

PATHFINDER[®]

ADVENTURE PATH[™]



SHATTERED STAR

BEYOND THE DOOMSDAY DOOR

By Tito Leati

I ONLY WANT A SLIVER...

Ayamyra, the mistress of the temple of Calistria in Magnimar, has taken a greater interest in the news about Windsong than most in the city, but her reasons are far

from altruistic. When her contacts inform her that the PCs are heading up there, she meets with them to ask a favor—if they can secure a single sliver of wood from Calistria's chair in the Windsong Council Chamber, she'll reward them greatly!

Ayamyra isn't interested in revealing *why* she wants the sliver (she hopes to use it as a component for a magical whip she's crafting), and if the PCs press her for a reason, she shrugs and retracts her offer, perhaps seeking out others (like a group of Night Scale thieves) to send north after the sliver—others who might just come into conflict with the PCs!

Reward: 9,600 XP if the PCs deliver a sliver from Calistria's chair (located in area **A20**). In addition, Ayamyra also rewards the party with a fully charged *wand of cure critical wounds*.

KEYSTONE



RECLAIMING WINDSONG ABBEY

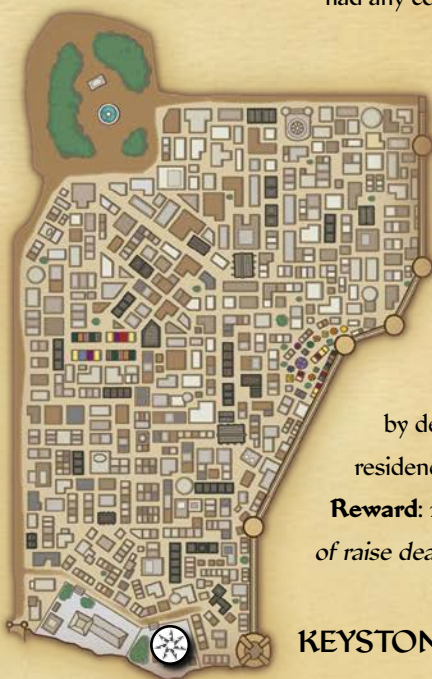
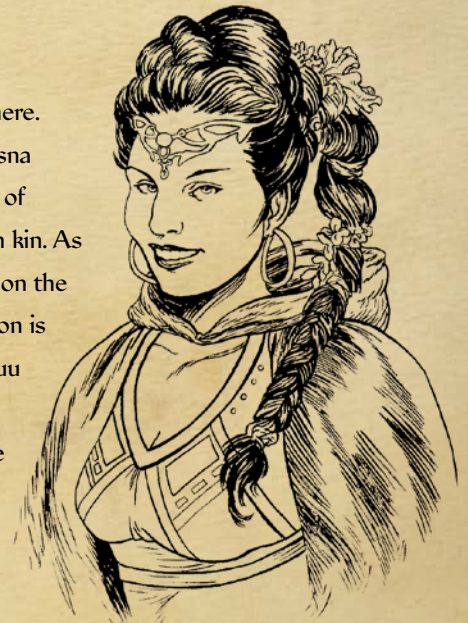
At the time of Ardathanatus's attack on Windsong Abbey, very few priests were stationed there. Few faiths had active clerics serving at the abbey. Of these, only the clerics of Erastil and Desna

had any contact at all with Magnimar's temples—and the cleric of

Erastil was not on good terms with his Magnimarian kin. As a result, sending aid to Windsong Abbey isn't high on the list for most of Magnimar's churches. The exception is Cynosure Tower, the city's temple of Desna. Bevaluu Zimantiu can't afford to abandon her post in Magnimar, so she contacts several agencies in the city, looking for aid—among these is Heidmarch Manor. Sheila Heidmarch makes sure to let the PCs know that if they can secure Windsong Abbey by defeating the monsters and villains who have taken up residence there, the church of Desna will reward them well!


Reward: 25,600 XP for clearing all monsters from the abbey. Bevaluu also rewards the PCs with a *scroll of raise dead* and two *scrolls of restoration* as a token of her personal thanks.

KEYSTONE



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SHATTERED STAR

ADVENTURE PATH  PART 4 OF 6

BEYOND THE DOOMSDAY DOOR

SHATTERED STAR

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SHATTERED STAR



DELVING THE PAST

Why have elves, halflings, and humans been mysteriously disappearing and what are the strange creatures that have been raiding the peaceful Kingdom of Eltrun? Rortet, the king of the city of Eltrun, and all of his royal subjects have changed into beasts! It is up to your party to lift the Curse of Sekamina cave!"

And that's how *The Curse of Sekamina Cave* began. This adventure, written by me on my mom's old typewriter back when I was in 6th grade or so back in the early 80s, is sitting here on my desk as I write this foreword. I've preserved all the fun little grammatical errors and the like in the quote above, and it amuses me that even then, in the first thing I wrote for what would eventually become my homebrew campaign setting of Baria, there are elements that have survived about 30 years to finally make their way

into print. Sekamina, as many of you know, is the name of the middle realm of the Darklands of Golarion—but first, it was nothing more than a four-level dungeon. According to the regional map on the inside cover of *The Curse of Sekamina Cave*, the entrance to this cave is about 12 hexes away from a place called Chimera Cove. I'm not sure how many miles that is, though, since 6th-grade James Jacobs didn't see fit to grace the first map of his campaign setting with anything like a scale.

In any event, the adventure (which was pretty obviously inspired by *The Lost Caverns of Tsojcanth*) was always meant to be a two-part series, and so as soon as I finished writing *The Curse of Sekamina Cave*, I continued with the sequel, *The Underground Kingdom of Yamasoth*. And there, again, is a word that folks beyond my junior high school circle of gaming buddies might recognize!

FOREWORD

In fact, the so-called “Sekamina Cave” series of adventures would explode into a never-finished seven-part epic. By “never finished,” I mean to say that I finished six of the seven parts (the other five had names like *City of Twilight*; *Isle of the Old Ones*; *Yanaron, the Plane of the Dead*; and *Shadowsea*), but that by the time I had finished generating most of the maps for the final part (which was to be titled *Descent into Neitherworld*—not sure if I actually meant to say Netherworld or not, though), I’d entered college, my high school game group had broken up, and a 2nd edition of the game I loved had just been published. So I did what any good gamer nerd would do. I started over.

The 2nd Edition version of the Sekamina Cave series was one big megamodule called *Into the Abyss*. It followed in the footsteps of its 1st Edition ancestor, and never really got finished—the players caught up to me before I could complete it and I ended up ad-libbing the last chapter with the maps I’d finished to that point. Of some minor note, one of the player characters in *Into the Abyss* accidentally released an ancient undead warlord named Xanderghul and his evil wizard accomplice Karzoug—two NPCs who in the original adventure were just names, but who would go on to become two of Baria’s more hated and notorious recurring villains.

So, the reason I tell you all this is to give you a little bit of background on this volume’s adventure, “Beyond the Doomsday Door.” There are elements in here that I’ve been seeding in other Pathfinder books—the qliphoth lord Yamasoth, Windsong Abbey, the cult of Groetus, and more—that all come from my homebrew world. I’ve sprinkled in bits and pieces of things from Baria before, of course, but it wasn’t until I finally started developing the adventure that I realized just how many of those elements all seemed to suddenly and subconsciously migrate into the adventure outline I’d given to Tito Leati to work from. It’s always a bit surreal for me to see how authors develop things I’ve invented, but I also suspect it might be a little frustrating for these authors to see the final result of the adventure and find out I’ve changed a few things here and there. This adventure suffered a bit more of that than normal—and I hope that’s for the best—but some of the things that Tito had created for the adventure ended up getting written out. Things like 800 words on weird redcap speech mannerisms and the story of Ricle Peaks’ manifestation of the local bogeyman legend were cool, but in the end they had to go to make room for other elements I wanted to add to the adventure. (One particularly neat element, the “Stoned Flesh Forest”—which was an underground forest of petrified trees that were originally humans who had warped and transformed over time—got cut simply because it didn’t make sense for Groetus, the god of empty places, to have a cluttered temple filled with trees.) So, I hope you forgive me, Tito, for tinkering a bit on this adventure!

ON THE COVER

Wayne Reynolds presents my favorite Pathfinder, Koriah Azmeren, heroine of the Darklands and poster-girl for feat-intensive character builds. Turns out that dual-wielding two different exotic weapons uses up a lot of feat slots! Beyond Koriah, we get a glimpse of what might happen if Yamasoth gets through the *Doomsday Door*, in a painting that has a subject similar to the amateurish colored-pencil-and-marker scribbles I created for the cover of *The Underground Kingdom of Yamasoth* 30-some years ago. Only rendered with, you know, skill and talent.

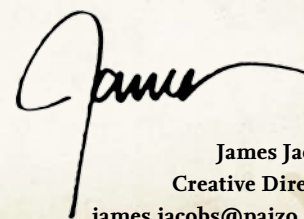
OLD-SCHOOL MAYHEM

The original intent was for me to have this foreword written before we all went off to Gen Con, but in hindsight, I’m actually glad that these words got delayed until after.

Because now I get to brag about meeting one of roleplaying’s icons—Frank Mentzer. Having the chance at Gen Con to stop by and talk with him, get his autograph, and generally fan-boy out a little bit (I hope I didn’t overdo it!) was one of the highlights of the convention.

For you see, we don’t play just Pathfinder here at Paizo. I’ve got a long-running *Call of Cthulhu* game going, for example, and I’m hoping to start up a *Star Frontiers* game here soon. But lately, the editorial and art departments seem to have been bitten by the old school bug. Rob McCreary ran us through a *Dungeon Crawl Classics* adventure (in which all four of my characters, ill-fated brothers whose names even I’ve forgotten, ended up as chaos leviathan chow), and Andrew Vallas was so delighted with it that he’s started up a DCC campaign. I’m not immune either—I went to the Old School Renaissance booth at Gen Con on a mission to pick up a copy of *Lamentations of the Flame Princess*. Finding Frank there was a delightful and unexpected bonus.

As it turns out, all that old school mayhem is precisely what I need while developing the Shattered Star Adventure Path. With huge dungeons, complex traps, and classic monsters filling every page of this Adventure Path’s installment, I’m pretty sure I can’t get enough of the classics! Which is a good thing, because what’s coming in “The Dead Heart of Xin” is going to be epic indeed!



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SHATTERED STAR



BEYOND THE DOOMSDAY DOOR

PART ONE: NEWS OF DESTRUCTION

A vision of Windsong Abbey in smoking ruins sends the heroes north along the Lost Coast in search of the latest fragment of the Shattered Star. Dire rumors and whispers of the devastation hint that an ancient evil has returned to the abbey.

PAGE 8

PART TWO: WINDSONG RUINS

Giants frolic amid the ruins of the village surrounding Windsong Abbey—and the structure itself has fared little better. Evil bloodthirsty fey, two-headed monsters, and otherworldly horrors rule here now, but could there be a few allies hiding here as well?

PAGE 10

PART THREE: DOWN TO DOOMSDAY

With the aboveground portion of the abbey under their control, the heroes turn their attention to the legendary dungeons below. Once a Thassilonian temple devoted to Groetus, these dungeons now serve a much darker god indeed!

PAGE 25

ADVANCEMENT TRACK

“Beyond the Doomsday Door” is designed for four characters and uses the medium XP track.

10 The PCs should be well into 10th level when they begin this adventure.

11 The PCs should reach 11th level soon after they begin exploring the aboveground portion of Windsong Abbey.

12 The PCs should reach 12th level by the time they start exploring the second dungeon level below Windsong Abbey.

The PCs should reach 13th level by the end of the adventure.



BEYOND THE DOOMSDAY DOOR

ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

Windsong Abbey has long served as a prominent landmark of the northern Lost Coast, with its stately white lighthouse standing sentinel over the Varisian Gulf. Founded in 4082 AR in the wake of the Even-Tongued Conquest by a group of priests who had grown frustrated by the machinations of politicians in matters of faith, Windsong Abbey was always intended to be a neutral ground for the adherents of diverse beliefs. Its founders envisioned a place outside of established nations where members of the 21 most widespread faiths of the Inner Sea could meet and discuss religion, current events, and philosophy in an ecumenical venue, where all beliefs were considered equal and all forms of violence between rival cults prohibited. Members of nearly every faith in the region came to represent their beliefs here over the years, with only the cult of Rovagug declining to take part. And while each faith was held equal, tradition held that the eldest priest would serve as the abbey's voice, wearing a masked headpiece to denote her role. The first Masked Abbess was a priestess of Pharasma, but over the years to follow, different faiths held the vaunted position.

The abbey itself was built over the ruins of a much older site—a temple of Groetus whose deepest chambers contained mysterious sealed doors, including a particularly ominous one that the priests identified through study and research as one of the “*Doomsday Doors*.” Many ancient temples of Groetus included these portals—massive apertures said to be counting down the days until the end of the world, at which point each would open to unleash its own localized apocalypse to aid the End Times. In their explorations of the ancient Groetan temple, the priests uncovered a *doomsday key* that would open some of these portals, but they wisely decided these doors should stay closed. The *doomsday key* was entrusted to the Masked Abbot or Abbess and was kept in a vault where none could use it to delve the deeper chambers below the abbey.

And so, for over 500 years and against all odds, this so-called “house of twenty faiths” continued to exist with little to no internal strife or trouble. A small village grew up around the abbey to support the priests, and as the prophesied day of Aroden's return drew near, the priests watched with keen interest how the world prepared.

As it did throughout the rest of the Inner Sea region, Aroden's death in 4606 AR sent shock waves through Windsong, and particularly impacted the faith and mind of the abbey's current priest of Pharasma, an elf named Ardathanatus. As happened with many of Pharasma's priests, the failure of prophecy drove Ardathanatus mad. He became convinced that Iomedae had murdered her mentor, that she assassinated Aroden in a blatant attempt to seize his power. So enraged, Ardathanatus murdered Windsong's Masked Abbess, for as a priestess of Iomedae, he blamed her as much as her deity for the onset of the

Age of Lost Omens. Several other priests died that day as well, all laid low by the mad cleric of Pharasma. By the time Ardathanatus fled the abbey, no fewer than seven of the abbey's clerics had been murdered by one of their own.

In the years to follow, Windsong began to fall apart. The wake of Ardathanatus's murder spree combined with Aroden's death to shake the faith of many of Windsong's priests. Some of them abandoned the abbey entirely, while others retreated to their own corners within the abbey to become isolationists or hermits. Only a few priests stayed on in their original posts, keeping the abbey secure in the hope of reopening it as an universal place of worship someday. Now, only five full-time priests remain at Windsong Abbey—clerics of Desna, Erastil, Gozreh, Nethys, and Zon-Kuthon. But even as the previous adventure in the Shattered Star Adventure Path got underway, this total has begun to shrink—for Ardathanatus has returned to Windsong Abbey!

After Ardathanatus fled the abbey at the dawn of the Age of Lost Omens, he wandered the wilds of Varisia for some time. Eventually, he reached Hollow Mountain and learned of the power of the nascent demon lord Yamasoth—he'd long since abandoned his faith, but in this powerful qliphoth that the elf regained it. While back in Windsong tales of his rampage had become legendary (he is remembered today as something of a bogeyman to the peasants and priests of the abbey), deep under Hollow Mountain Ardathanatus grew more powerful and more corrupt. The culmination of his fall was his discovery of an ancient artifact in the deep chambers far below Hollow Mountain—here Alaznist had hidden a stolen fragment of the *Sihedron*: the *Shard of Envy*.

As the shard's curse took hold, Ardathanatus's mind grew more and more obsessed with Windsong Abbey. Had the priestess of Iomedae died a natural death, he would have been the one to take up the mantle of Masked Abbot of Windsong. In his own twisted way, he views the events of Aroden's death as a complex conspiracy to compel him to cast away his allegiances and go into exile by tricking him into murdering the abbot. Now, Ardathanatus is consumed with envy over the fact that others rule the ancient abbey that he feels destined to command.

Ardathanatus recently returned to the mainland, bringing with him several dangerous minions recruited from Hollow Mountain. He gathered more to his side in the Fogscar Mountains, and when he finally assaulted Windsong with magic and monsters, he brought much of the monastery down in ruins and captured several of the priests. Only one, a wily old cleric of Desna named Casimir Azmeren, managed to escape, going into hiding in the ruins. As Ardathanatus left the control of the ruins above to his monsters and turned his attention to the plundering of the Groetan temple below, Casimir sent an urgent *sending*

out to his daughter Koriah for help. Unfortunately, his cry for help neglected to convey the scope of the attack on Windsong as effectively as it did his desperation. Koriah, who was already on her way north from Magnimar to return to the Caves of the Craven for further exploration when she received the *sending*, immediately detoured to Windsong to rescue her father—only in turn to be captured herself.

And this is the state of Windsong today. Ardathanatus has lingered in the dungeons below the abbey for weeks, if not months (time his initial attack so that it occurred at about the point the PCs were halfway through “The Asylum Stone”), growing more and more obsessed with using the *Doomsday Door* to open a route to Yamasoth’s Abyssal Realm. When the PCs use the *Shard of Gluttony* to locate the *Shard of Envy*, it points them to a Windsong Abbey that lies in ruins!

ADVENTURE SUMMARY

After learning about the current location of the *Shard of Envy*, the PCs travel to Windsong Abbey. There, they find the abbey and its village in ruins, overwhelmed by evil fey and giants. They have a chance to rescue one of the few surviving priests, a man named Casamir, who can give them some guidance on how to proceed—including the fact that the one who led the attack was an ex-member of the abbey, the elf Ardathanatus.

From here, the PCs must delve into the deadly temple of Groetus that has lain for so long unexplored under the abbey. Not only has Ardathanatus populated these dungeons with his own minions and traps, but he has also managed to open several sealed areas of the temple and convinced the undead remnants of the Thassilonian cult of Groetus that the End Times are near, and that if they aid the elf cleric of Yamasoth in opening the *Doomsday Door*, their god will reward them. To win the *Shard of Envy* and reclaim Windsong Abbey, the PCs must defeat this traitorous cleric!

PART ONE: NEWS OF DESTRUCTION

Although Windsong Abbey lost much of its cultural importance and political influence in the decades following Aroden’s death, it remained a famous pilgrimage site until the present time, and the flashing, rainbow-hued light of its lighthouse, the Pharos Pharasmae, has long been a well-known navigation signal to sailors off the Varisian Coast. When the PCs determine that the *Shard of Envy* is located in Windsong’s vicinity, with a successful DC 10 Knowledge (geography or local) check, a PC can confirm that while Windsong Abbey’s influence has declined of

late, the monastery is still active and functioning—that the vision shows it in ruins should be a surprise to the PCs.

While news of the attack on the abbey has reached Magnimar, the city and temples are slow to react. As such, the PCs will find little support from either the city or the temples in terms of sending troops and other support, but both certainly express concern over the development. This adventure assumes the PCs travel alone to Windsong to investigate, but there’s certainly a chance they could attempt to recruit aid from Magnimar’s government or temples by reporting that something dire has happened to Windsong. Unfortunately, Windsong has long run under its own flag—it is not a holding of Magnimar, and most established churches and temples regard the abbey as something of a curiosity at best or a hive of heretics at worst.

Sheila Heidmarch has a slightly different take, should the PCs seek her advice—if the PCs can go up to the abbey, determine what happened, and set things right, this could well give Heidmarch Manor some more political clout in the region as an agency that seeks to help Varisia’s citizens, regardless of their politics or faith. As before, she can also supply the PCs with an *ioun stone* (in this case a *dusty rose prism*) that they can use to activate the *Shard of Envy* when they recover it. If the

PCs speak to her, she also advises them to make a brief stop in the town of Sandpoint—among the various rumors she’s heard about the attack on Windsong, the following tale is reported by a new Sandpoint resident.

A Varisian peddler and harrower named Pilla was among the first to pass by the abbey after it was attacked. She tried to investigate, and supposedly found something of interest before she was chased away by a giant, of all things! Last I heard, she’d all but moved into a room at the Rusty Dragon in Sandpoint—and I don’t blame her. If I were her, being chased by a giant would certainly put me off life on the road!

PILLA THE PEDDLER

The most important source of information regarding Windsong for the PCs is **Pilla Linuveshi** (N female human expert 5), a Varisian peddler and on-and-off-again fortune-teller who’s taken up residence in Sandpoint’s Rusty Dragon. While she was badly rattled by her close encounter with a hill giant, she loves telling her story for the attention it gets her. If the PCs stop by Sandpoint to visit her, they



PILLA LINUVESHI

BEYOND THE DOOMSDAY DOOR

find Pilla in the tavern's front room, enjoying some free food and attention—she's only too eager to talk to the PCs.

As the PCs talk to Pilla, she repeats her story of having noticed smoke rising from the abbey and detouring from her journey to investigate. As she approached, she found a strange, small pointed cap of crimson felt that appears to have been soaked in blood. A moment later, a boulder “the size of a horse!” landed not 10 feet from her. The giant that threw it gets larger each time she tells the story (by the time the PCs hear it, the hill giant has become 40 feet tall). Pilla fled, and still isn't quite sure how she survived other than that she's always been good at running away from monsters.

She still has the red hat, and produces it for the PCs to examine if they wish. With a successful DC 16 Knowledge (nature) check, a PC identifies the hat as having belonged to a murderous type of fey known as a redcap—Pilla made this connection herself and proudly points it out if the PCs don't. Although she was chased off by a giant, Pilla suspects redcaps are the primary cause of the problems in Windsong, and if she's right, she suspects everyone in the abbey is long dead. If the PCs are thinking of heading up to Windsong, she can warn them that they should make sure to be well stocked with cold iron weapons to fight redcaps with, and also tells them that the little terrors can't stand the sight of religious icons. Whatever drove them to attack Windsong Abbey must be frightening and powerful indeed if it could force them to swallow these fears!

If the PCs ask her for more information about Windsong, she says she's never actually been in the abbey itself, but she can sketch a crude map of the village for them—although she's quick to point out that most of these buildings looked destroyed. She mentions that the entire place seemed to have been hit by an earthquake and that while two of the buildings in the abbey were destroyed, the central light, the so-called Pharus Pharasmae, still stands. In fact, she claims to have seen movement up in the tower, and wonders if, perhaps, a priest has holed up in there. After all, if the lighthouse withstood an earthquake, that could well be a great place to hold out against an invading force, yes?

Story Award: Speaking to Pilla and learning what she knows about Windsong earns the PCs 4,800 XP.

