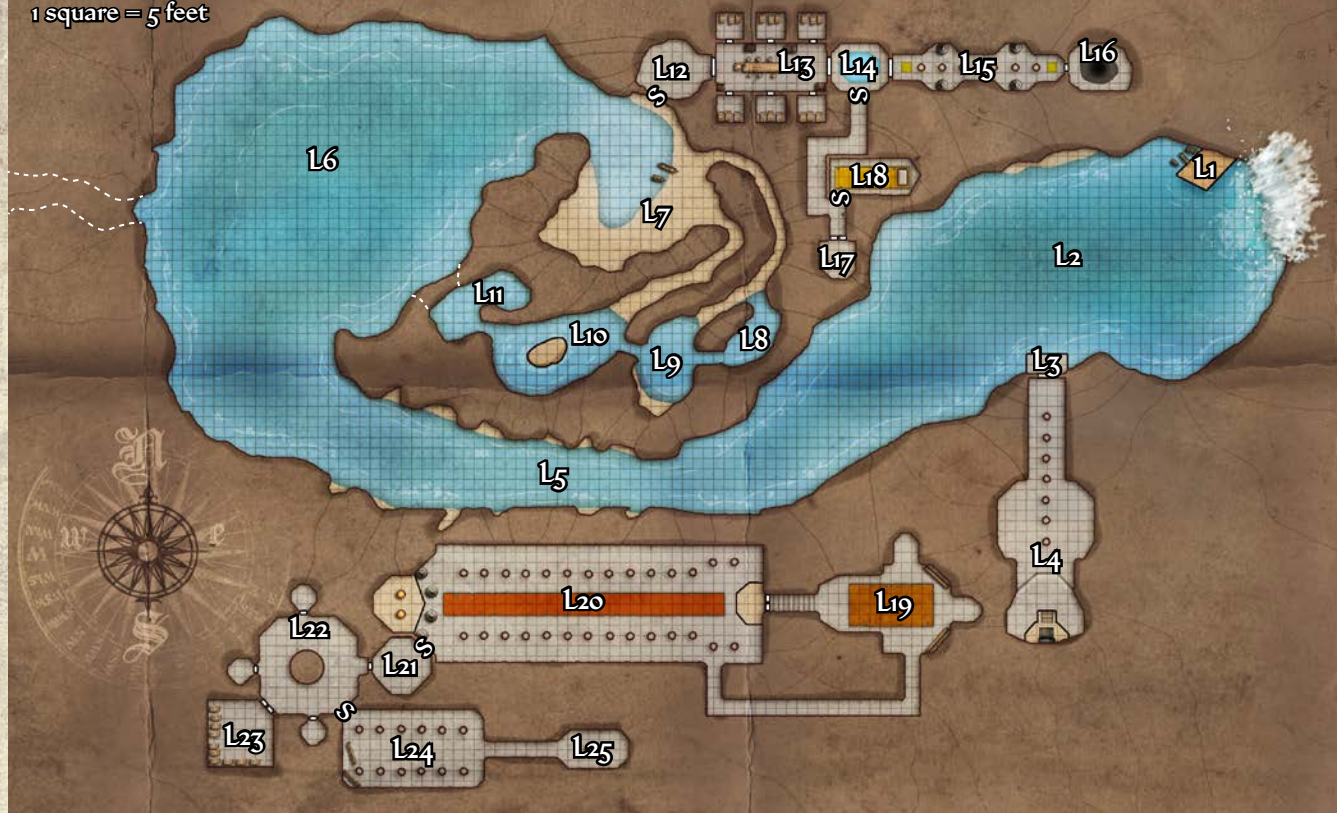
A stone platform extends from the cave wall here, its floor a foot from the water surface. An immense red metal panel sits in the far wall, its face engraved with numerous scenes depicting a beautiful woman on a throne as numerous strange monsters bow before her.

This red door, like the one in area **K3**, is made of a djezet alloy. Like that door, a successful DC 25 Perception check reveals that it is in fact a door and not just a decoration. And like that door, the panels on its face (these depicts Sorshen using her magic to dominate all manner of powerful monsters, including giants, dragons, neothelids, sea monsters, mobogos, and the like) are

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1 square = 5 feet



essentially buttons. Pressing the central button, which depicts Sorshen dominating a giant, causes the panel to glow softly as Thassilonian writing appears along the panel's upper edge, spelling the phrase "And so do the mighty Architects serve eternal" as the door swings open.

L4. MOCHTAU'S HALL (CR 7)

This long, grand marble hall features a single row of pillars down its center. The vaulted ceiling thirty feet above is painted with lewd frescoes depicting giants and humans engaged in carnal acts set among pastoral scenes. To the south, the hall widens before rising up in a series of steps to a white marble throne. Six large treasure chests sit next to the throne.

Thousands of years ago, Sorshen greeted her giant supplicants and minions in this rich hall, typically after having a dominated transmuter cast *enlarge person* on her to increase her stature. Today, Ashamintallu has somewhat misunderstood the purpose of this chamber, and instead uses it as a sort of exhibition to honor ancient Thassilon's mastery over giants.

Creature: Ashamintallu's current exhibition is Mochtau, a cave giantess the alu-demon encountered living a solitary

life in a cavern several miles northeast of the Lady's Cape. She charmed the creature and led her back here, keeping her as something of a pet in the same way she assumes Sorshen once did her own giants. The alu-demon visits the cave giant twice a week to resupply her with food and water, to re-cast *charm monster*, and to torment/play with the giantess. After nearly 20 years of this, Mochtau is more than a little insane, and has started thinking of herself as Sorshen when she's not being visited by the "real Sorshen." Even if the *charm monster* effect is dispelled, Mochtau retains these delusions.

She spends a fair amount of her time seated on her throne, periodically barking orders to hallucinatory courtiers. Ashamintallu often brings the giant pets of her own to entertain her, with the full knowledge that most of these pets won't last that long before the giant eats them. Her current pets are two immense swamp monitors, lumbering green-and-brown lizards that swiftly move to attack any creature smaller than Large that they notice. As she notices the PCs, she bellows out a challenge: "You dare enter my throne room, little mortals! If you kneel to me now, I, Sorshen, shall call off my pets and eat only one of you!" Of course, the giant lizards aren't trained (they only avoid attacking Mochtau because of her size), and even if the PCs comply, Mochtau's commands to the lizards are

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ignored—much to her surprised delight. Mochtau is content to watch the battle at the start, but as soon as one of the lizards is slain or she is herself harmed, she roars in rage and joins the attack. As she fights, she continues to bellow out evidence of her madness, roaring phrases like, “Kneel, little mortals, I am SORSHEN!” When she enters battle, she prefers throwing her treasure chests as rocks—they burst open when they hit, scattering their contents in a filthy 5-foot-radius burst. All creatures in this area must succeed at a DC 12 Fortitude save to avoid being sickened by the fact that the “treasure chests” contain little more than the rotted remnants of Mochtau’s last several meals.

MOCHTAU CR 6

XP 2,400

Cave giant (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 3 127)

hp 67

MONITOR LIZARDS (2) CR 2

XP 600 each

hp 22 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 194)

Treasure: Five of the six treasure chests are filled with rotting meat and decay—remnants from Mochtau’s meals. The sixth contains the same, along with 20 tourmalines worth 2,000 gp in all.

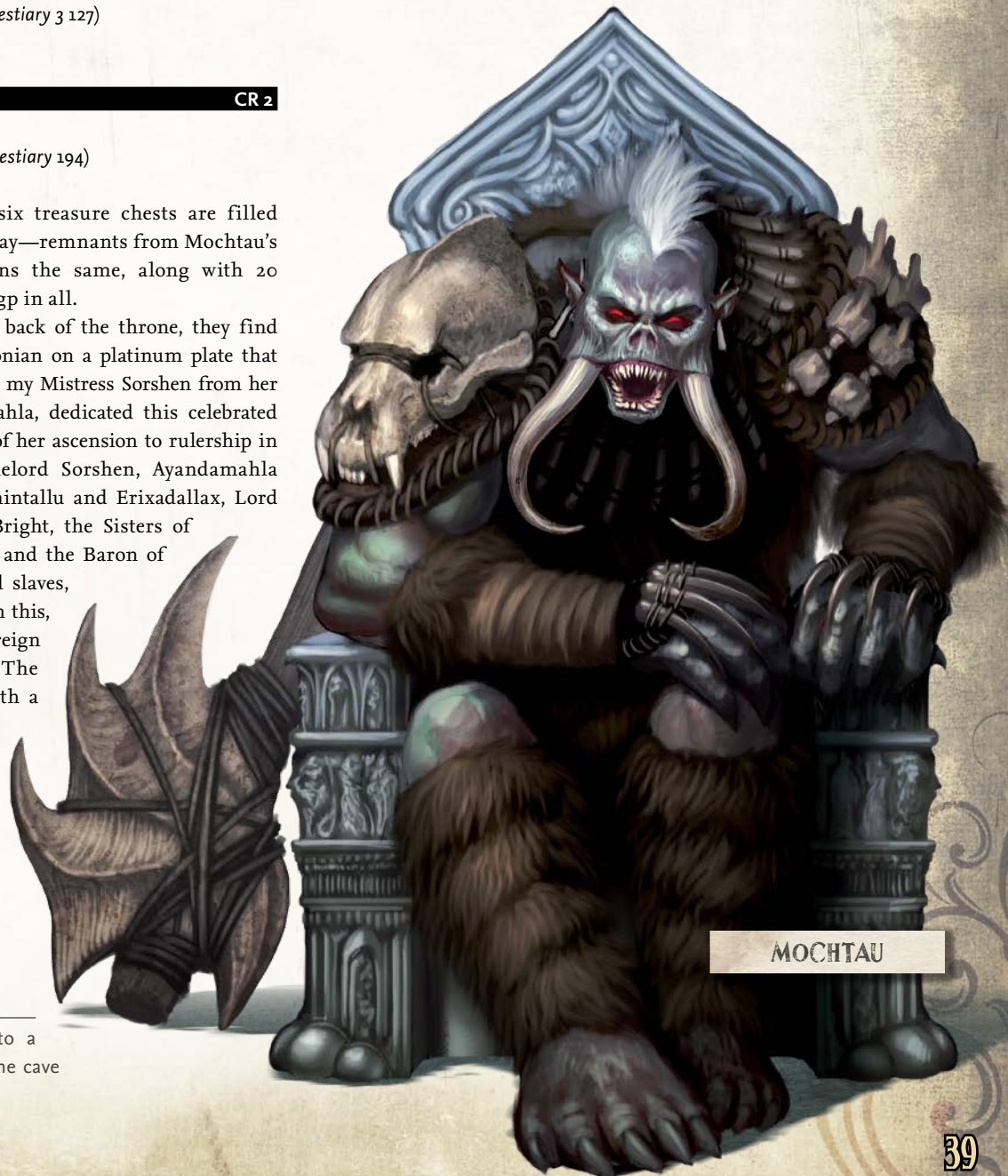
If the party checks the back of the throne, they find an inscription in Thassilionian on a platinum plate that reads as follows: “A gift for my Mistress Sorshen from her humble servant Ayandamahla, dedicated this celebrated day, the 25th anniversary of her ascension to rulership in Eurythnia. Present—Runelord Sorshen, Ayandamahla and her daughters Ashamintallu and Erixadallax, Lord & Lady of the Burning Bright, the Sisters of Charming & Delectation, and the Baron of Calamities, along with all slaves, servants, and supplicants in this, the Lady’s Light. May she reign unchallenged forever.” The plate can be pried off with a successful DC 16 Strength check, and is worth 750 gp for its platinum content alone, but to a scholar who recognizes the names, it is worth 3,000 gp.

L5. SKAVELING NICHES (CR 8)

The lake constricts here to a width of thirty feet or so, the cave

walls narrowing down to form a tunnel. The ceiling is thirty feet above, while numerous ledges line the walls at varying heights. Several of these ledges contain manacled humanoid bodies. The remains are in advanced stages of decomposition, and in many cases are no more than skeletons.

The bodies placed on display here are the remains of the false Sorshen’s previous consorts—mostly men and women plucked from ships or the Mushfens over the centuries as Ashamintallu grew bored and sought out new playthings. None of the corpses hold anything of value, as Ashamintallu takes care to keep anything useful before chaining her victims here to die slow, agonizing deaths of starvation and thirst.



Creatures: A pair of undead guardians that date back to Thassilonian times linger on here—two large skavelings, known also as ghoul bats. The creatures swoop down to inspect all passing groups, but do not attack those that contain someone disguised as Sorshen (including a PC brought back to life as her clone). If they're attacked, or if they see none who look like their long-lost mistress, they attack at once. The undead bats know better than to attack those the false Sorshen has chained up here, but that doesn't prevent them from enjoying tormenting such unlucky souls.

SKAVELINGS (2) **CR 5**

XP 1,600 each

hp 58 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 2 42*)

L6. THE LAKE OF LONGING (CR 6)

The ceiling peaks nearly forty feet overhead in this enormous underground lake. Phosphorescent lichen and fungus cling to the stalactites above, reflected by the waters below to make the walls of the cave dance with a pearlescent shimmer.

The waters of this lake are 30 feet deep on average. A submerged tunnel to the west winds up through the rock from the lake's bed where indicated—this tunnel runs for a mile before emerging into the sea amid a bed of seaweed under 40 feet of water to the west of the Lady's Light. A second submerged (and much shorter) tunnel connects the depths of the lake to area L11 to the east.

This entire cavern bears the decayed remnants of a once-quite-powerful enchantment effect that would overwhelm the minds of all intruders, forcing them to fall under the effects of a geas to seek out Sorshen and present themselves, unarmed and unarmored, to her for appraisal. Today, this effect has degraded to a sinister shadow of its former power. All creatures that enter this cavern hear strangely familiar, seductive whispers in their native language. Each round, the urgings become more urgent, building an overwhelming sense of need and longing pounding in the chests of the victims. These whispers are supernatural, and affect even creatures that plug their ears. The effect is a language-dependent compulsion, and as such can be protected against with applications of *wax of defiance*. This effect does not extend underwater—although those who have already fallen under the effect are not released from the compulsion once they enter the water.

After 3 successive rounds of exposure, a creature must succeed at a DC 14 Will save or be compelled to strip naked, discard all gear, dive into the water, swim for area L7, and claw at the wall where the secret door to area L12 is located. The compulsion fades once the secret door to area L12 is opened. Thereafter, creatures that remain

in the room must save again against the whispers once every minute.

Creatures: The waters of this lake are far from safe, for a pair of giant moray eels dwell within. They do not attack boats passing by above, but quickly move to attack any living creatures they notice swimming in the waters of their den.

GIANT MORAY EELS (2) **CR 5**

XP 1,600 each

hp 52 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 119*)

L7. THE BRIGHT GROTTO

Large amounts of lichen on this cave's walls glow with intense vibrancy, providing brilliant illumination to the cave and making the sandy beach along the lakeshore glitter. Two rowboats are beached on this sandy shore. Two dry tunnels head off to the east, while to the west the waters of the lake widen into a much larger cavern.

The secret door to the north is airtight and difficult to locate, requiring a successful DC 25 Perception check to spot. The Gray Maidens from area L13 and beyond, often travel to this beach to fish for food. They do their best to hide their tracks, but a successful DC 15 Survival check is good enough to note a trail of footprints that leads to the wall at the secret door's location—noting this grants a +10 bonus on Perception checks made to locate the secret door. Furthermore, every hour the PCs spend here, there's a cumulative 10% chance that 1d4 Gray Maidens from area L13 enter this area through the secret door to fish for dinner.

A PC who succeeds at a DC 15 Perception check notes the faint smell of decay wafting from the northernmost tunnel leading to area L8 and L9. A successful DC 10 Perception check enables a PC to notice cries of anguish and pain coming from the southern tunnel—cries that end abruptly a few seconds after they're first heard.

L8. CORPSES IN SEAWATER (CR 3)

This cave is flooded with water, in which bob three bloated corpses, naked and facedown.

The bodies in here are all human women who bear scarred faces—these unfortunates are Gray Maidens who displeased Ashamintallu, who handed them over to the sea hag Daefu (see area L10) as punishment. They carry nothing of value. The water in this cave is 10 feet deep.

Creatures: Some of the fuaths (lobster-clawed and dog-headed little gremlins) who serve the sea hag Daefu enjoy frolicking and splashing in the water here. If surprised by the PCs, two of the gremlins are encountered here

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playing a grisly game of catch with a rotten eyeball as they leap from body to body. If they spot the PCs (either before or after the PCs notice them), they leap into the water and swim west to join their kin and warn Daefu.

FUATH GREMLINS (2)

CR 1

XP 400 each

hp 7 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 3 142*)

L9. MANACLED PRISONERS

This cavern is partially flooded with seawater. A watery channel leads to the east and another to the west, while a dry tunnel leads northeast. A narrow beach lies to the south.

The water here is 20 feet deep. Unlike the larger caverns, this cave is dark—any significant amount of noise or light here brings the denizens of areas **L8** and **L10** investigating at once.

A pair of bodies lie upon the small beach to the south. Each is manacled hand and foot and wearing only underclothes—both bodies have scarred faces and are recently dead. These two women were Gray Maidens who displeased the false Sorshen and were handed over to Daefu for “correction.” (The other Gray Maidens assume that these two were brought up to the Lady’s Light itself to serve at Sorshen’s side, as Oriana and a few others have been.) As usual, the unbalanced sea hag went too far in her eager ministrations. Once Daefu realizes these two have died from her tortures, she’ll toss the remains into area **L8** with the others. Clad only in their torn undergarments, a successful DC 12 Heal check reveals that they were horribly tortured, but the scars on their faces are not recent.

L10. WHIPPING POST PLATFORM (CR 7)

Water fills the majority of this cavern, although an oval rock island protrudes from the middle of the water. A single stone post extends from the middle of the island, while watery tunnels lead east and west. A dry tunnel leads up to the northeast.

Creatures: The first time the PCs visit this area, they come upon a grim scene. A woman with a scarred face and wearing nothing but her undergarments is bound to the post on the island by lengths of seaweed. Numerous fresh wounds bleed on her unconscious body, while looming over her, poking at her body with the butt of a spear, is a hunch-backed humanoid woman with wet green skin, dripping white hair, and bulging orange eyes. Four strange creatures caper and dance at her feet—wolf-headed, lobster-clawed little men.

This is the sea hag Daefu with four of her six fuath gremlin “children,” looming over the latest victim supplied by Ashamintallu, a Gray Maiden named Helanda Mertien. Helanda is unconscious—stable at –7 hit points—but if the PCs don’t intervene, Daefu soon gets frustrated with her. Thinking the swordswoman is playing dead, the sea hag stabs her in the belly to wake her up and only succeeds in killing her.

If she notices the PCs, she cackles in glee and quickly forgets Helanda, shrieking out, “Oh, oh! New playmates here for Daefu to toy with! Sorshen is good to Daefu! Sorshen loves Daefu as Daefu loves her! One? Two? Three? How many more playmates come to Daefu? More sweet, pink flesh to poke and prod, more mouths to sing



DAEFU

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songs of agony, all because Daefu is loved by Sorshen. She sent you to me, yes? Sorshen loves Daefu because Daefu is loyal and Daefu is cruel and Daefu does her will eagerly. Who starts this? Who wants the first kiss from Daefu? Be patient, new flesh, all will get a turn!”

The PCs are, of course, free to attack the wretched creature before she finishes her diatribe—if she’s allowed to finish, she attacks instead, eager to add the PCs to her collection as she assumes they were indeed sent to her as new things to play with. If the PCs manage to capture Daefu alive and interrogate her, the sea hag proves to be somewhat useless as an informant; she’s quite deranged, and while not under the effects of a charm monster by Ashamintallu, she does harbor an obsession for the woman she believes is named Sorshen (even though she doesn’t recognize the name from history). If given the chance, though, Daefu doesn’t stick around to be captured, instead fleeing to the open sea if reduced below 5 hit points.

DAEFU

CR 5

XP 1,600

Advanced sea hag (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 243)

hp 46

Melee +1 keen longspear +11 (1d8+9/19–20/x3) or
2 claws +10 (1d6+6)

FUATH GREMLINS (4)

CR 1

XP 400 each

hp 7 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 3 142)

Treasure: Daefu keeps most of her treasure in her lair (area L11), but is never found without her magic longspear or her necklace of bones (a *deathbalm talisman*).

Development: If the PCs can save her and restore her to consciousness, Helanda Mertien can be a significant source of information. She’s certainly had a change of heart about belonging to the Gray Maidens, and at this point wants nothing more than to escape these dungeons and make her way to Magnimar so she can hop a ship to some distant port and start a new life. She can confirm to the PCs that the Gray Maidens do indeed have a presence in the surrounding dungeons, and can confirm that she’s followed the commands of Commander Oriana for years, and that her plan to come to the Lady’s Light to find treasure and magic to aid in reclaiming the Crimson Throne of Korvosa from its current “pretender” seemed like a good idea at the time. Helanda can describe to the PCs how the Gray Maidens made their way into the dungeons below the Lady’s Light (traveling from area I to J to the upper level while avoiding the guardians there with pheromones or by displaying the symbol of lust, or moving from area K1 to K3 to K4 to K6 where two of them

were slain by a glass golem, then on to area K12 where they were attacked by incubi).

After that fight, they were attacked by a beautiful woman who looked and sounded and certainly acted like Runelord Sorshen reborn. At first, Helanda believed this, as did the other Gray Maidens, and she rejoiced—getting a reborn runelord on their side would guarantee retaking the Korvosan throne, after all! Helanda goes on to describe how “Sorshen” teleported them one at a time using a wand (actually a *wand of dimension door*) from the room in which they’d fought the incubi into area L13. It’s that room and areas L7, L12, and L14–L17 that Helanda is the most familiar with, and she can describe them and the dangers within in detail. She knows that Oriana, her second-in-command Quenelle, and some others were taken away to serve “Sorshen,” although she now suspects most of those Gray Maidens ended up in the sea hag’s clutches. She herself ended up here after she’d grown suspicious of “Sorshen” and attempted to lead several other Gray Maidens in something of a revolt to contact Oriana and try to find out what was really going on—Helanda bitterly notes that the other Gray Maidens sold her out, and that “Sorshen” herself arrived to punish her by leading her into this cave, stripping her of her gear, and leaving her in the vile and violent clutches of “that horrible sea witch.”

Helanda now suspects more than ever that “Sorshen” is not the real Sorshen, but some sort of deceiver—perhaps a succubus. She’s also come to believe that this deception isn’t entirely at “Sorshen’s” choice, but that she actually believes she’s the runelord of lust. As such, Helanda theorizes, if one were to confront “Sorshen” with evidence that she wasn’t who she claimed to be, and thus reveal her madness to her, she would likely be put at a significant disadvantage. It was such evidence Helanda had hoped to lead her allies to find (she particularly hoped to find out the actual name of the being pretending to be Sorshen), but as she notes angrily as she indicates her current state, “You can see what trusting my so-called friends got me.”

At your discretion, Helanda can join the party as an ally, although she’ll need some equipment if she’s to be of any real help. Left to her own choices, she’d prefer to be led out of the dungeons and back to civilization, but if the PCs offer her the chance to get some revenge on her backstabbing kin or (even better) a chance to expose “Sorshen” for what she really is, the ex-Gray Maiden quickly agrees to the alliance.

L11. DAEFU’S LAIR

The ceiling in this watery cavern dips down to a mere couple of inches above the water level. Something under the water itself glows brightly, causing the water to shimmer and shine.

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The water here is 30 feet deep. This room serves Daefu as a lair—she's gathered large amounts of glowing lichen from the caves along with seaweed and the like to decorate the place. She has also used a woven net of seaweed to create a sort of barrier along the submerged tunnel leading to the waters of area L6. This barricade can be torn through as a full-round action, but is more than enough to prevent the giant eels from the cave beyond from entering (the sea hag otherwise relies on her gremlins' ability to congeal water to keep the eels at bay—the eels are spooked by this supernatural effect, and do not approach this cavern as a result).

Treasure: Daefu stores her treasures here, in a net of woven seaweed in the eastern part of her cave. This collection consists of a large number of beautiful but otherwise worthless seashells, two *potions of cure moderate wounds* (both with watertight seals), and a sack containing 36 gemstones worth a total of 900 gp as well as two fire opals worth 1,000 gp each and a pair of *elemental gems* (earth and air; Daefu is unaware they're magical, valuing them only as gemstones).

L12. ROUGH HEWN CAVERN

The cave's walls are rough-hewn and embers of a large fire burn dimly, with an iron pot and other cooking implements sitting beside it. A narrow natural chimney extends through the roof twenty feet overhead. On the east wall stands a huge red panel covered with images, while to the west lean several crudely made fishing poles and nets.

The Gray Maidens in the next chamber prepare meals here—smoke from their cooking fire wafts up through the fissure above to escape from the cliff face to the northwest of the Lady's Light (this fissure never widens more than 3 inches, making it a difficult method of entry and exit at best). The fishing poles and nets were provided to the Gray Maidens by Ashamintallu (she took them from the boggards) so that the Gray Maidens could provide for themselves.

The door to the east functions identically to the door in area K3, save that all of the images on the door's panels depict Sorshen in dalliances with attractive humanoids. Until Earthfall brought her reign to an end, this section of the dungeon housed her harem.

L13. GRAY MAIDEN QUARTERS (CR 7)

A long, wooden table of ancient design sits in this room, surrounded by uncomfortable-looking wooden chairs. Crates and chests are scattered against the walls, and several doors line the north and south walls between the crates. Huge red panels of painted murals stand to the east and west.

The red door to the east here is identical to the one to the west connecting to area L12.

Creatures: This hall is where those Gray Maidens who have yet to be taken away by Ashamintallu remain. In all, six Gray Maidens wait patiently here, under the assumption that they're simply biding their time while their commander Oriana works with Sorshen to prepare for their triumphant return to Korvosa. It's been several weeks since the waiting began, though, and some of the Gray Maidens are beginning to wonder if something else is going on, but since the only ones who have vocalized their growing suspicions have vanished, the remaining Maidens here have wisely chosen to stay silent for some time longer.

The Gray Maidens themselves spend most of their time either resting in the well-decorated but otherwise relatively unremarkable chambers to the north and south, fishing and cooking food in areas L7 and L12, bathing in L14, or trading stories and gambling with cards and coins here in the main room. When the PCs first visit this chamber, six Gray Maidens are gambling at the table in this room. Presented with intruders, they rise up, draw their swords, and order the PCs to surrender. If the PCs comply, they're stripped of their gear, tied with rope, and imprisoned in one of the side rooms until "Sorshen" can come and deal with them.