TIMELINE OF ARDATHANATUS'S ATTACK

Ardathanatus seeks to complete a plan he began almost unknowingly a century ago—using the *Doomsday Door*

as a gateway to Sekatar-Seraktis, the Abyssal realm of his master Yamasoth. Between skulk cultists from Hollow Mountain, giants and bugbear minions from Fogscar, and qliphoth conjured from the Abyss, Ardathanatus has seized control of the abbey. A timeline of how his attack played out is presented below so that, should the PCs interrogate captured prisoners or rescued clerics, you can present this information in a dynamic way. The weeks associated with this attack assume that the PCs took a month to finish “The Asylum Stone.” If they took longer, you should adjust the earlier dates as appropriate.

Week 1: Ardathanatus arrives at the Fogscar Mountains with several skulks and sinspawn, as well as a few taiga giant followers. He recruits a group of hill giants and ettins, and a band of redcaps (including a bogeyman that, much to Ardathanatus's delight, had been capitalizing on the legend of the cleric's murderous rampage to fuel his own evil) to his cause through different shows of force. One of his favorite minions from Hollow Mountain, the medusa cleric Sufestra, disguises herself as an elven princess and arrives at Windsong Abbey this same day and seduces Zolerim, the abbey's priest of Nethys. The man's curiosity about the chambers below Windsong helps win his loyalty over to Ardathanatus, and he agrees to aid in Windsong Abbey's fall in return for

rewards of power.

Week 2: Ardathanatus attacks the abbey. After throwing the area into chaos with an *earthquake* spell, he and his small army of monsters destroy the village and quickly overwhelm the abbey itself. Zolerim aids in the capture of Nildus and Gein, two of the abbey priests, after he surprises the Masked Abbot in the Council Chamber, beheading him as he sits in his chair. A final cleric, a man named Casamir, escapes and goes into hiding in the ruins. Ardathanatus secures the *doomsday key* and begins unsealing chambers into the Groetan temple below, leaving the key with Sufestra once all the doors are open. Ardathanatus turns control of the abbey's surface level and grounds to the recruits from Fogscar, leaving Sufestra in charge of them, while he moves his own followers down into the dungeons below. Meanwhile, hiding out in the abbey's lighthouse, Casamir uses a *sending* spell to call for help from his daughter Koriah Azmeren.

Week 3: Koriah arrives and manages to kill a few giants and redcaps before she's turned to stone by Sufestra. Casamir sees the horror and goes somewhat mad with grief, barricading himself deeper within the Pharus Pharasmae. In the dungeons below, Ardathanatus makes



ARDATHANATUS

contact with Kandamereus, an ancient undead cleric of Groetus, and convinces him to aid in opening the *Doomsday Door* to Sekatar-Seraktis, a process that will take many weeks, if not months, to complete.

Week 4: Ardathanatus completes his exploration of the underground levels of the Groetan temple, sealing some rooms back up, installing new guardians conjured from the Abyss, and otherwise preparing for what he knows will someday soon come—resistance in the form of do-gooders sent to the abbey to cleanse it of evil. He doesn't initially realize that the *Shard of Envy* he carries is what these adventurers seek, nor does he understand the true significance of the shard's potential.

PART TWO: WINDSONG RUINS

Windsong Abbey is approximately 120 miles north of Magnimar as traveled via the Lost Coast Road. As the PCs should be well into 10th level by this point, details on the relatively short trip to Windsong from Magnimar are not necessary here. Feel free to add in new encounters as they travel north as you see fit.

As the PCs approach the abbey's vicinity, the rolling hills, light forests, and coastal cliffs give way to devastation. Farm fields scorched black, houses turned into jumbles of timber, and the mangled remains of half-eaten livestock rule the view. Turkey vultures wheel in the skies above, and the smell of ash and decay taints the air even now, weeks after the initial destruction was wrought.

Windsong Abbey appears remarkably different from a distance depending on whether it is day or night. During the night, the iridescent light of the Pharus Pharasmae shines regularly in the lantern of the lighthouse, and the damage caused by Ardathanatus's attack is mostly concealed by the darkness. But during the day, the light of the central tower fades and the rest of the structure offers a sad spectacle. What were once two of the most impressive structures of the complex, the central chapel and the great guesthouse, have been almost completely destroyed. The tallest building of the abbey complex remains the 150-foot-tall Pharus Pharasmae, a white marble lighthouse, but now that the chapel and guesthouse lie in ruins, the second tallest structure is the 60-foot-tall gatehouse, followed by the 40-foot-tall chapter house. The Windsong Tower (area A22), connected to the main complex by an elevated corridor and standing more than

100 feet above the foamy waters of the reef, is the only part of the abbey that seems not to have suffered any kind of damage during the recent assault. The abbey grounds also show signs of abuse and destruction, especially the service buildings and the graveyard.

The current occupants of Windsong have been left to their own devices—the medusa Sufestra has little interest in delegating tasks and spends most of her time in area A22. The abbey itself is primarily the domain of the redcaps, with the ruins of the village and the graveyard now serving, quite literally, as stomping grounds for ettins and giants. These creatures prefer spending the days asleep in various ruined buildings, coming out at night to cavort among the ruined towns. Every few nights, a new ruined house is selected to serve as a bonfire and its ruins are put to the torch.

An old 20-foot-wide stone wall encompasses the actual abbey grounds. This 10-foot-tall stone belt dates back to the times when the cult of Groetus dominated the region, and was the plinth of the outer palisade of a primitive fort, which was destroyed and abandoned a long time before the foundation of Windsong Abbey. The base of the old wall has been long plundered for construction material, and presents many gaps and collapsed sections along its course.

The abbey's wharf, consisting of a pier and a boathouse, lies on a small sandy beach at the base of the cliffs. On the landward side, the structure is surrounded by impassable rocks, and is connected to the

top of the cliff by a wooden staircase built on sturdy poles. No boats remain moored to the pier. A short walk along the beach eventually reveals the entrance to a cave under the abbey (area E2), and a successful DC 30 Perception check made while looking up at the cliff above, atop which the abbey itself sits, reveals numerous narrow niches and hollows that connect to various chambers of the dungeon levels. A successful DC 10 Perception check allows a PC to notice the stained-glass window opening into area C3 from the shore below. Canny PCs can certainly use these openings to enter the dungeon's lower chambers, but they may find themselves ill-prepared for the dangers within if they don't first explore the upper levels!

THE WINDSONG

A famous feature of Windsong Abbey is the fact that the entire structure functions something like a musical instrument. As the winds blow in from the sea, they funnel



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through a number of pipe-like tunnels located at the base of Windsong Tower, creating a haunting sound known as the Windsong, and giving the abbey its name.

On a typical day, the breeze blowing in from the sea picks up in intensity as the day goes on, while at night the typical wind patterns avoid the pipes entirely. Almost completely silent at night, the tower pipes and the air ducts that crisscross the abbey and the dungeons begin producing low, whistling sounds as the day progresses. When the wind blows just right, the resulting solemn and peaceful tune can be heard throughout the abbey and its surroundings. Variations on the song exist, influenced by seasons, weather, and even the phases of the moon. The possible effects of the Windsong are as follows.

Land Breeze: In the 12-hour period from midnight to noon, the Windsong is almost completely silent.

Sea Breeze: In the 12-hour period from noon to midnight, the murmur of the wind can be clearly heard throughout most of the structure, with the exception of the fourth dungeon level, which is not fitted with sound tubes. Perception checks that involve hearing in the abbey are made at a -2 penalty.

Windsong: At some point during sunset each night, there's a 25% chance that the tower pipes catch the wind and play the Windsong. The tune can clearly heard throughout the entire complex. Perception checks that involve listening done in the abbey grounds are made at a -4 penalty (or -2 on the fourth dungeon level). The Windsong lasts for 1 hour, during which all divine spells function at $+1$ caster level and the redcaps are sickened.

THE GIANTS (CR 11, 13, OR 14)

Creatures: A few giants are allowed to dwell within Windsong Abbey proper, but the bulk of the lumbering oafs recruited by Ardathanatus have been left to dwell in the ruined buildings surrounding the abbey. In theory, these giants compose the initial guardians of the region, but in practice they're not all that observant. If the PCs approach Windsong by day, the giants are asleep in various ruined buildings, and as long as the PCs are reasonably stealthy, the PCs should be able to reach the abbey without rousing them. Note, however, that if the abbey alarm is raised, these giants waken and eventually lumber over to join any fights there. In this event, you can have the giants arrive in waves as you see fit.

At night, the giants are out and about—some of them lumber into the hinterlands to scavenge or hunt for food, while the remainder cavort and roughhouse. Each night, there's a 30% chance the giants decide to light a ruined building on fire for entertainment. The giants who leave the area to hunt return at dawn, and as the sun rises, they feast before going back to sleep.

In all, six hill giants and nine ettins dwell among these buildings. If the PCs attract their attention, the giants

hoot and roar and attack—forming into three groups of two hill giants and three ettins each. One group moves to attack the PCs at once, while a second group lumbers up to take shelter behind the stone wall. This second group waits and watches, ready with stacks of boulders to throw if the PCs defeat the first group or approach within 50 feet of the wall. The third group comprises the hunters and scavengers—if they're present when the PCs arrive, they join the first group in the attack. A single group of giants is a CR 11 encounter, so if the PCs are forced to handle two groups at once, they may find the giants to be overwhelming and should consider fleeing.

Any giant reduced to fewer than 15 hit points immediately loses interest in the fight and flees north, abandoning Windsong forever. A slain giant carries 3d20 gp worth of looted treasure in its bag.

HILL GIANTS (6)

CR 7

XP 3,200 each

hp 85 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 150)

ETTINS (9)

CR 6

XP 2,400 each

hp 65 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 130)

WINDSONG ABBEY FEATURES

There are numerous methods by which the PCs can enter the abbey. While the following encounters are organized with the assumption that the PCs enter through the main gate (area A1), they could just as well enter through other means, such as clambering through a ruined wall, flying or climbing over a wall into the courtyard, using *gaseous form* to pass through a narrow window, entering a room via *dimension door* or *teleport*, and so on. The denizens of the abbey are alert and expecting an attack, but until the PCs are actually fighting within the walls, the redcaps and other creatures within remain at ease—even if they know that intruders are fighting the giants down in the village. Each encounter area has details on how the denizens of each room react to fights elsewhere in the keep, so you should be very familiar with all areas of the abbey before running this section. Fights here can be very dynamic indeed, with new waves of creatures from adjoining rooms arriving at one battlefield just as the previous fight is ending. Chaining multiple fights together in rapid succession like this can quickly deplete party resources, but fortunately for the PCs, the inhabitants of Windsong interpret any PCs fleeing from a fight as victory, and send jeers and calls of triumph after them. At your whim, if the PCs make multiple strikes against the abbey, the denizens may get more diligent about pursuing foes.

Though half-destroyed by the recent assault, Windsong Abbey still retains a significant portion of its structure

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intact. The ground floor of the buildings is made of large, well-squared sandstone blocks quarried from the surrounding cliffs. With the exception of the gatehouse and now-ruined chapel and guesthouse, the upper floors are reinforced with carved terra-cotta wall veneers. The surviving pitched roofs of the abbey are similarly tiled and topped by a forest of decorative steeples and broaches, which rise on slender pillars from the underlying stone structure. The ceilings of the abbey are high, usually 15 to 20 feet, and the structures and interior spaces are generally very large for humans, conveying a sense of grandeur. The stone walls rising from the foundations have just a few arrow slits opening here and there, while the timber-framed structures atop them are abundantly windowed with stained glass. The roofs are fitted with an efficient gutter system to collect rainwater, which is mostly conveyed by pipelines into a subterranean cistern. Many decorative oil lamps made of copper and crystal hang from the ceiling and walls inside the structure to provide light during the nighttime hours, although they are mostly left unlit by the current occupants of the abbey.

A1. MAIN GATE (CR 11)

The main entrance to the abbey opens into the middle of an enormous gatehouse. A monumental archway, twenty feet wide and almost as tall, allows passage under the bulk of the structure into the abbey courtyard to the west. The great wood-and-iron outer gate has been battered down, one massive leaf partially open, the other unhinged and lying on the stone-paved floor. Fragments of stained glass lie scattered over the ground.

The gates were smashed open by Ardathanatus's giants, and as a result neither can now be effectively closed. In the coffered ceiling between the two gates are four murder holes, which can be noticed from below with a successful DC 25 Perception check. The stained-glass fragments are the remains of the windows in area A9.

Trap: The four murder holes are manned by the redcaps in area A8. The industrious redcaps have significantly weakened the murder holes from above, and with the aid of a few ettins, have hauled four massive stone blocks from the ruined cathedral up here. The blocks now hang above the murder holes by thick lengths of rope—a single redcap can release all four by tugging on a cunningly tied knot, sending all four boulders crashing down through the floor and into the 20-foot-square area between the inner and outer doors. Of course, the redcaps do their best to time this to hit as many PCs as possible. If they notice a PC attempting to disable the trap, though, they immediately trigger the blocks even if they only have a chance to get that single character. Once the trap is triggered, the fallen blocks fill the area and make it extremely difficult terrain

to traverse (with 1 square counting as 4 for the purposes of movement).

FALLING BLOCK TRAP

CR 11

XP 12,800

Type mechanical; Perception DC 25; Disable Device DC 35

EFFECTS

Trigger manual; Reset none

Effect Atk +20 melee (1d6); multiple targets (all creatures between the two gates in area A1)

A2. COURTYARD (CR 10)

This large, stone-paved courtyard is dominated by a one-hundred-fifty-foot-tall tower constructed of pure white marble. Other than a set of white double doors set at the tower's base, the structure's walls present no windows or openings except for at the peak, which is constructed after the fashion of a lighthouse. The immaculate tower makes a stark contrast with the devastated appearance of the courtyard, whose pavement slabs are cracked and disconnected on the south and covered with ash and soot to the northwest where the great thatched roof of the guesthouse was consumed by a huge fire.

Now that the abbey has become a place of madness and chaos, the courtyard is most of the time empty and eerily desolate. Near the middle of the courtyard, about 30 feet west of the entrance to area A4, a small 15-inch-diameter hole drops 20 feet down into area B3, facilitating air circulation in the cistern below. A wooden lid once covered the hole, but it was destroyed during the attack.

Creatures: During the day, the balcony on the southwest corner of the courtyard attached to area A20 serves as a sentry post for a group of four redcaps armed with crossbows and *screaming bolts*. A door leads from this balcony into area A20—during the day, the door is barred from the inside. A successful DC 15 climb check enables a PC to clamber up a support beam from below to the balcony, and these redcaps have no problem doing so when necessary. At night, the four redcap sentries relocate to area A9, but during the day they remain relatively alert. Upon seeing intruders in the courtyard below, they wait until their foes are on the western half before opening fire with their *screaming bolts*. The sound of this attack is more than enough to alert the denizens of the abbey that trouble has arrived, if the PCs haven't already made their presence known.

REDCAPS (4)

CR 6

XP 2,400 each

hp 60 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 2 233)

Ranged heavy crossbow with *screaming bolt* +11 (1d10+2/19–20)

Gear leather armor, Medium heavy crossbow with 10 *screaming bolts*, Medium scythe

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Development: There's a 20% cumulative chance each round that combat continues that the ettins in area **A15** make a sortie to attack the PCs in the courtyard instead of waiting for them in ambush. In addition, there's a 25% chance that the redcap musician Larla Clankypump and her dust mephit minions (see area **A11**) come into the courtyard to attack as well once they hear the ettins join the fight. Finally, there's a cumulative 10% chance per round that the qliphoth within the ruined cathedral (area **A14**) slither out to attack as well—if they do, any surviving ettins (who are particularly unsettled by these monsters) beat a fighting retreat back to area **A15**.

A3. POSTERN GATE (CR 9)

A fifteen-foot-high vaulted passage runs through a gap between the western buildings of the abbey here. Both the outer and inner doors at the ends of the passage hang partially open.

Trap: Both of the postern gate doors are still functional (they have been opened from inside) and can be bolted shut from within. Ardathanatus placed one of the many magical traps he's set in the area here, and left the doors open to lure intruders into the area. This *greater glyph of warding* trap is loud enough to be heard throughout the abbey's upper level.

GREATER GLYPH OF WARDING

CR 9

XP 6,400

Type magic; Perception DC 31; Disable Device DC 31

EFFECTS

Trigger location; Reset none

Effect spell effect (*greater glyph of warding*, sonic blast glyph, 7d8 sonic damage, DC 21 Reflex save for half damage); multiple targets (all creatures in area **A3**)

A4. LIGHTHOUSE ENTRANCE

The stem of this tall, white tower seems built out of a smooth, marble-like substance, very hard and uncannily flawless. A spiral staircase built on the surface of the wall leads up to the top.

The double door at the base of the tower, made of the same light and quasi-indestructible marble-like substance as the walls, is shut tight. A permanent *arcane lock* (CL 17th) augments the door's existing lock, and the stone and door of the tower are magically treated for strength. The door (Disable Device DC 40 to pick the lock, hardness 16, hp 120, break DC 38) and tower walls (hardness 16, hp 1,080 per 5-foot section, break DC 70) survived the earthquake and assault intact as a result.

A person who carries a specially prepared miniature tower carved in the spire's likeness can open and close the door with ease—currently, one of these miniatures is

in Casamir Azmeren's possession. The tower's walls are smooth and cannot be climbed without magic such as *spider climb*.

The interior of the structure (areas **A4** and **A5**) are warded by a *forbiddance* spell (CL 17th) attuned to chaotic good. The password "Pharasmae" allows free passage into the area.

A5. PHARUS PHARASMAE

The room at the top of the spiral stairway is encased in thin, immaculate walls windowed with large, colorless glass panes. In the middle shines a huge iridescent sphere, whose dazzling colors are magnificently reflected all over the surrounding white walls and window panes. The walls of the room have been covered to a height of seven feet with tangled scribbles and drawings of butterflies and angelic women.

These windows are in fact permanent *walls of force* (CL 17th), placed here when the spire was first constructed over 500 years ago. The sphere at the center of the room is a permanent *prismatic sphere* (CL 17th), suspended 10 feet off the ground and 10 feet from the ceiling—nearby mirrors can be wound so that they sweep back and forth, the source of the light's unique kaleidoscopic look.

Creature: When Ardathanatus stormed the abbey, one of the local clerics, a man named Casamir Azmeren, took refuge here, knowing that the structure was a solid fortress. Before the attack, Casamir was the tender of the lighthouse, in fact—when the violence came, he made a decision that haunts him to this day. Rather than join what he knew would amount to a slaughter, Casamir instead fled here, hoping to hold out until salvation arrived so that he could report what happened to the abbey. When his first attempt to call for help from his daughter Koriah ended in her defeat and petrification, he went a little mad—since that tragedy, he's been busying himself by writing prayers to Desna on the walls, using sticks of charcoal mixed with spit and drops of his own blood. When he grows hungry, he casts *create food and water*. He hasn't left the Pharus Pharasmae in weeks, and the room reeks of his occupancy.

Getting in to talk to Casamir could be tricky—the entrances to the Pharus Pharasmae are well warded, after all. If the PCs get into a particularly noisy fight in the courtyard below, if they hammer for at least 10 minutes on the door at area **A4**, or if they manage to get up to the *wall of force* windows and catch Casamir's attention, the distraught cleric realizes that hope may have finally come. Communicating with Casamir is at first difficult, as he doesn't want to let the PCs in to talk to them until he's sure they're here to kill the monsters. Once he witnesses them slaying giants, redcaps, or other monsters in the abbey, he opens the door at area **A4** long enough to let them in, then leads them up here to speak.

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If, on the other hand, Casamir notices the PCs but they don't attempt to contact him, he prepares a *divination* spell the next day to learn more about them—satisfied with the result that they're here to help, he then casts *sending* to arrange a meeting with the PC who looks most likely to be a worshiper of Desna. He informs the PCs of the password to avoid the lighthouse's *forbiddance* effect in this message.

Casamir experienced Windsong Abbey's fall firsthand, and can fill the PCs in on what happened. The cleric correctly suspects that Ardathanatus, recorded as the last priest of Pharasma on duty at the abbey before the death of Aroden, has turned to chaos and evil, and intends to bring on a catastrophic invasion of demons on the Material Plane. Casamir also knows that Zolerim, the local priest of Nethys, violated the Windsong Truce and aided Ardathanatus by killing the Masked Abbot, although he's not sure why Zolerim betrayed the abbey. He goes on to tell of his daughter's capture, barely managing to hold back tears as he describes how Koriah succeeded in killing several redcaps before what could only have been a medusa emerged from the refectory (area **A15**) to turn her to stone. The statue remained in the courtyard for a day as the redcaps despoiled it, but eventually an ettin dragged it off into the refectory. Casamir is distraught about his daughter's fate, and hopes the PCs can save her.

If the PCs think to ask, Casamir can confirm that Ardathanatus did indeed carry a strange triangular-shaped shard of metal on him, and that he seemed particularly taken with caressing it when he was barking orders to his monstrous minions during the attack on Windsong.

Further information about Casamir and the role he can play in this adventure can be found on pages 56–57.

CASAMIR AZMEREN

CR 7

XP 3,200

hp 35 (see page 56)

Story Award: If the PCs manage to contact Casamir and secure his aid and learn what he knows, award them 6,400 XP.

A6. GATEHOUSE STOREROOM (CR 11)

This room contains a large barrel and a couple of wooden shelving units. Several opened crates and burst sacks lie scattered here and there. There is a trap door in the southwest corner, next to the entrance.

The iron-shod door of this room is unlocked and slightly ajar. The abbey guards kept supplies here, including fresh food and water delivered on a daily basis from the countryside. The redcaps ransacked the supplies, and nothing of value remains here. The barrel is half full

of stale water. The trap door, which once gave access to the dungeons below, has been turned into a trap by the redcaps.

Trap: The redcaps have weakened the floor in the 10-foot square where the trap door is located, so that it collapses as soon as two Medium creatures simply stand near to it. Under the trap door, 20 feet below, the redcaps have fitted a bed of poisoned spikes and erected a brick wall to isolate the bottom of the trap from the rest of the complex.

POISONED PIT TRAP

CR 11

XP 12,800

Type mechanical; Perception DC 30; Disable Device 30

EFFECT

Trigger location; **Reset** none

Effect 20-ft.-deep pit (2d6 falling damage); pit spikes (Atk +15 melee, 1d4 spikes per target for 1d6+5 damage each plus poison [giant wasp poison]); DC 20 Reflex avoids; multiple targets in a 10-ft.-square area)

A7. GATEHOUSE STAIRWAY

A wooden stairway ascends the inner wall of this otherwise empty room.

The iron-shod door of this room is locked (Disable Device DC 30, break DC 25). The stairway leads up to area **A8**.

A8. GATEHOUSE GUARDPOST (CR 10)

The gatehouse's second floor consists in a single, huge room. In the north part of the room are a round table with some chairs and a fireplace.