If one of the PCs appears to be Sorshen, the Gray Maidens instead adopt a more deferential pose, lowering their weapons as one asks, "Is it time to march on Korvosa, Mistress?" Tricking these Gray Maidens into thinking that a PC is in fact their false mistress requires constant Bluff checks, but as long as the PC playing Sorshen can keep the charade up, these Gray Maidens follow her commands. Unfortunately, they don't know much information to help the PCs (see Development, below). The first time the PCs fail a Bluff check against even one of the Gray Maidens' Sense Motive checks, they grow suspicious and one of them asks, "Lady Sorshen, where are the magic shields you promised us?" This is a trick question, for the Gray Maidens have been promised no such shields, and if the PCs answer in any way that implies that they think such a promise has been made, the Gray Maidens attack, accusing the PC "Sorshen" of being an imposter. If the PCs manage to navigate this trick question, the Gray Maidens remain loyal until a second failed Bluff check, at which point they attack as mentioned above.

GRAY MAIDENS (6)

CR 2

XP 600 each

Female fighter 3

CN Medium humanoid (human)

Init +1; Senses Perception +6

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DEFENSE

AC 22, touch 11, flat-footed 21 (+9 armor, +1 Dex, +2 shield)

hp 30 each (3d10+9)

Fort +5, Ref +2, Will +4; +1 vs. fear

Defensive Abilities bravery +1

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft.

Melee mwk longsword +8 (1d8+3/19–20)

Ranged light crossbow +4 (1d8/19–20)

TACTICS

During Combat The Gray Maidens fight ferociously, favoring Power Attack and using bull rush to force PCs into squares occupied by other enemies or furniture in order to make them fall down. Favoring melee over ranged combat, they fight in pairs, working to flank foes or to

prevent themselves from being flanked. They rely upon their high AC in combat to protect them from attacks of opportunity. Should they be reduced to 15 hit points or fewer, they drink a *potion of cure light wounds*.

Morale The Gray Maidens fight ferociously and to the death.

STATISTICS

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

Base Atk +3; CMB +6; CMD 17

Feats Alertness, Improved Bull Rush, Iron Will, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (longsword)

Skills Intimidate +5, Perception +6, Sense Motive +6

Languages Common, Varisian

SQ armor training 1

Combat Gear *potions of cure light wounds* (2); **Other Gear** full plate, heavy steel shield, light crossbow with 15 bolts, masterwork longsword, 30 gp

Treasure: The crates contain the Gray Maidens' diminishing food supplies, along with camping gear, rope, tools to repair armor, and other miscellaneous supplies. Some of the crates contain extra armor and weapons; in all, there are four suits of full plate, six heavy steel shields, three masterwork longswords, three light crossbows, and 120 bolts in these crates. One of the chests is locked (Oriana has the key, or the lock can be picked with a DC 30 Disable Device check)—it contains 4,178 gp.

Development: Once the Gray Maidens confront the PCs here, the additional Gray Maidens bathing in area L14 can attempt DC 5 Perception checks (the DC for this check has been modified for distance and the intervening door) each round to hear the commotion. If they do, they don their armor and join the events in this room 4 minutes after their successful Perception check.

If the PCs manage to establish a conversation with one of the Gray Maidens (likely only possible through deception or magical control), the Gray Maidens prove to have little more information beyond that possessed by Helanda in area L10. A Gray Maiden captured alive and interrogated without trickery or magical control tries to feed the PCs misinformation, such as by exaggerating how many Gray Maidens make up their group, or by trying to encourage the PCs to go explore a dangerous room such as area L17.

L14. AN INTERRUPTED BATH (CR 6)

The air in this room is almost uncomfortably warm and filled with steam. A grand, tiled bathing pool, the waters steaming hot, sits at the center of the room, while two large red panels stand in the east and west walls.



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Both doors here appear and function identically to the one in area L12. The secret door to the south can be found with a successful DC 25 Perception check—the Gray Maidens know about it, but also know it leads to a trapped room and so they only use this door if they're hoping to trick the PCs down to area L17.

The steam in this room isn't so thick as to interfere with vision, but it does make the floor here slippery (+5 to the DC of any Acrobatics check). The waters of the bathing pool are always hot and scented with lilac and lavender, and constantly refresh to remain pure and clean as filth and dirt is washed away.

Creatures: This bath is the Gray Maidens' favorite place to rest and relax, and the first time the PCs visit this wing of the dungeon, four Gray Maidens are enjoying the chamber. Their armor lies in organized piles near the north edge of the bath—if they hear violence in area L13, they help each other back into the armor (this takes 4 minutes) before moving to investigate. If confronted before that, they rely upon their shields only to defend themselves in combat, but fight no less ferociously.

GRAY MAIDENS (4)

CR 2

XP 600 each

AC 13, touch 11, flat-footed 12 (+1 Dex, +2 shield)

hp 30 each (see page 43)

L15. THE GOLDEN GALLERY

This long gallery is striking and gaudy. The walls are painted a shimmering golden hue, with similarly gilt columns running down the center. Black marble statues of the same beautiful woman stand to the north and south—an inscription has been carved into each statue's base. Each statue holds out a hand as if in greeting. Rich tapestries hang on the walls at the center of the gallery, while set at intervals along the tiled floor are three great golden plates, slightly recessed. The ceiling is made of black marble shot through with a sparkling material.

All four statues are of Sorshen. The inscriptions at the base are identical, and read (in Thassilonian), "By my touch may you enter the shining glory of my inner sanctum." This is a clue to the working of the teleporter in this room. All of the statues and all three of the golden plates in the floor emit strong conjuration magic. The westernmost and easternmost plates have a dull finish, but the central one is brightly polished. If someone touches a statue's hand, all three plates start to glow equally (masking the fact from that point that the central one was more polished), growing brighter with each hand touched. Once someone has touched all four hands, the next person to step upon the central gold plate is immediately teleported to the eastern alcove in area L19. Someone who instead steps

onto the western or eastern plate is teleported to area L17. Once a person teleports, the plates stop glowing and the four hands must be touched again to restart the process. A person can touch a hand as a free action as she passes a statue, but even racing around the room, there's likely to be a gap of a few rounds between each activation of the teleporter, successful or not, and you should keep close track of this gap as those who teleport into other rooms may be forced to endure the dangers there alone for a bit.

The broad oaken door to the east has no lock or handle, and needs only to be pushed open. The door's a little sticky, though, so pushing it open requires a successful DC 15 Strength check—a DC 20 Disable Device check (or a *knock* spell) suffices to more gracefully open the door.

L16. FOOLS RUSH IN (CR 4)

A large sinkhole dominates the center of this damp chamber. A five-foot-wide ledge runs around the pit, but the ledge slopes downward and is crusted with slippery-looking slime.

A character who forces the door from area L15 into this room open with a Strength check must succeed at a DC 12 Reflex save or slip on the slick floor and slide into the pit—such a character may attempt a second DC 15 Reflex save to catch himself at the edge before falling into the sinkhole. Characters who move around the pit may do so only at half speed—moving any faster results in a DC 12 Reflex save to avoid slipping and falling as described above. The slick floor increases the DC of Acrobatics checks by +5.

The sinkhole itself is 30 feet deep. The walls are slippery and steep—a successful DC 20 Climb check is needed to navigate them. A character who falls into the sinkhole takes only 2d6 points of falling damage, but the sinkhole's floor is covered by a pool of green slime. This dangerous plant is kept alive by ancient magic, and was used back in Sorshen's time to dispose of unwanted organic and metal waste. The same magic that keeps the slime alive prevents it from growing beyond its current size, but does not restore the slime if it is destroyed via cold, fire, sunlight, or *remove disease*.

GREEN SLIME

CR 4

XP 1,200

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L17. PERFUMED TRAP (CR 7)

The air in this room is thick with the scent of expensive perfumes. Dozens of delicate crystal jars and vials are displayed on pedestals of polished pink marble along the walls. A glass orb that swims with liquid amber light hangs from the ceiling fifteen feet above on a delicate, ten-foot-long golden chain.

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Hazard: Sorshen stored her collection of rare perfumes here—the strange scents are all preserved by magic and guarded by a devious trap. Any who breathe the air in this room must succeed at a DC 15 Will save to resist becoming confused by the potent scent in the air. Any result of “Attack nearest creature” or “Deal damage to self” has a 50% chance instead of compelling the confused victim to attack the hanging globe. The confusion effect lasts until the confused creature rolls a confusion result of “act normally,” which affords her 1 round to act before she must start making new DC 15 Will saves to avoid becoming confused again. Once a victim succeeds at one of these Will saves, she is forever immune to the scent in the room.

Trap: The hanging globe of glass is a trap. If it is jostled in any way or if any of the perfume is removed from any shelf, the globe explodes with an ear-splitting blast that causes several specially prepared vials on the surrounding pedestals to shatter—each of these vials contains a dose of burnt othur fumes that quickly fills the room once released.

PERFUME TRAP

CR 7

XP 3,200

Type mechanical; Perception DC 20; Disable Device DC 25

EFFECTS

Trigger touch (perfume vials or glass orb); **Reset** none

Effect deafness for 2d6 rounds (DC 15 Fortitude negates); burnt othur fumes (the 6 vials disperse into the room and effectively expose each person in the chamber to only 1 dose of the poison; Fort DC 18, frequency 1/round for 6 rounds, effect 1 Con drain/1d3 Con, cure 2 saves; multiple targets (all creatures in area L17))

Treasure: The golden chain that suspends the glass orb is worth 250 gp, but the true treasures in this room are its perfumes. In all, there are 20 vials of exotic perfume here (*Pathfinder Campaign Setting: The Inner Sea World Guide* 293), with each vial containing 3 doses of perfume—each vial is worth 300 gp. If the trap is disarmed, 3 vials of burnt othur fumes can be safely salvaged as well.

L18. SECRET SHRINE (CR 8)

The secret door to this room can be found with a successful DC 25 Perception check—the Gray Maidens do not know about this door or the chamber beyond.

This black marble-walled chamber’s ceiling is lost in a layer of shimmering black fog, while a long golden rug runs down the center of the room on the floor. A rectangular block of polished stone, black with fat blood-red streaks, sits at the eastern end of the rug. Several objects sit atop this stone, and the cinnamon-scented air is filled with a strange, nagging hum like that of a swarm of buzzing insects. The wall beyond the

altar stone is decorated with a detailed mural of a voluptuous demonic woman with bat wings, a serrated tail, legs of molten stone, and a crown of seven horns. Both of her hands are held out to her sides, palms turned up toward the ceiling—a globe of blackness hovers above each palm.

With the exception of Alaznist (whom everyone knew worshiped demon lords) and Xanderghul (who never bothered hiding his admiration and respect for the Peacock Spirit), the runelords of Thassilon presented to their nations a relatively secular face. Sorshen’s faith was one of convenience; she switched deities as often as she switched outfits, as necessitated by her goals at the time. In building the Lady’s Light, she planned on powering many of its magical effects with magically bound outsiders and spirits, primarily those of succubi and incubi. In order to augment these effects, she trafficked with the queen of succubi, the demon lord Noctacula. In return for Sorshen building a shrine to her and offering sacrifices now and then, Noctacula aided Sorshen by providing the runelord with suitable demons to enhance the Lady’s Light. Since Sorshen didn’t want the rest of those dwelling in the structure to be distracted by the hand of anyone other than herself, she built Noctacula’s shrine in this secret room.

The shrine and the painting on the wall behind it can be identified as being devoted to Noctacula with a successful DC 20 Knowledge (planes or religion) check. A successful DC 20 Perception check made while examining the painting reveals what seems to be a line of letters carved into the painting above both upturned hands but hidden behind the globes of blackness. These carved messages are in Abyssal and are hidden by very small *illusory walls* (CL 20th) just in front of the script—someone who notices the letters by touch can attempt to disbelieve the illusion with a DC 16 Will save, but simply making a rubbing of the runes also reveals the messages.

The message above the left hand reads: “In deference to Our Lady of Shadows, the following are hereby consigned to servitude within the Lady’s Light.” The space below is mostly blank—it once listed all of the names of the succubi and alu-demons who were imprisoned or bound to the Lady’s Light, and as time went on and those demons escaped or perished, their names faded from the carving. Today, only one name remains: Ashamintallu. (Neither Sorshen nor Noctacula bothered recording the names of the incubi who served.)

The message above the right hand reads: “Those who would seek my inner sanctum need only speak my artist’s name.” A PC who succeeds at a DC 20 Craft (painting) check (or any similar check, at your discretion) confirms that the art style of the painting of Noctacula matches the style of the mural in area K8—speaking that artist’s

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name (Amivadeus Yasrin) aloud in this room causes the person who spoke to be immediately teleported to the eastern alcove in area **L19**.

Creatures: The black fog above is a harmless but spooky manifestation of Nocticula's favor, but the creatures bound within the fog are a different story. As soon as any creature that is not chaotic evil enters this room, tendrils of black fog drip down from the mist to form the room's guardians—three chaotic evil shadow mastiffs. The otherworldly hounds all appear directly before the altar and immediately use their bay attacks, following that up by attacking any who remain in the room. They do not pursue foes outside of the shrine.

SHADOW MASTIFFS (3)

CR 5

XP 1,600 each

hp 51 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 3 241)

Treasure: The objects that sit atop the altar consist of a golden cup with ancient bloodstains within (worth 450 gp), a +1 *adamantine dagger* with a curved blade (also crusty with long-dried blood), an incense burner bearing a minor magical enhancement that allows it to constantly emit cinnamon-scented smoke (worth 200 gp), a narrow bronze incense case containing 2 doses of *incense of meditation*, a silver scroll tube (itself worth 250 gp) containing a *scroll of heal*, and an unholy symbol of Nocticula (a seven-pointed crown wrapped with thorny vines) made of onyx and pearl and worth 1,000 gp.

L19. OPULENT CHAMBER (CR 6)

This magnificent marble chamber is richly appointed. Its domed ceiling is frescoed with an image of a starry night sky, while a thick rug of exquisite manufacture covers much of the floor. A stairway rises to a pair of double doors to the west, while a hallway leads away to the south. Large alcoves decorated with gold tiles extend to the north and east. Black marble benches carved to represent coiling serpents sit on the northeast and southeast walls.

Anyone who uses the teleporter effects in either area **L15** or **L18** appears in the eastern alcove of this room. The northernmost alcove radiates strong conjuration magic—any creature that steps into the northern alcove is immediately teleported to the center of area **L15**.

Creatures: Although Sorshen took with her most of the more powerful guardians of the Lady's Light when she left the structure for the last time, she did not bring them all. This room is guarded by a group of lust sinspawn—hideous creatures with the torsos of voluptuous women but with arms, legs, and heads of nightmarish parodies of the human form. These lust sinspawn have stood

guard patiently here for thousands of years, needing neither food nor water to survive, and remaining loyal to Sorshen's memory because of enchantment magic woven directly into the fabric of their being. The four sinspawn stand guard in pairs before the two exits from the room; each is armed with a *guisarme*, and they attack most intruders on sight, although they let those who appear to be Gray Maidens pass unchallenged. The presence of a PC disguised as Sorshen has a more immediate effect—the sinspawn drop to their knees in worship and do not attack that PC or her companions. A PC disguised as Sorshen can attempt to give orders to the sinspawn, but must make a successful *Bluff* check against the sinspawn in order to do so. If the sinspawn sees through the bluff with its *Sense Motive* check, it realizes it has been deceived and immediately attacks. Likewise, a sinspawn who sees through a Sorshen disguise immediately attacks as well (note that a sinspawn has no chance to see through such a disguise in the case of a PC who has been reborn as Sorshen in her clone, but can still detect the trickery if that character fails a *Bluff* check).

LUST SINSPAWN (4)

CR 2

XP 600 each

Female lust sinspawn (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 2 246)

NE Medium aberration

Init +1; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., sin-scent; **Perception** +6

DEFENSE

AC 17, touch 12, flat-footed 15 (+3 armor, +1 Dex, +1 dodge, +2 natural)

hp 19 (3d8+6)

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

Immune mind-affecting effects; **SR** 13

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft.

Melee mwk *guisarme* +4 (2d4+1/x3), bite –2 (1d6 plus sinful bite) or

bite +3 (1d6+1 plus sinful bite), 2 claws +3 (1d4+1)

Special Attacks sinful bite (DC 14)

TACTICS

During Combat The sinspawn fight separately, each seeking to engage her own target in battle and ganging up on a foe only if they outnumber the enemy. They do not pursue foes into the northern teleporter, but do pursue foes who flee into area **L20**.

Morale The lust sinspawn fight to the death.

STATISTICS

Str 13, **Dex** 13, **Con** 12, **Int** 10, **Wis** 11, **Cha** 16

Base Atk +2; **CMB** +3; **CMD** 15

Feats Dodge, Toughness

Skills Intimidate +9, Perception +6, Stealth +7, Survival +6

Languages Thassilonian

Gear masterwork studded leather, masterwork *guisarme*

SHATTERED STAR

L20. THE GRAND BALLROOM (CR 8)

This cavernous hall is made of marble, with two rows of pillars carved to resemble tree trunks supporting the ceiling thirty feet above. The frescoed ceiling is painted to depict the canopy of foliage such trees would produce, and a star-flooded sky, full moon aglow, peeks through the boughs here and there. A lavish rug, colored burnt orange shot through with threads of gold, runs the length of the room. Two great tapestries of rich burgundy hang from the sides of a balcony on the east wall that overlooks the ballroom from a height of thirty feet, while at the opposite end of the room, four statues of a beautiful woman guard a large stage.

As the PCs approach this chamber, regardless of the direction of their approach, the sound of a large party in full swing—delighted laughter, spirited music, the clinking of fine crystal, and the murmur of a large crowd—becomes increasingly obvious. When they first enter this room, they're greeted by what might be an unexpected sight—a grand masked ball in full swing. Dozens of men and women dressed in fine clothing dance to the music of a small orchestra on the stage, while just below the stage sits none other than Runelord Sorshen herself on a ruby throne, clad in a scandalously revealing gown. As the PCs enter, she rises from the throne and claps her hands twice. This causes the orchestra to fall silent and the members of the dance to immediately hush and turn their attention to her as she speaks.

"Oh my sweet subjects," she coos, her voice seductive and penetrating. "Now is the time for us to enjoy the succulent fruits of our labor. I give you license to indulge your appetites, every unexpressed libidinous impulse, for by such indulgences you honor me. Those who would interfere with this sacrament are like the blind chastising the sighted for looking with pleasure upon a rainbow. Why, some in our midst this very moment actively work against us—obstacles between us and the indulgence of our passions. Behold the cold and bloodless prudes who even now stand before us!"

At this point, all turn to face the PCs, their expressions a mixture of contempt and disgust. One looming man dressed in green-and-gold robes (who can be identified as none other than Karzoug, the runelord of greed, with a successful DC 25 Knowledge [arcana or history] check), raises an accusing finger at the PCs and yells venomously: "The proper place for those without the Inner Fire is the grave! Come, let us drag them there!" At this command, the crowd surges toward the PCs in an angry mob, emitting a unified, growing howl of fury.

Fortunately for the PCs, this is all an elaborate *programmed image*, one set in place ages ago by Sorshen

to trigger whenever anyone other than a sinspawn approaches within 20 feet of this room. The illusion is meant mostly to shock, impress, and perhaps frighten intruders—as soon as the first illusory reveler reaches a target, the entire thing vanishes, leaving the room empty of all save one creature. The *programmed image* recharges after a day, so that the next time the room is entered, the illusion plays out again. A character who interacts early with the illusion can attempt a DC 19 Will save to disbelieve it.

The secret door leading to area L21 can be discovered with a successful DC 20 Perception check.

Creature: In fact, only one creature stands guard in this chamber—a lust sinspawn sorcerer who, as with the sinspawn in area L19, was left behind by Sorshen so long ago. Named Chanukrah, this sinspawn knows someone's coming near as soon as the *programmed image* activates, and immediately begins casting her preparatory spells as described in her tactics. The illusion doesn't hide her completely, but it does allow her to "mill with the crowd," granting her cover to use Stealth as soon as the PCs enter the room. As with the lust sinspawn in area L19, Chanukrah allows fully armored Gray Maidens to pass unchallenged—provided they don't behave suspiciously (such as by attempting to interact with the illusion). Her long experience with illusions combined with the conviction that the real Sorshen is long gone (she's one of the few creatures in the Lady's Light who knows Ashamintallu is a false Sorshen, but sees no reason why she should reveal that to anyone) means that a PC disguised as Sorshen won't automatically distract or trick her—if such a "Sorshen" enters the room alone or in the company of only Gray Maidens, Chanukrah lets her pass by unchallenged, but if a group including a "Sorshen" enters with other companions (or if the group reacts to the illusion with anything other than indifference), she assumes that such a "Sorshen" is an illusion as well and attacks.

CHANUKRAH

CR 8

XP 4,800

Female advanced lust sinspawn sorcerer 6 (*Pathfinder RPG*)

Bestiary 2 246, 292

NE Medium aberration

Init +4; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., sin-scent; Perception +14

DEFENSE

AC 21, touch 15, flat-footed 16 (+4 armor, +4 Dex, +1 dodge, +2 natural)

hp 94 (9 HD; 3d8+6d6+60)

Fort +8, **Ref** +7, **Will** +10; +2 vs. poison

Immune mind-affecting effects; **Resist** electricity 5; **SR** 13

OFFENSE

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

CURSE OF THE LADY'S LIGHT

Melee +1 guisarme +13 (2d4+11/x3) or bite +12 (1d6+7 plus sinful bite), 2 claws +12 (1d4+7)

Special Attacks sinful bite (DC 18)

Spells Known (CL 6th; concentration +13)

3rd (5/day)—*summon monster III*

2nd (7/day)—*bull's strength*, *summon monster II*, *touch of idiocy* (DC 19)

1st (8/day)—*cause fear* (DC 18), *charm person* (DC 18), *mage armor*, *magic missile*, *ray of enfeeblement* (DC 18)

o (at will)—*bleed*, *daze* (DC 17), *detect magic*, *flare* (DC 17), *mage hand*, *prestidigitation*, *read magic*

Bloodline Abyssal

TACTICS

Before Combat Chanukrah casts *mage armor*, *fly* (from her wand), and *bull's strength* on herself.

During Combat Chanukrah casts *invisibility* on the first round of combat. She then casts *summon monster III* each round, switching to *summon monster II* once she's out of the more powerful spell, hoping to overwhelm the PCs with conjured monsters. She prefers summoning dretches and multiple giant fiendish spiders with *summon monster III* and lemures and multiple dire rats with *summon monster II*. She uses her ranged spells and wands against foes who seem to be able to see her or otherwise counter her invisibility, resorting to melee only as a last resort, using *arcane strike* with each attack to deal an additional +2 points of damage with her guisarme.

Morale Chanukrah fights to the death.

STATISTICS

Str 24, **Dex** 19, **Con** 20, **Int** 12, **Wis** 15, **Cha** 24

Base Atk +5; **CMB** +12; **CMD** 27

Feats Arcane Strike, Augment Summoning, Dodge, Eschew Materials, Spell Focus (conjunction), Toughness

Skills Acrobatics +16, Fly +10, Intimidate +16, Perception +14, Stealth +16

Languages Aklo, Thassilonian

SQ martial proficiency, bloodline arcana (summoned creatures gain DR 3/good)

Combat Gear *wand of acid arrow* (11 charges), *wand of fly* (9 charges) *wand of lightning bolt* (6 charges); **Other Gear** +1 guisarme, silver crown worth 800 gp

L21. WARDED ANTECHAMBER

The floor of this octagonal antechamber is decorated with a colorful mosaic depicting hundreds of interwoven, multicolored

serpents intermingled with disembodied human arms. An iron-bound oaken door sits in the west wall.

This room is warded with a magical alarm—as soon as any creature enters the room, the lights in area L22 flash silently with red light. A successful DC 25 Perception check made for the room before it is entered reveals the magical energies of the alarm, which can then be disarmed with a successful DC 30 Disable Device check as if it were a magical trap. The presence of someone who appears to be Sorshen prevents the alarm from triggering—as does *invisibility* or a successful DC 30 Stealth check. The alarm can be bypassed by merely waiting 1 minute after opening the door before stepping into the room, but closing the secret door resets the alarm.



CHANUKRAH

L22. CHAMBER OF CORRECTION (CR 7)

A broad central column of stone fills the center of this octagonal chamber. A flight of stairs coils up around this column, passing through an opening in the ceiling thirty feet above. Several doors lie in the chamber's walls. The room itself features a large amount of ancient and archaic but no less frightful-looking torture implements.

The stairway spiraling around the central column winds up through the rock for nearly 200 feet before emerging into the base of the actual Lady's Light at area M1.

The smaller octagonal chambers to the north, south, and west are cells—the doors separating them from the main room are iron doors with narrow sliding slats at eye level that allow for the passage of a plate of food or a saucer of water. The doors feature rotating wheels that can be turned to lock them in place—unlocking a door from the L22 side is a full-round action, but from within the cell, unlocking the door is impossible, as there are simply no moving parts available to disable. Currently, none of these cells are occupied—those Ashamintallu wishes to punish are generally sentenced to death by torture at Daefu's hands (see area L10). If the Gray Maidens capture any PCs, though, they'll end up in one of these cells while their gear is placed in another. A captured PC languishes here for 2d4 days before Ashamintallu eventually comes to try to charm the PC.

A successful DC 30 Perception check reveals the cleverly hidden secret door to area L24—the Gray Maidens do not know about this door.

Creatures: Quenelle Page, the second-in-command of the Gray Maidens, is typically found here with three of her subordinates. All of the Gray Maidens found here and in rooms beyond consist of those whom, for whatever reason, Ashamintallu took a liking to and wanted to have closer at her side should she need them. The majority of this second group of Gray Maidens spends their time in this room working on their increasingly complex plans for retaking Korvosa or resting in area L23. The rank-and-file Gray Maidens can be easily duped by a competent Sorshen or Gray Maiden disguise, but not so with Quenelle, who reacts to attempts by the PCs to pose as Sorshen in a similar way to the Gray Maidens in area L13. Confronted with PCs in Gray Maiden disguises, she'll ask them to remove their helmets to identify them. As soon as she suspects treachery (with a successful Perception or Sense Motive check against the PCs' Disguise or Bluff checks—she gains a +10 circumstance bonus on Sense Motive checks if the alarm in area L21 was set off), she pretends to be tricked (making her own Bluff checks as appropriate) as she asks the PCs if they would like to hear her latest plans for retaking Korvosa. Given the chance,

she goes on in great detail as long as she can about her plans, hoping to give the additional five Gray Maidens in area L23 time to don their armor and come to her aid. After 4 minutes, these five enter the room; Quenelle then smiles, applauds the PCs on their brave attempt at trickery, and attacks.