If the trap in area **A1** hasn't been triggered, the four huge blocks of stone still hang over the floor in the middle of the room; the weakened murder holes are still strong enough to support the weight of Medium or smaller creatures. If the trap has been triggered, the central 20 square feet of the room's floor are gone, fallen away into the rubble of the area below. Hanging ropes make it possible to swing across the gap with a successful DC 15 Acrobatics check.

The table near the fireplace is usually used by the redcaps to consume meals and play games. A number of pulleys and levers are used by redcaps to trigger the trap in area **A1**, and a couple of peepholes allow an unseen observer to keep an eye on the passage below. Near to the staircase in the south sits a human-sized cage made of wood. Currently empty, the cage is used by the redcaps to hold recently captured prisoners until they are transferred to the dungeon. The cage is held together by rope and nails, and can be closed with a padlocked chain. If the PCs inspect the interior of the cage carefully, they find tiny

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graffiti recording the names of captured peasants and their desperate invocation of help from the gods.

Creatures: Four redcaps are stationed here in a constant state of readiness—they sleep in shifts after dark but are awake during the day. Although not particularly on the alert, the redcaps keep an eye on the fireplace, the cage, the murder holes, and the arrow slits, promptly responding to any menace.

If the PCs confront the redcaps before the falling block trap (see area A1) is triggered, the monsters try to lure the PCs into the dangerous area in the middle of the room, then trigger the trap with one of the ropes (a redcap can do this as a move action from any square adjacent to the trap's boundary), causing the floor to fall away and dealing damage (plus 2d6 falling damage for the 20-foot drop) to anyone in the danger zone who fails a DC 20 Reflex save.

If the PCs confront the redcaps after the trap is triggered, the redcaps move back and forth over the hole by jumping (with their +27 bonus to jumping, they can succeed at the check automatically if they have a running start).

The redcaps flee upstairs to area A9 once at least two of their number are slain.

REDCAPS (4) **CR 6**
XP 2,400 each
hp 60 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 2 233*)

Story Award: If the PCs reach this area without triggering the trap in area A1 and manage to defeat the redcaps before they can trigger the trap or endure the trap's triggering during the battle, award them 12,800 XP for the trap as normal.

A9. GATEHOUSE WATCHPOST (CR 12)

A single large room encompasses the entire top floor of the gatehouse. A large treasure chest sits among several bedrolls to the north. The stained-glass windows along all the walls have been universally smashed out.

Most of the furniture of this room has long ago been chopped to pieces and burned as firewood, but the stained-glass windows were destroyed simply because the redcaps hated the religious imagery they contained. Besides the bedrolls of the recaps, their sleeping area contains a small chest with the band's most precious treasures.

Creatures: While there are bunks here to accommodate all of the redcaps, in fact, many of the fey simply choose to sleep near their actual post when night falls. The leader of the redcaps,

a brute named Roy Flaxbeater, is always encountered here, enjoying the comforts of being in charge by eating, drinking, sleeping, and tormenting prisoners or (when prisoners are in short supply, as they are now) other redcaps. During the day, Flaxbeater and his four unfortunate minions can be found alert and awake in this room, while at night, the five redcaps are all sleeping. If any redcaps from area A9 fled up here, Flaxbeater and his playthings are alert and ready for combat. Likewise, if the trap in area A1 gets triggered, Flaxbeater prepares for combat. Flaxbeater himself is a foul-mouthed, energetic monster who put out his own eye simply so he could wear a large spherical garnet in the socket to make himself look more frightening.

ROY FLAXBEATER **CR 10**
XP 9,600

Male redcap rogue 7 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 2 233*)
 NE Small fey

Init +10; **Senses** low-light vision; **Perception** +19

DEFENSE

AC 25, **touch** 18, **flat-footed** 18 (+4 armor, +6 Dex, +1 dodge, +3 natural, +1 size)

hp 141 (15 HD; 8d6+7d8+82); **fast healing** 3

Fort +9, **Ref** +17, **Will** +9

Defensive Abilities evasion, trap sense +2, uncanny dodge; **DR** 10/cold iron

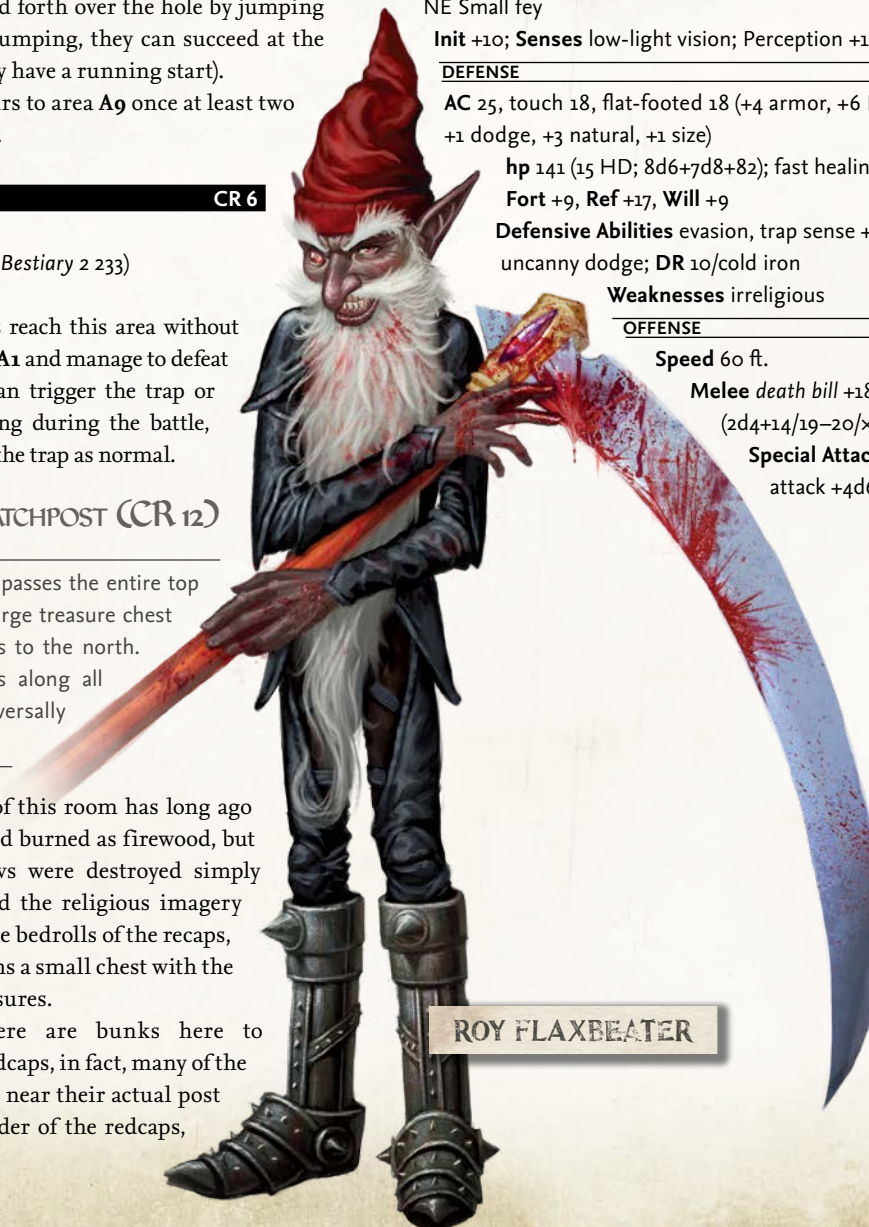
Weaknesses irreligious

OFFENSE

Speed 60 ft.

Melee death bill +18/+13
 (2d4+14/19–20/x4)

Special Attacks sneak attack +4d6



ROY FLAXBEATER

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TACTICS

During Combat If he's expecting trouble, Flaxbeater hides near the south stairs so he can sneak attack the last PC to enter the room once combat starts. He uses his minions as nothing more than flanking partners, and tries to avoid fighting in melee against foes that wield weapons capable of penetrating his damage reduction.

Morale Flaxbeater panics if reduced to fewer than 20 hit points. He sacrifices any and all of his followers in order to escape death in this case—if he can't flee downstairs, he climbs out a window. His goal is to find somewhere to hide until he's healed back to full hit points, whereupon he stealthily tracks down the PCs and waits for them to get into another fight before leaping out to stab them again.

STATISTICS

Str 22, **Dex** 23, **Con** 20, **Int** 14, **Wis** 13, **Cha** 18

Base Atk +9; **CMB** +14; **CMD** 31

Feats Combat Expertise, Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Improved Critical (scythe), Improved Initiative, Mobility, Spring Attack, Vital Strike, Weapon Focus (scythe)

Skills Acrobatics +24 (+36 when jumping), Bluff +22, Climb +24, Escape Artist +24, Intimidate +22, Perception +19, Sense Motive +18, Sleight of Hand +24, Stealth +28; **Racial**

Modifiers +12 Acrobatics (when jumping)

Languages Aklo, Common, Giant, Sylvan

SQ boot stomp, heavy weapons, red cap, rogue talents (bleeding attack +4, combat trick, resiliency), trapfinding +3

Other Gear +2 leather armor, death bill (see page 60), garnet eye worth 5,000 gp, key ring

REDCAPS (4)

CR 6

XP 2,400 each

hp 60 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 2 233)

Treasure: The treasure chest amid the bedrolls is locked (Disable Device DC 40), but Flaxbeater carries the key. The chest contains 922 sp, 600 gp, a pouch of seven gems worth 100 gp each, and about 40 pounds of silverware stolen from the abbey (cutlery, vases, bottles, and cups) worth 1,300 gp in total thanks to their excellent workmanship. Roy Flaxbeater's bundle of keys opens most locks in the abbey buildings save for the doors at areas **A4** and **A10**.

A10. LABYRINTH WITHOUT WALLS (CR 12)

The iron-shod door into this room from the courtyard is sealed with a particularly ominous-looking lock bearing a metal plate fashioned in the shape of a moonlike skull. A successful DC 20 Knowledge (religion) check is enough to recognize the lock as being carved in the shape of the holy symbol of Groetus. The housing for the lock, as well as the door itself, appears to be quite old, as a PC who succeeds at a DC 15 Knowledge (engineering) can confirm. In fact, this door and the wall of the room around it predate Windsong

Abbey by many centuries—it is of Thassilonian make, and once served as the back entrance to the temple of Groetus in the cliff below.

An examination of the lock reveals its true complexity, for even as it is studied, the mechanism of the lock itself twists and changes. The entire thing is a magical item known as a *doomsday lock*. It radiates strong transmutation magic, and any attempt to pick the lock causes the skull to bite down on the key or lockpick. The user must make a DC 20 Reflex save each round—failure indicates the biting skull deals 1d6+10 points of damage to the item (enough to automatically destroy most normal or masterwork lockpicks). A new Reflex save must be made each round. The lock can, however, be opened if the attempt is made while invisible. Attempts to pick the lock using Disable Device take a –10 penalty if the skull is attempting to chew the lockpick.

While the lock can perhaps be picked (with a series of six consecutive successful DC 35 Disable Device checks to decode the six-part combination), an easier method of unlocking the door exists—the *doomsday key* carried by Sufestra in area **A22** fits this lock perfectly and does not trigger the biting skull. Unfortunately, the lock itself is a combination lock that requires a specific pattern to open. Using the *doomsday key* bypasses the trap associated with the area only if the correct combination is used.

Trap: An ancient trap wards this old entrance to the vaults below, one that the priests of Windsong knew about but never removed, as they felt that the trap served just as well to keep any dangers in the dungeons below from escaping as from keeping anyone from above getting in (the priests and servants used trap doors elsewhere in the abbey for ingress and egress). Casamir can warn the PCs about this trap if they speak to him. He knows that the door's lock requires a combination, but doesn't know that combination—that secret was kept by the Masked Abbot. Although the abbot is now dead, Casamir muses that, perhaps, the combination can be found in his quarters (area **A19**).

Using the *doomsday key* to unlock the trap bypasses it—but only if the correct combination is entered. The lock itself turns both left and right, with each turn twisting the key 90 degrees in one direction before the lock makes a satisfying click. The correct combination to open the *doomsday lock* is as follows: 2L–3R–1L–2R–2L–3R, with the numeral indicating how many clicks the key must be turned and the L or R indicating direction (left or right). Once the right combination is entered, the door swings open.

Any other method used to force open the door (including a series of Disable Device checks made without a *doomsday key*) triggers the trap. A ripple of cold air radiates out from the lock to a radius of 30 feet, and all creatures in this area are subjected to the *labyrinth without walls* trap. This effect is similar to that generated by a *maze* spell—all creatures within 30 feet of the door when it is opened are shunted

SHATTERED STAR

into an extradimensional realm unless they are warded by a *dimensional anchor* or similar effect. This realm is a featureless gray and infinite expanse with a ruined, empty cathedral of Pharasma at its heart. The sky is black and starless, with only an immense skull-shaped moon hanging above. Despite the lack of walls, the method of escaping this realm is identical to that of a typical *maze* spell—each round as a full-round action, a character may attempt a DC 20 Intelligence check to escape. If multiple creatures are caught by the trap, they all share the same fate and are together in this eerie realm—if one creature in the group succeeds at the DC 20 Intelligence check, all of its allies can opt to escape the realm as well. Each round that passes, creatures in this realm must make a successful DC 20 Will save to avoid taking 1d4 points of Charisma drain. A creature drained to 0 Charisma is comatose and cannot make Intelligence checks to escape, and at your option, becomes afflicted with agoraphobia (fear of open spaces—see page 250 of the *Pathfinder RPG GameMastery Guide* for rules on madness).

If the attempt to open the door succeeds, the door remains open for only 1d10 rounds before it closes automatically with a resounding slam. This deals 3d6+10 points of damage to any object or creature in the doorway—only if the object or creature is not destroyed or slain by this damage can the door be effectively propped open. The trap automatically resets each time the door is closed.



DOOMSDAY LOCK

The iron-shod door of this room, slightly ajar, is blackened by soot but still in working order. The ground floor of this burned guesthouse now appears as a large open space with just a few rooms surviving along the other walls. The rooms on the ground floor of this building once served as guest rooms, while the bulk of the abbey's priests dwelled in rooms on the upper floors, now completely destroyed. The surviving side rooms were originally cleared and intended to serve as a place for many of Ardathanatus's minions to rest, but after a few weeks of infighting, these rooms are empty save for the northernmost room, which is now occupied by Larla Clankypump, the redcap musician.

Creatures: Clankypump, whose music is seldom appreciated by her brethren, was selected by Ardathanatus to serve as the "leader" of the redcaps, but the elf miscalculated the amount of respect the redcaps have for her. Poor Clankypump has never been able to maintain much in the way of respect of her kin, and after Flaxbeater more or less stole her thunder by taking over, the depressed redcap began spending most of her time in this building—its ruined skeletal remains serving to perfectly augment her bleak mood. Several dust mephits (a small gang of outsiders that have long followed Clankypump around and enjoy her music in ways the other redcaps do not) dwell here as well, perching amid the ruins like

tiny little gargoyles.

If Clankypump hears combat, she watches from hiding and casts *whispering wind* to alert the skulks in area B10, but otherwise she feels no real loyalty to the other inhabitants of the abbey. She does not join in any battles as a result. Clankypump alone among the redcaps might be willing to listen to reason, but only if the PCs immediately compliment her or her musical skills—otherwise, her instinctive reaction is to attack.

LABYRINTH WITHOUT WALLS

CR 12

XP 19,200

Type magic; Perception DC 33; Disable Device DC 33

EFFECTS

Trigger touch; **Reset** automatic (as soon as door closes)

Effect spell effect (*maze*, CL 20th, DC 20 Will save each round to resist 1d4 Charisma drain); multiple targets (all creatures within a 30-foot-radius spread of the door)

A11. CHARRED DORMITORY (CR 11)

Once a three-story-high building, this structure is now little more than a charred pile of ruins surrounded by a twenty-foot-high enclosure of blackened wall. A few smaller rooms remain along the walls, but even these are partially collapsed. Fragments of furniture suggest this was once the abbey guesthouse before the fire ruined it all.

LARLA CLANKYPUMP

CR 9

XP 6,400

Female redcap bard 6 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 2 233)

NE Small fey

Init +10; **Senses** low-light vision; Perception +19

DEFENSE

AC 23, touch 17, flat-footed 17 (+3 armor, +6 Dex, +3 natural, +1 size)

BEYOND THE DOOMSDAY DOOR

hp 117 (14 HD; 8d6+6d8+62); fast healing 3
Fort +8, Ref +17, Will +13; +4 vs. bardic performance, language-dependent, and sonic
DR 10/cold iron
Weaknesses irreligious

OFFENSE

Speed 60 ft.
Melee mwk scythe +16/+11 (2d4+11/x4)
Special Attacks bardic performance 19 rounds/day (countersong, distraction, fascinate, inspire competence +2, inspire courage +2, suggestion)
Bard Spells Known (CL 6th; concentration +11)
2nd (4/day)—*glitterdust* (DC 17), *hold person* (DC 17), *invisibility*, *whispering wind*
1st (6/day)—*charm person* (DC 16), *cure light wounds*, *hideous laughter* (DC 16), *ventriloquism* (DC 16)
o (at will)—*dancing lights*, *ghost sound* (DC 15), *mage hand*, *message*, *open/close*, *summon instrument*

TACTICS

Before Combat Clankypump casts *invisibility* if she has time.
During Combat Clankypump tries to avoid combat. She inspires the dust mephit minions with courage, then uses *glitterdust*, *hold person*, and *hideous laughter* to keep the PCs disorganized and distracted. She prefers to hold back on physical attacks until she's got the bulk of the party blinded or otherwise incapacitated, in which case she focuses those attacks on any PCs who still remain able to fight back.
Morale If she is reduced to fewer than 20 hit points, Clankypump surrenders, begging for mercy and promising that she can help the PCs. She knows the PCs need the *doomsday key* to open the door to area **A10**, and that the key is held by the medusa in area **A22**. She agrees to help the PCs recover the key if they promise to let her go once they secure the key, but in fact, she attempts to flee as soon as she has a chance to heal herself back to full hit points.

STATISTICS

Str 20, Dex 23, Con 18, Int 14, Wis 15, Cha 20
Base Atk +8; CMB +12; CMD 28
Feats Arcane Strike, Combat Casting, Combat Reflexes, Improved Initiative, Power Attack, Vital Strike, Weapon Focus (scythe)
Skills Acrobatics +23 (+35 when jumping), Escape Artist +23, Knowledge (engineering) +15, Knowledge (religion) +15, Perception +19, Perform (comedy) +22, Perform (wind) +22, Sense Motive +19, Stealth +27; **Racial Modifiers** +12 Acrobatics (when jumping)
Languages Aklo, Common, Giant, Sylvan
SQ bardic knowledge +3, boot stomp, heavy weapons, lore master 1/day, red cap, versatile performance (comedy, wind)
Combat Gear *wand of confusion* (13 charges); Other Gear +1 *light fortification leather armor*, masterwork scythe, 112 gp

ADVANCED DUST MEPHITS (5)

CR 4

XP 1,200 each

hp 25 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 202, 294)

A12. KITCHEN

A great fireplace, almost ten feet tall, dominates this large kitchen from a circular alcove to the northwest. Several workbenches covered with food scraps and dirty chopping boards and bowls lean against the walls; and a central table with chairs stands in the middle.

The iron-shod door of this room is unlocked and slightly ajar. The kitchen, now used only occasionally by the redcaps, is impressive for its size, but otherwise unremarkable. A PC who inspects the mess and succeeds at a DC 15 Perception check notices that someone seems to have been recently preparing sausages with ingredients like meat, onion, oatmeal, suet, spices and salt. A successful DC 15 Heal check is enough for a PC to confirm that the meat seems to have come from humans.

A13. PANTRY (CR 10)

This large pantry contains many wooden shelving units and all kinds of kegs, barrels, and crates. The majority of these containers have been ransacked, although numerous bunches of sausages and misshapen leathery bags hang from the ceiling beams near the middle of the room.

The wooden door of this room is locked (Disable Device DC 25, break DC 18). The pantry is almost completely empty, swept barren by hobgoblin mercenaries, and the only visible foodstuffs are the sausages (all that remains of the abbey's acolytes), a few rounds of sheep cheese, and a half-dozen barrels of salted fish. Among more conventional sausages are some bulging stomachs filled with offal, similar to large white puddings. These are actually redcap haggis made with the entrails of human victims. One of these swollen stomachs, a bit darker and larger than the others, is painted in blood with intricate designs. The stomach radiates strong evocation magic and has the word "peel" written on it both in Aklo and in Abyssal.

Trap: The painted stomach is a curious trap left here by Ardathanatus. This stomach has been enchanted to summon a monster that shares an affinity with its horrid content—a revolting, intestine-like nyogoth. If anyone but a redcap examines it, or if a lawful or good creature comes within 10 feet, the stomach bursts open, releasing the summoned nyogoth qliphoth. The nyogoth remains on the Material Plane for 15 rounds, trying to kill any living being but a redcap or Ardathanatus himself.

SHATTERED STAR

QLIPPOTH HAGGIS TRAP

CR 10

XP 9,600

Type magic; Perception DC 32; Disable Device DC 32

EFFECT

Trigger proximity (true seeing); Reset none

Effect spell effect (*summon monster VII*, summons a nyogoth qliploth for 15 rounds—see *Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 2 224*)

A14. DESTROYED CATHEDRAL (CR 12)

What was once a magnificent cathedral now lies in ruins, its outer wall almost completely obliterated. The space inside is clogged with rubble, broken beams, and shards of stained glass. Splashes of dried blood and fragments of flesh and bone lie throughout the ruined chamber.

This formerly breathtaking cathedral has been all but ruined, the statues of the 21 deities that once sat in niches in the walls having all been pulled down and reduced to rubble. It was through the earthquake-induced breach in the wall here that the bulk of the giants and monsters under Ardathanatus's command invaded the abbey, and it was here that the battle was lost.

Creatures: Ardathanatus called a pair of disgusting qliploth from the depths of the Abyss to guard this room. Both monsters resemble tangled, glistening coils of intestines wrapped around a fanged mouth—these, like the creature summoned by the trap in area A13, are nyogoth qliploth. The strictures of Ardathanatus's *planar ally* spell prevent the nyogoths from leaving the abbey, but as detailed in area A2, they may move into the courtyard to join a battle there. If fought here, the two monsters begin combat with *acid fog* along the ruined southeast portion of the area to make fleeing difficult, then move to fight in melee. They do not pursue foes out of the abbey, but don't hesitate to use *acid arrows* and *fear* against those who try to remain at range.