Quenelle is, perhaps more than any other Gray Maiden, completely enthralled by "Sorshen," and has wholly bought into her deception. A brutal fighter with a sadistic sense of humor, she cries out, "In the name of Sorshen and Eurythnia Reborn!" as she attacks.

QUENELLE PAGE	CR 5
XP 1,600	
Female fighter 6	
CN Medium humanoid (human)	
Init +4; Senses Perception +5	
DEFENSE	
AC 21, touch 10, flat-footed 21 (+9 armor, +2 shield)	
hp 55 (6d10+18)	
Fort +7, Ref +2, Will +3; +2 vs. fear	
Defensive Abilities bravery +2	
OFFENSE	
Speed 20 ft.	
Melee +1 <i>longsword</i> +13/+8 (1d8+8/19–20)	
Special Attacks weapon training (heavy blades +1)	
TACTICS	
During Combat Quenelle is an excellent tactician, and despite her heavy armor does her best to stay mobile in fights, attempting to flank foes with her underlings or trying to force enemies to move to keep up with her to deny them full attacks. In lieu of making full attacks herself, Quenelle uses Vital Strike and Power Attack. She's not afraid to use Improved Sunder on weapons, particularly if their wielders seems particularly good at dealing damage with them.	
Morale If reduced to fewer than 20 hit points, Quenelle makes a fighting retreat up the stairs to area M1, calling any surviving Gray Maidens to her side to cover her retreat. Her goal is to reach Commander Oriana or, preferably, "Sorshen," to gain additional support in defeating the PCs. Otherwise, she fights to the death.	
STATISTICS	
Str 18, Dex 10, Con 14, Int 8, Wis 12, Cha 13	
Base Atk +6; CMB +10(+12 sunder); CMD 20	
Feats Cleave, Improved Bull Rush, Improved Initiative, Improved Sunder, Power Attack, Vital Strike, Weapon Focus (longsword), Weapon Specialization (longsword)	
Skills Intimidate +8, Perception +5, Sense Motive +5	
Languages Common	
SQ armor training 1	
Combat Gear <i>potion of cure moderate wounds</i> ; Other Gear masterwork full plate, masterwork heavy steel shield, +1 <i>longsword</i> , 215 gp	

CURSE OF THE LADY'S LIGHT

GRAY MAIDENS (3)

CR 2

XP 600 each

hp 30 each (see page 43)

Treasure: Two stretching racks serve the Gray Maidens as improvised war tables, on which they've spread a large number of books, maps, and battle tactics on scrolls for how they plan to retake Korvosa from the current ruler. These plans are well thought out, detailed, and capitalize upon a number of flaws in Korvosa's current defenses—they are quite valuable as a result, both to Korvosan agents (who would pay to keep them out of enemy hands while using them as a guide to shore up their defenses) or to Magnimarian government officials (who are always looking for advantages over their traditional Korvosan competitors). To either, this collection of notes is worth 10,000 gp.

L23. BARRACKS (CR 7)

Lines of bunk beds stand against the west and south walls in this otherwise empty room.

Creatures: This room was originally the quarters for the guard force of the Lady's Light, but is used today by the Gray Maidens. The first time the PCs visit the area, there are five Gray Maidens here—two who are awake and three who are sleeping. All of them are out of their armor. If they hear Quenelle's call of alarm or the sounds of combat in area L22, they quickly work to get into their armor. This takes 4 minutes, at which point all five Gray Maidens burst into area L22 to provide what aid they can.

GRAY MAIDENS (5)

CR 2

XP 600 each

hp 30 each (see page 43)

L24. UNFINISHED MURAL (CR 8)

Columns resembling sensuous limbs entwined in a complex and improbable embrace support the ceiling of this large chamber. Its walls are covered in a minutely detailed mural depicting imaginative and horrific acts involving bloodletting and blood drinking. The blood in the painting seems to ripple and reflect light as if it were freshly painted onto the wall. However, the project is unfinished, and the remains of partially collapsed wooden scaffolding slump against the walls to the southwest.

Sorshen was never truly finished with adding rooms to the Lady's Light—the various wings below the structure were not all built at the same time, with new wings being added as the inspiration took her. Near the end

TWO DEADLY ROOMS

Areas L24 and L25 are to a large extent “optional.” These two rooms contain nothing to aid the PCs in their quest for the Shard of Lust, but guard a relatively important secret about Runelord Sorshen—her final resting place. Feel free to remove these two encounters (as well as the rooms and the secret door leading to them) from your game if you feel that the encounters here would be too much for your group. Alternatively, you could reduce the number of monsters encountered in these two rooms, but this could well undermine the importance of the information awaiting discovery in area L25.

of Thassilon, Sorshen grew more and more interested in developing methods of extending her life and youth into immortality. She was particularly interested in the nature of vampirism, and how vampires used the blood of the living to retain the appearance of youth. Necromancy was never a strong point for Sorshen, though, and so she was forced to attack the question of “what in blood gives vampires life” from an alchemical angle instead. Much of her work into this topic was done deep under what is now known as Castle Korvosa, but she planned on building a secondary complex here under the Lady's Light where she and her favored (usually dominated) allies could further study the phenomenon. This room was to serve as the grand entrance hall to the complex, but she didn't get much further in her plans than what exists here and in area L25 before Thassilon fell.

The mostly completed mural radiates strong conjuration magic—for the blood depicted in the mural is quite real. The magic of the mural causes it to weep blood, constantly refreshing the substance. Sorshen's original intent for this effect is unclear, but today it serves as little more than a grisly curiosity to most, and to the creatures who dwell here now, a constant source of food.

Creatures: A gang of vampiric mists have dwelt in this chamber for many years after sensing the blood weeping from the walls and seeping into the dungeon via narrow fissures. They have little reason to leave this room, and while they are far from hungry, they quickly move to defend their home from intruders. All of these vampiric mists are effectively constantly overdosed on blood (and thus gain a +2 bonus to AC and on Reflex saves, and can take an additional move action each round).

VAMPIRIC MISTS (6)

CR 3

XP 800 each

hp 30 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 2 277)

SHATTERED STAR

Treasure: One pot of *marvelous pigments* lies amid the ruined scaffolding—all that remains of a large amount of the stuff (which served as a component for the creation of the real blood bled by the mural).

L25. SORSHEN'S GREAT SECRET (CR 9)

The walls, floor, and ceiling of this room are rough and unfinished, as if the construction of the chamber had simply ended the step before these surfaces were smoothed and polished. A single pillar supports the ceiling twenty feet above. The wall to the east depicts a detailed carving of a stone pyramid looming over a coastline. The lower half of the carving seems to depict a cutaway view of the ground below the pyramid, indicating several levels of chambers and caverns. Blood appears to be flowing down these channels into a chamber deep below the pyramid in which an enormous nude woman reclines, her back arched as though in the throes of sexual ecstasy as the blood runs down into her open mouth.

As in area **L24**, the blood on the walls here is quite real. The carving itself is a representation of Sorshen's final resting place below the Grand Mastaba—a successful DC 12 Knowledge (local) check is enough for a PC to recognize the pyramid as the same one that serves as the base for Castle Korvosa. The indication that Sorshen may well be buried below this castle is sobering, but the implications of the carving are beyond the scope of this adventure.

Creatures: At one point, Sorshen planned to bind several powerful demons into the carving on the east wall of this room, but she never got the chance to bind more than a trio of babau demons into it. These demons served more as placeholders than as the final intended guardians, but still dwell within the carving, and as soon as anyone approaches within 20 feet, they seem to emerge from the walls as if stepping through nothing more than a curtain of fog. The three demons have waited long for something to trigger their release, and eagerly attack all who stand before them.

BABAU DEMONS (3) CR 6
XP 2,400 each
hp 73 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 57)

Treasure: The nature of this carving represents the single most important discovery the PCs could make in the Lady's Light. If the PCs provide a detailed description or depiction of the carving, as well as a detailed map of area **L25**, to the Pathfinders in Magnimar, they not only earn 8,000 gp from the Pathfinder Society but also 4 points of Fame and 4 Prestige Points if they're members of the Pathfinder Society faction (see the *Shattered Star Player's Guide*).

M1. CHAMBER OF THE SEVEN (CR 7)

This is a grand chamber of polished marble with a wide pillar rising from the center. A curving flight of stairs winds around this pillar down into the depths. A starburst pattern in brilliant shades of orange surrounded by flowing script decorates the floor, while the domed ceiling twenty feet above evokes the opalescent interior of a rare seashell. Eight alcoves line the walls—standing in seven are regal statues of imperious figures carved from basalt.

The stairs lead down to area **L22**. This chamber exists at approximately foot level within the Lady's Light, but has no access to the outside world.

The writing in the floor is in Thassilonian, although the florid nature of the carvings make the words difficult to read. A successful DC 12 Linguistics check or DC 18 Intelligence check enables a PC to decipher the writing correctly: "She who desires to ascend the Lady's Light must first deign to embrace the Lady and the Lie." You should make this check secretly for the PCs, for a failed check results in a slight misinterpretation: "She who desires to ascend the Lady's Light must first deign to embrace those with whom the Lady Lies." *Comprehend languages* (or similar magic) automatically provides the correct translation.

Seven of the eight alcoves contain statues of runelords, as follows.

M1a—Alaznist: Runelord of Wrath (a beautiful red-haired woman with a look of fury twisting her expression)

M1b—Xanderghul: Runelord of Pride (a handsome, haughty man with arms crossed contemptuously)

M1c—Karzoug: Runelord of Greed (a stern-looking man offering the gift of a golden rose with his left hand)

M1d—Sorshen: Runelord of Lust (a beautiful, voluptuous woman, in the act of sensuously opening her robe)

M1e—Belimarius: Runelord of Envy (a plump and homely woman, face twisted in resentment as she looks upon Sorshen's alcove with jealousy)

M1f—Krone: Runelord of Sloth (a short man with a hooked nose and beady eyes, his shoulders slumped as if in fatigue)

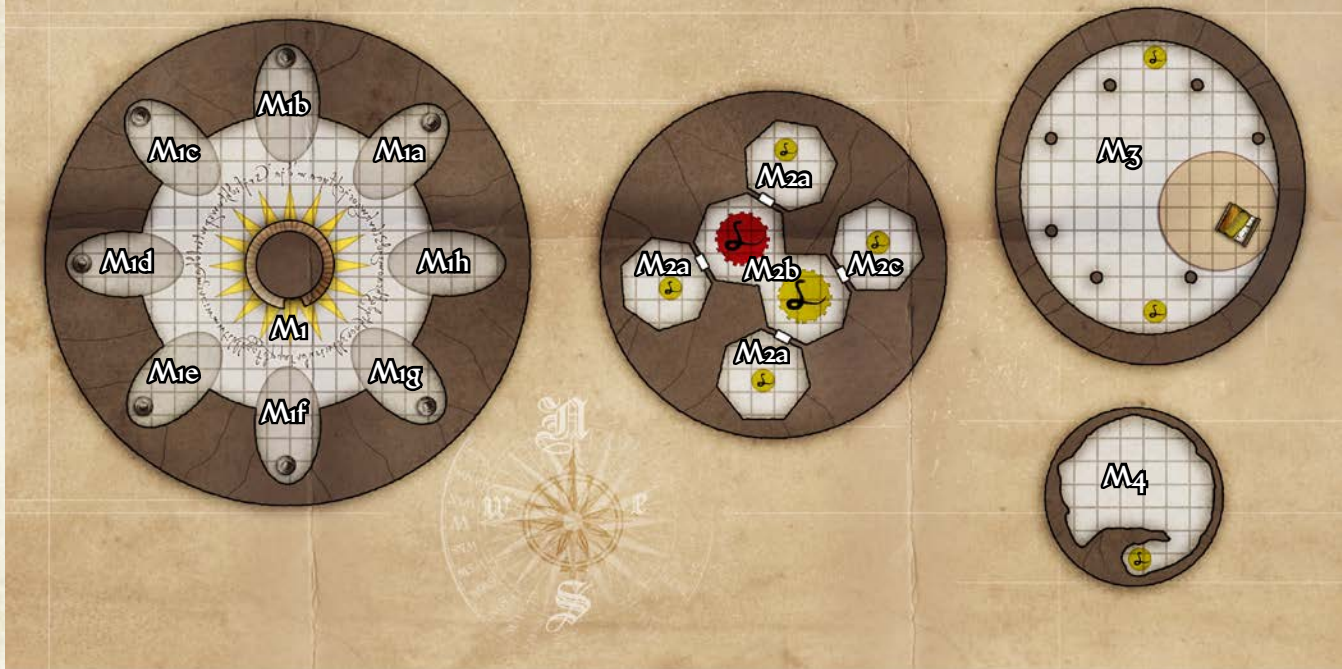
M1g—Zutha: Runelord of Gluttony (an obese man with diseased, leprous flesh, who hungrily gnaws at a huge haunch of meat)

A PC who succeeds at a DC 25 Knowledge (arcana or history) check correctly identifies the subject of a single statue. Each statue radiates strong conjuration magic. If someone embraces a statue, the floor of area **M1h** begins glowing with golden light. When a second statue is embraced, this light begins to flicker as if it were flames. If the statue of Sorshen (the Lady) and the statue of Karzoug generously giving a gift (the Lie) are embraced (in either order), the air in area **M1h** grows smoky with

CURSE OF THE LADY'S LIGHT

THE LADY'S LIGHT—UPPER LEVEL

1 square = 5 feet



golden mist—this effect lasts for 1 minute (during which embracing further statues has no further effect). Anyone who steps into this mist is immediately teleported to a random one of the three **M2a** areas above.

Stepping into area **M1h** before it fills with mist or before a third statue is embraced causes the alcove to stop glowing and effectively resets the room.

Although this room's wards are not a typical trap, they include a summoning element that can be discovered and disarmed as if it were a magical trap with a DC 30 Perception check followed by a DC 30 Disable Device check. Alternatively, a PC could attempt to activate the teleporter blindly using Use Magic Device—this is a DC 25 check, but if it fails by 5 or more, the room summons its four elementals to attack the party (see Creatures, below).

Creatures: If three or more statues are embraced, a thunderous roaring fills the room, like a combination of crashing waves, thunder, a roaring inferno, and a rock fall all combined into one cacophonous fury—all creatures in the room must succeed at a DC 14 Fortitude save to resist being deafened for 2d6 rounds. At the same moment, area **M1h** stops glowing (effectively resetting the room), and four Medium elementals—air, earth, fire, and water—appear in area **M1h** and immediately surge out to attack intruders. These elementals are summoned (and persist no longer than 10 rounds before vanishing);

further elementals cannot be summoned by the room as long as one still lives, but otherwise there is no limit to the number of elementals this room can conjure.

MEDIUM ELEMENTALS (4)

CR 3

XP 800 each

Air, Earth, Fire, and Water Elementals (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 120–126)

hp 30 (air, fire, and water) or 34 (earth)

Story Award: If the PCs manage to reach area **M2** without summoning any elementals, award them 3,200 XP as if they had defeated the elementals in combat. And if the PCs end up fighting multiple waves of elementals, award them XP only for defeating the first set.

M2. THE SPINNING SERPENTS (CR 7)

These chambers are located at hip-height within the Lady's Light. Characters who teleport into this level from the alcove at area **M1h** below arrive in one of the three side rooms labeled **M2a**.

The seven stone walls of this heptagonal chamber are polished to a reflective sheen. A red metal door sits in one wall—the only other feature in the room is a five-foot-wide mosaic of a coiled serpent slightly offset from the room's center in the floor.

SHATTERED STAR

Sorshen generally came and went from the higher levels via her own teleportation spells—these routes were intended for her visitors, and prepared them for her presence. As soon as a character teleports into this room, two things happen in rapid succession as the room seems to pulse and shine with golden energy. First, all ongoing spell effects in effect on the characters are subjected to a *dispel magic* effect (CL 20th). Second, the character is subjected to a *remove disease* and a *neutralize poison* effect (CL 15th). This effect also neutralizes any poisons carried by the PCs (but does not affect poisons carried in extradimensional spaces, such as in a *bag of holding*). These effects happen instantaneously—1 round later, the door to area **M2b** swings open automatically (closing an instant before a new arrival appears in the room it connects to).

The central part of room **M2b** is likewise empty of furnishings. The floor of its two wings are decorated with circular snake mosaics twice the size of those in the smaller rooms. A 3-foot-tall post capped by a horizontally aligned wheel protrudes from the center of each mosaic. By turning this wheel, the PCs can rotate the mosaics clockwise at a rate of 45 degrees per full-round action (doing so makes a loud rumbling sound that reverberates throughout these areas of the Lady's Light, alerting the occupants of area **M2c** and **M3**). Once both snake mosaics are rotated such that the heads of the two snakes aim directly at each other, the space between the two rooms fills with a semitransparent curtain of golden mist. Any creature that steps through this mist is immediately teleported to area **M3**. Currently, the northwest snake's head is pointing north, while the southeast snake's head is pointing east—thus, it takes a minimum of 3 rounds to aim the northwest snake to the middle of the room and a minimum of 5 rounds to do the same for the southeast snake.

Creature: Area **M2c** normally can serve as a teleportation destination, but unfortunately its teleporter has been damaged. This room now serves as a prison of sorts for the onetime leader of the Gray Maidens here at the Lady's Light—Commander Oriana. See pages 60–61 for her full description and a brief history of the events that led her to her current state: a broken captive of the one she'd hoped would aid in retaking Korvosa.

Oriana is in a dark place emotionally at this point—she knows she's been under the effects of enchantment magic and suspects "Sorshen's" plans for her and the Gray Maidens are far from beneficial. Very little actually frightens Oriana, but the idea that her mind might not be her own for much longer shakes her to the core. Suicide has always seemed to Oriana as the coward's route, but currently she feels she has no other options.

When the PCs arrive, she sees them as a convenient delivery for her death.

Once she notices their arrival, she gathers her courage over the course of 2d4 rounds, then steps into area **M2b** if she's not yet been confronted. Upon seeing the PCs, she cries out, "Who are you? Sorshen's latest pawns? Her newest playthings? Let me welcome you to this cursed place with all you deserve!" With this, she launches into a furious attack on the PCs, but once she's reduced to 20 or fewer hit points, the fight goes out of her. She cries out in anguish, casts aside her sword, falls to her knees, and shrieks to the closest PC to end her anguish with a blade, "And be quick about it before your mistress finds out!"

Quick-witted and diplomatic PCs can end her attack early by convincing Oriana that they're here to oppose Sorshen—doing so requires a successful DC 21 Diplomacy check. Once a PC attacks Oriana, a diplomatic solution is impossible; they must fight her until she surrenders in this case. If one of the PCs appears as Sorshen, no diplomacy attempt is possible, and if she feels someone is trying to control her with magic, even the option to surrender vanishes—this is the one condition under which she'll fight to the death.



ORIANA

ORIANA

CR 7

XP 3,200

hp 96 (see page 60)

Development: If the PCs grant Oriana mercy, they may find in her a significant ally against the alu-demon Ashamintallu. Convincing Oriana that the PCs aren't actually agents of Sorshen requires little more than telling her this once she's surrendered. No Diplomacy check is needed, as Oriana is ready to cling to a new hope. She's even willing to accept any story as to why a PC might look like Sorshen. As long as no one tries to control her mind, she puts her last ounce of trust in the PCs' hands.

Oriana can tell the PCs much about her experiences within the Lady's Light, including the fact that she's spent

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the past several weeks under mind control by Sorshen. She's not yet entertained the idea that Sorshen is anyone but the runelord, but if the PCs bring up the possibility, her eyes widen in sudden understanding and hope. She's perfectly willing to accompany the PCs up to the boudoir above, but the idea that she might actually have a chance to defeat the woman upstairs isn't something Oriana's allowed herself to have.

If any Gray Maidens survive, Oriana balks at the notion of putting them at risk in the battle to come—and in any event, there's no way to return to the chambers below from this room (there is one, she assures the PCs, in the boudoir above). She knows how to activate the teleporter in **M2b**, and advises the PCs to prepare for battle before they use the device to travel to area **M3**. Apart from confirming that "Sorshen" has powerful mind-affecting magic, she has no insight regarding how they can best fight the disguised alu-demon, although her urge to find out whom "Sorshen" really is should be well apparent.

M3. SORSHEN'S BOUDOIR (CR 10)

This ovoid, white marble chamber is an opulent, domed affair, with a ceiling of polished silver peaking twenty feet above. A pair of mosaic snake patterns decorate the floor to the north and south. Polished black marble pillars rise up along the edges of the room, metal manacles hanging from their inward-facing sides at a height of five feet. Articles of armor and clothing lie scattered on the floor, while to one side of the room an upraised platform sits a foot above the rest of the room. This platform is strewn with furs and blankets, and at its back near the wall sits an enormous canopied bed.

This area is at chest level within the Lady's Light.

When characters step into this room through the teleporter in area **M2b**, they emerge between the two western pillars—no return through this particular portal is possible. The two snake mosaics in the room mark the locations of the two actual exits from this room. While both mosaics radiate strong conjuration, they do not currently function. A casual examination reveals that the eyes of both snakes are apparently missing, and all that remains is a circular hollow. A pair of gemstones sitting on the bed's headboard (see *Treasure*, below) fit perfectly into these hollows; if they're placed, the mosaics activate

and glow with a soft golden light. A person who thereafter steps onto the northern mosaic is teleported to the western end of area **L20** at the end of the carpet, while stepping onto the southern mosaic teleports the traveler to the mosaic in area **M4**.

A recently killed Gray Maiden (one Ashamintallu's been keeping alive for nearly the whole time the PCs have been adventuring in the dungeons below) hangs from the manacles attached to the pillar just southwest of the bed. Her body is strangely brittle and dry, and bears obvious signs of torture.

Creature: The sole occupant of this room is the alu-demon Ashamintallu, although even she has long since repressed the truth of her own identity and believes herself to be Sorshen reborn. Having just sated her violent needs on the unfortunate Gray Maiden, she's reclining on the bed when the PCs arrive, and rises from the bed in her full beauty in the image of the Runelord of Lust as she realizes she has new visitors.

Ashamintallu is a dangerous foe, and reckless PCs who simply charge forward to attack her may find themselves facing a foe beyond their capabilities. Having Oriana along will certainly help, but if the PCs spoke to Helanda in area **L10**, or if they agree to work with Oriana to try to force "Sorshen" to reveal her true form, they can significantly hinder the alu-demon in the inevitable fight to come.

As Sorshen, Ashamintallu's response to the PCs is to treat them as new minions to be, speaking to them in a seductive tone dripping with arrogance. She greets the PCs, saying, "Oh, this is a delicious surprise! Greetings, new supplicants, you've arrived just in time. My latest lost her allure when she lost her life. Perhaps you can keep me entertained a bit longer?" If Oriana is with the PCs, Ashamintallu smiles at the Gray Maiden, saying, "Oriana, my love, this is unexpected. Am I to take your return to my boudoir as indication you've had a change of heart after our previous... conversation?"

Ashamintallu wants to toy with her visitors a bit before she attempts to charm the most attractive and then kill the others. If the PCs don't act, the woman moves from one to the other, appraising them cruelly and picking one or two PCs as "worthy companions." This is a chance for the PCs to confront her with accusations that she's not truly Runelord Sorshen. You should allow the players to roleplay this confrontation out for a few minutes, after which you should have them all make DC 25 Diplomacy



SORSHEN

or Intimidate checks (each player may choose which of the two skills to use). Certain things the PCs might bring up can modify all of their checks as follows.

- The first PC to address “Sorshen” by the name “Ashamintallu” gains a +10 bonus on all checks. Other PCs who do the same gain a +5 bonus.
- A PC effectively disguised as Sorshen gains a +10 bonus. This requires a successful Disguise check, but is automatic if a PC now lives in a Sorshen clone.
- The first PC to mention the glass golem from area **K6** gains a +5 bonus. A character who confronts Ashamintallu with a recognizable fragment from the statue (such as its head) gains a +5 bonus. If the golem is present and under a PC’s control, all checks by all PCs gain a +10 bonus.
- The first PC to confront her with the platinum plate from the back of the throne in area **L4** gains a +10 bonus, as the plate triggers memories of being present in Sorshen’s company.

If no PC succeeds at the check, Ashamintallu merely laughs at their foolishness and then attacks. If one PC succeeds at the check, Ashamintallu is visibly disturbed and gains the shaken condition for 24 hours. If two PCs succeed at the check, she is profoundly affected, and her mind begins to rebel against itself, which effectively imparts one negative level to the alu-demon. If more than two PCs succeed at the check, she shrieks in horror as she realizes the truth of their words—she immediately becomes staggered for 1d3 rounds and uses her first action in the combat to follow to revert to her true form. If all of the PCs succeed at the check, Ashamintallu gains an additional negative level and becomes staggered for an additional 2d4 rounds. These effects are cumulative.

ASHAMINTALLU

CR 10

XP 9,600

hp 129 (see page 58)

Treasure: The armor scattered about the room is a dismantled suit of full plate armor that once belonged to the poor Gray Maiden Ashamintallu just killed. If Oriana is present, she’ll want to bury the Gray Maiden (who, when alive, was named Loria Peratti) in this armor. Two fist-sized amber discs sit atop the bed’s headboard—each of these gems is worth 100 gp, but more importantly, they serve to activate the teleporter mosaics in this room.

M4. THE ARCANE OUBLIETTE

The walls of this oddly shaped room appear strangely molded, their surfaces like sweaty pink clay infused with bits of glittering crystal. The floor looks like dry, cracked mud dark red in color, and the ceiling arches only eight feet overhead. A disturbing

sound fills the space, resembling the endless exhalation of some bizarre, hulking beast. A mosaic of a coiled snake sits on the floor in a small alcove to the side, while all along the walls of the strange room sit numerous interesting-looking objects—but none more intriguing than the triangular shard of red metal that sits alone on a shelf at eye level.

This chamber is located within the head of the Lady’s Light. The snake mosaic on the floor is where visitors teleporting here from area **M3** appear. Anyone who steps onto the mosaic after first stepping off of it reappears in area **M3** atop the southern mosaic there.

This room still retains a powerful magical effect infused in the walls by Sorshen so long ago. An arcane spellcaster who prepares spells while in this room finds that all enchantment spells prepared in this room function at +1 caster level and gain a +2 bonus on checks to penetrate spell resistance. Conversely, any necromancy or transmutation (the traditional oppositional schools to enchantment in Thassilon) spells prepared in this room function at –1 caster level and the caster takes a –2 penalty on checks to penetrate spell resistance.

Treasure: Ashamintallu keeps many treasures here, from her spellbooks to trophies collected from some of her favorite past conquests. Her spellbooks sit on shelves to the west; these books contain many spells—beyond those she has prepared, all enchantment spells of 1st to 4th level from the *Core Rulebook* can be found herein. Feel free to augment these spells with additional spells from other books—there should be about 40 spells in these books in all (although there are no necromancy or transmutation spells at all). The spellbooks are littered with bits and pieces of Ashamintallu’s memories as well, and a character who studies these can piece together fragments of what has gone on in the alu-demon’s life, subject to GM approval (you can use these notes to offer the PCs answers to any lingering questions they may have about events in this adventure as you wish).