NYOGOTH QLIPPOTH (2)

CR 10

XP 9,600 each

hp 125 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 2 224*)

Development: This cathedral is in ruins, and repairing and restoring it should be a difficult, long-term task. Nonetheless, if a worshiper of any of the core 20 deities of the Inner Sea region (save for Rovagug) casts *hallow* or *unhallow* on the remains of the cathedral, that caster's deity rewards her for the act by immediately targeting the caster and any allies with one *heal* spell and one *greater restoration* spell each. In addition, for the next 24 hours, anyone who gains this boon also gains a +4 sacred or profane bonus to her highest ability score. This award is granted only once, upon the first casting of a *hallow* or *unhallow* spell here.

A15. REFECTORY (CR 11)

An elaborate fresco depicting a banquet shared by the many deities of Golarion decorates the four walls of this dining hall. The refectory is in complete disarray, with smashed tables and chairs and all kinds of cutlery and crockery scattered here and there amid loads of dirt and rubbish.

Creatures: The refectory is currently occupied by a group of ettins who remained at the abbey after the departure of most of Ardathanatus's mercenary force out of loyalty to their leader, a brute named Kob-Kog who wraps one of his heads in bandages because he only has one helmet. Needed at first to secure the abbey grounds before the arrival of more reinforcements from the Hollow Mountain, the ettins are now considered a nuisance by Ardathanatus due to their exceedingly gross and unruly behavior. Shortly before the PCs arrival, the ettins slew a stray cow and obtained a large cask of wine that had gone unnoticed. Their revolting jamboree left them sluggish and hungover, and as a result, all of them are sickened.

KOB-KOG

CR 9

XP 6,400

Male ettin fighter 3 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 130*)

CE Large humanoid (giant)

Init +5; Senses low-light vision; Perception +16

DEFENSE

AC 24, touch 10, flat-footed 23 (+6 armor, +1 Dex, +8 natural, -1 size)

hp 113 (13 HD; 10d8+3d10+52)

Fort +14, Ref +5, Will +7; +1 vs. fear

Defensive Abilities bravery +1

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft.

Melee mwk battleaxe +15/+10 (2d6+13/19-20/x3), mwk heavy pick +15/+10 (1d8+13/19-20/x4)

Space 10 ft.; Reach 10 ft.

Special Attacks superior two-weapon fighting

TACTICS

During Combat Until seriously wounded (see *Morale*, below),

Kob-Kog is a bastion of fury, barreling into the PCs to attack on sight. He is fond of using bull rush to knock down smaller foes, and always uses Power Attack to gain a +6 damage bonus at the cost of a -3 penalty to hit (these modifiers are included in the stats above).

Morale If reduced to fewer than 25 hit points, Kob-Kog attempts to flee, pushing any other remaining ettins aside in an attempt to throw off pursuit.

STATISTICS

Str 25, Dex 12, Con 19, Int 6, Wis 12, Cha 9

Base Atk +10; CMB +18; CMD 29

BEYOND THE DOOMSDAY DOOR

Feats Improved Bull Rush, Improved Critical (heavy pick), Improved Critical (battleaxe), Improved Initiative, Improved Iron Will, Iron Will, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (heavy pick), Weapon Focus (battleaxe)

Skills Intimidate +10, Perception +16

Languages pidgin of Giant, Goblin, and Orc

SQ armor training 1

Gear breastplate, masterwork battleaxe, masterwork heavy pick, large burlap sack containing silverware, jewelry, and art objects looted from the abbey and worth 4,550 gp in total

ETTINS (3)

CR 6

XP 2,400 each

hp 65 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 130)

A16. GUARDROOM (CR 12)

A grand stairwell to the upper floor is set along the west wall, splitting to the north and south in flanking ascending flights. An extravagant headdress consisting of a veil hanging from a silvery crown is draped over the north banister at the foot of the stairs.

This room was used for rest and recreation by the abbey guards. The fine weapons stored here have been stolen by Ardathanatus's minions—what remains is unremarkable and worthless.

Traps: Two more of Ardathanatus's devious traps await opportunities to devastate would-be rescuers here. The first of these is a *greater glyph of warding* centered on the headdress that explodes into a blast of sonic energy if the raiment is moved. The other trap is a pit trap similar to the one in area A6—a pit carved under a trap door that once led down into the basement.

HEADPIECE BOOBY TRAP

CR 9

XP 6,400

Type magic; Perception DC 31; Disable Device DC 31

EFFECTS

Trigger location; **Reset** none

Effect spell effect (*greater glyph of warding*, sonic blast glyph, 7d8 sonic damage, DC 21 Reflex save for half damage); multiple targets (all creatures in area A16)

POISONED PIT TRAP

CR 11

XP 12,800

Type mechanical; Perception DC 30; Disable Device 30

EFFECT

Trigger location; **Reset** none

Effect 20-ft.-deep pit (2d6 falling damage); pit spikes (Atk +15 melee, 1d4 spikes per target for 1d6+5 damage each plus poison [giant wasp poison]); DC 20 Reflex avoids; multiple targets in a 10-ft.-square area)

Treasure: A successful DC 20 Knowledge (religion) check identifies the headpiece as the raiment of the Masked Abbot of Windsong Abbey. This beautiful item is a *headband of mental prowess +4* (Wisdom and Charisma).

A17. NORTH SEA TOWER ROOM

The northwest corner of this room is circular, with windows that overlook the sea. In the round-shaped section of the room, a high-backed leather armchair sits facing one of the windows, its leather surface stained and stinking of decayed meat.

Development: This room has been occupied by the undead bugbear Luthask, who spends most of his time sitting on the armchair, staring out to sea in deep thought. Luthask is found here only if the PCs have arrived here completely undetected. Otherwise, the armchair is unoccupied, and Luthask is in the council chamber (area A20).

A18. SOUTH SEA TOWER ROOM

The southwest portion of this room is circular, with windows that overlook the sea.



KOE-KOG

Two to left for annis hag.
 Three to right for banshee nag.
 One to west for greenie crone.
 Two to east for spinster lone.
 Two to dusk for wife in tears.
 Three to dawn for witch's leers.

Player Handout

Development: This room is where Luthask's undead bodyguards, three mummies, often wait upon their master's orders. The mummies are found here only in the unlikely case that the PCs have arrived here completely undetected. Otherwise, the three chairs near the windows are unoccupied, and the undead are in the Windsong council chamber (area A20).

A19. ABBOT'S CHAMBERS

This rectangular room is almost completely lined in wood and furnished with a round table with a single chair, several stools near a large fireplace, and two tall bookcases flanking a window with flowery stained-glass designs.

This room, once the bedroom of the Masked Abbot, has been claimed by the medusa Sufestra, though she's been spending the majority of her time in area A22 of late. The bookcases beside the window are almost empty, and contain just a few books of obscure poetry and litanies written in Aklo and Abyssal—Sufestra's collection of demonic literature. On the table is a small book of poems in Abyssal dedicated to the demon lords of Golarion. The inside back cover of this book has been used to scribble a short poem. This is reproduced above as a player handout (see above).

The poem is actually a witchy chant-style annotation by Sufestra detailing the combination to open the *doomsday locks* in the dungeons while using the *doomsday key*. Sufestra chose to hide the combination in the form of a poem so that, while it would remind her, it wouldn't necessarily help anyone else. A successful DC 25 Knowledge (religion) check suggests that the "categories" of people and creatures mentioned in the poem are the typical worshipers of the demon lord Mestama (annis hags, banshees, green hags, spurned lovers, vengeful widows, and witches).

Treasure: The books on the shelves, while grim and blasphemous in subject matter, are rare editions worth 400 gp in all. If referenced while making a successful Knowledge (planes or religion) check about anything

associated with the Abyss, demons, or qliploth, these books grant a +2 circumstance bonus on the check.

A20. WINDSONG COUNCIL CHAMBER (CR 11)

This huge room is a large open central chamber surrounded by an ambulatory, creating a sort of indoor arcade with numerous five-foot-wide arches providing access into the center. In the central chamber, which sits under a vaulted twenty-foot-high ceiling supported by wooden timbers, twenty-one ornate chairs stand in solemn ring, their backs against the walls of the arcade between each of the arches. On the high back of each chair is the beautifully sculpted holy symbol of one of the major deities of Golarion. An immense dark fireplace looms to the west.

This is where the priests of the abbey held their meetings and councils. The 21 chairs each bear the holy symbols of the 20 major deities plus Aroden. A successful DC 20 Perception check made while examining the chairs reveals that two of the chairs (Aroden's and Rovagug's) seem to have not been used in a great while—in fact, Rovagug's seems never to have been used at all. Further, Iomedae's chair bears a deep gouge along the back at about the point where a seated person's neck would be located, for the priest of Iomedae was seated here a century or so ago when Ardathanatus murdered her by decapitating her with her own sword.

To the north, a door leads out to a balcony that runs along the outer wall, partially above area A3 and overlooking area A2. This door is barred from the inside (break DC 26).

Creatures: The undead bugbear Luthask and his three mummy bodyguards ("gifts" from Ardathanatus, after he found the mummies in deeper chambers below—each of these mummies was created in a desecrated area so it has more hit points than normal) spend much of their time in this room. Luthask sits on Urgathoa's chair in idle contemplation, and his bodyguards simply stand in the surrounding arcade, ready to do their job if needed. A prolific murderer in life, Luthask made a bargain with an ogrekin witch in the Fogscar Mountains to bring him back from death should he ever die. The ogrekin kept her end of the bargain, and Luthask promptly slew her in reward. But Luthask has found that the ogrekin may have had the last laugh, for while he now lives on as a juju zombie, he has lost his capacity to take joy in the kill. He joined Ardathanatus in the hope that the powerful cleric could someday restore his ability to feel pleasure in sadism. Until Luthask earns this reward, he is content to serve, spending the bulk of his time in gloomy thought as he philosophizes on the connections between life and the ability to feel pleasure.

A restless, utterly evil undead being, Luthask is quick to act under Ardathanatus's orders, but he is somewhat

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sluggish in the company of Sufestra, whom he dislikes and tends to avoid. Nicknamed “Massife Anes” by the redcaps for his emaciated but still mighty-looking body frame, Luthask does not react to alarms, only rising from his chair to attack the PCs once they reach this room. Each time he strikes a blow with his axe, he sobs in frustration, muttering phrases like “Can’t feel...” or “Numb...”

LUTHASK CR 10

XP 9,600

Male juju zombie bugbear fighter 7 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 38, *Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 2 291)

CE Medium undead (augmented humanoid)

Init +5; Senses darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +11

DEFENSE

AC 28, touch 12, flat-footed 26 (+10 armor, +1 Dex, +1 dodge, +6 natural)

hp 90 (9 HD; 2d8+7d10+43)

Fort +8, **Ref** +5, **Will** +6; +2 vs. fear

Defensive Abilities bravery +2; channel resistance +4; **DR** 5/magic and slashing; **Immune** cold, electricity, magic missile, undead traits; **Resist** fire 10

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee greataxe of lifestealing +19/+14 (1d12+15/19–20/x3)

Ranged mwk composite longbow with +1 elf-bane arrow +12/+7 (1d8+10/x3)

Special Attacks weapon training (axes +1)

TACTICS

During Combat Luthask prefers fighting with his axe, and particularly hates elves. He switches to his bow if an elven target is available, staying on the move to prevent attacks of opportunity and relying on his mummies to keep enemies from engaging him in melee in this case.

Morale Luthask fights until destroyed.

STATISTICS

Str 24, **Dex** 13, **Con** —, **Int** 10, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 16

Base Atk +8; **CMB** +15; **CMD** 27

Feats Deadly Aim, Dodge, Improved Critical (greataxe), Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes, Power Attack, Toughness, Weapon Focus (composite longbow, greataxe), Weapon Specialization (composite longbow, greataxe)

Skills Climb +16, Intimidate +15, Perception +11, Stealth +14; **Racial Modifiers** +8 Climb, +4 Intimidate, +4 Stealth

Languages Common, Goblin

SQ armor training 2

Gear +1 full plate, greataxe of lifestealing (as sword of lifestealing), masterwork composite longbow with 10 +1 elf-bane arrows, headband of alluring charisma +2

MUMMIES (3) CR 5

XP 1,600 each

hp 76 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 210)

A21. STAINED-GLASS GALLERY (CR 11)

This room is a sort of enclosed bridge suspended over the cliff and shore. The east and west walls are decorated with magnificent stained-glass windows depicting wonderful landscapes of the Outer Planes and of the home of the gods of Golarion.

Creatures: Ardathanatus used a pair of *planar ally* spells to conjure up a pair of wrath demons (known to many as vrock) to serve the medusa cleric Sufestra as guardians. As a result, while Sufestra doesn't officially control the demons, they do follow her commands. She casts *status* on both demons every morning, so even if they're unable to alert her of intruders into this room via telepathy, she



LUTHASK

SHATTERED STAR

knows the instant they're damaged, banished, slain, or otherwise inconvenienced.

Both vrocks stand at guard in the middle of the room and attempt to summon additional vrocks to their side as soon as they hear the sounds of combat in area A20. They use *mirror image* and *heroism* at the start of combat, and are quite fond of using *telekinesis* to hurl PCs through stained-glass windows, given the chance (it's a 120-foot fall to the rocky beach below).

VROCKS (2)

CR 9

XP 6,400 each

hp 112 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 69)

A22. BATHS (CR 12)

This room is finely tiled with ceramic and glass and smells of pleasant floral aromas. A large, circular stone bath rises from the floor in the middle. Of the three stained-glass windows in the room, the ones on the west and the east walls are flanked by large clay vases under copper pipes that descend from the ceiling. The air is pleasantly warm, no doubt heated by the steaming waters in the bath.

Three unusually realistic statues stand in the room—one of a begging redcap on his knees, another of a startled-looking hill giant, and yet another of a beautiful half-elven woman armed with a sword and a hooked club. These are all petrified creatures—but by the time the PCs enter the room, one or two of them may well have been restored to flesh (see *Creatures*, below)—make sure to amend your description of the room to include statues as appropriate.

This room is where the priests of the abbey came to relax—the large pool in the middle of the room is 3 feet deep, with submerged benches along the edges. The pool itself radiates faint conjuration magic, for the waters of the pool remain constantly heated, refreshed, and purified. This room sings with sound when the Windsong plays, for it is through the walls of this tower that the song is generated—here, Perception check penalties imparted by the Windsong are doubled.

Creatures: Sufestra, a beautiful medusa cleric, had long been enthralled with the teachings of the demon lord Mestama, particularly in her espousing of cruelty and deception. When Ardathanatus encountered Sufestra in Hollow Mountain, she was engaged in an exploration of the ancient Bakhrakani ruins for any ancient demonic artifacts related to her patron. They fought briefly, but Ardathanatus quickly proved the victor and subjected her to a *geas/quest* spell to serve him rather than die at his hand. In time, Sufestra has come to respect the powerful elf, and she no longer needs to be forced via magic to serve him, for she hopes that if he can open a portal to the Abyss via the *Doomsday Door*, she can make use of it herself to travel to the Abyss and pledge her loyalty to Mestama in person.

The three statues in this room are three of Sufestra's more recent victims. Two (the redcap and the hill giant) were followers of Ardathanatus who displeased the medusa—she ordered them to join her here for punishment, but before she petrified them, she extracted a promise from each that, if she restores them to flesh at some point in the future, she'll let them remain flesh as long as they aid her in combat. The third statue, of course, is Koriah Azmeren, as any PC who met her during the start of the Shattered Star Adventure Path can immediately recognize.

Sufestra is fond of disguising herself as a human or elven woman, keeping her serpentine hair hidden under a hood or cowl. In the unlikely event that she's caught unawares here, the PCs find her relaxing in the pool. More likely, the sounds of combat and the *status* spell on the two vrocks in area A21 let her know that trouble is afoot, in which case she prepares for battle as detailed in her tactics.

SUFESTRA

SUFESTRA

CR 12

XP 19,200

Female medusa cleric of Mestama 8 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 201)

CE Medium monstrous humanoid

Init +6; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., all-around vision; Perception +15

DEFENSE

AC 26, touch 13, flat-footed 23 (+9 armor, +2 Dex, +1 dodge, +4 natural)

hp 168 (16 HD; 8d10+8d8+88)

Fort +13, **Ref** +10, **Will** +18

BEYOND THE DOOMSDAY DOOR

DR 10/adamantine (130 points from *stoneskin*)

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft.

Melee +1 *frost punching dagger* +17/+12/+7 (1d4+3/x3 plus 1d6 cold), snake bite +11 (1d4+1 plus poison)

Special Attacks channel negative energy 7/day (DC 18, 4d6), petrifying gaze (DC 18)

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

At will—charming smile (8 rounds, DC 14), master's illusion (8 rounds/day)

7/day—copycat (8 rounds), dazing touch

Spells Prepared (CL 8th; concentration +12)

4th—*confusion*^D (DC 18), *cure critical wounds*, *freedom of movement*, *sending*

3rd—*cure serious wounds*, *dispel magic*, *protection from energy*, *speak with dead* (DC 17), *suggestion*^D (DC 17)

2nd—*cure moderate wounds* (2), *hold person* (DC 16), *invisibility*^D, *status*

1st—*charm person*^D (DC 15), *command* (DC 15), *cure light wounds* (3), *sanctuary* (DC 15)

o (at will)—*bleed* (DC 14), *create water*, *detect magic*, *read magic*

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

TACTICS

Before Combat Every morning at dawn, Sufestra casts *status* on the two vrocks in area **A21**. Once that *status* spell alerts her to combat, she prepares for battle by using a dose of *stone salve* on herself to gain *stoneskin*, and 1 dose each on the hill giant and redcap to gain two allies eager to earn their lives back. She ends her preparation by casting *freedom of movement*, *protection from energy* (fire), and *invisibility* on herself.

During Combat If possible, Sufestra hopes to have her giant and redcap minions deal with the PCs. She remains invisible during the first few rounds of combat, moving to cast healing spells on the most wounded ally each round. Once they're defeated, or once she's discovered, she casts *confusion* on as many PCs as possible (which also exposes the PCs to her gaze attack), then channels negative energy on the following rounds to wear the PCs down.

Morale Sufestra fights to the death.

STATISTICS

Str 14, **Dex** 15, **Con** 20, **Int** 10, **Wis** 18, **Cha** 18

Base Atk +14; **CMB** +16; **CMD** 29

Feats Combat Casting, Deceitful, Defensive Combat Training, Dodge, Improved Initiative, Improved Natural Armor, Iron Will, Selective Channeling

Skills Bluff +21, Diplomacy +13, Disguise +21, Knowledge (planes) +7, Knowledge (religion) +8, Linguistics +8, Perception +15

Languages Abyssal, Common, Elven, Giant, Thassilonian, Varisian

Gear +3 *chainmail*, +1 *frost punching dagger*, *doomsday key*, *stone salve* (4 doses), gold unholy symbol of Mestama worth 230 gp, precious necklace worth 2,500 gp

REDCAP

CR 6

XP 2,400

hp 60 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 2 233)

HILL GIANT

CR 7

XP 3,200

hp 85 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 150)

Treasure: Some of the bathing implements in the room (oils, bath salts, soap) are of exceptional quality and worth a total of 80 gp. Among the vials of bath salts and oils in the northwest alcove are three *potions of eagle's splendor*. Sufestra's disguise equipment is kept in the southeast alcove—this masterwork disguise kit is particularly well equipped with elven princess disguises, and grants a +4 bonus on such Disguise checks.

Development: Koriah Azmeren's statue can be restored to flesh via a dose of *stone salve* taken from the defeated medusa—otherwise, the players must use magic like *stone to flesh* or *break enchantment* to restore her. Koriah's role in the remainder of this adventure, should the PCs rescue her, is left to you to determine. If you feel the PCs could use some help in the chambers to come (which is likely, as some of the encounters in the dungeon below, particularly the final encounter, are quite deadly), she can accompany them on their adventures. Alternatively, she could escort her father back to safety in Magnimar. She could even become a recurring character, a rival, or a romantic interest—see pages 58–59 for more information on Koriah's plans and goals.

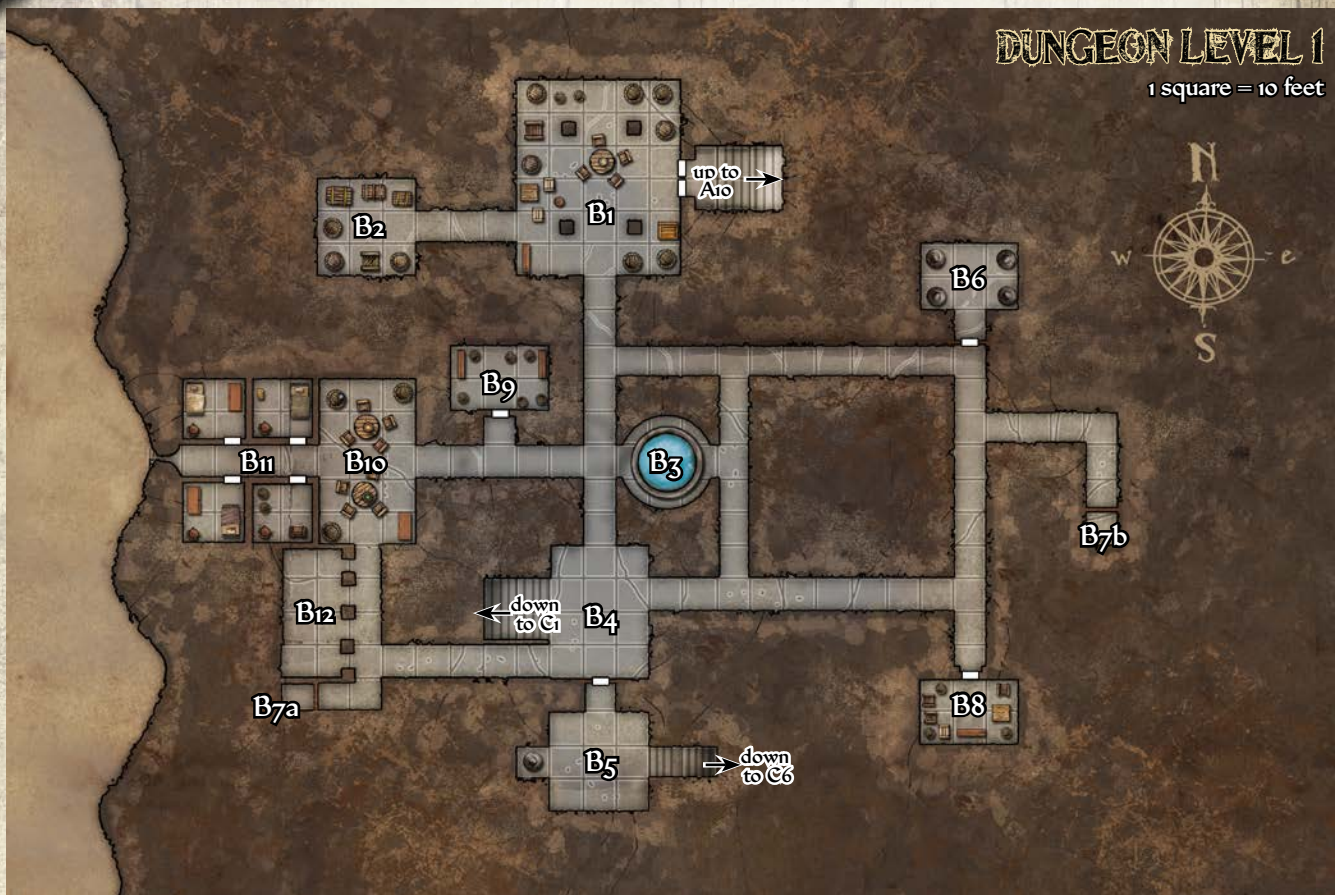
PART THREE: DOWN TO DOOMSDAY

The extensive dungeons under Windsong Abbey were hewn long ago, built during the time of Thassilon by the cult of Groetus into a particularly resilient upthrust escarpment of basalt along the ridge of badlands known at the time as the Rasp. This region also served as a border between the Thassilonian nations of Shalast and Bakrakhan, but the armies of Karzoug and Alaznist did not often clash in this particular stretch of land, for the cult of Groetus was quite strong in those days.