Other items are found on the other shelves, including a large pouch containing a dozen tourmalines worth 100 gp each, six black pearls worth 500 gp each, and two blue sapphires worth 1,000 gp each, as well as a *bag of holding (type II)* containing an *orb of consumption*, a pair of red leather *boots of striding and springing*, four spider silk drawstring pouches worth 50 gp each (two pouches each contain 1 dose of *dust of appearance*, 1 dose of *dust of dryness*, and 1 dose of *dust of illusion*), an *immovable rod*, a *whispering coin*, a pair of *goggles of night*, a *ring of minor electricity resistance*, and a +1 *light fortification breastplate* (this suit of armor once belonged to Gnaeus Gnaru—see area **K9**).

Of course, the most significant item to be found here is the *Shard of Lust*, which sits in a place of honor alone on a shelf in the northern wall.

CURSE OF THE LADY'S LIGHT



CONCLUDING THE ADVENTURE

Once the PCs have recovered the *Shard of Lust*, they can immediately use it to learn the location of the next shard in the sequence (as detailed in *Pathfinder Adventure Path* #61). Wise PCs, of course, think to activate the *Shard of Lust* with the *pink and green sphere ioun stone* given to them by Sheila Heidmarch, so as to avoid the shard's curse. While this curse won't affect them as profoundly as it did Ashamintallu, it could cause some embarrassing situations nevertheless!

With the false Sorshen exposed and slain, various surviving denizens of the dungeons beneath the Lady's Light eventually make their way out of the dungeons to find new haunts. The remaining survivors of the nearby humanoid tribes slowly recover and settle back into an uneasy equilibrium of simmering hostility. If only one of the tribes has survivors, they come to more or less dominate the Lady's Cape, until some other batch of nasties decides to move into the neighborhood. Should the party visit Maroux before leaving the Lady's Cape, she

provides another unsavory meal over which they share their adventures. She offers congratulations, thanking them for making the Lady's Cape a bit safer to live in, and wishes them luck in their future quests.

Sheila Heidmarch certainly expects an update from the PCs—at the very least, the fact that she likely has another *ioun stone* for them to use to awaken the next shard should lure the PCs back to Magnimar. Once the PCs provide a detailed report and maps of their adventure to the Pathfinders (a process that should take no more than a day's work writing), the Fame scores of PCs who are members of the Pathfinder Society faction increase by 12 and the PCs earn 12 Prestige Points for their accomplishments. In any event, their destiny now lies to the east—for any who successfully use the *Shard of Lust* to seek out the location of the next shard experience a vision of one of Varisia's most notorious locations: a strange and dangerous city known to some as the City of Strangers, to others as the Asylum Stone, but to most simply as Kaer Maga.

ASHAMINTALLU

One of the demonic daughters of the original overseer of the Lady's Light, Ashamintallu has been trapped for millennia in the monument after succumbing to the curse of the *Shard of Lust*.

ASHAMINTALLU

CR 10

XP 9,600

Female alu-demon enchanter 7 (*Tome of Horrors Complete* 154)

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

Init +7; Senses darkvision 120 ft.; Perception +22

DEFENSE

AC 28, touch 14, flat-footed 24 (+4 armor, +3 Dex, +1 dodge, +6 natural, +4 shield)

hp 129 (13 HD; 6d10+7d6+72)

Fort +8, Ref +10, Will +14; +2 vs. enchantment

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 +1 keen guisarme +12/+7 (2d4+4/x3) or 2 claws +11 (1d6+2 plus vampiric claws)

Alu-Demon Spell-Like Abilities (CL 8th; concentration +12)

3/day—charm person (DC 15), detect thoughts (DC 16), suggestion (DC 17)

1/day—dimension door

Arcane School Spell-Like Abilities (CL 7th; concentration +12)

8/day—dazing touch

Shard of Lust Spell-Like Abilities (CL 7th; concentration +12)

1/day suggestion (DC 17)

Spells Prepared (CL 7th [8th ench.]; concentration +12 [+13 ench.])

4th—charm monster (DC 20), confusion (2, DC 20), phantasmal killer (DC 19)

3rd—dispel magic, fireball (DC 18), hold person (2, DC 19), reckless infatuation^{UM} (DC 19)2nd—flaming sphere (DC 17), glitterdust (DC 17), hideous laughter (DC 18), touch of idiocy, unnatural lust^{UM} (2, DC 18)

1st—burning hands (DC 16), charm person (2, DC 17), mage armor, magic missile (2), protection from good, shield

0 (at will)—bleed, detect magic, ghost sound (DC 15), mending

Thassilonian Specialization Enchantment^{ISM}; Opposition

Schools Transmutation, Necromancy

TACTICS

Before Combat Ashamintallu casts *mage armor*, *protection from good*, and *shield*.**During Combat** Ashamintallu activates her *boots of haste* on the first round of combat, then uses flight to hover out of reach from melee attacks while she uses her spells to pick

the party apart. Her first act in combat is to use *confusion* on the PCs, followed by a *fireball* in the second round. She's fond of using *charm monster*, *charm person*, and *suggestion* to compel enemies to cast aside their weapons and strip off their armor and gear. Once she manages to neutralize the party through enchantments, she picks off the stragglers with her spells and at reach with her guisarme.

Morale If reduced to fewer than 30 hit points, Ashamintallu flees combat using *dimension door* to area L22, where she begins scouring the dungeon for allies and drinks her *potions of cure serious wounds* before returning to confront the PCs. If the PCs goad her into revealing her true nature, though, her madness takes over and she fights the PCs to the death.

STATISTICS

Str 15, Dex 17, Con 19, Int 20, Wis 15, Cha 18

Base Atk +9; CMB +11; CMD 25

Feats Arcane Strike, Combat Casting, Craft Wondrous Item, Dodge, Hover, Iron Will, Scribe Scroll, Spell Focus (enchantment), Toughness**Skills** Acrobatics +19, Bluff +20, Escape Artist +17, Fly +19, Intimidate +20, Knowledge (arcana) +21, Perception +22, Spellcraft +21, Stealth +19; **Racial Modifiers** +4 Perception**Languages** Abyssal, Boggard, Common, Thassilonian, Varisian; telepathy 100 ft.**SQ** arcane bond (guisarme), change shape (*alter self*, Medium humanoid), cursed, enchanting smile**Combat Gear** *potion of cure serious wounds* (4), *wand of dimension door* (14 charges); **Other Gear** +1 keen guisarme, *boots of haste*, spell component pouch

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Cursed The effects of the curse affecting Ashamintallu are detailed below and in the description for area M3. As a side effect of the curse, she gains the benefits of the *Shard of Lust* as if she were carrying it as long as the shard is within a mile of her.**Vampiric Claws (Su)** Each time Ashamintallu damages a foe with her claw attack, she gains an amount of temporary hit points equal to the amount of damage she dealt. She cannot gain more hit points than her target's current hit points plus the target's Con score (which is enough to kill the target). These temporary hit points vanish in 1 hour.^{ISM} See *Pathfinder Campaign Setting: Inner Sea Magic*.^{UM} See *Pathfinder RPG Ultimate Magic*.

Ashamintallu is an alu-demon, the offspring of a succubus and human. Her natural appearance is that of a well-formed woman with flawless skin, red eyes, pointed ears, crimson horns that protrude from her forehead, a demonic tail, and large red bat-like wings. However, she has not worn this visage for centuries. Unlike most alu-demons, she inherited the change shape ability from her succubus mother (this ability replaces the typical alu-demon *disguise self*-spell-like ability), and she has used this ability to adopt and maintain the shape of the Runelord Sorshen, based on her fragmented memories and the artwork found within the dungeons beneath the Lady's Light.

Ashamintallu's memories of her life before she fell under the curse of the *Shard of Lust* are vague and fragmented. Now and then, strange memories of serving Thassilonian wizards float to the surface of her mind, as do remembrances of her mother, the succubus Ayandamahla, who once served as the primary demonic "soul" of the Lady's Light. Likewise, Ashamintallu only barely remembers her mother's two betrayals—first by handing her over to Sorshen to serve within a glass golem in the dungeons below (see area **K6**), and then many centuries later after Ayandamahla discovered a way to use her daughter as a surrogate of sorts, forcibly passing on the effect of her binding to the Lady's Light to Ashamintallu. Compared to serving as the mind of a glass golem, the freedom to wander the Lady's Light and, during the new moon, the surrounding hinterlands (for periods of no more than 1 night per month) seemed at first to be a fantastic freedom to Ashamintallu, but she soon came to see this as no lesser a prison. Years wore into centuries during the Age of Darkness, and whereas her mother managed to use her time to focus on a method of escape, Ashamintallu instead fell victim to a powerful curse—the curse within the *Shard of Lust*. Over the course of thousands of years, this curse has become a part of Ashamintallu, and has grown in scope. Today, she believes that she is Runelord Sorshen reborn, and hopes some day to throw off the shackles that bind her to the Lady's Light so that she might return to the world and launch her empire anew.

Unfortunately for Ashamintallu, the curse also tends to make her easily distracted, forgetful, and capricious. Her life in the Lady's Light has been a long series of dalliances with those unfortunate enough to wander into the ruined monolith or to encounter her on one of those moonless nights along the

Lady's Cape, alternating with periods of depression during which she spends years asleep in her boudoir. At this point in her cursed life, even freedom wouldn't change a thing. She's lived too long as Sorshen in the Lady's Light, and despite the fact that she thinks she wants out, in truth she's cursed to be here until the day she dies.

CAMPAIGN ROLE

Ashamintallu, in the guise of Sorshen, is the final villain who stands between the PCs and the *Shard of Lust*. Even handicapped by her emotional instability and delusional beliefs, she remains a potent foe. If she survives, the desire to seek revenge against the PCs may just be the motivation she needs to finally find a way to escape the Lady's Light.



ORIANA

Commander of a mercenary band of unrepentant Gray Maidens and compelled by a deep-seated need for vengeance, Oriana hopes some day to retake the rule of her beloved Korvosa in Queen Ileosa's honor.

ORIANA

CR 7

XP 3,200

Female fighter 8

CN Medium humanoid (human)

Init +0; Senses Perception +7

DEFENSE

AC 24, touch 10, flat-footed 24 (+10 armor, +4 shield)

hp 96 (8d10+48)

Fort +11, Ref +3, Will +2; +2 vs. fear

Defensive Abilities bravery +2

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee +2 longsword +15/+10 (1d8+8/17–20)

Ranged mwk composite longbow +9/+4 (1d8+3/x3)

Special Attacks weapon training (heavy blades +1)

TACTICS

During Combat Oriana prefers to fight side-by-side or back-to-back with allies or those she commands so as to prevent foes from flanking her, but does not shirk from battle when she must fight on her own. She uses Power Attack against foes at the start of combat, but switches to Combat Expertise whenever she's reduced below 55 hit points. She uses Improved Disarm on foes with her second attack in a round unless the foe appears to be heavily wounded or isn't wielding a dangerous weapon.

Morale Oriana is no coward, and as long as those she commands or allies with still live, she'll fight to the death. On her own, she flees (or surrenders, if flight is impossible) once reduced to fewer than 15 hit points.

STATISTICS

Str 16, Dex 10, Con 18, Int 13, Wis 8, Cha 13

Base Atk +8; CMB +11; CMD 21

Feats Combat Expertise, Improved Critical (longsword), Improved Disarm, Intimidating Prowess, Power Attack, Shield Focus, Toughness, Vital Strike, Weapon Focus (longsword), Weapon Specialization (longsword)

Skills Handle Animal +6, Intimidate +15, Knowledge (history) +3, Perception +7, Sense Motive +3, Survival +10

Languages Common, Varisian**SQ** armor training 2

Other Gear +1 full plate, +1 heavy steel shield, +2 longsword, cloak of resistance +1, maiden's helm

Oriana was raised by a kindly city guard named Chanbeck who found her at the age of 2, abandoned in an alley. Himself an orphan, Chanbeck had few fond memories of his childhood, so rather than turn the child over to an orphanage he elected to raise her as his own child. He did some research into her history and learned she'd been abandoned by her mother, who still lived in Korvosa and worked as a tavern wench and part-time whore in Old Korvosa. Upon learning this, Chanbeck vowed to protect Oriana from her mother—a woman he felt didn't deserve a treasure like a daughter. Growing up, little Oriana had many aunts and uncles—each and every guard who called that barracks home treated her like a beloved niece or adored mascot, bringing her treats and telling her fanciful stories. She was the apple of Chanbeck's eye, and he doted on her, dressing her in fine dresses and vowing to make of her "a lady like her mother." Oriana was 12 when Chanbeck was killed while attempting to break up a tavern brawl. Devastated, she prevailed upon her "aunts and uncles" to tell the truth about her mother. Finally, they relented and the child sought her out.

The years had not been kind to Oriana's mother, who had grown increasingly severe and bitter. When Oriana presented herself, her drunken mother callously turned the girl away. "You aren't mine!" she shouted with revulsion. "Some drunken slattern birthed you!" Devastated, Oriana returned to the barracks in tears and burned all the fine clothes her father had given her. She then donned the smallest chainmail shirt she could find, picked up a sword, and began swinging it about with fury, making a vow to forget her mother—she would be a soldier, like her father. Within 6 months, many guards sported bruises and black eyes from sparring with wooden swords, as Oriana proved to be a natural.

Oriana grew into a beautiful young woman, with dark auburn hair, a creamy complexion, and deep blue eyes like brilliant sapphires. As she grew, her aunts and uncles died off one by one, only to be replaced by guards who'd never known her as a child, only as a woman. Many of them made sexual advances toward her, but she'd vowed never to have children and those she couldn't easily rebuff with words were turned aside by her fists or blade. When one particularly odious guard tried to take things too far, she broke his jaw. Unfortunately,

this man happened to be the son of a well-respected captain in the guard, and for several years afterward, Oriana found herself always enduring the least desirable of tasks and posts in the guard. She grew ever more bitter and resentful as time wore on, but retained her pride in both the city of Korvosa and her own martial prowess.

Then things changed—King Eodred died and Queen Ileosa took control of Korvosa. Oriana was one of the first to answer when Ileosa first put out the call among her favored guards that she was putting together a new martial group called the Gray Maidens to protect herself and Castle Korvosa. The period of time most of Korvosa's people look back upon now as one of the city's darkest is one that Oriana remembers fondly. As the months under Ileosa's rule wore on, it became clear to many that the Gray Maidens were anything but mere "queen's guards." Ileosa increasingly turned to extreme measures in recruiting for the Gray Maidens, but through it all, Oriana maintained her admiration for Ileosa's growing ruthlessness—she'd long felt that Korvosa had grown too soft, and under Queen Ileosa's rule, pride in what she felt would be a stronger Korvosa swelled in her heart. She wears the scars on her face, inflicted by Ileosa herself as part of Oriana's indoctrination, as a badge of pride. When Queen Ileosa was defeated, Oriana knew she had only a few days at most to escape the city before those same enemies came for her. She fled with a band of her most loyal followers, retreating to central Varisia where she and her group served as mercenaries until her rancor at having "lost Korvosa" drove her to a daring plan—she intended to loot the Lady's Light of its magic and wealth in order to fund and bolster an attempt to retake her home town.

Oriana now questions the wisdom of coming to the Lady's Light. For many weeks, she served "Runelord Sorshen" devoutly. But when Oriana dared to question her mistress's command to seek out and kill the half-orc witch Maroux for rebuffing an invitation to join the growing "army" within the Lady's Light (Maroux had treated Oriana and her Gray Maidens fairly, and Oriana felt that a death sentence for the witch was too much), her mistress struck her in a fury and banished her to this room. It wasn't long thereafter that the *charm monster* effect that kept Oriana loyal expired, allowing her to fully realize the extent to which "Sorshen" had duped her. She now believes that when "Sorshen" comes to visit her again, it will be to either murder her or re-establish her magical control—and Oriana isn't sure which of those fates frightens her more.

CAMPAIGN ROLE

Oriana may serve as the party's last obstacle before the false Sorshen, or a vital ally for the final confrontation

against Ashamintallu, depending on the PCs' interactions with her in the Lady's Light. If Oriana survives, she has a significant change of heart as she realizes that her quest for revenge led her to this doom. She decides to seek asylum in Magnimar, along with any of her surviving Gray Maidens, and hopes to rebuild her life.

SIDE QUEST

Oriana is wracked with guilt at having led her Gray Maidens into such danger. She's eager to find new homes and posts for the surviving Gray Maidens in Magnimar. If the PCs put in a good word for her with the Pathfinder Society or any other contacts in Magnimar, her integration into the city is much smoother.

Reward: 3,200 XP. In addition, and at your discretion, Oriana may offer her services to one of the PCs as a cohort.



SHATTERED STAR TREASURES

The following unique treasures can be found in “Curse of the Lady’s Light.” Player-appropriate handouts appear in the GameMastery Shattered Star item card set.

DEATHBALM TALISMAN

Aura moderate conjuration; **CL** 5th
Slot neck; **Weight** 1 lb.; **Price** 5,000 gp

DESCRIPTION

A *deathbalm talisman* grants its wearer a +5 resistance bonus on Fortitude saves against disease or poison, and if placed around the neck of an individual already suffering the effects of poison or disease, it allows a new save (with no additional bonus from the *deathbalm talisman*) to immediately remove the affliction. Whenever a wearer successfully saves against the effects of disease or poison while wearing a *deathbalm talisman*, it becomes dormant for 24 hours. After this time has passed, it refreshes and functions again. A character who wears a functioning *deathbalm talisman* for a period of 24 hours heals 1d4 points of ability damage to any one ability score currently suffering ability damage.

CONSTRUCTION

Requirements Craft Wondrous Item, *lesser restoration*, *neutralize poison*, *remove disease*; **Cost** 2,500 gp

MAIDEN’S HELM

Aura moderate enchantment; **CL** 6th
Slot head; **Weight** 3 lbs.; **Price** 3,500 gp

DESCRIPTION

A *maiden’s helm* appears as the distinctive plate and plumed helm worn by the Gray Maidens. The helm imparts enhanced power and gravitas to the wearer’s voice, granting a +5 competence bonus on Intimidate checks. The wearer of a *maiden’s helm* can use *command* three times per day.

CONSTRUCTION

Requirements Craft Wondrous Item, *cause fear*, *command*;
Cost 1,750 gp

ORB OF CONSUMPTION

Aura strong enchantment; **CL** 15th
Slot none; **Weight** 9 lbs.; **Price** 10,000 gp

DESCRIPTION

This cruel Thassilonian device could not seem less intimidating—it appears as nothing more frightening than a hollow sphere of pink glass the size of a halfling’s head. When it is held in both hands and its command word is spoken, a pulsing light throbs at the core of the sphere and the sound of an ongoing exhalation of breath emanates from the orb.

This effect lasts for as long as the user concentrates, up to a maximum of 6 rounds per day. All creatures within 10 feet of the orb that possess an Intelligence of 3 or higher (save the orb’s user, who is immune to its effects as long as it is held) must succeed at a DC 15 Will save or be compelled to approach the sphere and touch it—this save is required every round the creature remains within 10 feet of the user and the orb. This is a mind-affecting sonic effect. The first applicable creature to touch an active *orb of consumption* takes 1d2 points of Constitution damage and 1d2 points of Wisdom damage (a successful DC 15 Will save negates this damage). The life energy and sanity consumed by the orb grant the user a +4 enhancement bonus to Charisma for 1 hour per point of Constitution or Wisdom damage dealt. Additional uses do not increase the bonus to Charisma but do increase the duration of the effect.

CONSTRUCTION

Requirements Craft Wondrous Item, *bestow curse*, *eagle’s splendor*; **Cost** 5,000 gp

SILVERFANG

Aura moderate necromancy; **CL** 8th
Slot none; **Weight** 2 lbs.; **Price** 9,320 gp

DESCRIPTION

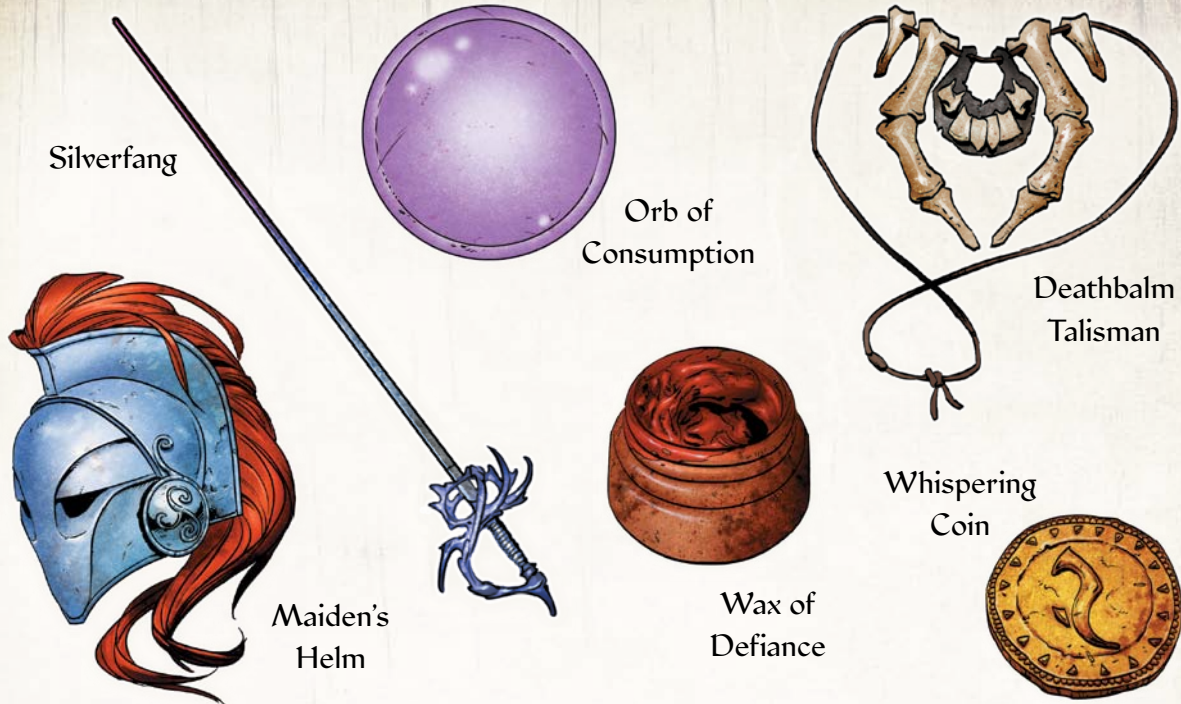
Silverfang is a +1 *undead bane mithral rapier* originally forged by a cabal of vampire hunters in Ustalav as a weapon against their hated foes. Ironically, the rapier was claimed by a powerful Nidalese vampire named Volsazni Dezarr as a trophy after he single-handedly slew the entire cabal during their foolish attempt to destroy him. Since then, Volsazni has bequeathed the weapon as a token of his favor to no fewer than a dozen vampiric thralls and five of his dhampir children—Gnaeus being the latest of these recipients.

As long as *Silverfang* is carried, the user gains a +2 resistance bonus on all saving throws against negative energy and level drain, and whenever he makes a Fortitude save to recover from a negative level, he may roll the save twice, taking the better of the two results as the actual result. Once per day, *Silverfang* can target an undead creature it just successfully critically hit with a *halt undead* effect (Will DC 14 negates) as a swift action.

CONSTRUCTION

Requirements Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *death ward*, *halt undead*; **Cost** 8,250 gp

SHATTERED STAR TREASURES



WAX OF DEFIANCE

Aura faint abjuration; **CL** 5th

Slot none; **Weight** —; **Price** 1,200 gp

DESCRIPTION

This waxy amber substance is typically stored in a lidded container that holds 10 applications. One application is enough to plug both of a creature's ears—applying the wax is a standard action. Once applied, the wax imparts a –2 penalty on Perception checks, but imparts a +4 resistance bonus on all saving throws against charm or language-dependant compulsion effects, like *charm monster*, *command*, and *suggestion*. If placed in the ears of a willing or helpless creature currently under a charm or language-dependant compulsion effect, the dose immediately allows the creature to make a new saving throw against the original effect to throw off the charm or compulsion effect (although without the normal +4 bonus granted by the wax if used when a creature is first targeted by such an effect). A single dose of *wax of defiance* lasts for 1 hour once applied.

CONSTRUCTION

Requirements Craft Wondrous Item, *break enchantment*, *silence*; **Cost** 600 gp

WHISPERING COIN

Aura moderate divination; **CL** 9th

Slot none; **Weight** —; **Price** 3,000 gp

DESCRIPTION

This ancient gold coin measures an inch in diameter and a quarter of an inch thick. One face bears one of the seven Thassilonian runes for magic and sin, while the opposite

side bears the image of a broken column. When carried, a *whispering coin* periodically haunts its carrier with soft whispers that seem to be in Thassilonian, but which are never loud enough to understand. These whispers are only slightly distracting, and in fact offer a boon to the carrier of the coin—they grant a +1 resistance bonus on saving throws against spells of the school of magic associated with the coin's rune (the coin found in this adventure bears the rune of lust, and thus grants a +1 resistance bonus against enchantment spells).

Once per day, when the bearer flips the *whispering coin* and asks a question in Thassilonian while the coin is in the air, the coin provides an answer to the question as it lands, either “yes” (the Thassilonian rune) or “no” (the broken column); the word “yes” or “no” is also whispered into the user's ear as the answer is determined. A *whispering coin*'s knowledge is limited to events that have a significant chance to affect the coin's carrier in the immediate future (no further out than a few minutes), and is further limited to facts, not conjecture. You could ask a *whispering coin* whether a door you were about to open is trapped, but not “Is the king the mastermind of the conspiracy we just learned about?” The GM, in other words, can determine whether or not a *whispering coin* can answer or not—if the coin can't answer, it spins on its edge upon landing for several seconds before flopping over to a random side and does not whisper a “yes” or “no” into the user's ear. The coin's one use for the day is still consumed.

CONSTRUCTION

Requirements Craft Wondrous Item, *augury*, *resistance*; **Cost** 1,500 gp



THE GRAY MAIDENS

TO AID IN THE DUTIES OF THE QUEEN'S PHYSICIANS, KNOW THAT THE ORDER OF THE GRAY MAIDENS HAS BEEN ESTABLISHED TO PROVIDE MILITARY SUPPORT AS NEEDED. THE MAIDENS ANSWER DIRECTLY TO THE CRIMSON THRONE, AND WILL BE CALLED UPON AS NECESSARY TO AUGMENT AND STRENGTHEN THE PEACE WHEN SIMPLE CITY GUARDS WILL NOT SUFFICE. IMPEDING OR DISTRACTING THE DUTIES OF THE QUEEN'S PHYSICIANS OR THE GRAY MAIDENS IS PUNISHABLE BY IMPRISONMENT. IMPERSONATING A QUEEN'S PHYSICIAN OR A GRAY MAIDEN IS PUNISHABLE BY DEATH.

—FROM THE BLOOD VEIL DECREE

THE GRAY MAIDENS

When Queen Ileosa ascended the Crimson Throne, many anticipated a reign filled with lavish balls, royal dalliances, and petty decadence. What the people of Korvosa didn't expect was the rise of a steel-souled tyrant. Although the queen's cruel whims were not entirely her own, her brief rule stands as the most violent in Korvosan history, a time of turmoil fraught with plague, genocide, narcissism, diabolism, and slaughter. Yet Ileosa did not enact these crimes alone—she transformed her own royal guard into a finely polished weapon that would reflect her dark ambitions as she used it to strike against her own people. This all-female army of deadly soldiers was the Gray Maidens.

Clad in identical suits of sculpted plate and lean chain, their faces hidden beneath the reflective steel of featureless helms, the Gray Maidens were chosen from among Korvosa's most able and beautiful swordswomen. The group served as the queen's personal agents, following her orders and ensuring her safety. But as the queen's cruelties took on more depraved forms, so did the Gray Maidens become increasingly corrupt. All members faced deliberate scarring and disfigurement—particularly of the face—as part of their indoctrination, ensuring that none of the queen's servants would rival her beauty.

The formation, cruelty, and fall of the Gray Maidens are detailed in the events of the Curse of the Crimson Throne Adventure Path, and a new story about Gray Maidens after Ileosa's fall, *Pathfinder Tales: Shattered Steel*, is available for free at paizo.com. What else survives of that organization is presented here: memories of their darkest deeds, surviving and unaccounted for members, and details on threats the Gray Maidens continue to pose in Varisia and beyond.

FORMER LEADERS OF THE GRAY MAIDENS

While Korvosa's mad queen Ileosa undeniably supplied the motivation, equipment, and merciless agendas for the Gray Maidens, blame for their deeds does not lie entirely with her. Others were integral in forming and training these soldiers, and ensuring their unquestioning obedience.

SABINA MERRIN

LN female human fighter 14

Sabina Merrin was chosen from the ranks of the city guard by King Eodred's fiancé, Ileosa Arvanxi, coming to serve as the noblewoman's bodyguard, handmaiden, and, eventually, first true friend in Korvosa. Formerly a student of the city's famed weapon master Vencarlo Orisini, Sabina left her training to take up arms as a member of the city guard. As Sabina served Ileosa, their relationship became increasingly intimate, the guardswoman idealizing Ileosa as the liege of her fantasies. With Ileosa's ascension to the throne and her (unnaturally) bold shift in personality, Sabina became more

and more enamored with the queen and blind to her faults, even as they became increasingly heinous.

Suggesting the queen allow her to seek out other similarly gifted warriors—beautiful, deadly, and devoted—to serve as royal guards and direct agents, Sabina provided the inspiration for the group that would become the Gray Maidens. While she assembled the first several dozen devoted warrior women to serve as the queen's personal retinue, Ileosa became both inspired by the soldier's potential and jealous of the beauties constantly in her wake. While Sabina held the position of commander of the Gray Maidens, Ileosa increasingly distracted Sabina with business within Castle Korvosa and leisure activities. Beneath the royal castle and in the troop's other redoubts, though, the queen entrusted the indoctrination, training, and—later—physical disfigurement of new members to conscienceless lieutenants, transforming her personal bodyguard into a small army of vicious sadists and brainwashed killers.

Despite Ileosa's attempts to distance the Gray Maidens' commander from her troops and her own unwillingness to see the unnatural cruelty consuming her mistress, Sabina gradually came to accept that Ileosa was not the paragon she so desired to serve. In the final days of Ileosa's rule, Sabina turned against the queen, aiding rebels in slaying her personal black dragon mount, Zarmangarof, and in putting an end to the evil festering within Castle Korvosa.

In the aftermath of Queen Ileosa's death, Sabina was viewed as a hero by many and was made a leader among the city's new provisional government. She helped disassemble the Gray Maidens and make restitutions to many forced into the group, as well as those who suffered losses at the group's hands. Yet even as Sabina seeks to help set a new course for Korvosa, free from the corruption and dark dealings of the city's Chelish ancestry, there are still those who will never see the founder of the Gray Maidens as anything less than a traitor and a murderess.

KORDAITRA DESTAID

LE female human cavalier 11

The death of King Eodred Arabasti II flooded the audience halls of Castle Korvosa with mourners and overtures of both sympathy and allegiance, but no display was grislier or more effective than that of Kordaitra Destaid, a knight-enforcer of the city's Church of Asmodeus. Sent to extend the church's condolences to the new monarch, she proved the depth of her and her brethren's sorrow by carving tears into her face and presenting the queen with the still bloody dagger. While Ileosa was originally horrified, her revulsion turned to respect when she noticed Kordaitra at the king's public funeral, her disfigurement unhealed nearly a week later.

After a time, the queen sent for Kordaitra, and asked why the knight had not entreated her temple brethren for healing. The Asmodean knight explained that doing

DEEDS OF THE GRAY MAIDENS

The Gray Maidens deserved their cruel reputation, and several of their many misdeeds stand out as crimes that will scar Korvosa for generations to come.

THE MERCILESS WAY MASSACRE

Ordered to stymie the spread of the blood veil plague, Gray Maidens and royal physicians quarantined a block of Old Korvosa. Confused and frightened, the poor residents refused to comply and pelted the queen's guard with rubbish as they sought to escape. Devoted to their orders, the Gray Maidens attacked and slaughtered all of the residents of the block, nearly a hundred men, women, and children.

THE QUARANTINE OF OLD KORVOSA

As the quarantines failed, Queen Ileosa ordered the destruction all of the bridges crossing the Narrows of Saint Alika. Only the stone causeway was spared, and this was heavily fortified to prevent escape. Any attempting to leave were assumed to be anarchists intent on spreading the plague, and so met the quarrels of Gray Maidens upon the bridge. Hundreds suffered and died as a result of the act.

IDOLS OF THE MAD QUEEN

The Great Tower, a redoubt for the Sable Company, cast its shadow over much of Korvosa's Heights district. After the riders were disbanded following an attempt on Queen Ileosa's life, the Gray Maidens pressed workers to disassemble the landmark, using the stone to craft four gigantic statues of the queen—which were never completed and have since been torn down. Korvosans still remember whip-wielding Gray Maidens driving laborers through the city like slaves toiling at some dark Osirian monument.

so would be a sign of disloyalty and that her devotion was greater than vanity. Convinced of the knight's dedication, Ileosa requested Kordaitra's aid in instructing a new martial order, not just in the ways of steel, but also in such loyalty. The knight accepted with true Asmodean fervor.

Over the following months, Kordaitra poured her fanaticism into the worthiest of those the queen and Commander Merrin sent to her, dispensing lashings as lessons, scars as badges of loyalty, and brutal deaths to those found lacking. She became known as Lady Tearless, and fear of the impassively vicious instructor and her red steel scourge incited many Gray Maidens—both those training and those already in service—to commit atrocities of which they otherwise would never have been capable.

Kordaitra was not counted among those killed in the revolt that deposed Queen Ileosa, and Korvosa's city guard

maintains a reward for her capture. Many Korvosans believe the Church of Asmodeus shielded their fierce sister and smuggled her to Nidal, Cheliox, or Iser to impose her training methods on less-than-willing Asmodean crusaders.

VAVANA DHATRI

NE female human wizard 9

Seeking refuge from the outbreak of scarlet leprosy that took her husband, Abanmi Dhatri bargained for passage upon the Brightburn, a Korvosan ship on its return journey from Vudra. The price for passage: 13 years of indentured service to the ship's owners, the notorious Arkona family—a price Abanmi gladly accepted for the sake of her children, 6-year-old Vavana and newborn Ishani.

While her brother was young enough to learn the ways of and blend in with the people of Korvosa, the Dhatri's new home city, Vavana faced significant prejudice, first as a child and later during her enrollment at Korvosa's infamous Acadamae. Embittered but clever, she gravitated toward the study of enchantment magic and of wresting control over the minds of others. She never learned who recommended her talents to Queen Ileosa—perhaps the Acadamae's manipulative headmaster Toff Ornelos, one of the cunning Arkonas she'd served as a youth, or a more mysterious agent—but when she was summoned to put her magic to use for Korvosa's greater good, she eagerly rose to the task and accepted the title Arbiter of Allegiance of the newly formed Gray Maidens.

Vavana ensured that all those Ileosa and Sabina selected to serve in the Gray Maidens were absolutely faithful. For those who required coercion, a few enchantments revealed secrets enough to blackmail most into service, though certain particularly skilled and stubborn conscripts faced regular doses from the arbiter's collection of fang-studded wands.

Widely spread stories say that several former Gray Maidens tracked Vavana to the Arkona Palace in Old Korvosa after Queen Ileosa's fall, but reports of what happened within are confused and vary to a bizarrely wide degree. As such, the status of the Gray Maidens' most nefarious mindbender remains unclear.

BEHIND THE MASK

Not all enforcers of the Crimson Throne served willingly. Through a combination of psychological and physical abuse, coercion, and enchantments, numerous Korvosans were made slaves of Ileosa's abominable regime. When the mad queen's power failed, these Gray Maidens removed their helms, but all scars are not so easily removed.

FILARIO GRANTSUEM

CG female human fighter 4

After 2 weeks of searching for his sister, Filario was shocked to find her clad in the anonymous iron of a Gray Maiden.

THE GRAY MAIDENS

More disconcerting was that she didn't recognize him, and struck him to the ground for his insistent and emotional questioning. Filario followed his sister back to the city's courthouse, the Longacre Building, and sought to find out what had happened to her, but was forbidden entry. When more subtle infiltrations failed, he attempted to join the Gray Maidens, but despite his lithe build, his gender betrayed him. Filario was fully prepared to use his knife to permanently improve his disguise's veracity, but friends within Korvosia's Cerulean Society found and sold him a cursed item that didn't seem so menacing to him: a *girdle of opposite gender*. With it, he gained admittance to the Gray Maidens and enough proximity to his sister to discover she was being magically compelled to serve. Before he was able to save her, though, she was cut down during the uprising against Queen Ileosa. Filario abandoned the Gray Maidens soon after, but has never attempted to remove his girdle, nobly refusing to do so until his sister is avenged—and maybe not even then, as he's become quite comfortable with his new gender.

JIRVASLIE RHANAMORS

NG female human ranger 5

Retired from a youth of adventuring, Jirvaslie prided herself on her daily training regime, but far more so on her two young children, Cemanda and Reglio. Stories of the former adventurer's exploits did not elude the Gray Maidens, who approached Jirvaslie about joining their ranks. Two days after she refused, her children vanished. Faceless members of the Gray Maidens made it clear that they had spirited away Jirvaslie's children, but that the two would be treated well so long as she lent her skill with blade and bow to the Crimson Throne's service. With no other choice, Jirvaslie served, trying her best to maim rather than kill and skirt the most lenient edge of her orders. But still she did much for which she is ashamed. During the rebellion, Jirvaslie managed to find her children, safe but scared in the basement of a Gray Maiden safe house. Although she forsook the crusade of Korvosia's ruler that day, she adopted another. Since then she has led a public campaign seeking to aid those women forced to serve the Crimson Throne and to punish those who served willingly. This has brought her into direct and very public opposition to Sabina Merrin, whom she condemns as the leader of the Gray Maidens and an opportunistic traitor rather than a rebel hero.

THE SCARRED

For many enslaved or coerced to serve as Gray Maidens, Ileosa's fall meant an escape from the cold iron of the royal guards. For some, however, freedom was not so easily won. The Gray Maidens scarred their members

both physically and psychologically, shattered hopes and ambitions, and left many with little to return to after the legion's destruction. For some, the faceless helm of a Gray Maiden is the only face they have left.

ERID SUULS

LE female human fighter 5/Hellknight 3

Once presumed by her order to have defected to serve Korvosia's queen, Maralictor Suuls was found innocent of violating her oaths as an Order of the Nail Hellknight, being judged not guilty on the grounds of arcane ensnarement. With her personal fiend-faced Hellknight armor destroyed, Suuls retained her Gray Maiden armor even after regaining her freedom and returning to Citadel Vraid. Since then, she has embraced her fury at being enslaved and the dread her new armor evokes among the populace of nearby Korvosia. She used acid to etch her armor with the imagery of her order, so the shining steel now bears double diabolical visages upon both her breast and blank helm. Impressed by her apparently unflinching adoption of the armor that once imprisoned her—and the utter mercilessness she has exhibited since—Suuls's peers among the Order of the Nail have come to refer to her as Lady Styx.

KELLES VEL

LN female fighter 3/wizard 3

Unlike most Gray Maidens, Kelles had no talent with a blade and absolutely no experience in martial combat. A student at the University of Korvosia with a keen mind for both antiquities and magic, she dreamed of one day being a scholar of the Jeggare Museum. Those dreams were shattered when Kelles caught the attention of a domineering Gray Maiden admirer, who added the lovely scholar's name to the list of those to be inducted into the ranks of the royal guard. Separated from her spellbook and with few physical abilities with which to leverage an escape, the kidnapped Kelles suffered through training that nearly killed her. Although the training strengthened her body, it left her physically disfigured and fractured her sheltered vision of the world. Abuse and violence forged her into a Gray Maiden, and to survive she performed the terrible



SHATTERED STAR

deeds demanded of her. When rebellion swept Korvosa, Kelles's post upon the bridge isolating Old Korvosa was quickly overwhelmed by the rebels. Falling back into the ruined district, she soon found herself alone and left to make her own decisions for the first time in months. She retreated into the heart of Old Korvosa, confused and disgusted with what she had become. Deciding that the life she had known was over, she was now determined to use the skills she had learned as a Gray Maiden to redeem herself. Now Kelles Vel is gone, replaced by rumors whispered among the desperate of Old Korvosa, stories that tell of the Midnight Maiden, who hunts the worst criminals of Korvosa's underworld, seeking atonement for her own evils or perhaps an end with a bit of meaning.

WOLCHINE SAVELTANA

NE female cleric of Urgathoa 5

The Church of Urgathoa's role in Queen Ileosa's plot to scour Korvosa of its unsavory lower classes ended with the demise of Lady Andaisin, a high priestess of that order. Yet this leader's death did not wipe Urgathoa's stain from the city completely. While the worshipers of the goddess of disease were scattered, several survived to continue their dark work. Using her penchant for duplicity and disguise, Wolchine took up the armor of a Gray Maiden and for months served as a member of the royal guard, spreading disease and corruption from behind a veil of steel. When the Gray Maidens were shattered, Wolchine once again sought to escape, fleeing into the tunnels beneath Korvosa and directly into the tentacles of one of city's notorious otyugh sewer dwellers. A combination of her quick tongue and the otyugh's fascination with the "shiny lady" saved her life, but left her the bloated monstrosity's prisoner. In the following months, the otyugh, Raxzhacmag, doted on Wolchine as a favored pet, keeping her in his cesspit palace and insisting she

eat the gifts he constantly lavished upon her—things an otyugh would enjoy, but poison and filth to a human. Wolchine survived through her magic and devotion to Urgathoa, but even as she has sought to manipulate her captor and worked to fashion him into the King Beneath the Streets—with the intention of drawing other creatures capable of assisting her escape—her captivity has unhinged her. Aside from narcissistically believing herself chosen by her goddess as a candidate for transformation into a daughter of Urgathoa, Wolchine has not removed her armor since the rebellion in the city above. In that time, through Raxzhacmag's hospitality, the false Gray Maiden has tripled in weight, leaving her a debilitated, demented creature trapped amid a slurry of steel, delusion, and impotent rage.

SURVIVING SECTS

Not all Gray Maidens were in Korvosa when the Crimson Throne toppled. While the vast majority faced death at the hands of the city's rebelling populace or as a result of trials in the following days, several Gray Maiden platoons were fulfilling their queen's will elsewhere within the city-state's domain. Though some attempted to return and avenge their queen, such attempts proved largely fruitless. The shrewdest commanders led their troops away from the site of their queen's defeat, forging new paths away from the turmoil of Korvosa.

ERINYES COMPANY

Sworn to a New Queen

Commander: Qualins Rachmirol
(LE female human cavalier 8)

Area of Operation:
Cheliox

Troops: Two dozen Gray Maidens, with more in training

By the time that Qualins Rachmirol received word of the uprising in Korvosa, it was already too late for her platoon of 26 Gray Maidens to intercede. Thinking swiftly, she ordered her soldiers on to Palin's Cove and commandeered a ship sailing for Westcrown. Their travels



THE GRAY MAIDENS

were long and treacherous, but eventually the surviving members of Rachmirol's troop reached the Chelish capital of Egorian, the home of Korvosa's onetime imperial rulers. Queen Abrogail took bemused note of the wayward knights from the empire's former frontier, but upon meeting with Rachmirol, the queen came to respect her devotion and prowess. Since then, Abrogail has seen fit to adopt Rachmirol and her platoon into the greater Chelish military, assigning the rogue Gray Maidens a variety of politically sensitive or particularly dangerous missions largely outside of Chelixa's borders. Their reputation of success and lethality has pleased the queen, who has since come to refer to these Gray Maidens as Erinyes Company.

FACELESS KAID'S BAND

Pledged to Steel and Gold

Commander: "Faceless" Kaid Brants (N female human fighter 4/rogue 2)

Area of Operation: Kaer Maga, Varisia

Troops: More than 30 diverse mercenaries

With her commander's brains bashed out by a gutter cleaner's shovel and her fellow Gray Maidens falling to rocks and quarrels around her, Kaid Brants slung a rope over the city wall she was assigned to defend and, cursing Ileosa for a Dis whore's daughter, told her squadmates that any who wanted to live should follow. Stealing horses, Kaid and 11 other Gray Maidens made their way to the only place any of them could think of where no one would care about their obvious pasts: Kaer Maga. Since then, Kaid and her squad have worked as mercenaries operating out of Downmarket in the City of Strangers. They've hunted Shoanti for 5 gold pieces per head, struck back against Hellknight bounty hunters, retrieved runaway slaves in the Bottoms, and looted lost halls in the Undercity. Since then, Kaid has lost nearly half of her original troop of Gray Maidens, but she has made a tidy profit as a mercenary leader and finds herself well suited to the role. She's replaced lost comrades with new members and even expanded her company. Now new members designate rank and seniority with pieces of Gray Maiden armor—each section of plate once belonging to fallen member. Only Kaid herself still retains a full set of Gray Maiden armor, lending her the moniker Faceless Kaid.

MAIDENS OF THE LADY'S LIGHT

Ileosa's Avengers

Commander: Oriana (CN female human fighter 8)

Area of Operation: The Lady's Light, Varisia

Troops: A dwindling number since leaving Korvosa

As her troops fell around her on the streets of Korvosa, Oriana called for retreat in the face of the rebel mobs and fled the city with her soldiers. In the time since, she has never forgotten her allegiance to Queen Ileosa and has

devoted herself to retaking Korvosa from its treacherous populace by any means. This goal has brought her and her troops to the Lady's Light at one of the farthest edges of Varisia, where she seeks to follow in her mistress's footsteps by seeking power amid the ruins of the Thassilonian realm of Eurythnia. More details on Oriana and her Gray Maidens can be found in this month's adventure, "Curse of the Lady's Light."

GRAY MAIDEN TROOPS

The Gray Maidens were by no means uniform in their experience or abilities. Drawn from every walk of life, some were experienced soldiers while others were little more than street thugs in impressive armor. Over the course of the Curse of the Crimson Throne Adventure Path, Gray Maidens are presented at a range of skill levels, from CR 2 foot soldiers to CR 8 palace guards. The Gray Maidens presented in this month's adventure, "Curse of the Lady's Light," provide examples of Gray Maidens filling the majority of this range. GMs who wish to create their own Gray Maidens of any level should make use of the following role. Roles are a new rules element that debuted in *Pathfinder Player Companion: Varisia, Birthplace of Legends*. These character builds provide suggested rules and advice for creating new characters of a specific theme. For more information on roles and a variety of samples for characters from Varisia, see *Varisia, Birthplace of Legends*.

GRAY MAIDEN

Fanatical Agents of a Fallen Queen

Specialty armored female soldiers, conscienceless killers

Race human; **Ethnicity** Chelaxian; **Gender** female

CLASS OPTIONS

Class fighter; **Class Features** weapon training (heavy blades)

Class cavalier (typically commanders); **Class Features** order (order of the cockatrice)

PREFERRED OPTIONS

Skills Intimidate

Feats Iron Will, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (longsword)

DESCRIPTION

The royal guard of a corrupt regime, the Gray Maidens enforced the will of Korvosa's notorious Queen Ileosa upon her beleaguered people. Fiercely devoted and willing to follow any command, no matter how heinous or inhuman, the Gray Maidens blend beauty and lethal skill behind emotionless steel visages. Since the death of Queen Ileosa, the Gray Maidens' numbers have dwindled, but most of those who survive cleave to vicious ambitions and dreams of avenging their fallen liege.

ROLEPLAYING

Persona absolutely loyal to leaders or cause, arrogant and superior, willing to fight dirty and win at any cost

Preferred Equipment full plate, heavy steel shield, longsword

SHATTERED STAR



TORAG

THE DWARVES BELIEVE THAT TORAG (TOR-AG) CREATED THE WORLD AT HIS GREAT FORGE, STRIKING IT AGAIN AND AGAIN WITH HIS HAMMER TO GET THE SHAPE HE DESIRED. AS THE ROCKS TUMBLED AND THE SPARKS FLEW, THE DWARVES WERE BORN, MADE OF STONE AND WITH BELLIES FULL OF FIRE. HE WATCHED OVER THE DWARVES DURING THEIR TIME IN THE DARKLANDS, AND AS THEY PURSUED THE ORCS TO THE SURFACE IN THE QUEST FOR SKY. DESPITE SETBACKS OVER THE MILLENNIA, UNDER HIS STERN EYE THE DWARVES FOUND PROSPERITY BENEATH THE SUN, MOON, AND STARS. A CONSUMMATE PLANNER, HE PREPARES BACKUPS AND CONTINGENCIES FOR NEARLY EVERY SITUATION. THOUGH EVERY DWARF WHO FALLS IN BATTLE PAINS HIS HEART, HE KEEPS HIS EYE ON THE FUTURE AND THE COUNTLESS DWARVEN LIVES EXTENDING FORWARD THROUGHOUT ETERNITY, LIKE GOLDEN LINKS IN A MIGHTY COAT OF MAIL.

TORAG

Torag loves the dwarven race (and, grudgingly, his non-dwarven worshipers), but is like a distant father figure who shows little of the affection he feels for his children. This is not because he's callous or cruel, but because he knows life is a hard journey and he wants his followers to grow up strong, determined, and competent—if he sheltered them from all hardship, they would not know the value of hard work or the satisfaction of earning greatness.

As god of the forge, the Father of Creation concerns himself with the art of creating and shaping metal. He believes that shoddy workmanship insults not only the crafter and the wielder of a tool or weapon, but the item itself. He pushes his followers to continually refine and improve their craft, whether in the materials they produce or the efficiency with which they produce them. An orc or goblin would craft a weapon that easily breaks; a true dwarf makes weapons that don't fail in battle and tools that don't wear quickly under heavy use. This belief in the sanctity of metalwork sparked Torag's hostility toward Droskar (see *Relations with Other Religions*). He opposes the destruction of well-crafted things, and frowns on burying armor and weapons (but not tools) with the dead, as these items can help protect a vulnerable community or bring needed coin to an impoverished one.

Torag believes that, like the necessary interlocking rings in chain mail, planning for a greater purpose and creating complex battle strategies work together to preserve life. However, he knows there are times when a dwarf needs to abandon a failing strategy and think on her feet, and he respects officers, soldiers, and wardens who demonstrate this quality. He prefers an organized defense over a tactical assault, and a tactical assault over a reckless charge. He opposes acting without thinking, rebellious thoughts, and individuals who place their community at risk. He does not believe there is glory in martyrdom, but honors those who sacrifice their own lives to save others.

Torag manifests as an older, cunning, powerful dwarf clad in heavy plate armor, with eyes glowing like molten gold. His hair and beard may be any common dwarven hair color, often with streaks of gray, and his hands are worn and scarred from centuries of hard work. He exudes a palpable aura of power, wisdom, and safety. In art, he is always depicted wearing intricate armor, and is typically shown busy at his forge hammering out a weapon or shield. Sometimes images depict him as a mighty guardian,

shielding dwarven children with his body as he clears away orcs and trolls with mighty sweeps of his warhammer, *Kaglemros* (dwarven for "forger of many weapons").

Torag shows he is pleased through reflections of his face on polished metal, preparations happening smoothly and ahead of schedule, and the discovery of mushrooms or stone fragments that exactly match the shape of his hammer. He sometimes sends messages as cryptic riddles that appear on stone surfaces for a short period of time. When he is angered, forges grow cold, shields crack, and even the simplest plan carries a feeling of impending doom. Earthquakes (whether localized or expansive) are the ultimate indication of his displeasure, but those who survive a deadly quake are considered blessed.

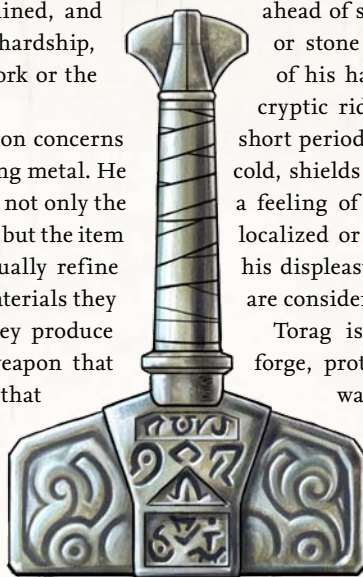
Torag is lawful good, and his portfolio is the forge, protection, and strategy. His weapon is the warhammer, as is his holy symbol. His domains are Artifice, Earth, Good, Law, and Protection. Most of his worshipers are dwarves, but he has many human followers as well, particularly in Druma and the Lands of the Linnorm Kings.

Dwarven priests typically serve larger communities, whereas human priests look after smaller settlements. Among dwarves, almost all of Torag's priests are clerics, with perhaps one-tenth being paladins or stalwart defenders

(see the *Pathfinder RPG Advanced Player's Guide*). Among his human worshipers in the Ulfen lands, Torag's priesthood consists almost entirely of clerics, with a handful of adepts in poorer villages directing prayers to him for protection. Human paladins of Torag are essentially unheard of. Priests create and maintain the armor and weapons of the faithful, build defenses for their settlements, and instruct militias in the use of weaponry for proper civil defense. Every priest undergoes at least a small amount of training in some kind of smithing, as well as Knowledge (engineering) to better construct defenses and Knowledge (history) to learn the battle tactics of famous leaders.