The priests of this temple were ecstatic about the coming of Earthfall, and took their own lives in a blasphemous ritual that transformed many of them into undead creatures. These priests remained trapped between life and death for centuries, lying in wait patiently for the next apocalypse to come.

When the first recent settlers in the region chose this site for Windsong Abbey, they wisely decided to leave the dungeon chambers of the temple alone. As such, the undead guardians of the temple continued their slumber until very recently, when Ardathanatus gained control of the *doomsday key* and set about opening the dungeons

SHATTERED STAR



and exploring them. Relatively skilled at commanding and trafficking with undead, he managed to recruit most of these Groetan cultists to his cause, and today, the dungeons are more dangerous and active than they have been since before the dawn of the Age of Darkness.

The four dungeon levels are all built on a relatively large scale. Hallways and doors seem to be sized more for the passage of ogres than for humans, and unless otherwise indicated, ceiling heights are on average 15 feet. The dungeons are mostly unlit, and those denizens of the complex who need light to see must carry their own light sources if they delve far from the well-lit areas. Stairs in the dungeon are particularly steep, with 1-foot-high risers—as a result, all stairways in the dungeons are considered to be difficult terrain. As with many Thassilonian structures, these dungeons are enhanced with preservative magic that prevents subsidence and erosion with the passage of time. This magic extends to much of the furniture in the dungeon, but while it will keep a wooden table from crumbling to dust over the course of 10,000 years, it doesn't protect the table from direct violence. Doors in the dungeon are remarkably well preserved as a result, but can still be smashed down in most cases with a successful DC 23 Strength check (which is typical for a strong wooden door).

B1. SPIRITS CELLAR (CR 11)

The odor of beer permeates this huge room. Several crates, barrels, kegs, and racks for wine fill the room—many of which have been opened, emptied, upturned, and shattered. The floor is littered with glass shards and corks and strewn with loose coils of rope.

The main cellar of the abbey, where the local production of beer had been aging since the first, merry days of ecumenism, has sadly been ransacked and drained almost completely dry by Ardathanatus's skul mercenaries. Only a dozen bottles and a few casks survive intact.

Creatures: Hollow Mountain hosts several enclaves of skulks, lithe humanoids with the ability to blend almost perfectly with their environments. Most of these tribes survive primarily as a result of their skill at hiding, for Hollow Mountain is a dangerous place indeed. The skulks of the Pallid Path are an exception—these worshipers of Yamasoth have largely forsaken the upper levels of Hollow Mountain or the ruins of Xin-Bakrakhan for the deeper caverns, particularly the swampy, stinking caverns of the Abysmal Slough, where they often war against the troglodyte tribes of the Deep Pools. When Ardathanatus

BEYOND THE DOOMSDAY DOOR

encountered the skulks on his journey through Hollow Mountain, he'd already converted to the worship of the skulks' god Yamasoth, and the elf was quick to capitalize on that by presenting himself to the Pallid Path as a savior. He recruited the entire tribe, and took them with him on his return here to Windsong Abbey.

The skulks of the Pallid Path have had it hard—they took significant losses both in the assault on Windsong and the exploration of these dungeon chambers. (Ardathanatus was fond of using them to trigger suspected traps). But the skulks of the Pallid Path are nothing if not fanatics, and their belief that each of their deaths helps to further the return of their deity to the world is more than enough to ensure their continued loyalty to Ardathanatus.

Although they originally numbered well over three dozen, with a few leaders among their own, today only 16 of the rank-and-file Pallid Path cultists remain. Of those, six are stationed here to guard the contents of the room—now that Ardathanatus has explored the dungeons, he has little further use for the skulks. If the skulks notice the PCs coming, five of them swiftly hide throughout the room and watch patiently while the sixth skulk sneaks into area **B2** to lure the clockwork golem there into this room.

PALLID PATH CULTISTS (6) CR 6

XP 2,400 each

Skulk cleric of Yamasoth 3/rogue 2 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 2 248)

CE Medium humanoid (skulk)

Init +7; **Senses** low-light vision; Perception +13

DEFENSE

AC 16, touch 16, flat-footed 13 (+3 deflection, +3 Dex)

hp 74 (8d8+35)

Fort +7, **Ref** +10, **Will** +8

Defensive Abilities evasion

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee mwk short sword +10 (1d6+2/19–20)

Ranged +1 composite shortbow with inubrix arrows +9 (1d4+3)

Special Attacks channel negative energy 1/day (DC 9, 2d6), sneak attack +2d6

Domain Spell-Like Abilities (CL 3rd; concentration +7)

7/day—acid dart (1d6+1 acid), artificer's touch (1d6+1, bypasses 3 DR and hardness)

Spells Prepared (CL 3rd; concentration +7)

2nd—*cure moderate wounds*, *spiritual weapon*, *wood shape*^D

1st—*animate rope*^D, *cure light wounds*, *doom* (DC 15), *shield of faith*

o (at will)—*bleed* (DC 14), *detect magic*, *light*, *stabilize*

D Domain spell; **Domains** Artifice, Earth

TACTICS

Before Combat The cultist casts *shield of faith*. They remain hidden as long as possible, for they plan to attack only once the golem from area **B2** is lured into this room.

During Combat Once the clockwork golem attacks, these cultists hang back to fire inubrix arrows at any heavily armored PCs. The skulks move after each shot, hoping to hide again and snipe at the PCs while they are forced to concentrate on the golem. Hanging back also keeps the skulks from accidentally attracting the wild golem's attention!

Morale A skulk that is reduced to fewer than 20 hit points attempts to flee south to area **B4** to warn the skulks there and join in the defense of that area's stairs.

STATISTICS

Str 15, **Dex** 16, **Con** 16, **Int** 8, **Wis** 18, **Cha** 7

Base Atk +5; **CMB** +7; **CMD** 23

Feats Combat Reflexes, Improved Initiative, Toughness, Weapon Finesse, Weapon Focus (short sword)

Skills Knowledge (religion) +8, Perception +13, Stealth +22;

Racial Modifiers +8 Stealth

Languages Common, Undercommon

SQ aura, camouflaged step, chameleon skin, rogue talents (combat trick), trapfinding +1

Gear +1 composite longbow with 10 inubrix arrows, masterwork short sword

Treasure: The arrows these skulks fire have heads crafted from a form of pale skymetal called inubrix, known also as “ghost iron.” Inubrix is very soft metal, but it passes through iron and steel as if they didn't exist. As a result, these arrows deal less damage and are treated as if constantly broken, but they completely ignore AC bonuses granted by iron or steel armor and shields. An inubrix arrow is worth 250 gp. More details on inubrix appear on page 71 of *Pathfinder Adventure Path* #61.

B2. BREWERY (CR 11)

This room contains wooden tubs, stone vats, and all the equipment necessary to brew beer, including a large copper kettle and an enclosed cast-iron stove, both connected to the ceiling by wide metal pipes. The equipment has been fitted with strange alchemic implements, including a tall keg that has been split in half vertically and resembles an upright wooden coffin.

Creature: In the unlikely case that the PCs have arrived here undetected by the skulks and without making any noise, the clockwork golem is still standing in the center of this room, idly guarding the chamber. The golem was originally created by one of the abbey's priests of Nethys nearly 80 years ago, and it has served the faithful of Nethys ever since; today, the creature is under the control of the treacherous Zolerim. Unfortunately, this clockwork golem is somewhat damaged (see below). Zolerim lacks the skill to fix the golem, and while Ardathanatus could fix it, he lacks the time to do so. For now, Zolerim has set the golem aside here until it can be repaired.

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Of course, the golem quickly activates and attacks if anyone other than Zolerim walks near—this includes the skulks from area **B1**, who take advantage of this to lure the monster out of this room and into area **B1** to attack the PCs.

DAMAGED CLOCKWORK GOLEM

CR 11

XP 12,800

hp 102 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 2* 137)

Weaknesses damaged

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Damaged (Ex) At the start of each round of combat after the first round, there's a flat 50% chance each round that the thing functions as if it were confused (results of "babble incoherently" should be treated as having the golem simply standing in place, grinding its gears and venting smoke while taking no actual actions. In addition, the golem takes a –2 penalty on attack rolls and saving throws, and a –5 penalty on all damage rolls. Damage it deals with its grind special attack applies to itself as well (bypassing its damage reduction) as the misaligned gears twist and churn, and it lacks the wall of gears special attack entirely.

B3. CISTERN

This room features a twenty-foot-diameter circular cistern filled with water. A five-foot-wide walkway rings the cistern, while above, a single narrow hole leads up to the surface.

The cistern is fed primarily by rainwater runoff that siphons down the gutters in the buildings above and out the gutters here; the hole in the ceiling leads to area **A2** above. The cistern itself is 40 feet deep, with walls that truncate inward in a funnel-like shape down to area **C5** below.

B4. LITANY ROOM (CR 11)

This room is decorated with the frescoed life-size images of singing clerics of different faiths gathered in vaulted chambers. The chanting flowing out of each singer's mouth in the frescoes is represented by floating notation marks that rise toward the ceiling over the head and fall back around the feet.

The stairs lead down to area **C1**. The door to the south that leads to area **B5** has a *doomsday lock*—it functions identically to the one at area **A10** but the door itself is not trapped.

Creatures: This room was used by some of Windsong's priests to chant litanies to the muffled but still audible accompaniment of the Windsong. Today, the room is a guardpost for the remainder of the skulk cultists of the Pallid Path—these skulks cleverly stand guard against the walls, using their ability to blend into surroundings to look like part of the fresco. A character who successfully notices the skulks in hiding likely notes that these six

figures alone do not have visible lines of notation marks winding out of their open mouths.

In addition to the six skulks here, any others that fled from area **B1** can be encountered here as well. The skulks are charged with preventing anyone from using the stairs or heading south to use the stairs in area **B5**, but are not permitted to go downstairs themselves.

PALLID PATH CULTISTS (6)

CR 6

XP 2,400 each

hp 74 each (see page 27)

B5. OBSERVATION ROOM

A faint, flickering light illuminates this room from an alcove in the western wall. Within the alcove, a luminous globe floats in midair above a stone pedestal. A flight of stairs leads down to the east.

The globe in the niche is an ancient creation of the Groetan cult—when anyone approaches the alcove, the globe shimmers and takes on the appearance of a moon with a skull-like face leering from its surface. With a successful DC 15 Knowledge (religion) check, a PC can identify this as a depiction of the god Groetus. If a divine spellcaster approaches within 5 feet of the glowing globe, its glow increases in radiance from dim light to normal light. A successful DC 25 Knowledge (religion) check enables a PC to recall stories of similar icons in Groetan temples. These strange objects served primarily as tokens of respect for visiting clerics and other divine spellcasters. This check also reveals that these icons were said to serve as windows through which powerful priests of Groetus could look out upon the world.

In fact, this icon is linked to the mind of the temple's surviving (but now undead) high priest, Kandamereus. If a divine spellcaster activates the globe by approaching within 5 feet, the mummy cleric notices and can observe the room through the icon as if using *clairvoyance/clairaudience*. The icon functions at CL 20th.

The stairs lead down to area **C6**.

B6. ICE ROOM (CR 10)

The stone door before this room is crusted with ice—while the door's not locked, the ice has built up enough that the door must be forced open with a successful DC 18 Strength check.

The air in this room is quite cold, and frost cakes the floor, ceiling, and walls. At the four corners of the room stand ice-encrusted statues of four very long-haired humans, two men and two women, whose arms are outstretched along the walls. Several crates and barrels lie stacked against the room's walls.

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The four statues in this room radiate moderate conjuration magic—each one constantly siphons frozen air into this room, reducing the temperature to a frigid level. This room is under severe cold conditions as a result (*Pathfinder RPG Core Rulebook* 442). The crates and barrels in this room contain frozen meat and other perishables—Ardathanatus's minions have their own supplies and never bothered with this room.

Creatures: The four statues in this room's corners are, as with the clockwork golem in area **B2**, the creations of the priests of Nethys who once served here. While Ardathanatus can't control these golems, he's used his knowledge of constructs to scratch a series of words into the brows of each of these creatures that scrambles its orders—as a result, the four golems are now much more aggressive and immediately attack anyone in the room, fighting until destroyed.

ADVANCED ICE GOLEMS (4) CR 6

XP 2,400 each

hp 65 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 161)

B7. PIT TRAP

This is the lower area of the pit traps in areas **A6** and **A16** above. Fresh brick walls have been erected to seal off the pits from the rest of the dungeon—the walls can be smashed with relative ease (hardness 6, hp 60, break DC 22).

B8. LUMBER ROOM

A faint smell of seasoned birch and a stronger musty smell of dust permeate this room, where large stacks of lumber, together with heaps of billets, boards, and charcoal are stored. A layer of dust covers everything here.

The lumber stored here was used for maintenance and repair work on the wooden upper stories of Windsong Abbey above. There's little of interest to Ardathanatus in the cluttered room these days, and this room could well make a great place to hide or even rest and recover—the skulks and other minions never come down here, as the dust indicates.

B9. WORKSHOP

This room contains a few sturdy wooden tables and the necessary equipment to work wood, leather, and textiles.

This room, used for routine maintenance of the abbey's furniture and trappings, has been used now and then by Ardathanatus to work on some of the traps and golems that now protect the abbey. A successful DC 20 Knowledge (arcana) check is enough to confirm that this workshop has been used recently for those two purposes.

Treasure: The fine tools in this room compose two full sets of masterwork craftsmen tools—each set is worth 200 gp and grants a +2 bonus on Craft skills having to do with carpentry, stonemasonry, and the like. Of perhaps greater interest are several scrolls containing Ardathanatus's notes on golem crafting, including his notes on how to disrupt and damage golems crafted by others so that they fly into berserk rages. These notes are worth 5,000 gp to an interested scholar of constructs.

B10. COMMON ROOM (CR 10)

This room is furnished with tables, chairs, and a few sideboards. The chairs are scattered here and there, and the sideboards have been smashed open and emptied. A large cast-iron stove sits in the northwest corner.

Creatures: This room was once a common room for the abbey's cellarers and groundskeepers—a place where these servants could relax. None of these folks survived the assault, and today, this room is where the Pallid Path skulks relax when off duty. The first time the PCs enter this dungeon level, the four other skulks that remain from the original 18 can be found here. If they hear the sound of combat, they take the time to hide in the room and prepare to attack intruders. Once combat begins, they shout and holler, attracting the attention of the agoraphobic taiga giant Ikoradmus from area **B12**.

PALLID PATH CULTISTS (4) CR 6

XP 2,400 each

hp 74 each (see page 27)

B11. SERVANT LODGINGS

Three of these rooms once served as sleeping chambers for the six servants charged with keeping the grounds of the abbey clean, providing food for the priests, or otherwise tending to the structure's needs. The rooms, and the storeroom in the southeast corner of this block, are now empty and abandoned.

The gap to the west looks out over the seashore—it's only 1 foot wide and 2 feet tall, and as such would be difficult for a larger creature to squeeze through (Escape Artist DC 30). On the far side, it's an 80-foot drop to the rocks below.

B12. CLOAKROOM (CR 12)

This room is furnished with two rows of benches and hangers. Two cloaks, one colored a bright red and the other a dirty russet brown, hang from pegs set in the north wall. A huge mound of furs lies in the south section of the room.

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Creature: The heights of Hollow Mountain are home to a loose-knit, feudal warrior culture of taiga giants who have long ago abandoned their traditional homelands for the often-tight confines of an ancient dungeon complex. Ardathanatus wanted to recruit these giants to his cause, but they proved too headstrong as a group—he was able only to recruit one of their number, a somewhat slow-witted brute named Ikoradmus. Ardathanatus would eventually gain the giant minions he sought in the form of hill giants and ettins, yet Ikoradmus remained a key element of the initial attack on the abbey, even though she's somewhat agoraphobic (and becomes sickened in wide open areas). Although she has to squeeze through many of the halls in this dungeon, she much prefers these close confines to the outdoors. She has something of a crush on Ardathanatus, and while he pays her well for her services, she hopes someday to find a way to “grow him bigger” so he can be her mate.

If called upon by the skulks in area **B10**, Ikoradmus lumbers to their aid, but otherwise, if the PCs find her here, she fights to the death, hoping to use their broken bodies as a gift for her beloved little hero, Ardathanatus.

IKORADMUS CR 12
XP 19,200

Female taiga giant (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 2 131)
hp 157

Treasure: The red cloak, embroidered with rainbow-hued spirals and fitted with two golden clasps, is a piece of very fine clothing worth 180 gp. The russet brown cloak is a cursed *cloak of resistance +3* that has the opposite effect (imposing a -3 penalty on all saving throws) when exposed to sunlight. In addition, Ikoradmus carries a bag containing 5,500 gp in miscellaneous jewelry, gems, and coins.

C1. SECOND-LEVEL LANDING

The stairs here lead up to area **B4**.

C2. TEMPLE OF THE WINDSONG (CR 12)

Gusts of air flow from a row of six circular holes carved into the west wall. The holes, evenly spaced at a height of 10 feet from the floor, are a mere six inches in diameter, and each is fitted with a large copper insert. The room's four pillars and walls are densely carved with symbols akin to musical notation marks and images of various birds with elongated tail feathers. On an altarlike structure to the south sits the badly defaced statue of a female angel whose butterfly wings are spread to encompass the entire wall of the alcove behind her. Rancid-smelling smears of orange slime encrust the room's pillars and walls and the statue alcove.

As with the holes in the walls below the baths (area **A22**), these holes are part of the source of the abbey's Windsong.

When the Groetans built this temple, this room was entirely devoted to the generation of the song, but when the priests of Windsong arrived 500 years ago, they consecrated the room as a shrine to Desna. Ardathanatus and his minions have defaced the statue.

Penalties on Perception checks associated with the Windsong double in this room when the song is playing.

Creature: One of Ardathanatus's more dangerous qliploth minions dwells in this chamber now. This monster is a chernobue—a hideous gray creature akin to an octopus or an enormous tadpole with a mouth dripping orange toxin for a belly. Ardathanatus placed the qliploth here via *planar ally* with orders to attack any who enter save for himself—the qliploth gleefully does so, even if those who enter are Ardathanatus's allies. Ardathanatus has specifically forbidden the chernobue from using its *plane shift* spell-like ability or from leaving this room—if attacked at range by characters beyond the room's limits, the chernobue fights back with *chaos hammer* and *confusion*.

CHERNOBUE QLIPPOTH CR 12
XP 19,200

hp 150 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 2 220)

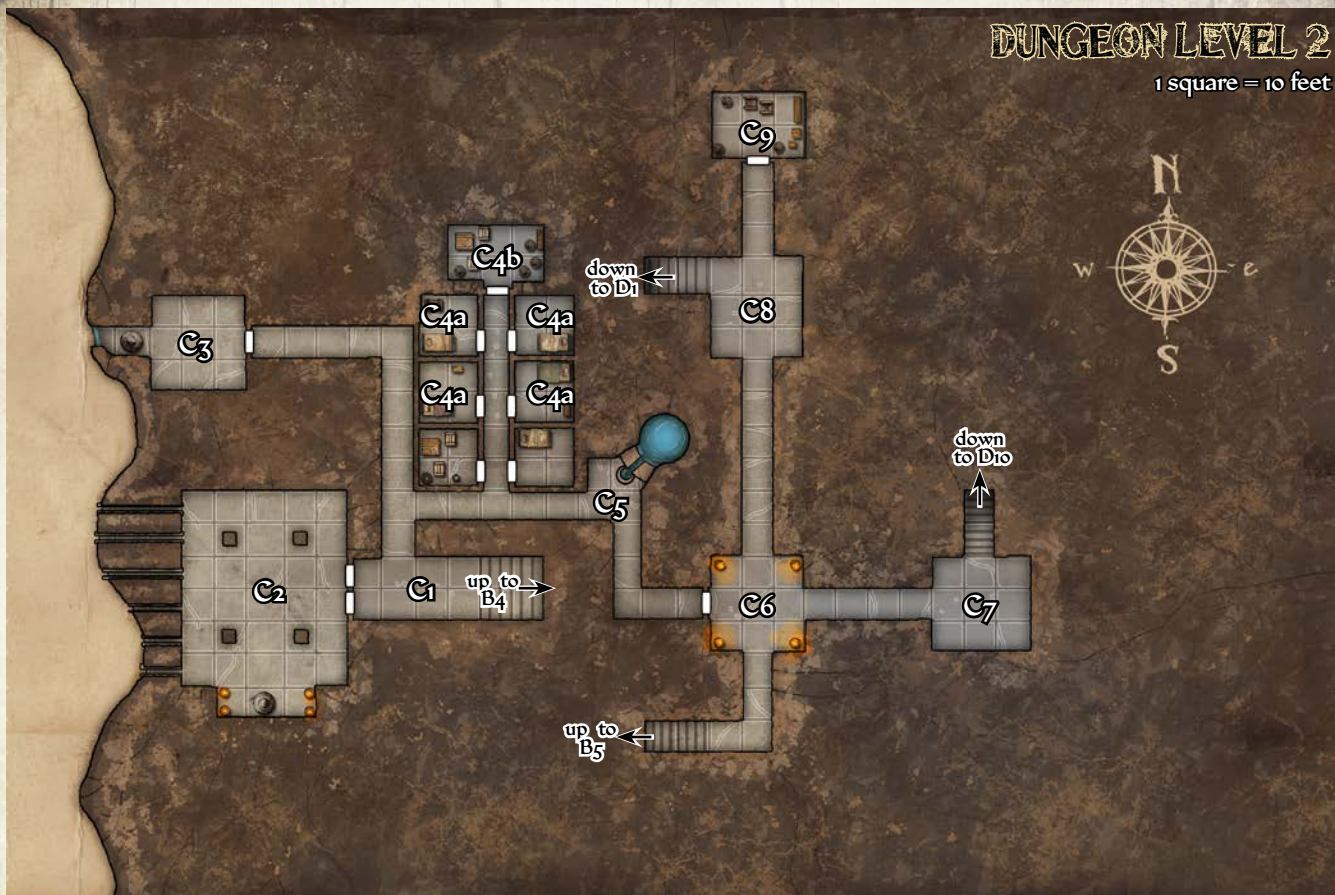
Treasure: Ardathanatus missed a hidden panel in the floor at the statue's feet—a successful DC 30 Perception check is enough to reveal the cleverly hidden niche. If Casimir told the PCs about this stash (see page 57), the PCs gain a +20 bonus on Perception checks to find the stash. Within the hollow (the walls of which have been lined with lead to defeat *detect magic*) are several items left here for emergencies that none of the priests were able to reach in time. These items include a *wand of restoration* (9 charges), a *scroll of break enchantment*, a *scroll of resurrection*, a *scroll of wind walk*, and a *ring of spell storing* containing *breath of life* and *cure light wounds*.