The faithful of Torag consider burrowing animals sacred, as well as all animals that dwell in caves and mountainous areas. They eat these animals only when starvation is the only other choice, though most temples sacrifice such animals at least one per year as an offering to Torag. Flying creatures that live underground are viewed as abominations and freaks, and it is taboo to eat them. In particular, bats, mobats, and skavelings are considered unclean animals.

Typical worshipers of Torag include dwarven smiths, soldiers, officers, and scouts. They craft tools and weapons



Aim high, plan well, and strike while the iron is hot, for unprepared metal shatters from a hammer's blow.

—*Hammer and Tongs:*

The Forging of Metal and Other Good Works

SHATTERED STAR

IRONBLOOM MUSHROOMS

Short and stunted, these small mushrooms are a favorite among dwarves but are rarely found outside of dwarven enclaves. They gained their name from thriving in dark places rich in iron, often sprouting up around dwarven forges. Outside of dwarven settlements, ironblooms are difficult to find.

Ironbloom mushrooms make up an important part of the diet of the dwarves of Five Kings Mountains, mainly because the fungi grow abundantly throughout their holdings. Ironblooms are rich in nutrients and have a light salty flavor, but a somewhat unpleasant earthy aftertaste. Because they are filling and weigh next to nothing, they make excellent traveling rations.



for the community, watch territorial borders, keep streets safe, plan and build defenses, and train others to forge and to protect their people. They are stable, dependable, conservative, loyal, and diligent.

Temple worship services take place at the central forge, with the high priest leading the ceremony and other priests assisting at the anvils. Services consist of long chants punctuated with hammers and bellows, using ritual chanting to keep time and proper pace. These services might incorporate actual crafting, resulting in the creation of one or more metal items for the community.

Torag greatly encourages his followers to marry, whether in a love-marriage or an arranged marriage. It is common for a priest to wed another priest from the same temple. The high priest typically arranges such marriages, with the consent of both families. Torag encourages his followers to have children, but given that dwarven couples might go decades without conceiving, this is a long-term plan (like much of the god's work). A couple that appears to be infertile might use magic or other methods to conceive.

TEMPLES AND SHRINES

Every act of smelting and smithing is considered a prayer to Torag, and even the smallest temple includes at least a small anvil. Most temples are circular, built around a large, central, fully functional forge, with satellite anvils throughout. The devout use all these workspaces at various times of the day. Because of the early morning noise from prayer-work, it is almost impossible to sleep in a temple, though some have a remote or sound-dampened chamber for when quiet is needed, such as for an infirmary. Outdoor settlements build their temples into the outer defensive wall, as this keeps the noise away from other residences and makes it easier for the priests to monitor the city's defenses. Priests enlarge temples to meet the needs of their

communities, and older settlements usually have grand cathedrals built around or over original, smaller temples. Many dwarven temples contain mausoleums, though most dwarves prefer to be buried in their family tombs. Every temple is stocked with weapons and foodstuffs so it can be used as a fortress and rallying point if the community comes under attack.

A typical shrine—whether public or in a home—is an alcove with an anvil-shaped altar. In dwarven communities, temples and shrines include a shelf to hold statuettes of Torag and the other dwarven deities so the priests can invoke prayers to them.

A PRIEST'S ROLE

Each morning, a priest rises early to stoke the coals of a temple forge, and then prepares breakfast while the forge reaches a suitable temperature. After eating, the priest does a little short-term work at the forge or anvil as a morning prayer, such as smelting a few chunks of copper or lead ore, or hammering a metal bar into a more useful shape for an apprentice or another priest to use. The priest prepares spells during this meditative, repetitive activity. After morning prayers, the priest leaves for assigned duties (which may be at the forge or anvil).

Most non-adventuring priests work as smiths for governmental or military organizations. They understand the practical needs of crafting as a necessary trade rather than as a form of artistic expression. A weapon or piece of armor with a smith-mark crowned by Torag's symbol might not be pretty, but it was surely tested for quality and durability. Priests who aren't inclined to work at a forge, anvil, or architect's desk all day gravitate toward leadership positions where they can use their knowledge to direct others on the battlefield or city walls, whipping them into shape and maintaining discipline. In a fortress with a priest of Torag serving as the steward, guards never sleep on duty.

Torag's followers take their responsibilities seriously, and usually work over one or two problems at any particular time. They can be patronizing like judgmental parents, or bark at their underlings about how a careless act could endanger everyone. In the company of others who share their faith, they relax a bit more. They don't like being idle, and usually tote small crafting projects with them at all times just to keep their hands busy, such as braiding leather cords into thicker strands (perhaps for eventual use as a cover for a weapon hilt) or inspecting a bag of crossbow bolt heads for flawed units in need of reforging.

The church is organized like a defensive army, with officers and a clear chain of command. They grant promotions and awards for excellent strategic ideas; heroic acts of defense in battle; and innovations in forging, smelting, and other crafting. Many settlements make the priesthood an official

part of the city guard, though priests must follow orders from lay officers only in times of civil defense.

As formal dress, the clergy wear work-worn, knee-length, heavy leather smithing aprons. Many priests do not decorate this garment, but some burn symbols into the leather or adorn it with studs, rivets, plates, or badges of steel or precious metal to commemorate significant events, such as marriage, the birth of a child, completion of the priest's first set of full plate, and so on. Priests also often carry large blacksmithing hammers during ceremonies; such a hammer may be plain or engraved, and is quite functional as a weapon. Priests and devout followers wear rings for their fingers, hair, and beards, often trading them among others of the faith to show friendship, debt, or allegiance.

Lay artisans garner respect within the church, especially exceptionally skilled smiths. Likewise, tactically minded lay members of the community are welcome to give their input to the temple priests, though they are rarely given any sort of official role in the religious hierarchy.

Because the temple contributes directly to community defense, priests heavily involve themselves in the community. Acolytes assist smiths when equipment runs short, aid in drilling new soldiers in military maneuvers and weapon training, and carry orders from generals to military outposts (often relying on spells like *sanctuary* to keep them safe). A typical adventuring priest is familiar with crafting, military hierarchy, and basic troop defense strategies.

HOLY TEXT

The official holy book of the church is *Hammer and Tongs: The Forging of Metal and Other Good Works*, which is usually bound in metal with interior pages of lacquered leather. In addition to prayers and the story of the creation of the dwarven race, it includes instructions on how to shape stone, build walls, smelt base metals, and forge iron and steel, as well as basic information about various predatory monsters and how to defeat them. The oldest copy of the book in a particular community (typically the one used in the main temple) includes a record of when the settlement was founded, which families or clans were involved in its founding, and other notable events in its history.

APHORISMS

Since Torag is a teacher of craft and strategy, over thousands of years his mortal students have created phrases to impart his wisdom to the next generation. Among these instructive phrases, the following are most common.

The Hand with the Hammer Shapes the Future: Craft and invention allowed dwarves and other civilized races to expand across the world. The artisan's mind thought up the first spear and hammer, the smelting of bronze and steel, and the construction of castles, clockworks, and even gunworks. Without these inventions, the civilized races would be like



SHATTERED STAR

goblins, huddling in the mud, fearing knowledge, and worshiping simple concepts like fire and rocks.

Hops and Water Is Not Beer: This phrase refers to the belief that inferior workmanship is unacceptable, and only one's best effort is good enough. No self-respecting dwarf would call a cup of water and hops "beer" because such a thing is unfinished and unpalatable. Likewise, a weaponsmith does not consider a poorly made axe or hammer to be a weapon. To avoid reprimands by their teachers, apprentices learn to call unfinished items by nicknames (for example, a hammerhead is a "slug") rather than the name of the final item. Because of this saying,

an apprentice known for making frequent mistakes is often called a "hopswater."

Among layfolk, this phrase is often altered to "Hope and water is not beer."



Let Them Break upon Our Shields: Though Torag is a war god, he would rather protect his followers than seek and destroy their enemies. This aphorism reminds the listeners of the power of a strong defensive position, and the fate of countless armies forced to give up after besieging an impenetrable fortress. Torag sincerely believes a successful offense requires a strong defense, and encourages his people to always have a safe retreat. In some clans, this phrase is rendered as "against our walls" instead of "upon our shields."

HOLIDAYS

No months in the standard Golarion calendar are named for Torag, though the dwarves call the month of Rova by the name Torawsh, believing it is a foolish thing to name a month for an evil, imprisoned god of destruction. The church celebrates anniversaries of successful battles, including the breaking of sieges.

Skylost: If a dwarven community has ties to one of the lost Sky Citadels, such as having been founded by dwarves from that location, the community mournfully notes the date that citadel was lost. However, each of these daughter communities might have its own specific date for that event, depending on what it considers significant, such as the when the last walls were breached, when the order to evacuate was given, or when the community's founders fled that citadel to establish a new home. Therefore, two towns founded by exiles from Koldukar (now Urgir in the Hold of Belkzen) might honor Skylost on different days because their patron clans evacuated the city on different days. On Skylost, dwarves reflect on the lives and accomplishments of slain ancestors. Non-dwarven temples (and those founded by clans from surviving citadels), however, usually do not observe this holiday.

RELATIONS WITH OTHER RELIGIONS

Torag cares little for destructive and aggressive deities, having battled them and their minions since the dawn of the world. The cult of Rovagug in particular draws Torag's hatred, for the Rough Beast's spawn have long seethed and squirmed in the deeper corners of the earth. Despite this loathing of Rovagug, Torag's followers do not get along well with Sarenrae's worshipers, as her disciples are generally too willing to forgive transgressions and too devoted to the sun, which to the long-lived, underground-dwelling dwarves is an indication of weakness. The Father of Creation respects Abadar for his adherence to law and commerce (which are especially valuable to the craft-inclined dwarves) and Irori for his discipline. He is friendly toward Cayden Cailean for his humor and love of ale, and respectful toward Iomedae for her battle prowess and devotion to order and good. He

gets along well with Erastil, perhaps the only deity more curmudgeonly than he is.

Torag is the head of the dwarven pantheon (see *Pathfinder Campaign Setting: Gods and Magic*), an extended family of gods and goddesses. Most of these deities are all but unheard of outside of dwarven communities, and it is rare even for a dwarf to worship one of them rather than Torag. The members of the pantheon defer to him except in matters that lie entirely in their jurisdiction rather than his. Rather than praying directly to these other deities, dwarves ask Torag to intercede on their behalf. Of the dwarven gods, only bitter Droskar, a former student of Torag and now the duergar god of toil and slavery, holds no allegiance to the Father of Creation, and the two deities are engaged in a slow-burning cold war.

NEW SPELLS

Clerics of Torag may prepare *fabricate* and *major creation* as 5th-level spells; his paladins may prepare them as 3rd-level spells. Paladins may prepare *mending* as a 1st-level spell.

In addition to *fallback strategy* (see *Gods and Magic*) and various spells granted by Torag on behalf of the other dwarven gods (see *Pathfinder Player Companion: Dwarves of Golarion*), his priests have access to the following spells.

FIREBELLY

School abjuration; **Level** cleric 1, druid 1, paladin 1 (Torag)

Casting Time 1 standard action

Components V, S, DF

Range personal

Target you

Duration 10 minutes/level

Saving Throw Reflex half, see text; **Spell Resistance** yes, see text

A magical fire warms your belly, granting fire resistance 5 and making your gut hot to the touch (but not enough to damage you or anything else). As a standard action, you can breathe a 15-foot cone of flame that deals 1d4 points of fire damage (Reflex half, SR applies). Each time you use this breath weapon, reduce the remaining duration of the spell by 1 minute.

The fire resistance of this spell otherwise acts like *resist energy*, interacting with other spells as that spell does.

IRONBLOOM SPROUTS

School transmutation; **Level** cleric 1, druid 1 (Torag)

Components V, S, DF, M (1 gp worth of powdered iron)

Targets 2d4 fresh mushrooms touched

This spell functions like *goodberry*, except as noted above and that it transforms 2d4 mushrooms into magical ironbloom mushrooms rather than transforming common berries into magical berries. Alternatively, you may create twice as many mushrooms, but each only has the nourishment ability of a *goodberry* and not the healing properties.

CUSTOMIZED SUMMON LIST

Priests of Torag can use *summon monster* spells to summon the following creatures in addition to the normal creatures listed in the spells. They are not allowed to use these spells to summon flying underground animals such as bats or dire bats.

Summon Monster I

Badger

Summon Monster III

Azer

Dire badger

PLANAR ALLIES

The Father of Creation's divine servants are powerful creatures and skilled metalworkers. Most have no time for nonsense, and when summoned prefer to immediately start planning—or take action if a plan is ready. They do not take kindly to being summoned by someone who acts rashly or succumbs to pressure from reckless or chaotic allies. Torag's herald, the Grand Defender (see page 88), resembles a huge, dwarf-shaped iron golem with a hammer and shield, known for casting off its outer layer of armor whenever it is "killed," only to reveal a smaller set underneath. Torag's most frequently summoned servitors are the following.

Ambassador Zurin: Clad in brass armor, this azer noble is an imposing sight, with rippling muscles and a broad, flame-red beard. He enjoys studying the tactics of opponents, whether on the battlefield or at the diplomat's table, and uses his knowledge to outmaneuver superior opponents. He is on good terms with various fire elementals of note, and though he dislikes efreet, Zurin is not averse to negotiating with them if necessary—but gets a wicked glint in his eye if any payment offered to him would come in the form of contracts for the services of efreet.

Hrilga Shield-Maiden: This yellow-haired dwarf is a celestial werebear and a skilled cavalier. Though comfortable giving orders to soldiers, she prefers to lead the charge, relying on her martial skill, supernatural resilience, and tactical knowledge to carry her allies to victory. In hybrid and bear form, her fur is bright metallic gold. She loves honeyed pastries and thick mead.

Stoneriver: This beefy brute of a bulette is only marginally smarter than others of its kind, but it obeys Torag's will and has a ruthless cunning that lets it function like an expert hunter and tracker. It is immune to fire, and can burrow through lava as easily as it does earth. Its favorite activity is crunching duergar bones, but it would love to be offered an evil halfling for a meal.



NEW PROFESSIONS

PATHFINDER'S JOURNAL: LIGHT OF A DISTANT STAR 2 OF 6

The day after I fell back in with my Magnimarian friends, I found myself walking the same streets where I had first spied Shess. The same streets, the same destination, but now everything was different. Was I Taldara Meirlanel the Pathfinder, explorer, and chronicler? Or Tal the thief?

Scratching Mordimor behind the ear as we walked through lanes that now seemed somehow less hostile and foreign, I tried to dismiss the whole notion. My father would have said it was my human side—my “blind side” he called it, with no small measure of contempt—that

cared so much for labels and absolutes. “Scholar or thief?” he would have said, dismissing the whole thing with a wave of his hand. “Why not both? And much more besides.”

Why not both, indeed.

I had sent word to my employer, the alchemist Gundsric, yesterday by courier as soon as I was able. His reply, a terse rescheduling, awaited me when I returned to my lodgings at the Sated Shark late that night. For the past six weeks, I had assisted him in cataloging his massive collection of artifacts, and engaged in a great deal of

NEW PROFESSIONS

translation and annotation of the rare scrolls and tomes he had accumulated. It was stimulating and rewarding work, and the dwarf's library was perhaps the finest in the city outside of the archives of the Cyphermites. It also paid very well, for the wealthy dwarf had once held a high position at Riddleport's famed Gas Works and, it was rumored, had further enriched himself through private expeditions into the poisonous underground world beneath the forges.

Thus, my guilt at entering the dying dwarf's service under false pretenses was acute. It had not been chance that had led me to Gundsric's door, but rather a directive from Sheila Heidmarch, Venture-Captain of the Pathfinder Lodge of Magnimar and my immediate superior in the Society. The orders—which came in the form of a suggestion—were to verify the rumors that Gundsric had come into possession of the last journal of Jan Lortis, the Pathfinder who had famously discovered the trans-dimensional tomb of the Gepesh twins in Ustalav, and who had disappeared with no word while exploring the wilds of eastern Varisia two decades ago.

Verify the rumors, or reclaim the journal if possible. Direct offers to buy the journals had failed, and subsequent attempts to arrange for a copy to be made were turned away by an irritable Gundsric, who denied any knowledge of the text. To describe the dwarf as possessive would be a gross understatement, and it was thought that any further queries about the journals would only alienate him further. Therefore, Gundsric did not know that I had any affiliation with the Society, and neither had I mentioned the journal. Instead, I worked in his home, staying alert to any signs of my true goal, or any mention of Lortis or his expedition.

Scholar, thief... and spy?

Gundsric's house straddled the border between the Wharf District and the tangle of tenements, grog shops, and brothels disdainfully referred to by the locals as Rotgut. It was likely the most lawless district in Riddleport, and certainly the most rundown. A curious place for a dwarf who had retired rich from the Gas Works to make his home. Perhaps the rumors were true that Gundsric was as pleased to sell his potions to any street scum who met his price as he was to supply the city's wealthier and more respected individuals. Or maybe it was that, suffering from fatal black lung contracted in the carbauxine mines below the city, coughing his life away bit by bit, Gundsric no longer feared the knives and clubs of the urban predators all around him.

To see his home, however, was to get a different impression of Gundsric's desire for security.

Approaching it from the west through a narrow lane between leaning rows of strake-sided buildings, it seemed at first a lichen-slick wall at the end of the

street. As I drew closer, the wall revealed itself as a stone foundation making up half the height of a fortresslike three-story dwelling. It was as architecturally alien to the city as a Shoanti felt tent would seem pitched inside the Black Dome of Sothis. The house's few windows—heavily shuttered with iron-shod marine oak—were situated asymmetrically around the upper story. Decades of weather had rusted the shutters, leaving streaks along the sides of the house like the dried blood of some long-neglected wounds. Overall the place was as squat, ugly, and guarded as the dwarf himself.

I did not have long to wait after rapping with the heavy bronze knocker—a ring through the nose of a verdigris bull's head—before I was greeted with the metallic clacking of locks and bolts from within. As always, Mordimor mumbled his displeasure at this. Gundsric's front door was of steel-hard black wood, which I suspect had been alchemically treated. The only other access to his dwelling was a portcullis-fronted double door leading from his basement to a damp alley that ran some ten feet below street level around the back of his house.

With the snicking of the last lock, the door swung inward. Gundsric stood filling the doorway like some stunted old tree. What strength had once been his was long dissipated by his illness, and his eyes bulged from a gaunt face that seemed to have had all the flesh sucked from it below his dry yellow skin. He wore a heavy leather apron over threadbare cloth, and was stained and soiled from head to foot. On a silver chain around his neck hung the battered pewter flask I had never seen him without. His right shoulder was higher than his left, resulting in a hump that lent him a leaning, unbalanced aspect. Most striking was his beardless face, withered like an old fruit. Many of the dwarven carbauxine miners of the Gas Works trimmed or even shaved their beards to better accommodate the cumbersome breathing apparatuses they employed. Whether Gundsric had done so and kept the fashion, or whether his beard had fallen out as a side effect of black lung, I couldn't guess. His beardlessness marked him as a dwarf apart, sick and alone.

"Elven reliability," he said, glowering at me beneath bushy eyebrows like a tangle of iron wire. "This is how you repay me for my generosity."

It was a conversation I had had with him many times before, and one it is needless to relate here. It was something of a formality, each of us reminding the other of our usefulness, of our lack of other options. Gundsric needed me because no scholar in the city would work with him due to his abrasiveness and bad reputation. I, as a penniless academic denied access to the Cypher Lodge (or so my story went), had no other employment options that did not involve learning a new profession—most especially the world's oldest, as Gundsric never failed to imply.

In the end he assented to my entry, his black eyes scanning the street suspiciously as if seeing an assassin in every shadow. I moved into the dim interior, flinching slightly at the always-jarring—and always-different—commingling of odors within. Today the eggy stink of sulfur had joined hands with the harsh chemical reek of ammonia to produce a bouquet of truly unwelcoming proportions. Beneath it all, hardly discernible, was the ever-present whiff of the noxious carbauxine the dwarf used to light and heat his home.

“Don’t just stand there sniffing. Get to work. And don’t let that weasel of yours wander around again—this can be a dangerous place.” Gundsric finished his reproach with an explosive cough, lungs rattling like wet parchment. Before he stumped off to his basement workshop—one of many rooms I had never seen in his house—he fixed Mordimor and me with a wicked grin, his teeth flecked with fresh blood.

I went upstairs through a dark, narrow stairway to the workroom, a small, wood-paneled chamber containing a single desk and weakly burning gas lamp. I busied myself with the familiar routine of translation while Mordimor slept curled up in my lap. The room was as spare as a cloister, and other than the corridor and stair I had just moved through and the foyer and rude privy at the entrance to the house, it was the only part of Gundsric’s home I was allowed access to without his supervision. What lay beyond the barred doors I passed almost every day was largely unknown to me.

When the dwarf had new work for me, he would set out the items or texts in this workroom, along with terse instructions and a quantity of elixirs that aided in translation. My knowledge of languages is not inconsiderable, but Gundsric’s collection included many texts in obscure and antique dialects that were unreadable even to those fluent in the modern forms of those languages. Since my own minor magical skill is not equal to the task of more than a few minutes of such translation work, and Gundsric’s potions were far more potent than any spell I could ever employ, I had come to rely on the alchemist’s elixirs almost exclusively. Even, I am sad to say, to the point of shunning my own scholarship. Each draught did more than merely convey the meaning and nuance of unfamiliar scripts, but seemed to invigorate and even elevate all my efforts, extending my awareness beyond what I had ever been capable of in the past.

This had been, in many respects, the happiest period of my life, however brief it was, and however false so much that underlay it would one day turn out to be. In that tiny, dim room, I had worked as if possessed, seeing with better, brighter eyes into the rich lore of the untrammled past. It was a kind of meditation, a trance,

and often the hours would slip by without my noticing their passage.

But that day was different. I was distracted, the twenty-sixth-century folio in the Taldan vulgate I was annotating lying neglected before me while my thoughts drifted to Kostin. He and Aeventius had not been idle in the past months, and both had regaled me with stories last night in the common room of the Gold Goblin. The old cons they had pulled together as teenagers had been dusted off anew as they lied and cheated their way around Riddleport’s seedier shoreside, all the while setting things up for their big score. Even the acerbic wizard had, after a few glasses of Chelish red, laughed and joked about their progress.

What would they have done in my position? Here I was, virtually unproven to the Society, entrusted with a task by my venture-captain, and yet what progress had I made? I caught myself toying with the faintly glowing elixirs then, fingers running over the cool glass vials, tracing the star-shaped symbols engraved on the corks. There were three left in the rack, which meant that I had consumed two already in the space of only a few hours. Naturally the effect should diminish somewhat, using them everyday as I had, but my rate of consumption had begun to worry me. I snatched my hand back, resisting the urge to have another potion. Mordimor stirred on my lap, fixing me with a quizzical look.

I surveyed the nearly featureless room. The dim glow of a single gas lantern was adequate to my needs; in fact, my already keen vision seemed sharper than ever before. It was a side effect of the potions, of course. I placed my quill in its holder and pushed the folio aside, my thoughts trending in new directions. What would Kostin do in my position?

Thoughts racing almost too fast to follow, I stood up, hardly noticing Mordimor’s grumbling protest as he plopped off of my lap. I was seeing Gundsric’s house now, seeing all of it in my mind’s eye, in much the same way my imagination had danced along the edges of the Cyphergate, or as it did when confronted with the various minor artifacts of the dwarf’s collection. The floor plan was unconventional, almost bizarre, but how much of what I was now imagining was truly guesswork? I knew a wide stairwell ran from the main floor up two flights; I had seen this when Gundsric led me down a normally locked corridor to a room containing his Keleshite ceramics. That stairway ran parallel to the one I climbed everyday—staring straight ahead I would be looking at those stairs right now, could I but see through the paneled wall. But with the stairs in such a position a dead spot was created, a wasted triangle of space, between the stairwell and the exterior wall.

It was then that I noticed the door.

NEW PROFESSIONS

I rushed to the spot, running my hands over the smooth walnut paneling. How could I have failed to see this, day after day? Sliding my fingernails in the cracks between panels I gave a light tug, to no avail. I tried another panel, while Mordimor sniffed along the crease where wall met floor. There was no give at all in the wood, and I stepped back, exasperated.

And then, as certain as my vision of the door had been, the logic of its opening came to me.

It was a dark burl of wood, low down along the wall but not uncomfortably so for someone of the dwarf's stature. A hard push was all it took. With a click, the panel before me popped away from the wall and swung gently outward. Pulling it open all the way, I could see a dark, slant-ceilinged hall running deeper into the house.

Mordimor chuffed in surprise.

"I know, Mord. I can't see how we could have missed it, either." I stooped to scratch his head, and a glint of light on the back of the door drew my attention. There, a little below chest-height for me—but eye-level for a dwarf—was affixed a kind of prism. Leaning down, peering into the thick, green glass, I could see almost perfectly through the thin door, despite it being smooth and solid on the other side.

So, I had been watched. The spy had herself been spied upon.

Since I had come to rely on Gundsric's potions entirely, I had stopped even bothering to cast my own translation spells. Thus I had fallen back into the daily habit of preparing the simple magic I used to speak with Mordimor, something we both looked forward to for a few minutes every day. Conversing with an animal in such a way is never as straightforward or precise as people imagine, but after years of mutual experience Mordimor and I have come to understand one another quite well.

I cast the spell now, the words spilling out of me in an old familiar rhythm, the gestures nearly automatic. A successful casting is always recognizable, and I immediately felt the power flood through me, a comforting yet invigorating wash of energy. I told Mordimor to wait in the shadow at the base of the narrow stair and call a warning to me should the dwarf emerge from his basement laboratory. Not for the first time, I envied wizards and their uncanny bond with their familiars. But perhaps this lack of true integration, this reliance on a spell to bridge the gulf of incomprehension between two beings so inherently different, is the price Mordimor and I pay for retaining our individual selves.

My badger friend grumbled in mild consternation, told me to be careful, and rubbed his whiskered snout against

my hand in a gesture that needed no spell to translate. He then bounded off down the stair, a black-and-white ripple of fur. With one last look over my shoulder, I entered the secret hall.

It was long and low, and faced on one side with a shelf littered with artifacts. Here and there I recognized objects and texts that I had worked with in my little room. This, then, was the path Gundsric took to carry materials in and out of the workroom. The path he used to creep up to the door to spy on me, for whatever suspicious reasons of his own. I could hardly resent the fact or hold it against him, given my own intentions.