C3. TEMPLE OF SUNSET

The walls of this square chamber, partly covered by red tapestries, are decorated with carvings of the sun, the moon, and various constellations. Three rows of wooden benches face a large stained-glass window on the west wall, before which kneels a statue of a winged woman with fiery hair in a contemplative mood.

A successful DC 10 Knowledge (religion) check identifies the statue as that of Sarenrae, and correctly interprets her contemplation as representing the setting of the sun. Strangely, among all the modern religious paraphernalia in the temple that Ardathanatus and his minions have destroyed, this statue remains untouched. This is because a tiny portion of Sarenrae's hope that Ardathanatus can be

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redeemed has infused the statue and its chamber, resulting in a potent *antipathy* effect against all of the abbey's invaders. These minions shun the room—if the PCs seek to take shelter here, invaders must succeed at a DC 30 Will save to enter the room to attack them. This effect can affect even creatures normally immune to mind-affecting effects. If the statue or the stained-glass window is damaged or destroyed, though, this faint link to the Dawnflower vanishes. A nonevil creature that is about to damage either the statue or the window receives a momentary twinge of guilt and shame for what he is about to do—a twinge that gives the character a last-minute chance to stay his destructive act. The window itself is 3 feet wide and 9 feet tall. If broken, it could allow the PCs a sneaky way into the dungeon, but at the loss of this room's protective nature and the visions praying before it could reveal (see below).

Nonevil creatures that rest in this room need only half as long as normal to gain the benefits of a full night's sleep—this shortens the amount of time required to prepare spells as appropriate, but does not allow a character to prepare spells more than once in a 24-hour period. Characters who gain this benefit heal naturally at twice the normal rate.

A character who prays before the statue or sleeps within this area receives a compelling vision or dream of how one

might be able to redeem Ardathanatus rather than simply kill him—see Ardathanatus's Side Quest entry on page 55 for more details.

C4. ACOLYTES' LODGINGS (CR 11)

Several large bedrooms and a pair of storerooms line the walls of this hallway. Their doors hang open, revealing the dusty, disorganized contents of each room, while the door to the north barely hangs on its hinges, revealing a smashed and battered armory beyond.

Creatures: This wing of rooms was once used by the acolytes of the abbey—each bedroom features a bunk bed and accommodations for two. While all of the acolytes were slain during Ardathanatus's attack, a family of four werebears that served the abbey were spared the slaughter—but only after they were charmed and controlled by a pair of shoggti qliphoth called from the Abyss to serve Ardathanatus. The shoggti dwell here still—horse-sized, four-limbed, mollusklike monstrosities that enjoy commanding and manipulating the emotions and minds of the werebears. The werebears themselves are four adventuring brothers who became gifted with

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lycanthropy as a reward for servitude in Erastil's name against a particularly violent band of bandits who dwelled in the Churlwood. The rangers returned to Windsong Abbey with news of their success against the bandits, and were willing to return to the woods to live out their lives in isolation, but the priests of the abbey were welcoming and understanding of their condition and asked them to stay on as hunters and scouts. The four brothers were overjoyed at the offer and joined the abbey—a mere half-year before it was fated to fall at Ardathanatus's attack.

Today, the four brothers (named Aigus, Lemuel, Verken, and Zovvi, respectively), serve completely at the whim of their new qliploth masters. The shoggti themselves dwell in the ruins of the armory (area C4b) while the werebears dwell in the four rooms labeled C4a (the unlabeled rooms nearby remain abandoned). The werebears are often brought before the shoggti to fight each other—the qliploth enjoy watching the brothers stab and hack at each other, but are careful to call off the fights before one of them dies. The werebears' damage reduction helps them endure the wounds they inflict on

each other, which pleases the shoggti as it makes their grisly battles last longer.

The shoggti are quick to send the werebears into combat against the PCs via telepathic command. As with the orders to fight each other, these commands are resisted by the charmed werebears. In order to compel a werebear to attack the PCs, a shoggti must win an opposed Charisma check—if the werebear wins this check, it takes no action in that round, but once it fails this check, it fights the PCs to the death while the shoggti hang back and attempt to charm and command the PCs into joining their ranks. The shoggti resist using their horrific appearance to fascinate the PCs until it becomes obvious that the werebears have been defeated, at which point the shoggti activate this ability before slithering in to fight the PCs in melee. The shoggti have been conjured here by *planar ally*, and have no option to flee; as such, they fight to the death.

ADVANCED SHOGGTI QLIPPOTH (2)

CR 8

XP 4,800 each

hp 94 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 2 225, 292)

BEYOND THE DOOMSDAY DOOR

AIGUS, LEMUEL, VERKEN, AND ZOVVI (4)

CR 4

XP 1,200 each

Afflicted werebears (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 2 181)

hp 34 each

Treasure: Much of the armory (area C4b) has been destroyed, along with the weapons within, but a successful DC 20 Perception check reveals not only a masterwork longsword and a masterwork longbow, but also seven +1 *undead bane* arrows.

C5. GREEN MOUSE FOUNTAIN (CR 12)

The northeast portion of this wall curves outward and has been carved in the shape of an immense grinning mouse, its snout extending out from the wall in the shape of a bronze, faucetlike extension over an empty stone basin.

This fountain connects to the cistern (area B3), with the faucet allowing those downstairs to access the water in controlled amounts. A safety valve in the basin itself causes the faucet to shut off automatically if it's left on, in order to prevent unwanted flooding.

Trap: Ardathanatus took advantage of this area to craft one of his many traps to vex and torment unwary intruders into the dungeon. Anyone who approaches within 10 feet of the faucet triggers the trap, causing the pointed bronze faucet to shoot from the wall like a missile, followed by a high-pressure jet of water that quickly summons a single elder water elemental. The water in the cistern continues to drain after this trap is triggered, eventually filling the west wing of the dungeon to a depth of about 5 inches of standing water (the safety valve can't function once the faucet is gone). The water won't flow past the door to area C6 unless it is opened, in which case the water eventually drains all the way down to the lower levels and disperses enough to be nothing more than a minor annoyance.

CISTERN TRAP

CR 12

XP 19,200

Type magic; **Perception** DC 30; **Disable Device** DC 30

EFFECT

Trigger proximity (*true seeing*); **Reset** none

Effect Atk +15 (2d6+3 plus +15 bull rush attempt), single target within 5 feet; spell effect (*summon monster VIII*, summons an elder water elemental for 15 rounds—see *Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 127)

C6. PROPHECY ROOM

The door to this room bears a *doomsday lock* (but no trap) similar to the one found in area A10. Beyond this door lie chambers of the dungeon that the priests of the abbey never explored.

The walls of this room are decorated with complex frescoes of a crowd of people in a queue, waiting to talk to a blindfolded old man who stands twice as tall as everyone else. Various prophecies, represented by strips of parchment scribbled with words, erupt from the tall man's gaping mouth and fly up to the sky and all over the landscape.

The four braziers at the corner of this room are fueled by dim *continual flames*. With a successful DC 25 Knowledge (religion) check, a PC can identify the old man as an archaic representation of an ancient priest of Groetus, before the man was transformed into Groetus's herald (see page 84). The prophecies issuing from his mouth are written in Thassilonian, and an examination of them along with a successful DC 30 Knowledge (religion) check to interpret the metaphors correctly gives the impression that this fresco, well over 10,000 years old, prophesies the death of Aroden as "the passing of the last of the Azlanti at the dawn of an age of lost omens."

The stairs lead up to area B5.

Treasure: An examination of the parchments issuing from the man's mouth using *detect magic* reveals a moderate aura of divination. With a successful DC 35 Spellcraft check, a character can identify this magical property—once per day, the parchment strips can be used to cast *divination* (CL 20th) as if the fresco were a *scroll of divination*.

C7. SHRINE OF EMPTY PLACES (CR 11)

The plastered walls of this room are decorated with images of an endless series of exceptionally realistically painted torch-bearing pillars receding off into the horizon, giving the chamber the optical illusion of being far larger than it actually is. A flight of stairs descends to the north, the painting incorporating the stairwell in such a way as to make the stairs appear to descend into a particularly wide pillar.

The god Groetus has three primary areas of concern: empty places, oblivion, and ruins. The Thassilonian cult of Groetus that built this complex was mostly concerned with oblivion—in particular, the promise of an apocalypse that would reset reality and allow the cult to transcend the end of the world to witness the glory their deity promised. This room and area C8 were built as shrines where the priests could meditate on Groetus's other themes—empty places (this room) and ruins (area C8).

The first time (and only the first time) a creature enters this room, it must make a DC 15 Will save to resist a momentary feeling of vertigo from the brief impression that it has stepped into an infinitely large empty room. Those who succeed at the save recover almost at once, but those who fail are staggered for 1d4 rounds.

The stairs descend to area D10.

SHATTERED STAR

Creature: As this room provides access to the lower level, Ardathanatus placed one of his fiendish patron's favored minions here as a guardian—a lumbering, crablike monstrosity known as a gongorinan. The creature waits in the center of the room using *statue* to appear as an ugly but harmless misshapen boulder on the ground. It reverts to its true form and unfolds all of its limbs as soon as a PC comes within reach of its attacks and fights to the death—as it fights, it roars and clatters, alerting its companion in area C8, which then uses *dimension door* to appear in this room to join the battle.

GONGORINAN

CR 11

XP 12,800

hp 137 (see page 90)

C8. HALL OF RUIN (CR 11)

The plastered walls of this room bear an incredibly realistic mural of the interior of a ruined cathedral, portrayed such that one who stands in the center of the room perceives the chamber to be much vaster than its actual size. Archways to the north, south, and east appear to be freestanding stone arches that look almost like strange portals, while to the west a fourth archway provides access to a flight of stairs leading down.

As with area C7, this room was built to allow the cultists to venerate an aspect of Groetus their daily rituals downplayed—in this case, his interest in ruined places. The stairs to the west lead down to area D1.

The first time (and only the first time) a creature enters this room, it must make a DC 15 Will save to resist a momentary feeling of crushing sadness from the brief impression that it has stepped into a place of great glory that has been abandoned. Those who succeed at the save recover almost at once, but those who fail are nauseated for 1d2 rounds.

Creature: A second gongorinan guards this room—its tactics are identical to those of the one posted in area C7.

GONGORINAN

CR 11

XP 12,800

hp 137 (see page 90)

C9. APOTHECARIUM

This room's furnishings reveal it was once an apothecarium, although the smells of herbs and spices are long gone today. Alchemical equipment lies under layers of dust.

This room was used by the Groetan cult to brew potions and various hallucinatory drugs employed in rituals to enhance their abilities to catch glimpses of other realities.

Treasure: Although the bulk of the items kept here have long since crumbled away to dust, a search of the room automatically gathers up various valuable components such as gemstone dust, bits of gold, and finely crafted tools worth a total of 1,200 gp. Ardathanatus overlooked these treasures in his haste to explore the lower levels, and also missed one of the greatest treasures to be found in the dungeon. Sitting idly forgotten on a shelf near the northwest corner of the room is a *philosopher's stone*.

D1. WOODLAND ROOM (CR 12)

The walls of this room are partially covered with decorative slabs of pale green marble carved with intricate bas-reliefs depicting a tangled forest populated by all sorts of beasts. What appears to be a door made of a massive block of serpentine stands in the middle of the north wall. A skull-shaped lock adorns the door.

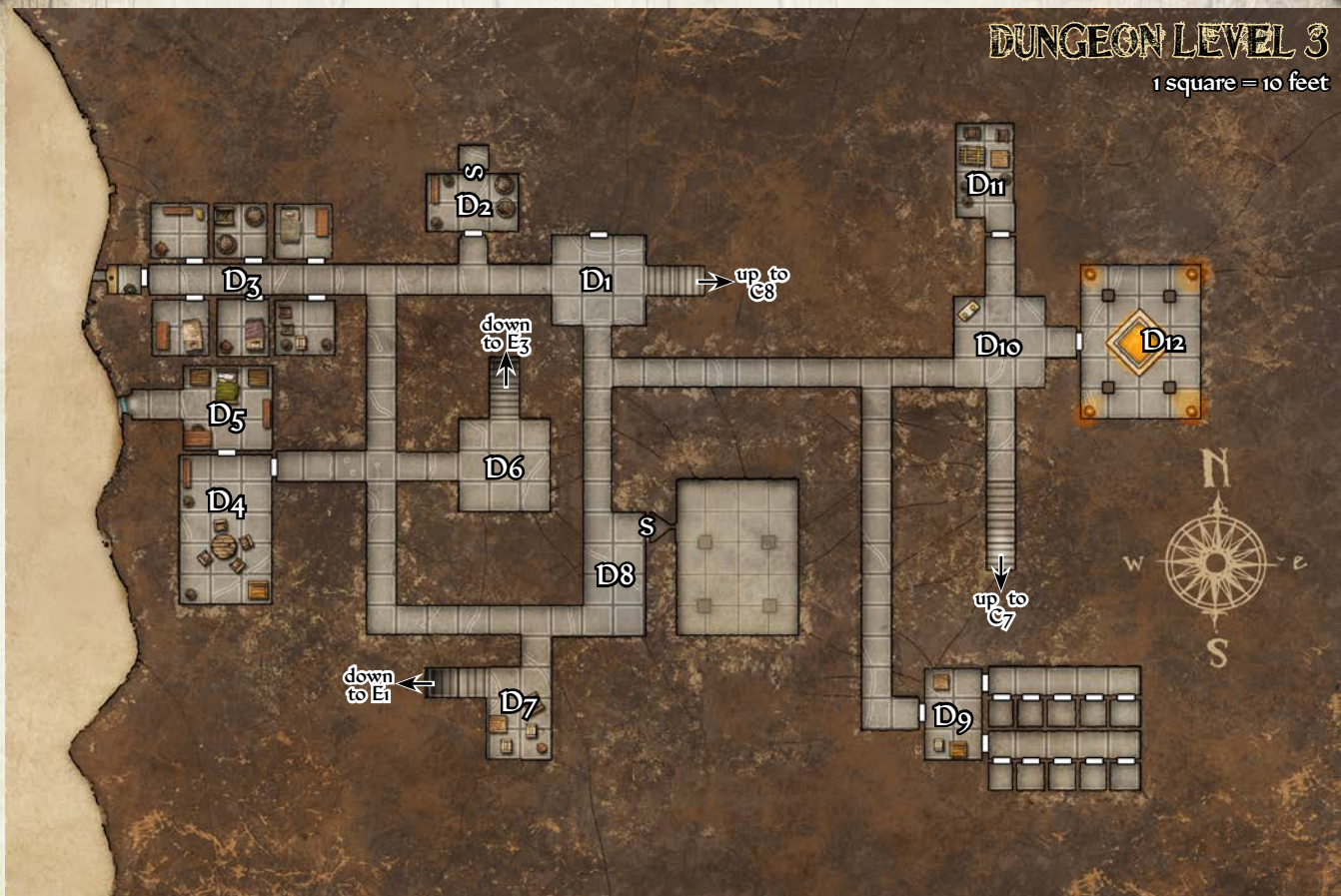
The Groetans spent most of their lives in the underground chambers of this dungeon, and this room was built to give those who periodically longed for the greenery of the outdoors a place to rest and relax in. But the room had another purpose as well, for the serpentine door with a *doomsday lock* like the one at area A10 (which is locked but not trapped) served as a portal to the outer world—a way for the cultists to come and go from the dungeon, or even an escape route. The serpentine door once led to a set of standing stones on a mountainside in the western Fogscar Mountains, but with the sinking of Bakrakhan, the portal's far side was destroyed.

Trap: The serpentine door periodically shudders and hums softly, and radiates an aura of conjuration magic. With a successful DC 35 Spellcraft check made while studying this aura, a PC can correctly identify the door as a portal that's malfunctioning, likely because of the destruction of the portal at the far end, and suggests that opening the door is dangerous. This is very much the case, for anyone who opens the door (Ardathanatus noticed the unstable aura before he succumbed to curiosity) unleashes the backlash of energy that's waited for 10,000 years since the portal's destruction. Once the trap activates, the area beyond the serpentine door is nothing more than smoking, blasted stone—unless the trap is successfully disabled, which actually resets the portal and transforms it into a one-way link to a crumbling cliffside in the Fogscar Mountains where a single 20-foot-tall menhir perches above a 200-foot-tall cliff. This is all that remains of the ring of standing stones, and characters who open the door can look through the door as if standing on the edge of the cliff looking out over the Varisian Gulf. There is no ground to stand on, for the portal is about 10 feet from the edge of the cliff—characters who cannot fly and who step through fall to the rocky surf below. This one-way portal cannot be used to return to Windsong Abbey, which lies about 65 miles to the southwest of the portal's destination.

BEYOND THE DOOMSDAY DOOR

DUNGEON LEVEL 3

1 square = 10 feet



MALFUNCTIONING PORTAL

CR 12

XP 19,200

Type magic; Perception DC 30; Disable Device DC 35

EFFECT

Trigger touch; Reset none

Effect 60-foot-spread explosion of sound and force (10d6 sonic damage plus 5d6 force damage; DC 18 Reflex save for half damage; creatures who fail the save are permanently deafened)

D2. UNDERGROUND LIBRARY

This room is lined with fine wooden planks, even on its ceiling, and features a large rectangular table and several smaller round tables. Tall, well-stocked bookcases occupy the walls.

Creature: One of Ardathanatus's more sinister accomplices, a bogeyman who has taken on the persona of Ricle Peaks (the primary character in the somewhat inaccurate legend of Ardathanatus's murderous frenzy), has been spending much of his time here, studying the various tomes. Obstinate placed here by Ardathanatus to guard the secret room, the bogeyman doesn't actually understand any of the words in the Thassilonian books, but it hopes, in time, to learn the language. As with many bogeymen,

Ricle is a tall, lanky creature, but unlike most of his kind, he lacks anything even closely approximating a mouth. To compensate for his lack of a mouth, Ricle has mastered the art of using *ghost sound* to speak—he can use this spell-like ability as a free action to talk. He gains nourishment via directly absorbing the fears of his victims, and to any who take the time to ask, he gives different reasons for his lack of a mouth each time. To one person, he claims he was born without one because his mother blasphemed against the gods while she was pregnant, but to another, he might say a witch stole his mouth in an attempt to keep him revealing what he discovered about the true history of Varisia.

If he learns the PCs are near (such as by hearing the explosion in area D1), Ricle becomes invisible and then moves around the room when the PCs arrive, claiming to be the disembodied spirit of a librarian who once worked here. If the PCs accept this story, he claims to be enraged at the "invaders" of the dungeon and offers to help the PCs defeat them. Of course, his advice amounts to little more than suggestions for the PCs to do the exact wrong things. He even offers to accompany the PCs, in which case he follows them invisibly to study their tactics—he only attacks once discovered or once the PCs confront Ardathanatus; in these cases, he attacks immediately. If forced to attack while he's

SHATTERED STAR

alone with no allies to flank foes, he fights defensively and attempts to flee to somewhere he can recruit help. If reduced to fewer than 20 hit points, he flees the scene entirely, only to harass the PCs for the days to come with *nightmares*.

RICLE PEAKES

CR 11

XP 12,800

Bogeyman (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 3* 42)

hp 93

Treasure: The books on the shelves are all written in Thassilonian and preserved via magic. They cover the topic of the worship of Groetus, real and imaginary apocalypses of the past and future, and catalogs of ruins. They are outdated, but are still quite interesting and valuable to scholars of ancient lore. Using these books as an aid for any questions relating to Thassilon, Azlant, or the worship of Groetus grants a +5 circumstance bonus on the associated Knowledge check, but the library consists of 82 books in all with a total weight of 250 pounds. As a set, the library is worth 2,500 gp.

A successful DC 35 Perception check reveals the secret door in the north wall. Within is a single table on which lie several scrolls and a large leather-bound book.

Some of the scrolls are magical (a *scroll of planar ally*, *scroll of commune*, and *scroll of greater restoration*), but one stack is a collection of documents written in Abyssal that refer to the scarcely documented history of the abbey after Aroden's death. On one of the sheets is written an account of the tale of Ricle Peakes, with four figure drawings of the main characters (funny images of Ardathanatus, Pharasma, Groetus, and Yamasoth)—these notes were written by Ardathanatus as a sort of “confession” as to why he murdered the Masked Abbot so long ago. A character who reads through this notices several areas where Ardathanatus almost appears to be remorseful about his actions—citing these passages in the text can aid in redeeming the elf (see page 55).

Another scroll, also in Abyssal, contains Ardathanatus's theory that undeath is nothing more than the natural next step in a soul's progression toward the Great Beyond. This concept is about as blasphemous as you can get regarding the teachings of Pharasma,

which maintain that undeath is a mockery of the process of life, death, and rebirth.

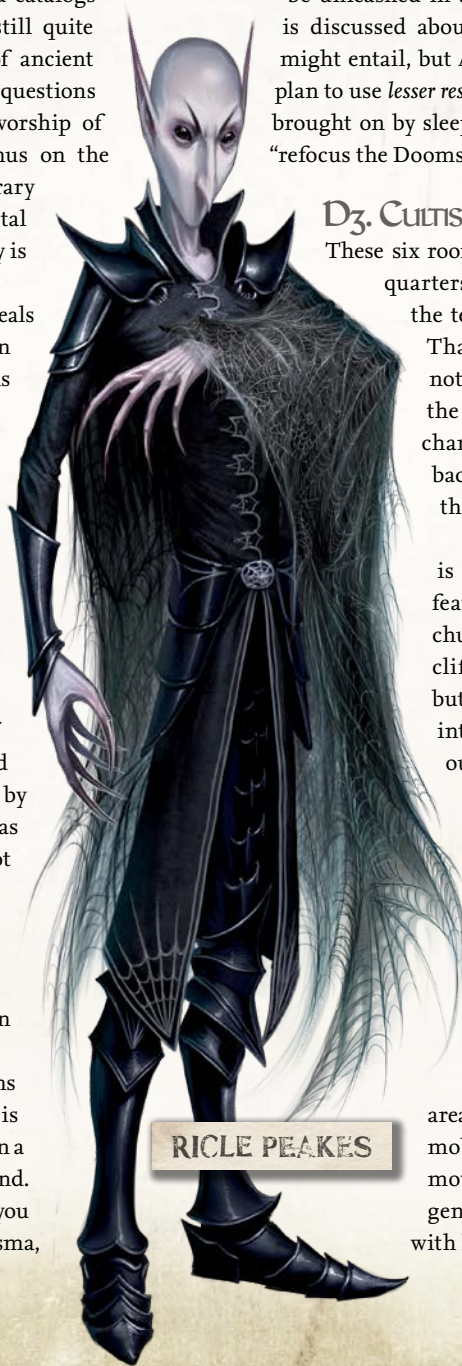
The leather book is a relatively recent tome that belongs to Ardathanatus. Written in Abyssal, this book is called *Secrets of the Blackfire*, a tome devoted to the manipulation and refocusing of magical portals, and originally penned by Blackfire Agents. The book contains instructions (among other things) for a ritual that can refocus any established extraplanar portal to connect to a new location, but notes that this ritual is quite difficult. While it requires only one person to perform, the ritual can take many weeks, and during the performance, the person must retain consciousness—sleep is forbidden, lest the energies “be unleashed in a most unfortunate manner.” Little is discussed about what this “unfortunate manner” might entail, but Ardathanatus has made notes of his plan to use *lesser restoration* spells to fight off the fatigue brought on by sleep deprivation during his attempt to “refocus the Doomsday Door to my master's realm.”

D3. CULTIST CELLS (CR 12)

These six rooms were used originally as personal quarters and storage for the acolytes of the temple of Groetus. When the end of Thassilon came, the cultists retired not here, but rather to the crypts on the level below, and they left their chambers here as if they were coming back the next day. For 10,000 years, these rooms lay untouched.

The chamber farthest to the west is a shared lavatory, with a toilet that features a 4-inch-diameter midden chute that empties out the side of the cliff (once this led to a narrow defile, but now that the Rasp has transformed into the coast, the chute merely opens out over the surf).

Creatures: The current occupants of these rooms are a group of sinspawn guardians, elite members of a much larger tribe of sinspawn that Ardathanatus met in Hollow Mountain. At any one time, six of these sinspawn can be found resting here, while the others serve as Ardathanatus's honor guard in area E13 below. These sinspawn quickly mobilize to attack any intruders, moving to investigate loud noises generated elsewhere in the dungeon with haste.



RICLE PEAKES

BEYOND THE DOOMSDAY DOOR

SINSPAWN GUARDS (6)

CR 7

XP 3,200 each

Sinspawn ranger 5 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 2* 246)

NE Medium aberration

Init +6; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., sin-scent; Perception +5

DEFENSE

AC 21, touch 12, flat-footed 19 (+7 armor, +2 Dex, +2 natural)

hp 77 each (8 HD; 3d8+5d10+37)

Fort +8, **Ref** +9, **Will** +6

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

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft.

Melee mwk halberd +11/+6 (1d10+4/x3), bite +5 (1d6+1 plus sinful bite)

Ranged +1 composite longbow +12/+7 (1d8+4/x3)

Special Attacks favored enemy (animals +2, humans +4)

Ranger Spells Prepared (CL 2nd; concentration +4)

1st—*longstrider*, *resist energy*

TACTICS

Before Combat The sinspawn cast *longstrider* once they know intruders are coming near.

During Combat Half the sinspawn in a group move forward to attack in melee while the remaining sinspawn hang back to use arrows. When a sinspawn in melee is reduced to 30 hit points or fewer, it backs out of melee to take the place of an archer who steps up to fill the melee role.

Morale The sinspawn guards fight to the death.

STATISTICS

Str 17, **Dex** 18, **Con** 16, **Int** 10, **Wis** 15, **Cha** 10

Base Atk +7; **CMB** +10; **CMD** 24

Feats Deadly Aim, Endurance, Point-Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Rapid Shot, Toughness

Skills Climb +10, Knowledge (dungeoneering) +11, Knowledge (religion) +2, Perception +15, Stealth +13, Survival +15

Language Aklo, Thassilonian

SQ favored terrain (underground +2), hunter's bond (companions), martial proficiency, track +2, wild empathy +5

Combat Gear +1 human bane arrows (10), *potion of cure moderate wounds*; **Other Gear** +1 chainmail, +1 composite longbow with 10 arrows, masterwork halberd

D4. ANCIENT LOUNGE (CR 10)

This finely furnished lounge contains a cushioned wooden bench, wall-mounted glass cabinets, a round table with wooden chairs, and a large bulky chest. The table itself has been fitted with straps around its circumference that would be just about right to restrain a human atop it by the ankles and wrists.

Creatures: The first time the PCs enter this room, a human is indeed strapped to the top of the table—a pale-skinned naked man covered with numerous shallow cuts and painful-looking bruises. This is one of the missing

WINDSONG NIGHTMARES

Between Ricle Peaks, the animate dreams in area D4, and the night hag Gathuspia, the PCs' enemies have excellent ways to torment PCs who sleep on the abbey grounds. If the PCs make their presence known to the dungeons' denizens and then sleep anywhere within a mile of Windsong Abbey, Ricle Peaks and Gathuspia work together to vex and torment the PCs. Ricle focuses his *nightmare* spell-like ability on a wizard or other arcane spellcaster to prevent the recovery of valuable magical resources, while Gathuspia dream haunts any healers or characters with obviously low Constitution scores. Other PCs are vexed and tormented via *nightmare* spells cast by the animate dreams. In describing these dream attacks on the PCs, feel free to foreshadow foes they have not yet fought in this adventure as adversaries, or even to have their nightmares seem to give good advice that, if acted upon while awake, would bring woe.



Windsong priests, a cleric of Zon-Kuthon named Gein Kafog. Gein was captured alive during the initial battle, and Ardathanatus eventually hopes to use his brain in the construction of an alchemical golem, but until then he's keeping the hapless prisoner here in the care of the traitorous cleric Zolerim (see area D5), with instructions that Gein is not to be allowed to die, but neither should he be allowed to waken. As a result, Gein is unconscious but stable at -6 hit points.

While Gein languishes in his comatose state, his mind is under repeated assaults by the two monstrous creatures that guard his body while Zolerim relaxes in the room to the north. These two monsters appear as seductive women covered with piercings, tattoos, and scars, and it is in this form that they appear in Gein's dreams to torment him. While a successful DC 18 Knowledge (planes) suggests these are a form of kyton, a successful DC 28 Knowledge (planes) check reveals that they are, in fact, animate dreams that only appear as kyton seductresses to further torment Gein—as animate dreams, they appear the same in Gein's nightmares as they do to those who are awake.

Once the PCs enter the room, the animate dreams immediately alert Zolerim to the intrusion via telepathy before they step forward to attempt to seduce the PCs. Their supernatural nature should be swiftly apparent as they approach, for their eyes are white and soulless and their voices manifest as telepathic thought, not speech. Once combat begins, the two animate dreams attack with *confusion* and *phantasmal killer* spells at the start of battle, but then move on to attack with their cursed touch.

SHATTERED STAR

Once warned of the party's intrusion, Zolerim begins casting defensive spells on himself as detailed in his tactics. He joins the fight as soon as his spellcasting is complete.

ANIMATE DREAMS (2)

CR 8

XP 4,800 each

hp 90 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 2* 29)

Treasure: The pottery and silverware in the glass closets are worth 400 gp and 700 gp respectively. The chest is locked (Zolerim carries the key, or a successful DC 30 Disable Device check can pick the lock), and contains all of Gein's equipment (his breastplate armor and his magic spiked chain).

Development: If not accidentally killed in a battle that takes place here, Gein Kafog can be restored to wakefulness by healing magic that brings him up to positive hit points—but even then he is both fatigued from exposure to nightmare spells and suffering from the nightmare curse of the animate dreams—this curse has drained his Wisdom score to 0, so once he's brought to positive hit points, he can do little more than gasp and gurgle mindlessly. If his Wisdom score is restored to at least 1, his mind clears and he becomes increasingly lucid. His Wisdom need not be restored to its full score for him to be able to speak to the PCs, but until his Wisdom is fully restored, his clerical abilities are crippled.

Gein is a cleric of Zon-Kuthon, but his take on the Midnight Lord's teachings is unusual to say the least. In fact, in his homeland of Nidal, Gein's beliefs are heretical, and he was forced to flee the city of Nisroch as a result. He heard rumors of Windsong Abbey, sought it out, and was delighted to learn that the priests welcomed him despite his belief that Zon-Kuthon's manifestation as the lord of darkness, envy, loss, and pain is not representative of his desires but of his condition. Gein sees Zon-Kuthon as the ultimate martyr, and that he took upon himself his dreadful transformation from the god he was before as a way to protect his sister Shelyn from a great and unknown peril. Gein hopes to someday learn what that peril was, if only to show those who interpret the Midnight

Lord as a paragon of evil ways that there's more to the god than that.

Gein can inform the PCs about much of what transpired during Ardathanatus's attack, but unfortunately doesn't know much more about the situation than Casamir, for he was captured early during the fight after a *blade barrier* cast by Ardathanatus nearly killed him. He's lingered at negative hit points ever since, with the animate dreams periodically ensuring he was fed and otherwise tended to in the few moments he was allowed to emerge to wakefulness. Gein remembers these moments only as nightmares. After he learns that he's within the forbidden depths below Windsong, Gein wants nothing more than to return to the ruins above and to start rebuilding, but until Ardathanatus can be defeated, he simply hides out in the nearby woods and waits for the PCs to finish their job. At your option, Gein could join the PCs and aid them in their quest—the more Wisdom he regains, the more self-confidence he gathers.

Note that Gein's statistics below assume he's fully healed, has had his Wisdom restored, and has his armor and weapon.



GEIN KAFOG

GEIN KAFOG

CR 7

XP 3,200

Male human cleric of Zon-Kuthon 8

LN Medium humanoid (human)

Init +3; Senses Perception +4

DEFENSE

AC 17, touch 9, flat-footed 7 (+8 armor, -1 Dex)

hp 71 (8d8+32)

Fort +8, Ref +1, Will +12

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft.

Melee +1 *merciful spiked chain* +9/+4 (2d4+4 plus 1d6 nonlethal)

Special Attacks channel positive energy 4/day (DC 15, 4d6), staff of order (4 rounds, 1/day)

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

7/day—touch of darkness (4 rounds), touch of law

Cleric Spells Prepared (CL 8th; concentration +12)
4th—*air walk*, *death ward*, *order's wrath*^D (DC 18), *restoration*

3rd—*deeper darkness*^D, *dispel magic*, *magic vestment*, *speak with dead* (DC 17), *wind wall*

2nd—*align weapon* (law), *blindness/deafness*^D (DC 16, only to cause blindness), *find traps*, *hold person* (DC 16), *spiritual weapon*

BEYOND THE DOOMSDAY DOOR

1st—*bane* (DC 15), *detect chaos*, *inflict light wounds* (DC 15), *obscuring mist*^D, *sanctuary* (DC 15), *shield of faith*
o (at will)—*create water*, *detect magic*, *read magic*, *stabilize*
D Domain spell; **Domains** Darkness, Law

TACTICS

Before Combat Gein casts *magic vestment* on his armor every morning, and casts *air walk* and *death ward* if possible before heading into dangerous territory.

During Combat Gein's weapon is a +1 *merciful spiked chain*; as long as its merciful quality is active, the spikes retract into the metal—he would rather defeat a foe and leave him alive but humbled than dead. Against undead, he prefers to channel energy or cast healing magic. If he's traveling with the PCs, he hangs back and focuses on healing the characters, especially once he realizes how much more powerful they are than him—Gein has no issue playing sidekick to higher-level heroes.

Morale Gein didn't used to fear death, but his experiences of late have changed his mind—he flees combat if reduced to fewer than 15 hit points (using *deeper darkness* to cover his retreat) rather than risk being taken prisoner after being rendered unconscious again.

STATISTICS

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

Base Atk +6; **CMB** +8; **CMD** 17

Feats Blind-Fight, Combat Casting, Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Skill Focus (Diplomacy), Toughness

Skills Diplomacy +15, Knowledge (religion) +11, Linguistics +7, Sense Motive +11

Languages Aklo, Common, Infernal, Shadowtongue, Varisian
SQ eyes of darkness (4 rounds/day)

Gear breastplate, +1 *merciful spiked chain*

Story Award: If the PCs save Gein Kafog, they earn XP as if they had defeated him in battle. If they restore his Wisdom fully so he can aid them, award them an additional 6,400 XP.

D5. HIGH PRIEST'S CHAMBERS (CR 11)

This chamber is furnished with a bed, a table, and a cabinet—like the tapestries that hang on the wall, all are gray and colorless, giving the bedroom a gloomy feel. To the west, a short alcove ends at a three-foot-diameter circular window in the wall that shimmers with energy as it looks out over the sea.

Creature: Originally the personal quarters of Kandamereus, the high priest of the Groetan cult back during Thassilon's fall, this room has been claimed by the traitorous priest Zolerim. When not busy researching new methods of harnessing destructive magic, Zolerim spends his time of late working on his plans to rebuild one of Runelord Alaznist's destructive *Hellstorm Flumes*—towers

used back in Thassilon's day to project beams of fire to scour approaching armies. He hopes to transform the Pharus Pharamae into just such a weapon, for once Ardathanatus finishes his job here, he's promised Zolerim command of the site. He also gave one of the three *doomsday keys* he recovered from the dungeon to Zolerim, so that the priest could more easily navigate the chambers below the abbey.

Zolerim is a smallish, hideous man with a chirping voice. His eyes look different from one another: the right is a narrow, deep blue fissure, while the second is bulging and very pale. Zolerim wears a simple deep violet robe with matching pointed shoes and a patchy tartan cloak. Zolerim was never a particularly popular priest among the residents of Windsong Abbey (his personality matches his physical ugliness), but no one could have guessed at the true depth of his treachery. When Sufestra came to him, she seduced him not with her beauty, but with promises of greater magical power from her master, Ardathanatus. In return for his aid in taking Windsong, the medusa paid him with potent magical scrolls, and a tome entitled *My Lady's Fire* (see below), and promises of greater magic to come. Zolerim's first loyalty has always been to his obsession with magical devastation—he views Nethys's destructive aspects as the god's true focus, and having spent only 3 years at Windsong, he'd long since come to the conclusion that there was nothing more the site could teach him. It was time for a change.

ZOLERIM

CR 11

XP 12,800

Male human cleric of Nethys 3/wizard 3/mystic theurge 6
NE Medium humanoid (human)

Init +1; **Senses** Perception +4

DEFENSE

AC 24, touch 14, flat-footed 23 (+4 armor, +3 deflection, +1 Dex, +2 natural, +4 shield)

hp 101 (12 HD; 3d8+9d6+53)

Fort +8, **Ref** +7, **Will** +13

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft., fly 60 ft. (good)

Melee mwk dagger +6/+1 (1d4–1/19–20)

Special Attacks channel negative energy 3/day (DC 11, 2d6), destructive smite (+1, 7/day), hand of the apprentice (7/day), intense spells (+1 damage)

Domain Spell-Like Abilities (CL 9th; concentration +13)
7/day—blast rune (1d6+1 energy damage, 3 rounds)

Cleric Spells Prepared (CL 9th; concentration +13)

5th—*flame strike* (DC 19), *shout*^D (DC 19)

4th—*cure critical wounds*, *explosive runes*^D (DC 17), *freedom of movement*, *sending*

3rd—*cure serious wounds* (2), *dispel magic*, *glyph of warding*^D, *meld into stone*

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2nd—*hold person* (DC 16), *resist energy*, *shatter*^D (DC 16),
extended shield of faith, *sound burst* (DC 16), *spiritual weapon*
 1st—*command* (DC 15), *cure light wounds* (3), *sanctuary* (DC 15),
true strike^D

o (at will)—*bleed* (DC 14), *create water*, *light*, *stabilize*
D Domain spell; **Domains** Destruction, Rune

Wizard Spells Prepared (CL 9th; concentration +13)

5th—*wall of force*

4th—*dimension door*, *fear* (DC 18), *fire shield*

3rd—*dispel magic*, *extended false life*, *fly*, *lightning bolt* (DC 17)

2nd—*acid arrow*, *glitterdust* (DC 16), *extended mage armor*,
mirror image, *extended shield*

1st—*charm person* (DC 15), *magic missile* (3), *ray of*
enfeeblement (DC 15)

o (at will)—*arcane mark*, *mage hand*, *message*, *prestidigitation*

TACTICS

Before Combat Zolerim casts *extended mage armor* and *extended false life* every morning. Once he's alerted to

trouble, he casts *sending* to alert Ardathanatus that the PCs are in the dungeon. He casts *extended shield*, *fly*, *freedom of movement*, and *extended shield of faith* on himself before entering combat.

During Combat Zolerim uses flight to stay mobile in combat and relies on his damaging spells to hit the PCs at range, but casts *mirror image* on the first round of the fight.

Whenever he's surrounded and can't get to safety to cast spells, he simply channels negative energy. He heals himself whenever he's reduced to 40 or fewer hit points.

Morale If he's reduced to 20 or fewer hit points, Zolerim casts *wall of force* to try to seal the PCs off from him, then flees. As soon as he's out of sight, he casts *meld into stone* to hide in the dungeon floor for an hour or so before emerging. At this point, he heals himself and then moves out into the dungeon to seek the PCs for revenge. He doesn't expect mercy, and if escape isn't an option, he fights to the death. If captured, he is unrepentant, claiming that Nethys cares nothing for petty human politics and that he sided with the source of stronger magic (Ardathanatus), as his god demanded—he only reveals what he knows of the dungeon if magically compelled. In this case, you can use a charmed or compelled Zolerim to give the PCs whatever hints you wish about the parts of the dungeon they have yet to explore.

STATISTICS

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

Base Atk +6; **CMB** +5; **CMD** 19

Feats Craft Construct, Craft Magic Arms and Armor, Craft Wand, Craft Wondrous Item, Extend Spell, Lightning Reflexes, Scribe Scroll, Toughness

Skills Bluff +12, Fly +24, Knowledge (arcana) +19, Knowledge (history) +13, Knowledge (planes) +13, Knowledge (religion) +19, Sense Motive +19, Spellcraft +19

Languages Aklo, Common, Draconic, Thassilonian, Varisian
SQ arcane bond (dagger), combined spells (3rd)

Combat Gear *scroll of blade barrier*, *scroll of greater dispel magic*, *scroll of heal*, *scroll of mass inflict critical wounds*, *wand of cure moderate wounds* (CL 10th, 15 charges), *wand of fireball* (CL 10th, 9 charges); **Other Gear** masterwork dagger, *amulet of natural armor* +2, *doomsday key*, *headband of mental prowess* +2 (Int, Wis), *minor cloak of displacement*, key to chest in area **D4**

Treasure: Besides some clothes and shoes set identical to those currently worn by Zolerim, the chest of drawers contains Zolerim's spellbook (containing all his prepared wizard spells plus 2d4 other spells per level from 1st to 5th of your choice), an exquisite statuette of Nethys made of ebony and ivory worth 120 gp, a golden paper knife with a ruby in the pommel worth 1,150 gp, a silver mirror worth 100 gp, and a leather bag containing 320 gp.

A red leather book sits on a nightstand near the bed. Entitled *My Lady's Fire* and written in Thassilonian, this



ZOLERIM

BEYOND THE DOOMSDAY DOOR

ancient book is an account of the construction of Runelord Alaznist's *Hellstorm Flumes*. The book also contains a map of the original locations of the flumes, although the only one that exists above the waters of the Varisian Gulf today is located in Sandpoint. This fantastically rare tome not only is worth 8,500 gp, but also functions as a spellbook containing all spells from the *Core Rulebook* with the fire descriptor.

D6. NIGHTSCAPE ROOM

This room is decorated with frescoes showing fantastic images of the space beyond the sky, a black expanse populated by anthropomorphized suns, beast-shaped constellations, and multicolored worlds.

As with the woodland motifs in area D1, this chamber was adorned to give the cultists a chance to enjoy a sight that they often went long without—an unobstructed view of the night sky. The entire room radiates moderate illusion magic—anyone who concentrates on the image for at least 2 full rounds sees the image shift and waver so that it suddenly and exactly matches the current configuration of the skies above.

The stairs lead down to area E4.

D7. TORTURE CHAMBER

This room is furnished with a table and a few chairs—all manner of torture implements lie strewn on the table, along with a large supply of alchemical tools. Central to this all is a large glass dome and an intimidating looking saw.

This torture chamber has been set up only recently by Zolerim and some of his master's undead servants. Ardathanatus has started equipping this room to prep Gein Kafog's body for harvesting his brain for the alchemical golem he wants to build, as a successful DC 25 Knowledge (arcana) check suggests to anyone who looks over the specific mix of tools on the table.

The stairs to the west lead down to area E1.

Treasure: The alchemical tools constitute a masterwork alchemy lab, and among the tools is a *wand of gentle repose* (44 charges).

D8. QLIPTOTH GUARDIANS (CR 13)

With the exception of what appears to be a pair of human-sized boulders sitting on the northeast and southeast corners of this room, this chamber is empty. The secret door in the east wall is incredibly well hidden, and locating it requires a successful DC 40 Perception check. Beyond the secret door is a tapering alcove that narrows down to a 3-inch-diameter peephole allowing one to look out into the main temple of Groetus (area E13) below. Unless he's been

warned by the creatures in this room, Ardathanatus is likely in the middle of one of his long rituals to refocus the *Doomsday Door* when the PCs look through this window—see area E13 for further details.