The first room I came to was the mirror of my workroom, though cluttered with a disarray of manuscripts and tomes on leaning shelves. My impression of Gundsric as an organized, orderly dwarf suddenly needed revision, for this place was clearly the product of a chaotic, almost



**"PERHAPS THERE'S MORE
TO THE OLD DWARF
THAN MEETS THE EYE."**

careless mind. Or, perhaps, one preoccupied with other matters. Dark as it was—the carboxine lanterns here maintaining but the merest flicker—I could still make out the steep stairs leading up to the third floor in the black portal at the far end of the room. Pausing briefly to listen for any telltale warning from Mordimor, I stifled the apprehension that had been threatening to overtake me since I first opened the secret door. Taking a deep breath, I tried to calm my racing heart. This was what I had come for, I reminded myself. Not the research. Not the translation. This.

I moved to the stairs, and upward. For all I knew, the journal of Jan Lortis was lodged in one of the leaning piles in the room I had just passed through, along with a dozen other unguessed rarities. But I did not have time to check every spine and catalog. Already a plan was formulating in my mind, one I thought worthy of my new profession, and one I hoped would allow me to return to these rooms at my leisure in the near future.

Just ahead, the light increased, though the air grew yet more oppressive with heat and dust. The first room on the third floor was a jumble of old armor and antique weapons, objects once cared for and now given over to neglect. A silver-chased breastplate of Cheliox's old empire lay dusty in a corner where it had fallen from an armor stand. An Aldori dueling sword, its hilt encrusted with emeralds and pearls, hung dingy and forgotten from pegs on the far wall, the blade's once-fine steel freckled with rust. A dozen other such treasures languished here, as if imprisoned for the crime of daring to approach perfection. It was an armory that would make any prince

envious, but it seemed more the hoarding of some kleptomaniacal goblin chieftain than the collection of a wealthy dwarf, a race that prized metalcraft above almost any other art.

The next room told a similar tale of disregard in iron, bronze, and polished stone, containing as it did an extraordinary array of Ulfen ritual vessels engraved with Skald runes. I fought the urge to linger, moving quickly, hoping to find what I was looking for before my nerve gave out or Mordimor signaled me. Two more rooms, two more neglected treasure-troves, and I finally came upon what I sought. A window.

I slipped over to it, remaining alert to the room's contents. Here for the first time I was seeing evidence of Gundsric's profession. The room was laden with glassware in a myriad of esoteric shapes, as well as racks of carefully labeled solutions in every color imaginable. One whole wall was dominated by a system of small drawers, and the pungent odors of a thousand reagents danced in the thick air. Another wall was pinned with dozens of curling parchment maps, yellow and brittle with age, each bearing heavy notations around the irregular shapes of an underground tunnel system. In front of the room's only window, a small table held a gas burner beneath an armature designed to hold containers above the flame. Here, at least, was some semblance of the careful mind I had always ascribed to the dwarf, and it seemed the disregard with which he treated his collection did not extend to the alchemical tools of his craft.

At the window, I tugged hard at the shutter's bolt. It was stuck fast, no doubt having remained locked for years. Straining, with both hands wrapped around the rust-furred toggle, I wrenched at it. Once, twice, three times—I may as well have been trying to pry a stone loose from the house's foundations. I had to make this work, had to open it now, as I knew I would never have the

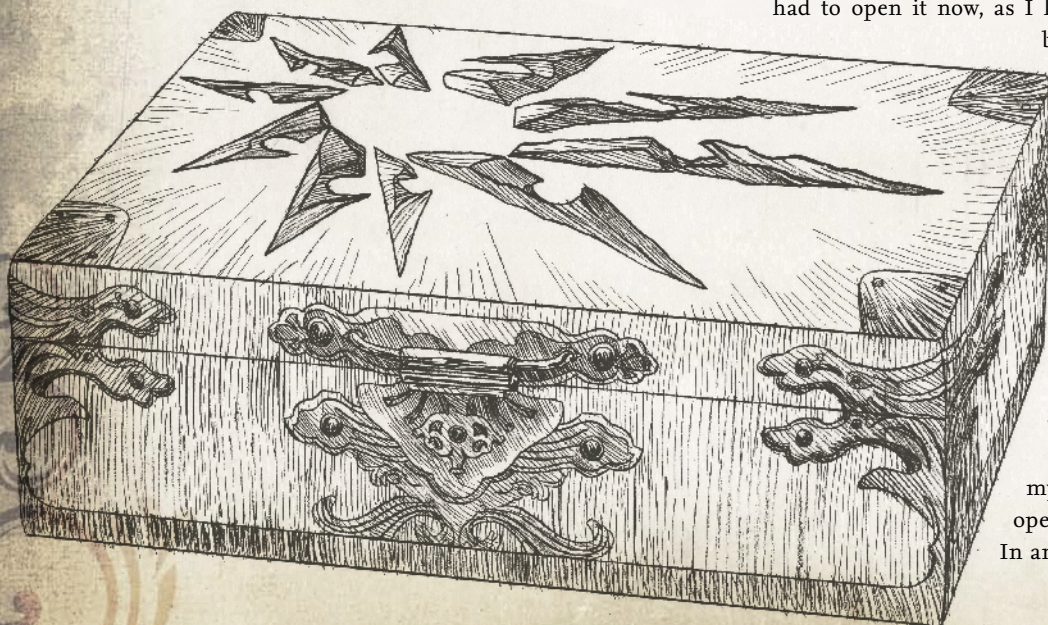
bravado to attempt this again.

Whatever chance I—or more to the point, Kostin or Shess—had to break into this house later and search it more thoroughly depended on opening this bolt. Opening it right now.

Almost without noticing, I caught a sound barely louder than the pounding of my own heart. It was Mordimor's warning bark, far below.

With a savage jerk I flung myself at the bolt, forcing it open and crashing to the floor. In an attempt to arrest my fall, or

"WHAT IS IT ABOUT THE SYMBOL THAT SO CAPTURES ONE'S ATTENTION?"



at least minimize the noise I was making, I had grabbed unsuccessfully for the nearest handhold, knocking a small box off the table. I stood up quickly, pulse racing, hardly feeling my scraped palms, and scooped the rectangular box—about as large as a loaf of bread—off the floor and replaced it on the table.

Something about the box stole my attention. It bore the same star-shaped rune as the translation elixirs, and I noticed for the first time the similarity it held to a Thassilonian sihedron, though Gundsric's star was composed of ten arms of disproportionate and unequal length. Something about it twisted at my gut, and even as I yanked my eyes away, I felt it calling them back, dragging my attention toward it. Sweat broke out on my forehead as I forced myself to look elsewhere.

More of the translation potions stood on a rack next to the gas burner. Without thinking, I grabbed one of the vials and slipped it into my pouch.

But I had no time to spare on exploring this further. Still feeling the box's siren call, I turned and raced back the way I had come. Again Mordimor's warning bleat reached me, and my fear at being caught, at ruining my chances of ever finding the journal of Jan Lortis, paled in comparison to my concern for Mordimor's safety. In only a few minutes my evaluation of Gundsric had changed, and now I saw the bitter, angry dwarf as something other than pitiable. Whether it was my fear that suggested this to my already hyper-stimulated mind, or perhaps my own intuitive understanding of his character brought on by the glimpse at Gundsric's private rooms, I could not say. What I did know with a sudden, undeniable certainty was that I had been underestimating the alchemist—perhaps dangerously so.

I sped through the dust and the jumble of the third-floor rooms, and down the stair as fast as I was able. I was hot, dizzy, all my fears given a sickening, vivid edge by the potion. Once again, I heard Mordimor's cry as I entered the secret corridor, though this time it was punctuated by Gundsric's own shouts. Dashing down the hall, I experienced one of those moments when time seems to slow, when even the simplest things seem fraught with difficulty, and in that short corridor I endured an eternity's worth of dread.

Emerging from the passage after what was in reality but a few seconds, I was relieved to see the workroom empty. But the noise of Gundsric's cursing and Mordimor's bleating had grown louder. I spun, slamming the secret door in my haste to get it closed. Wincing at the thud, I lunged toward the stair, just as Mordimor shot up and out of the darkness of the stairwell and into my arms. He was trembling but unhurt.

"Torag take you, vermin!" Gundsric clambered up into the room, eyes red and bulging. His lips and chin were

smearred with bright blood. Seeing me, he roared and shook his fist. "Your damnable skunk bit me!" he ranted, his words transitioning into a bloody, hacking cough that robbed him of all speech.

Still clutching Mordimor, I squeezed past the coughing dwarf and took the stairs two at a time. I could not stay in this house another minute—I was shaking as badly as poor Mord. Over my shoulder I said something about having to leave early, making some sort of inarticulate apology. I do not truly remember what I said, but I still recall the tremulousness of my own voice and my fear that the dwarf should notice it.

He stumped after me, slant-shouldered, moving like some poorly made, clumsy-limbed golem. His hacking cough boomed off the walls and filled the close spaces of the house—a metronome tracking the rhythm of his dying.

I fumbled at his front door, Mordimor clinging to my shoulder. The sensible thing would be to talk, ease the dwarf's suspicions. He was angry at my badger's unlawful wandering, at being bitten, but Gundsric knew nothing of my own explorations. The rational part of me screamed to slow down, to smooth things over as I had done so often before. But I could not—my perception of the dwarf had altered, and without being able to say why, I now regarded the thing that hacked and gurgled in the corridor behind me as a monster.

As I worked the last bolt in a panic, his bloody hand closed over mine.

My flesh rebelled at his touch. He gave off heat like a forge fire. So close, I could smell the brimstone stink of him, the riotous mingling of odors both sour and sweet that surrounded him like an aura. Paralyzed, my body screamed silently to push him away, to draw my knife. To kill him if I could.

With a snarl, he threw open the last bolt and flung the door wide.

"Get out," he said, voice husky and crackling with mucus.

I slipped around him, not daring to look. The humid street air that greeted me was like a breath of spring after my ordeal. I hastened to be on my way, body aching and tense, tendons like the snare-strings of some sprung trap.

At the end of his street I paused, daring to look behind me, still cradling Mordimor. Gundsric stood in his door, a dark silhouette, crooked and still as any broken thing. The sun was barely past noon, and the air was as rank and stifling as any other mid-Erastus day in Riddleport. But standing there, looking at Gundsric, I felt a chill as cutting as the windward shadow of the Winterwall steal over me. Shivering, and with the black shape of the dwarf still watching me, I turned and lost myself in the comforting anonymity of the crowd.

SHATTERED STAR



BESTIARY

THASSILONIAN RUINS DOT THE LANDSCAPE OF VARISIA. THOSE DELVING INTO THESE RUINS IN SEARCH OF OLD LORE, LOST ARCANES TECHNIQUES, AND PRICELESS TREASURES ENCOUNTER MORE THAN JUST DUSTY ROOMS AND COBWEB-CHOKED CORRIDORS—THEY ALSO COME ACROSS ANCIENT PROTECTORS AND NEW INHABITANTS USING THE RUINS AS LAIRS. SOME OF THESE THREATS BUBBLE UP FROM BELOW AND OTHERS TRICKLE DOWN INTO THE DARK HALLS AND CRUMBLING CHAMBERS. FOR THIS REASON, EVERY EXPEDITION TO ONE OF THESE THASSILONIAN RUINS SHOULD INCLUDE LEARNED SCHOLARS, CANNY EXPLORERS, AND MORE THAN A LITTLE MUSCLE.

—ANCIENT HISTORY OF THE INNER SEA

BESTIARY

This month's entry into the Pathfinder Bestiary drags you through the swamps to discover grotesque variants of boggards, ancient Thassilonian constructs, and the herald of the Father of Creation. While Varisia as a whole is a lightly explored frontier, the Mushfens are notorious for being uncharted and largely impassable. Such a petri dish of danger is sure to provide ample opportunity for adventure.

CHANCE MEETINGS, MALCONTENTEDS, AND MONSTERS

Although much of the Shattered Star Adventure Path takes place in dungeons across Varisia, adventurers still have to get to and from those dungeon sites, which usually has them trailblazing through hazardous terrain. In these places, all manner of perilous creatures await the chance to feed on fresh humanoid flesh. Here you'll find a random encounter table suitable for this volume of the Pathfinder Adventure Path, as well as three encounter hooks to add to your Shattered Star campaign.

Some of the creatures on the table can be encountered on the surface in the area around the entrance of the dungeon while others are found in the darkened depths. If the resulting roll is a creature not suitable for your particular environment, roll on the table again or simply choose an appropriate encounter. This table and these entries build upon some of the typical encounters found in the Mushfens, a swampy land of boggards, marsh giants, and even stranger beasts.

Dungeon Stowaways (CR 5): Creeping through the dungeon corridors in its centipede form or fluttering throughout the darkened halls in its bat form to escape notice, a quasit (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 66) named Skraleses is squatting in a portion of the dungeon, hoping to make it her own. In her time in this dungeon, Skraleses befriended another strange lurker in the complex, a phantom fungus (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 3 219) that follows the little demon around, cloaked in invisibility. Each of these creatures uses its invisibility to harass and annoy victims, and to aid in hasty escapes if noticed by the other dungeon denizens. In addition, Skraleses keeps a crawling hand (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 2 59) as a pet, and sometimes uses the disgusting creature as bait to lure out some of the other creatures in the dungeon.

Foul Harpies (CR 6): Nesting in the thick canopy of trees that shade the Mushfens, a pair of harpies (*Bestiary* 172) harass humanoids who explore the nearly impassable swamp. These two harpies are clutchmates, and twins at that—a rarity among harpies. The twins often clash with boggards, but since they prefer the taste of other humanoids, complaining of the weird fishy taste of the bloated frogfolk, they always keep an eye on those who venture into the Mushfens. These twin harpies have tattered black feathers and bright orange, taloned legs, and

MUSHFENS ENCOUNTERS

d%	Result	Avg. CR	Source
1–4	1d8 giant frogs	4	<i>Bestiary</i> 135
5–9	1 gray ooze	4	<i>Bestiary</i> 166
10–14	1 leech swarm	4	<i>Bestiary</i> 187
15–19	1 phycomid	4	<i>Bestiary</i> 2 210
20–24	1d12 stirges	4	<i>Bestiary</i> 260
25–29	1 venomous snake swarm	4	<i>Bestiary</i> 3 249
30–34	1 basidiron	5	<i>Bestiary</i> 28
35–39	1 gibbering moulder	5	<i>Bestiary</i> 153
40–44	1 green hag	5	<i>Bestiary</i> 167
45–49	1 ochre jelly	5	<i>Bestiary</i> 218
50–54	1d8 boggards	6	<i>Bestiary</i> 37
55–59	1 hodag	6	<i>Bestiary</i> 3 148
60–64	1 hungry fog	6	<i>Bestiary</i> 3 152
65–69	1d8 swamp barracuda	6	<i>Magnimar, City of Monuments</i> 61
70–74	1d4 vooniths	6	<i>Bestiary</i> 3 283
75–79	1 black pudding	7	<i>Bestiary</i> 35
80–84	1d10 blindheims	7	<i>Bestiary</i> 2 46
85–89	1 young black dragon	7	<i>Bestiary</i> 92
90–94	1d8 faceless stalkers	8	<i>Bestiary</i> 2 122
95–100	1 marsh giant	8	<i>Bestiary</i> 2 129

their skin on their necks and faces is a landscape of scarlet rashes and bulbous growths, giving them an appearance of carrion birds. A favorite tactic of the harpies is to stalk a victim from the air before beginning their captivating song, after which they perch high in a tree and allow their prey to come to them. One maintains the song while the other ravages the humanoid. For the victims that follow, they take turns switching their roles.

Hostile Hunters (CR 7): A half-dozen ragtag humans move through the swamp as naturally as boggards or lizardfolk might. The group is led by a man called Helgath (use the statistics for a monster hunter on page 257 of the *Pathfinder RPG GameMastery Guide*), who claims he's searching for Mushfen Mel—a 60-foot long anaconda that's said to have a humanoid arm growing out of its neck. Accompanying Helgath is Kurna (use the statistics for a trapper on page 276 of the *GameMastery Guide*), a ruthless and filthy trapper known more for selling ratty raccoon pelts than for monster hunting. Helgath chose Kurna for this mission because she agreed to bring along her son and three cousins (use the statistics for a bandit on page 258 of the *GameMastery Guide*). This mud-caked group is tired and hungry, and they appeal to the PCs for aid, but they truly plan on robbing the PCs blind and leaving the bodies in the marsh for other creatures to feed upon.

SHATTERED STAR

BOGWID

This nightmare shambles along the ground on eight muscular tentacles that leave behind a clear viscous residue stinking of putrefaction. Its amphibian skin is moist, green-black, and covered in warts and protuberances. On its back, dozens of fist-sized pustules shift and pulsate with nauseating vitality, like sentient oily bubbles threatening to burst.

BOGWID

CR 5



XP 1,600

CN Medium aberration

Init +8; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +2

Aura revolting aura (10 ft., DC 13 Fort)

DEFENSE

AC 19, touch 14, flat-footed 15 (+4 Dex, +5 natural)

hp 47 (5d8+25)

Fort +5, **Ref** +5, **Will** +1

Resist acid 5, cold 5

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft., climb 20 ft., swim 20 ft.

Melee 2 slams +7 (1d6+4 plus nauseating touch)

Ranged offspring +7 ranged touch (1d2 bleed plus disease)

Special Attack ravenous young

STATISTICS

Str 19, **Dex** 18, **Con** 18, **Int** 3, **Wis** 4, **Cha** 13

Base Atk +3; **CMB** +7; **CMD** 21 (33 vs. trip)

Feats Improved Initiative, Stealthy, Toughness

Skills Climb +16, Escape Artist +6, Perception +2, Stealth +11 (+19 in swamps), Swim +12; **Racial Modifiers** +8 Stealth in swamps

SQ amphibious

ECOLOGY

Environment any swamps or underground

Organization solitary or clutch (1 adult plus 2–8 adolescents)

Treasure none

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Disease (Ex) *Bogwid Fever*: Bite—injury; *save* Fort DC 16, *onset* 1 day, *frequency* 1/day, *effect* 1d2 Str damage and shaken, *cure* 2 consecutive saves. The DC save is Constitution-based.

Nauseating Touch (Ex) The bogwid's touch is disgusting. Creatures hit by its slam attack must succeed at a DC 16 Fortitude save or be nauseated for 1 round. The save DC is Constitution-based.

Ravenous Young (Ex) Each round, a bogwid can launch one of the offspring clinging to its back at a target within 10 feet as a ranged touch attack. On a successful hit, the offspring attaches itself to the target and begins draining blood, automatically dealing 1d2 points of bleed damage each round (and possibly infecting the target with bogwid fever). As a full-round action, a creature can attempt to remove one of these offspring, either by bludgeoning it with a fist or pulling it off. Either way, removing an offspring kills the larval creature. Someone other than the target the offspring is attached to can also perform this action. Anyone using

a weapon to kill or remove an attached offspring deals half of the damage to the creature to which the offspring is attached. A bogwid can launch up to 10 offspring per day before it must rest and gestate more larval young.

Revolting Aura (Ex) The bogwid is both visually and odoriferously revolting. Any creature within 10 feet of a bogwid must succeed at a DC 16 Fortitude save or be sickened. This effect persists as long as the creature is within the aura and for 2 rounds thereafter. A creature that successfully saves is not subject to the same bogwid's revolting aura for 24 hours. The save DC is Constitution-based.

Aberrant beasts of ancient origin, bogwids are loathsome, skulking predators that inhabit the gloomy swamps and damp subterranean places of the world. Looking like a bloated, eight-limbed, greenish-black mix of frog and tentacled beast, this asexual creature is most notorious for the larvae it carries on its back.

ECOLOGY

Some scholars suggest the large, muscular body of the bogwid serves as little more than transport for its ravenous young—30 to 40 fist-sized, pustule-like protuberances that cling to its back, inflating and deflating, shifting and quivering with disturbing vitality. The bogwid attacks with two of its undulating tentacles, the bottoms of which are lined with ragged, bony ridges that can tear hungrily into exposed flesh. However, the more disturbing danger is those pulsating orbs of flesh on its back: larvae that are capable of launching themselves as far as 10 feet and attaching to creatures with their fanged sucker mouths. Once one of these disgusting things sinks its jagged teeth into flesh, it begins sucking blood and does not release its grip until it or the target is dead.

When a bogwid makes a kill, several of its young jump upon the warm carcass and feed greedily. If the victim is a Medium or larger creature, these rapacious larvae fight for the opportunity to burrow into the corpse. Over the course of 2 weeks, the burrowed creatures gestate, and the cadaver bloats until an adolescent bogwid (a bogwid with the young template) gruesomely bursts forth. The larger the kill, the more of the bogwid's young can burrow in and hatch out as adolescents; a Large victim can accommodate two larvae, a Huge victim four larvae, a Gargantuan victim eight larvae, and a Colossal victim 16 larvae. A creature smaller than Medium doesn't possess sufficient nutrition for bogwid larvae to gestate properly. As a result, adult bogwids tend to completely consume smaller kills instead of leaving them for the larvae. Bogwids that inhabit seaside haunts are not averse to eating carrion. Indeed, a sizable sea creature whose carcass washes ashore (a whale, for instance) is usually set upon by a nearby bogwid, whose ravenous larvae tunnel their way into the rotting flesh, and several days later erupt like a crawling,

monstrous plague. In this way, large clutches of these foul beasts can come to infest coastal areas.

The bogwid is generally nocturnal, though it is not unusual for one to hunt during the day if it has gone a long time without feeding. A bogwid hunts patiently, concealing itself well in its natural habitat by heaping sand, seaweed, vegetation, and other detritus onto its body. Though a bogwid possesses limited intelligence, its animal cunning allows it to employ natural hazards to its advantage, setting up ambushes that cleverly integrate drop-offs, natural pits, and quicksand. As these creatures are also able to climb, it is not uncommon for bogwids to roost on rocky overhangs or in large trees, dropping down on unsuspecting victims from above.

Alchemists pay a significant price for the glands in bogwid tentacles that produce the foul, viscous liquid the creatures excrete. However, these glands are difficult to extract fully intact (DC 25 Heal check) and must be properly stored in water after removal. Appropriately dissected and transported, the glands fetch 25 gp apiece on the right market. Alchemists employ this putrid substance in various formulae to augment their effectiveness.

HABITAT & SOCIETY

Though great numbers of bogwids take up residence in temperate, swampy, coastal regions and the damp caves that are sometimes found in such places, plenty of the creatures inhabit inland marshes as well. They have been known to adapt to warmer climes, but tropical bogwids are much rarer. The fetid creatures tend not to flourish near major settlements, even if those settlements are in close proximity to the bogwids' natural habitat. The reason is that the presence of a beast like this near a town strikes such revulsion and fear into a population that they quickly post sizable rewards for the destruction of the beast. Rangers who traverse marshes and

wet caves eagerly seek out such lucrative bounties. Indeed, the fact that these monsters have not been hunted to extinction is a testimony to their revolting fecundity.

As these creatures are asexual, bogwids also tend to be solitary, driving off gestated offspring soon after they reach maturity. Recently matured bogwids seek out their own territory. On the few occasions bogwid clutches form, they most often include a single adult accompanied by two to eight adolescents. These abhorrent creatures have a life expectancy of about 10 years. An older bogwid can be identified by its flesh, which becomes gray-green and increasingly dry as the creature ages. The larvae an older bogwid carries about eventually lead to its own downfall. In the end, the strongest of its young fight off weaker kin and burrow into the dying parent, exploding forth from the corpse in the usual manner 2 weeks later.

A bogwid does not tolerate other major predators in its territory, hounding them relentlessly until such competitors are killed or find alternate homes for themselves. The bogwid is especially aggressive against crocodiles, which tend to be its chief rivals for prey in swampy regions. In fact, a telltale sign of a bogwid having laid a claim to territory is the discovery of a crocodile corpse lying on its back, the stomach bloated with gestating larvae or torn out as though something exploded from within, suggesting an adolescent bogwid is not far away.



SHATTERED STAR

BOGWIGGLE

This gray-green beast appears to be an oversized tadpole that never fully matured. Two large, bulbous eyes bulge from either side of its head, and a gaping mouth reveals jagged fangs. Scars cover its warty skin, running from its mouth all the way back to its finned tail.

BOGWIGGLE

CR 1



XP 400

CE Small aberration (aquatic)

Init +5; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +1

DEFENSE

AC 12, touch 12, flat-footed 11 (+1 Dex, +1 size)

hp 16 (3d8+3)

Fort +2, **Ref** +2, **Will** +4

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft., swim 40 ft.

Melee bite +4 (1d4+1), tongue -1 touch (sticky tongue)

Space 5 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft. (10 ft. with tongue)

STATISTICS

Str 13, **Dex** 12, **Con** 13, **Int** 3, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 6

Base Atk +2; **CMB** +2; **CMD** 13

Feats Improved Initiative, Power Attack

Skills Acrobatics +5, Stealth +9 (+17 in swamps), Swim +13; **Racial**

Modifiers +4 Perception in swamps, +8 Stealth in swamps

Languages Boggard (can't speak)

SQ amphibious, swamp stride

ECOLOGY

Environment temperate swamps

Organization solitary, pair, or pack (3-6)

Treasure none

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Sticky Tongue (Ex) A creature hit by a bogwiggles tongue attack cannot move more than 10 feet away from the bogwiggles and takes a -2 penalty to AC as long as the tongue is attached (this penalty does not stack if multiple tongues are attached). The tongue can be removed by making an opposed Strength check as a standard action or by dealing 2 points of slashing damage to the tongue (AC 11, damage does not deplete the bogwiggles actual hit points). The bogwiggles cannot move more than 10 feet away from the target, but can release its tongue's grip as a free action. Unlike a giant frog, a bogwiggles cannot pull targets toward it with its tongue.

Swamp Stride (Ex) A bogwiggles can move through any sort of natural difficult terrain at its normal speed while within a swamp. Magically altered terrain affects a bogwiggles normally.

Bogwiggles, also known as toad-hounds, are the degenerate spawn of boggards. They appear to be dog-sized tadpoles that have stopped halfway through the transformation to full-fledged frogs. A single set of long legs sprouts from a bogwiggles bulbous body, and a thick, rudderlike tail protrudes from its back. Barely more intelligent than dogs, bogwiggles spend the majority of their short, violent lives serving as hunting and guard animals for their capricious, toadlike masters.

Bogwiggles can live up to 20 years, but because of swamp predators and the cruelty of their masters, most die long before reaching the age of 10. Bogwiggles always have the same skin tone as the boggards with which they live—typically gray, green, or black. Just as with boggards, bogwiggles lose their coloring as they age, and particularly old bogwiggles are often a pale gray, almost white color. The average bogwiggles measures just less than 3-1/2 feet long, not counting the tail. Most weigh roughly 65 pounds, but bogwiggles of much larger size have been reported.



ECOLOGY

Like their boggard kin, bogwiggles begin life as nothing more than tadpoles, and born into the same stagnant pools. These degenerate and malformed boggard kin are victims of a form of targeted infanticide that transforms them into their current forms. As the tadpoles begin to mature, the priest-king keeps a watchful eye over the birth ponds, looking for any sign that one of the tadpoles is stronger and more dominant than the others and could pose a threat to his rule. When the tadpoles begin the transformation into mature boggards, the priest-king feeds the dominant tadpole a toxic mixture of fermented swamp vegetation and crushed red beetles that stunts its metamorphosis, causing it to mutate into a bogwiggler. This process of intentional contamination renders the bogwiggler sterile. After a few months, it becomes clear to the caretakers of the birth pools that the stunted tadpole will never mature into a regular boggard. At this point, the bogwiggler is removed from the pool and treated as nothing more than a common animal. Most often, the priest-king or his minions take these abhorrent creatures in and train them as vicious guard and hunting animals. Gathered together with others of their kind, bogwiggles create packs that defer to the priest-king or their trainer as the alpha of the group. Bogwiggles are most often trained to guard the priest-king, his valuables or home, and the village as a whole. After bogwiggles reach full maturity at the age of 10 months, they finish their training. For the remainder of their short and violent lives, they hunt with boggards around the village and guard their master's belongings.

Bogwiggles are omnivores, but greatly prefer flesh over algae and water plants. Bogwiggles have a particular taste for insects and the flesh of humanoids. While hunting, a bogwiggler pack functions similarly to a pack of dogs or wolves. Using stealth and their increased mobility in their swampy homeland, bogwiggles surprise their foes and attack with full force. Usually a number of bogwiggles single out an individual creature, trap it with their tongues, and use their strong jaws to finish it off. After the kill, bogwiggles prefer to allow the flesh to fester in swamp water for a few days before consuming it.

HABITAT & SOCIETY

Bogwiggles are found anywhere that their fully matured kin live, typically in temperate swamps, but occasionally in warmer climates such as those of tropical rivers and rainforests. Bogwiggles live within boggard communities, and are often found patrolling the perimeter around the primitive mud-huts that make up boggard villages. Usually, but not always, bogwiggles move freely through the village, living as pets and protecting certain homes

and the birthing pools. One bogwiggler pack always stands guard inside the boggard priest-king's mound, watching the priest-king's consorts and valuables.

Bogwiggler society, if it can be called such, is symbiotic with the boggards' own society. The boggards tolerate the existence of these "runts," and keep them as loyal companions as long as they serve their purpose. If the boggards find the bogwiggles to be detrimental to the community, they kill the blighted creatures and feed the corpses to the other boggard tadpoles maturing in the birth pools. Considered animals and unfortunate mutations, bogwiggles rarely fill roles with any responsibilities beyond hunting and protection, and even then they are supervised by mature, normal boggards.

VARIANT BOGWIGGLERS

As with boggards and the amphibians they are related to, bogwiggles are highly sensitive to their environments, and have varying appearances and abilities based on the region they are found in. Additionally, bogwiggles can have differing abilities based on exactly when in the transformation from tadpole to boggard they were stunted. Some develop painful, piercing croaks that can stun a human into submission, some have two sets of legs, and others have only tails. Still others have poisonous flesh, or can even spread filth fever through their bites.

Croaking Bogwiggler (CR +0): These variant bogwiggles can produce loud and terrible croaks capable of stunning their enemies, much like their fully-developed kin. Because of how these bogwiggles developed, they lack the sticky tongue special ability. Any non-boggard creature within 30 feet of the bogwiggler must succeed at a DC 12 Fortitude save or be stunned for 1 round. This effect can be used once every hour. Creatures that succeed at this save cannot be affected again by the same bogwiggler's croak for 24 hours. The save DC is Constitution-based.

Filthy Bogwiggler (CR +0): Raised from tadpoles in putrid pools stewed with waste and stocked with rancid meat, these bogwiggles spend their lives surrounded by disease. As such, filthy bogwiggles possess an immunity to disease and their bite has the potential to inflict their targets with filth fever (*Pathfinder RPG Core Rulebook* 557).

Poisonous Bogwiggler (CR +1): Some bogwiggles that are raised in especially toxic pools of water (a careful mixture monitored by their fully developed kin) develop their own poison glands that secrete a slimy poison that coats their skin and is infused in their flesh. Any creature that touches a poisonous bogwiggler or hits it with a natural attack risks poisoning itself. Bogwiggler slime does not affect boggards or boggard kin. In addition, poisonous bogwiggles are immune to poison of all kinds. *Bogwiggler Slime:* Skin—contact; save DC 11; frequency 1/round for 4 rounds; effect 1d2 Dex; cure 2 consecutive saves.

GRAND DEFENDER

This mighty golem made of polished iron resembles a keen-eyed dwarf. It carries a warhammer and a large shield bearing Torag's symbol.

GRAND DEFENDER

CR 15



XP 51,200

LG Huge construct (extraplanar)

Init +3; Senses darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Perception +20

DEFENSE

AC 32, touch 7, flat-footed 32 (-1 Dex, +20 natural, +5 shield, -2 size)

hp 157 (18d10+58)

Fort +6, Ref +5, Will +8

DR 15/adamantine; Immune construct traits, magic

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee warhammer +27/+22/+17/+12 (3d6+11/x3)

Space 15 ft.; Reach 15 ft.

Special Attacks breath weapon, hammer storm

STATISTICS

Str 32, Dex 9, Con —, Int 15, Wis 14, Cha 13

Base Atk +18; CMB +31; CMD 40

Feats Cleave, Combat Reflexes, Great Cleave, Improved Bull Rush, Improved Initiative, Power Attack, Stand Still, Throw Anything, Toughness

Skills Knowledge (dungeoneering) +11, Knowledge (engineering) +11, Knowledge (history) +11, Knowledge (local) +11, Knowledge (nature) +11, Knowledge (religion) +11, Perception +20

SQ ablative adaptation, defender's shield, dwarf traits

ECOLOGY

Environment any land (extraplanar)

Organization solitary

Treasure standard

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Ablative Adaptation (Su) As a standard action, the Grand Defender can cast off its outer layer of metal, revealing a slightly smaller version of itself underneath. This new form may be made of cold iron, mithral, or iron, and its appearance may change with each use of the ability, altering its apparent genders, hair style, and so on. In its cold iron form, the Grand Defender's DR changes to DR 15/cold iron and its attacks count as cold iron for the purpose of bypassing damage reduction. In its mithral form, its DR changes to DR 15/silver and its attacks count as silver. In its iron form, its abilities revert to normal. If the herald is brought to 0 hit points, it becomes inert; 1d4 hours after it last took damage, it sheds its outer layer and reanimates at half its normal hit points. Regardless of how often it uses this ability, the herald never changes size categories, as if it slowly grows to its normal size between transformations. Once shed, the outer layer decays into worthless powder

1d4 minutes after the transformation, though before this occurs it can spend 1 full round consuming the discarded metal to recharge its hammer storm ability.

Breath Weapon (Su) As a free action once every 1d4+1 rounds, an iron golem can exhale a 10-foot cube of poisonous gas that persists for 1 round. Any creature within the area when it is exhaled (as well as any creature that passes through the cloud during the remainder of that round) is exposed to the cloud's poisonous effects. This poison is magically created each time the golem uses this power. *Breath weapon*—inhaled; save Fort DC 19; frequency 1/round for 4 rounds; effect 1d4 Constitution damage; cure 2 saves. The save DC is Constitution-based.

Defender's Shield (Ex) The Grand Defender's shield is a +3 heavy steel shield, though it becomes nonmagical if the herald is destroyed or is no longer holding or wearing it.

Dwarf Traits (Ex) The Grand Defender has the following dwarven racial traits: defensive training, hardy, hatred, stability, stonecunning, and weapon familiarity.

Hammer Storm (Ex) Once per day as a full-round action, the Grand Defender can expel a volley of warhammers from its mouth in a 30-foot cone that deals 15d6 points of bludgeoning damage (Reflex DC 19 half). If the herald is in its cold iron or mithral form, these hammers count as cold iron or silver. The Grand Defender can exclude any number of squares in the cone's area, preventing the hammers from striking those squares. The attack also counts as an awesome blow, though the Defender makes a single combat maneuver check, applying that result to the CMD of all creatures in the area, and affected creatures can only be knocked directly away from the Defender. The hammer storm actually creates 24 physical warhammers that persist after the instantaneous attack and may be used by creatures (though they are normal warhammers, not masterwork, cold iron, or mithral). The Grand Defender can spend 1 minute eating 24 warhammers (or an equivalent amount of metal) to recharge this ability.

Immunity to Magic (Ex) The Grand Defender is immune to spells or spell-like abilities that allow spell resistance. Certain spells and effects function differently against it, as noted below.

- A magical attack that deals electricity damage slows the Grand Defender (as the *slow* spell) for 3 rounds, with no saving throw.
- A magical attack that deals fire damage breaks any slow effect on the Grand Defender and heals 1 point of damage for each 3 points of damage the attack would otherwise deal. If the amount of healing would cause the herald to exceed its full normal hit points, it gains any excess as temporary hit points. The Defender gets no saving throw against fire effects.
- The Grand Defender is affected normally by rust attacks, such as those of a rust monster or a *rusting grasp* spell.

Created by Torag to serve as his herald, the Grand Defender is a powerful golem animated by the collective

will of dozens of great dwarf heroes. The heroic souls within the golem consider it an honor to lend their knowledge and love of battle to this mighty shell so it can protect dwarves in the mortal world. These heroes control the golem for anything from a single manifestation to several consecutive months of tasks, and afterward return to their reward in the afterlife. These multiple identities contribute to its varying appearance in each incarnation, even changing its apparent gender. The above statistics describe a typical manifestation of the herald, though if it is summoned for a specific purpose, the individual spirits within might have greater knowledge pertaining to that purpose. In general, the herald is friendly toward followers of Torag and focused on defending individuals or communities.

ECOLOGY

The spirits within the Grand Defender retain all their mortal memories and knowledge, and when in the mortal world they have been known to recognize or call out through the herald to old friends, relatives, or offspring with an unexpected familiarity and affection. If visiting a place one of its spirits had been as a mortal, the golem might know secret exits or caches of materials long forgotten by the current inhabitants. Without the heroic spirits, the herald barely has a will of its own and acts in a programmed fashion like a common iron golem; however, Torag never sends it to the Material Plane that way, and existing knowledge of its “empty” state only comes from rare visitors to Torag’s planar realm who encountered the herald.

As a construct controlled by dead heroes, the Grand Defender has no need for rest or sustenance. However, the controlling spirits may enjoy the company of other creatures, and the golem can consume materials, though its sense of “taste” is certainly altered to suit its magical abilities. For example, most of the heroic souls report mild intoxication after eating metal in order to recharge the hammer storm ability.

HABITAT & SOCIETY

Since followers of Torag respect the knowledge of crafting and defense, most are in awe of the herald for having multiple lifetimes of learning and experience. In idle times before or

between battle, mortal dwarves have been known to ask it for lost secrets of forging and engineering, and the hero spirits have Torag’s permission to pass on this lore as long as doing so doesn’t hinder his herald’s purpose for that visit. Other dwarves hope to speak with a dead ancestor in order to pay their respects, apologize for some old offense, or recount a descendant’s achievement. In this capacity, the Grand Defender takes on a role similar to an oracle or spirit mediator for ancestor-worshiping cultures, acting as a bearer of messages to the afterlife and strengthening a community’s connection to its past. Because of these connections, Torag prefers to include spirits with ties to the intended community or location rather than members of a rival clan or outspoken heroes whose opinions and prejudices have grown less quaint and more embarrassing over the centuries.



SHATTERED STAR

THASSILONIAN SENTINELS

During the height of the Thassilonian empire, nobles and other wealthy elite favored these constructs. Nobles could keep these guardians and protectors in their homes, hidden in plain sight among the palace's normal decorations. Able to replace the heads of statues to blend in, these creatures keep alert for intruders, and extract themselves from the statues with which they are docked in order to attack. The creatures don't need to remove themselves from their statues to use their special attacks, however, and only separate for added mobility or to have the chance to attack with their claws. When encountered with others of their kind, they use their limited, animal-like intelligence to engage in crude pack tactics.

Made of various metals and other compounds, at least a dozen varieties of sentinel pervaded long-vanished Thassilon. All of these varieties were crafted from materials that wouldn't be out of place as a medium for sculpting or casting. Though the practice of creating these constructs largely died out along with the empire at Earthfall, explorers delving into forgotten ruins sometimes encounter sentinels that still function.

BRONZE SENTINEL

Sculpted from bronze in the form of a large humanoid head, this creature perches on six mechanical legs, its eyes intermittently shining with an orange glow.

BRONZE SENTINEL

CR 3



XP 800

N Small construct

Init +7; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Perception +5

DEFENSE

AC 18, touch 14, flat-footed 15 (+3 Dex, +4 natural, +1 size)

hp 32 (4d10+10)

Fort +1, **Ref** +4, **Will** +1

Immune construct traits, fire, magic

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft., climb 20 ft.

Melee 2 claws +9 (1d4+4)

Ranged fiery bolt +8 (1d6 fire)

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 2nd; concentration -1)

Constant—*detect magic*

STATISTICS

Str 18, **Dex** 16, **Con** —, **Int** 1, **Wis** 11, **Cha** 5

Base Atk +4; **CMB** +7; **CMD** 20 (28 vs. trip)

Feats Improved Initiative, Skill Focus (Perception)

Skills Climb +12, Perception +5, Stealth +9

Languages Thassilonian (can't speak)

SQ alert, freeze

ECOLOGY

Environment any

Organization solitary, pair, or troop (3-7)

Treasure none

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Alert (Su) A bronze sentinel can take simple orders and identify intruders, and it possesses the ability to alert its creator or another creature to which it's keyed. When a bronze sentinel detects a trespasser, it can choose to alert the creature to which it's keyed in one of two ways. The sentinel can create a loud sound like that of a bell, chime, or gong that can be clearly heard at a range of 500 feet. Alternatively, a bronze sentinel can send a mental alert to the creature to which it is keyed as long as that creature is within 1 mile of the sentinel. The mental alert wakes the keyed creature from sleep, but doesn't affect normal concentration. A bronze sentinel's creator is the first creature to which it is keyed, and the creator can pass its link to another creature as part of a 4-hour ritual that uses materials costing 500 gp.

Fiery Bolt (Su) As a standard action, a bronze sentinel can fire a bolt of flame as a ranged touch attack out to a maximum range of 30 feet. This bolt deals 1d6 points of fire damage.

Immunity to Magic (Ex) A bronze sentinel is immune to spells or spell-like abilities that allow spell resistance, save for spells with the electricity descriptor.

Bronze sentinels were among the most common of Thassilonian sentinels, and saw widespread use in ancient Bakrakhan and Eurythnia. Thassilonian nobles and wizards used these creatures to protect their goods, magical laboratories, and libraries. A bronze sentinel's fiery bolt burns hot, but its flames are short lived. This construction is in place to minimize the risk of the sentinel setting fire to the very things it is set to protect.

MARBLE SENTINEL

Crouched on six jointed metal legs, this large humanoid head crafted from polished marble gazes intently with its glowing green eyes.

MARBLE SENTINEL

CR 4



XP 1,200

N Small construct

Init +7; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Perception +6

DEFENSE

AC 20, touch 14, flat-footed 17 (+3 Dex, +6 natural, +1 size)

hp 43 (6d10+10)

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

Immune acid, construct traits, magic

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft., climb 20 ft.

Melee 2 claws +12 (1d4+5)

Ranged paralyzing bolt +10 (paralysis)

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 2nd; concentration -1)

Constant—*detect magic*

BESTIARY

STATISTICS

Str 20, **Dex** 16, **Con** —, **Int** 1, **Wis** 11, **Cha** 5

Base Atk +6; **CMB** +10; **CMD** 23 (31 vs. trip)

Feats Ability Focus (paralyzing bolt), Improved Initiative, Skill Focus (Perception)

Skills Climb +13, Perception +6, Stealth +10

Languages Thassilonian (can't speak)

SQ alert, freeze

ECOLOGY

Environment any

Organization solitary, pair, or troop (3–7)

Treasure none

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Alert (Su) A marble sentinel can take simple orders and identify intruders, and it possesses the ability to alert its creator or another creature to which it's keyed. When a marble sentinel detects a trespasser, it can choose to alert the creature to which it's keyed in one of two ways. The sentinel can create a loud sound like that of a bell, chime, or gong that can be clearly heard at a range of 500 feet. Alternatively, a marble sentinel can send a mental alert to the creature to which it is keyed as long as that creature is within 1 mile of the sentinel. The mental alert wakes the keyed creature from sleep, but doesn't affect normal concentration. A marble sentinel's creator is the first creature to which it is keyed, and the creator can pass its link to another creature as part of a 4-hour ritual that uses materials costing 500 gp.

Immunity to Magic (Ex) A marble sentinel is immune to spells or spell-like abilities that allow spell resistance, save for spells with the force descriptor.

Paralyzing Bolt (Su) As a standard action, a marble sentinel can fire a green-hued bolt of energy as a ranged touch

attack out to a maximum range of 30 feet. A creature struck by this ray must succeed at a DC 12 Fortitude save or be paralyzed for 1d6 rounds. The save DC is Charisma-based.

Marble sentinels were prized for their ability not only to detect intruders, but also to restrain them with paralyzing bolts. This ability only lasts temporarily, so the creator or other creature the sentinel is keyed to would have to receive the alert and mobilize her guards to properly subdue and restrain any trespassers.

CONSTRUCTION

Though the exact process of creating the base form differs depending on the materials involved, the process of animating sentinels is roughly the same. Each sentinel must be carved or worked to a fine detail before being subjected to spells and magical unguents worth 1,000 gp.

BRONZE SENTINEL

CL 10th; **Price** 21,000

CONSTRUCTION

Requirements Craft Construct, *alarm*, *detect magic*, *geas/quest*, *limited wish*, *scorching ray*, creator must be caster level 10th; **Skill** Craft (sculpture) DC 18; **Cost** 11,000 gp

MARBLE SENTINEL

CL 12th; **Price** 24,000

CONSTRUCTION

Requirements Craft Construct, *alarm*, *detect magic*, *geas/quest*, *limited wish*, *stone shape*, creator must be caster level 12th; **Skill** Craft (sculpture) DC 20; **Cost** 12,500 gp



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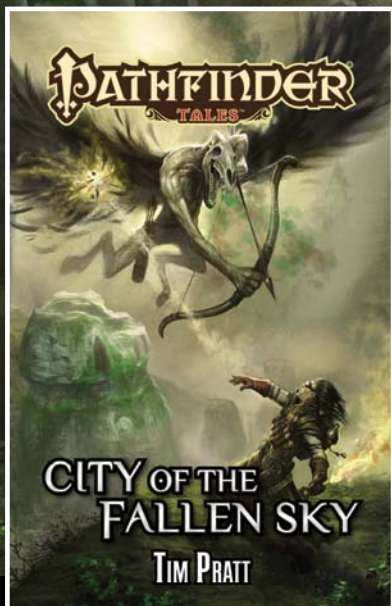
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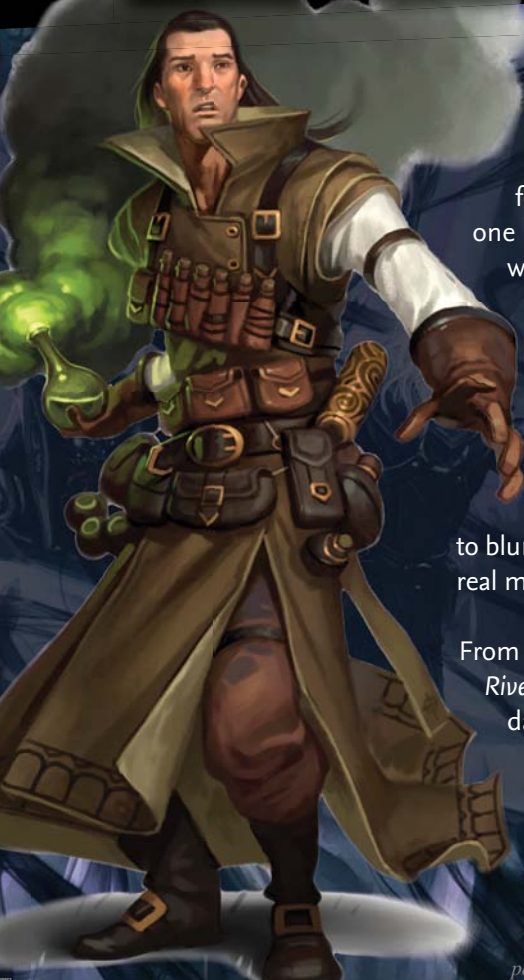
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Once a student of alchemy with the dark scholars of the Technic League, Alaeron fled their arcane order when his conscience got the better of him, taking with him a few strange devices of unknown function. Now in hiding in a distant city, he's happy to use his skills creating minor potions and wonders—at least until the back-alley rescue of an adventurer named Jaya lands him in trouble with a powerful crime lord. In order to keep their heads, Alaeron and Jaya must travel across wide seas and steaming jungles in search of a wrecked flying city and the magical artifacts that can buy their freedom. Yet the Technic League hasn't forgotten Alaeron's betrayal, and an assassin armed with alien weaponry is hot on their trail...

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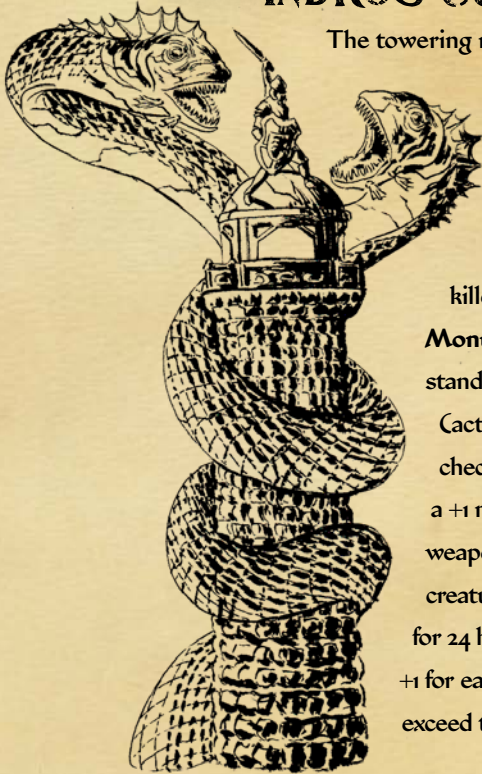
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INDROS CUL VYDRARCH



The towering marble sculpture called “Indros cul Vydrarch” depicts the legendary battle between Alcaydian Indros and the great Vydrarch. In the days before the City of Monuments was the city it is today, Alcaydian Indros, paladin of Aroden, led an expedition through western Varisia to the Lost Coast, eventually rediscovering the Irespan. It was there, on the shores of the Varisian Gulf, that he and his warriors fought the dreaded Vydrarch. During the fight, Indros lost dozens of soldiers, and after he killed the creature, its poisonous blood tainted the waves for weeks.

Monument Boon: Recite the poem “Upon a Serpent’s Grave” in the original Aquan while standing before the monument, then attempt a DC 15 Perform

(act, oratory, or sing) check. Success grants a +1 morale bonus on all weapon damage rolls against creatures with the aquatic subtype for 24 hours. This bonus increases by +1 for each 5 points by which you exceed the Perform check’s DC.



CAPITAL DISTRICT

MISTRESS OF ANGELS

This fine marble sculpture of Ordellia Whitwren, one of the founders of Magnimar, shows the beloved cleric of Desna looking out over the Varisian Gulf to the horizon, as if she were scanning for threats to the city.

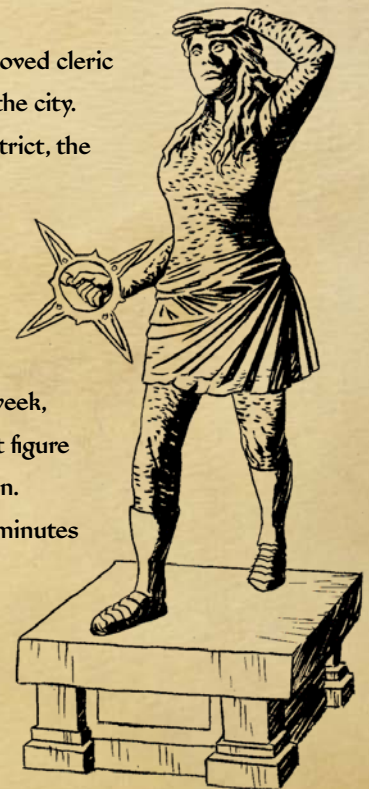
Situated in the district of Magnimar named after her and commonly called the Foreigner’s District, the statue celebrates her faith in the angelic protectors of Magnimar. During the founding of the city, the resident Varisians asked the newcomers to relocate south of the Yondabakari. All the

founders refused except Ordellia, who bargained that if the Varisians could show her an angel, she would accept their demands. After looking to the

Seacleft Spire at dawn every day for a week, she finally caught a glimpse of a radiant figure atop the alabaster spire in the rising sun.

Monument Boon: Meditate for 10 minutes before the statue and make a successful DC 15 Knowledge (religion) check to gain a +1 morale bonus on all initiative checks for 24 hours. This bonus increases by +1 for every 10 points by which you exceed the Knowledge (religion) check’s DC.

ORDELLIA



IRON MAIDENS

Varisia's newest heroes have stumbled across a powerful relic from the ancient empire of Thassilon—yet the artifact has been sundered into seven fragments. The third of these fragments lies in the swampy Mushfens south of the city of Magnimar, hidden within an ancient, towering lighthouse known as the Lady's Light. With squabbling boggards, troglodytes, and other swamp monsters dwelling around the ruins, approaching the Light will require either stealth or bravado. But the threats posed by slimy and scaly humanoids pale in comparison to the exiled Gray Maidens who have claimed the interior of the Light as their new headquarters, or to the sinister curse that afflicts the powerful, ancient caretaker of the ruin.

This volume of *Pathfinder Adventure Path* continues the Shattered Star Adventure Path and includes:

- “Curse of the Lady's Light,” a Pathfinder RPG adventure for 5th-level characters, by Mike Shel.
- The sadistic secrets of the Gray Maidens, a militaristic order once fiercely loyal to an evil, deposed queen, by F. Wesley Schneider.
- The secret ways, peerless techniques, and ancient traditions of Torag, stern god of the forge, protection, and strategy, by Sean K Reynolds.
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