Creatures: The two strange boulders in the corners of this room are actually two gongorinan qliploth that are using their *statue* spell-like ability to appear innocuous. These qliploth do not attack the PCs if they merely walk through the room, but do observe and report their passage to Ardathanatus down in area E13 via telepathy. If the PCs start searching the room, or if they attempt to damage either qliploth, both monsters immediately animate and attack. Otherwise, they wait for the PCs to pass through, then one of the two sneaks along behind the PCs to observe—if this qliploth is spotted, it immediately attacks, making a fighting retreat back to this room to gain the help of its companion. The monsters fight to the death.

GONGORINANS (2)

CR 11

XP 12,800 each

hp 137 each (see page 90)

D9. PRISON (CR 12)

A large, mahogany desk with a high, leather-covered chair dominates this room. A chest sits near the desk, while a wooden shelving unit contains several sets of manacles and a few cudgels. Two steel gates in the east wall lead to two parallel rows of prison cells.

This room, once used to hold prisoners of the cult and the odd human sacrifice reserved for special rituals, has lain dormant and empty for many years. With Ardathanatus's arrival, though, these cells have been put back to use. Originally several surviving villagers and servants languished here, but today, only one prisoner remains—Nildus Thilano, the abbey's former priest of Erastil (see Development, below).

Creature: The prison is currently guarded by a lumbering behemoth of a monster—a crimson-furred, horned gorilla-like creature with a gaping maw in its chest. This creature is a baregara, an Abyssal fiend believed by some to be a sort of proto-demon. This particular baregara is named Tezmakruh, called from the Abyss by Ardathanatus to serve as a prison warden. Whenever a prisoner has outlived its usefulness, the corpse is given to the baregara as payment. Ardathanatus has kept Nildus alive for as long as he has as much to hold off having to finalize payment with the baregara (and thus retain it on site as additional muscle) as for any other reason. It's been too long for the baregara since it last had a chance to crunch bones between its dual sets of teeth, and it eagerly attacks intruders on sight and fights to the death as a result.

SHATTERED STAR

TEZMAKRUH

CR 12

XP 19,200

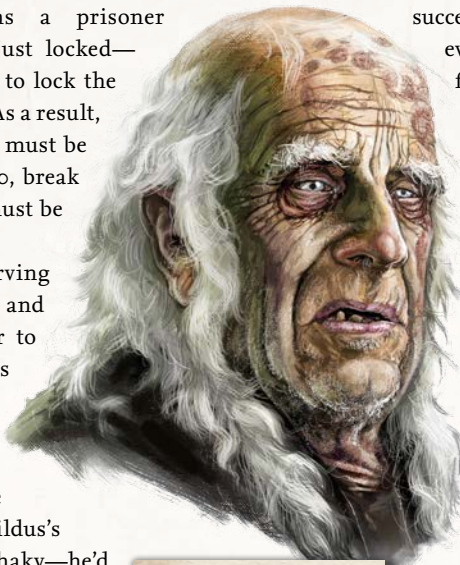
Baregara (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 3 34)

hp 168

Treasure: The chest by the desk contains all of Nildus's gear and equipment, as listed in his stat block below. In addition to this, the chest contains 350 gp worth of coins and jewelry taken from the other (now-dead) prisoners who were once kept here.

Development: Only one of the prison cells (the southeasternmost one) contains a prisoner today. This door is more than just locked—Ardathanatus has used *stone shape* to lock the bars and door of this cell in place. As a result, in order to open the cell, the door must be smashed down (hardness 10, hp 60, break DC 28), or a spell like *stone shape* must be used to loosen the door and bars.

Within the cell languishes a starving man covered with angry welts and scars resulting from what appear to be suckers (partially healed wounds from various qliphoth torments). This is Nildus Thilano, an elderly man who, until his capture, was the abbey's cleric of Erastil. At the time of Ardathanatus's attack, Nildus's devotion to Erastil was already shaky—he'd seen too much pain and tragedy in his life, and that, combined with the loss of his entire family to sickness over the course of 1 horrific year, shook his faith to the core. The speed with which Ardathanatus took the abbey, along with Zolerim's treachery and the horrors he's witnessed in the form of the qliphoth and undead that now rule the dungeon, shattered his wavering faith, and today Nildus is adrift without a god. The ex-cleric knows his lack of faith has damned him to an afterlife of torment, and this knowledge even further depresses him—he's stopped eating as a result, and consequently he is suffering nonlethal damage from starvation and constantly fatigued. If the PCs rescue him, his depressed attitude prevents him from being of much help, even if the PCs heal him and return his gear. He follows the PCs aimlessly, staying out of combat but not seeking escape from the dungeons unless the PCs lead him out personally, in which case he simply loiters in the area until fate catches up with him. He can certainly tell the PCs about Ardathanatus (sharing similar information to what Casamir and Gein can impart), but knows little more about the dungeon save that Ardathanatus promised to make him "the first sacrifice to the Polymorph Plague once the *Doomsday Door* has been refocused to



NILDUS THILANO

Sekatar-Seraktis." Nildus or a successful DC 25 Knowledge (religion) check reveals "Polymorph Plague" to be an alternate name for Yamasoth, while a successful DC 30 Knowledge (planes) reveals "Sekatar-Seraktis" to be the Abyssal realm in which the qliphoth lord lives.

Nildus currently has 40 points of nonlethal damage and is fatigued from starvation. His stats below present him with this damage cured and with his gear from the chest in this room returned to him, but he still functions as an ex-cleric of Erastil. Whether or not he regains his faith depends in large part on how the PCs treat him and how successful they are against Ardathanatus, but even then, it's some time before he recovers from his ordeal and regains his clerical supernatural and spellcasting abilities. Note that as an ex-cleric, Nildus can no longer use his scrolls, so he gives them to the PCs as thanks for rescuing him.

NILDUS THILANO

CR 4

XP 1,200

Male old human ex-cleric of Erastil 7

LG Medium humanoid (human)

Init +5; Senses Perception +4

DEFENSE

AC 15, touch 11, flat-footed 14 (+4 armor, +1 Dex)

hp 49 (7d8++14)

Fort +5, Ref +3, Will +9

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee mwk heavy mace +5 (1d8-1)

Ranged +1 composite longbow +7 (1d8/x3)

TACTICS

During Combat Nildus stays back in combat, supporting allies with his longbow. He only steps up to engage in melee if no other choice is available, and even then, he prefers to aid another to increase an ally's AC or attack rolls.

Morale Nildus has lost his family and faith, but while he has little to live for, he fears the punishments the afterlife has in store for him. He flees combat if reduced to fewer than 30 hit points.

STATISTICS

Str 9, Dex 12, Con 10, Int 12, Wis 19, Cha 10

Base Atk +5; CMB +4; CMD 15

Feats Combat Casting, Improved Initiative, Point-Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Toughness

Skills Diplomacy +10, Knowledge (nature) +8, Knowledge (religion) +11, Survival +11

Languages Common, Varisian

Combat Gear scroll of *breath of life*, scrolls of *lesser restoration* (2), scroll of *neutralize poison*; **Other Gear** +1 studded leather, +1 composite longbow with 20 arrows, masterwork heavy mace

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Story Award: Rescuing Nildus Thilano earns the PCs 4,800 XP. Helping him regain his faith and become a cleric again should take longer than the PCs are likely to remain in Windsong Abbey, but once they do so, they gain an additional 6,400 XP.

D10. OCEAN ROOM

This room is decorated with large bas-reliefs of azure marble that depict the sea and a multitude of marine creatures—fish, shellfish, mollusks, dolphins, and whales, but also many merfolk. A spherical lamp of corrugated blue crystal sits near the north wall.

The decoration of this room was created in honor of a vision the high priest of the temple had, wherein merfolk rose from the depths of the sea and blew upon rune-carved horns to cause the lands to crumble into the ocean. It was this vision (a metaphorical glimpse of Earthfall) that inspired the temple's first high priest to build on this site.

Treasure: The lamp of blue crystal sitting atop the altar burns with a *continual flame*. Of quite fine workmanship, the lamp is worth 3,500 gp.

D11. GATHUSPIA'S DEN (CR 13)

This room seems to contain only old empty crates, folded sacks, and upturned clay vases of various sizes and shapes. Sitting on a table near the northeast corner are several strange jars containing what appear to be coils of blue mist.

Creature: One of Ardathanatus's more dangerous minions uses this room as storage. This creature is the night hag witch Gathuspia, who spends the majority of her time in the region in ethereal form. When the PCs first enter this room, there's a 25% chance that they encounter the night hag here, but if any of the empty *soul jars* are jostled, touched, or taken from the table, the night hag has a chance to notice this each round by making a successful DC 20 Perception check. As soon as she succeeds at the check, she returns to this room (taking 1d4 rounds), at which point she dismisses her etherealness and demands the return of her property. She attacks the PCs whether or not they comply, hoping to trap their souls in her jars and knowing that if she defeats these intruders, Ardathanatus will be pleased and will likely reward her.

GATHUSPIA

CR 13

XP 25,600

Female night hag witch 8 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 215; *Pathfinder RPG Advanced Player's Guide* 65)

NE Medium outsider (evil, extraplanar)

Init +10; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +21

DEFENSE

AC 32, touch 17, flat-footed 25 (+4 armor, +6 Dex, +1 dodge, +11 natural)

hp 192 (16 HD; 8d10+8d6+120)

Fort +16, **Ref** +12, **Will** +16

DR 10/cold iron and magic; **Immune** charm, cold, fire, fear, sleep; **SR** 24

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft., fly 60 ft. (good)

Melee +1 *unholy dagger* +19/+14/+9 (1d4+7/17–20), bite +13 (2d6+3), claw +13 (1d4+3)

Special Attacks dream haunting, hexes (evil eye [–4, 9 rounds], flight [feather fall at will, levitate 1/day, fly 8 minutes/day], healing [cure moderate], misfortune [2 rounds], slumber [8 rounds])

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 8th; concentration +13)

Constant—*detect chaos*, *detect evil*, *detect good*, *detect law*, *detect magic*

At will—*deep slumber* (DC 18), *etherealness*, *invisibility*, *magic missile*, *ray of enfeeblement* (DC 16), *soul bind* (DC 24)

Spells Prepared (CL 8th; concentration +14)

4th—*confusion* (DC 20), *cure serious wounds*, *dimension door*
3rd—*contagion* (DC 19), *lightning bolt* (DC 19), *stinking cloud* (DC 19), *vampiric touch*

2nd—*blindness/deafness* (DC 18), *command undead* (DC 18), *hold person* (DC 18), *see invisibility*, *web* (DC 18)

1st—*charm person* (DC 17), *command* (DC 17), *cure light wounds*, *mage armor*, *ray of enfeeblement* (2, DC 17)

0 (at will)—*bleed* (DC 16), *light*, *message*, *touch of fatigue* (DC 16)

Patron plague

TACTICS

Before Combat Gathuspia casts *invisibility* and *mage armor* before entering combat, and activates her flight hex to increase her combat mobility.

During Combat Gathuspia spends the first few rounds of combat using her magic to soften up foes, with *lightning bolt* and *confusion* in particular to disrupt and damage, and *stinking cloud* and *web* to reduce their mobility. Once she's got the PCs relatively split up, she swoops in to make melee attacks, using Vital Strike with her bite on the first round of combat. She knows her Armor Class is good, but faced against foes who are able to hit her and penetrate her damage reduction, she retreats back to range and relies on *magic missiles* and other magic. She tries to capture the souls of any slain PCs as soon as possible using *soul bind*, and if she manages to capture three (and thus fills all three *soul jars*), she leaves the battle by returning to the ethereal plane, content with her prizes for now.

Morale Gathuspia is unlike many of the other outsiders who serve Ardathanatus in that she hasn't been called here by his magic—her alliance with the elf is on her own terms. While she values his aid and hopes he succeeds at his mission

SHATTERED STAR

since that will only increase the number of souls she can harvest, she's not so blindly devoted to his cause that she would lay down her life for him. If reduced to 40 or fewer hit points, she attempts to escape by using *etherealness* and does not return.

STATISTICS

Str 23, Dex 23, Con 22, Int 22, Wis 14, Cha 21

Base Atk +12; CMB +18; CMD 35

Feats Bleeding Critical, Combat Casting, Critical Focus, Dodge, Improved Critical (dagger), Improved Initiative, Toughness, Vital Strike

Skills Bluff +24, Disguise +21, Fly +33, Intimidate +24, Knowledge (arcana) +25, Knowledge (planes) +25, Perception +21, Sense Motive +21, Spellcraft +25, Stealth +25, Swim +10



GATHUSPIA

Languages Abyssal, Celestial, Common, Infernal
SQ change shape (any humanoid, alter self), heartstone, witch's familiar (spider named Seleste)

Other Gear +1 unholy dagger, heartstone, soul jars (3)

D12. SACRED FIRE (CR 12)

Four pillars support the vaulted, forty-foot-high ceiling of this large chamber. Each pillar is decorated with flame-like carvings and stylized images of phoenixes. A low, two-stepped platform in the middle of the floor surrounds a diamond-shaped fire pit in which a forge sits.

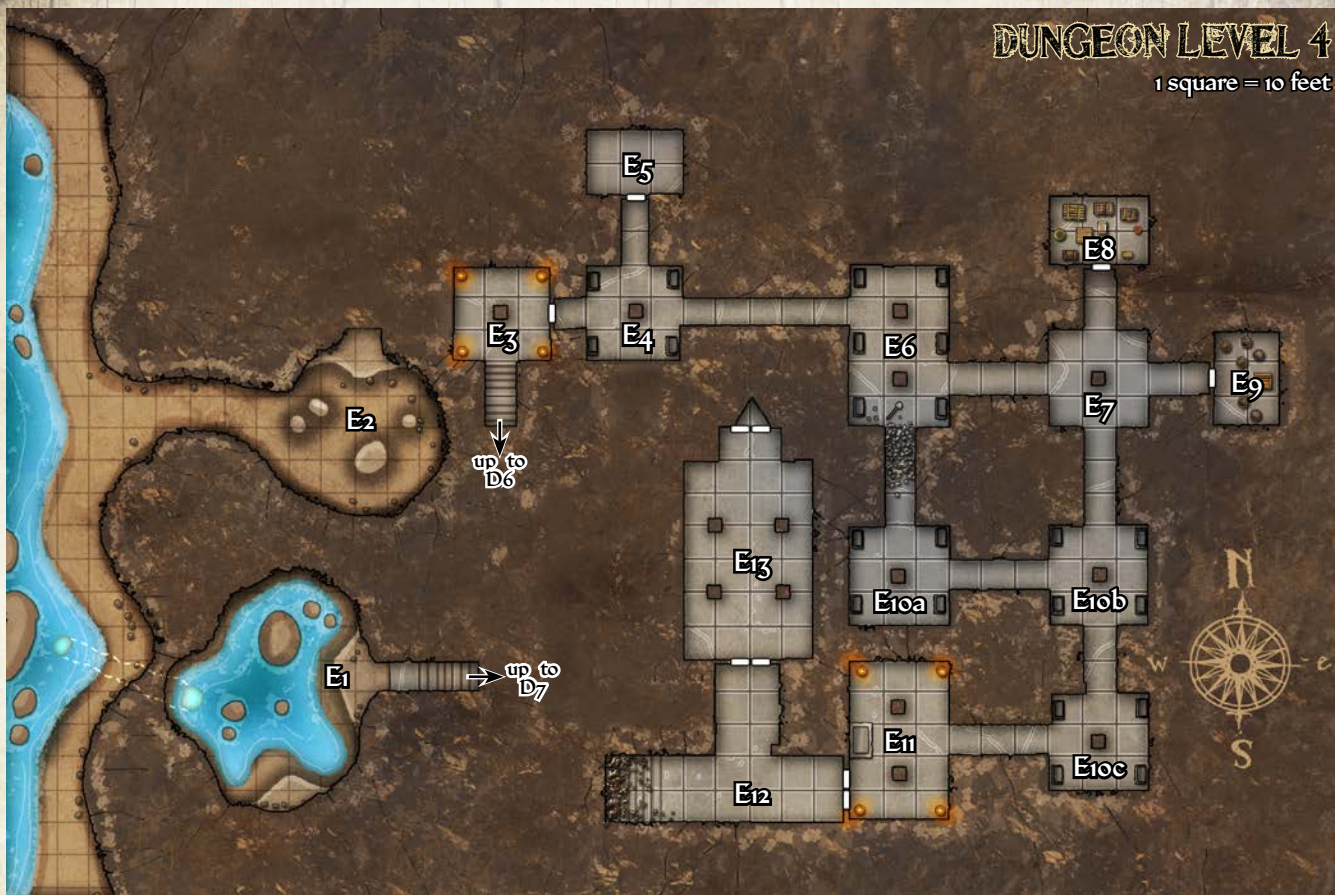
The forge in this room is essentially an immobile magic item crafted long ago by the priesthood of Groetus—it was used to forge the *doomsday locks* as well as components of the *Doomsday Door* itself, along with many other metal magical items utilized by the cult. The forge radiates strong conjuration magic, and anyone who enters the central forge pit takes 3d6 points of fire damage per round. A character capable of withstanding this fire can use the forge to craft all manner of metal objects, including particularly tough metals like adamantine and horacalcum. In addition, magic items crafted in this forge benefit from a 10% reduction to their cost, as the magic of the forge augments the crafting procedure.

Creatures: Back in the day, a fire giant smith toiled in this room. Today, however, Ardathanatus has staffed the forge with Beshka, an advanced efreeti renowned for her skill at armorsmithing and weaponsmithing. Securing Beshka's cooperation was somewhat difficult, and Ardathanatus (to his disappointment) had to promise not to take advantage of her ability to grant *wishes* (beyond using them to forge weapons) in exchange for her aid in crafting him a new weapon and a new suit of armor out of a large mass of horacalcum ore he recovered under Hollow Mountain. Assisting the efreeti are three salamanders—creatures Ardathanatus had much less trouble bullying into servitude. (The salamanders use Beshka's *wish* to aid in the construction of the armor.) The first time the PCs enter this chamber, Beshka has finished the halberd and is close to finishing the armor, and is eager to be done so she can return home. If confronted by the PCs, she tiredly regards them before she waves them off and says (in Common), "I've only got one more day here. Leave without a fuss and I won't be forced to burn you alive." If the PCs don't comply, she sighs heavily and attacks—as she does so, the braziers burning in the four corners of the room each disgorge a Large fire elemental to aid the efreeti. Bound here by a *planar ally* spell, she has no choice but to fight to the death.

BEYOND THE DOOMSDAY DOOR

DUNGEON LEVEL 4

1 square = 10 feet



BESHKA

CR 9

XP 6,400

Advanced efreeti (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 140, 294)

hp 115

SALAMANDERS (3)

CR 6

XP 2,400 each

hp 76 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 240)

LARGE FIRE ELEMENTALS (4)

CR 5

XP 1,600 each

hp 60 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 124)

Treasure: The suit of +1 moderate fortification horacalcum full plate armor (horacalcum is a skymetal detailed on page 71 of *Pathfinder RPG Adventure Path* #61) that Beshka is working on is a day away from completion. If finished (this requires a day's work and a successful DC 29 Craft [armor] check in a forge capable of working the rare metal), the armor is worth 77,500 gp.

Development: If the PCs leave Beshka to finish her work, she finishes the armor in a day and it's delivered to Ardathanatus. She returns home, and if the PCs haven't defeated Ardathanatus by this point, when they

encounter him he's wearing this armor instead of his adamantine armor.

On the off chance that the PCs manage to dismiss or banish the efreeti without killing her, she's thankful to the PCs for shortening her servitude by even a day. Only 2d4 days later, a fire mephit appears before the PCs and bows low, informing them of Beshka's thanks for relieving her of her duty to Ardathanatus early. As a reward, the efreeti sent this mephit, a toadie named Gogorog, to deliver a reward to the PCs—a *luck blade* containing one wish.

E1. SOUTH CAVERN (CR 12)

The churning waters of a sea cave fill this grotto with the sound of the surf. A few steep-sided rocks protrude from the waters like islands. To the south, a ten-foot-high ledge rises from the water. A rusted chest sits high up on this ledge, surrounded by a small mound of gold coins and silver dinnerware.

The water levels shown on the map are at low tide—the water is 15 feet deep at this point. At high tide, the water depth increases by 10 feet, leaving only the lighter-colored parts of the room above water. The waters fill the shaded areas to a depth of 1 foot at high tide. The stairs to the east

SHATTERED STAR

lead up to area D7, while to the west, a submerged tunnel leads underwater to a deep tide pool outside. Noticing this submerged tunnel from above water requires a successful DC 25 Perception check inside this area, and a successful DC 35 check once outside because of the heavy seaweed growth.

Creatures: A rampage of a half-dozen particularly brutish sea drakes has taken up nesting in these caves. The aquatic drakes have dwelled here for many months, right under the noses of the abbey priests. The drakes themselves aren't particularly smart, but they're cunning enough to enter and exit their lair underwater and to keep their attacks on targets miles away from the abbey, knowing that if the priests discovered them, they'd be attacked. Ardathanatus discovered the drakes here while exploring, and his addition to their treasure stash has, for now, bought a modicum of cooperation from the drakes; they don't bother Ardathanatus and he doesn't bother them. The drakes assume that the PCs are members of Ardathanatus's group come to buy more "cooperation time" from them, and demand the PCs place their tribute near the chest. If the PCs comply by giving them at least 2,000 gp in valuables, the sea drakes let them come and go as they wish—otherwise they attack. They even pursue foes up into the dungeon, but no farther than the third level. Opportunistic PCs can certainly lure the drakes into battle with other denizens on that level, for Ardathanatus's commands to leave the drakes alone only holds water when the drakes aren't invading the dungeon.

ADVANCED SEA DRAKES (6) CR 7

XP 3,200 each

hp 87 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 2 109, 292)

Treasure: Ardathanatus's offering to the sea drakes consists of 1,300 gp and a stack of silverware looted from the abbey worth 700 gp in all. The rusted chest is a remnant from decades ago, when a Riddleport pirate hid his stash in this cave. The pirate is now long dead, and the sea drakes have wrenched open the chest to admire the contents. The chest's lid is easily removable as a result. Inside are five cracked leather bags holding 500 gp each, a ruined silk pouch containing 30 pearls worth 100 gp each, a masterwork dagger in a gem-encrusted scabbard (the scabbard is ruined but its 12 garnets are worth 100 gp each), a *ring of wizardry I*, and an *amulet of mighty fists +2*.

E2. NORTH CAVERN

A wide tunnel slopes down to the west to open out onto the beach outside. To the north, a ledge sits five feet above the ground.

During high tide, only the ledge and the four small islands are above water, while during low tide, the cave is dry but strewn with seaweed.

Until recently, a secret passageway connected the north wall of this cavern to area E3, but Ardathanatus wasn't comfortable with this "back door" and walled it up with several *walls of stone*. He used *stone shape* to make the north wall seem something like a natural cavern, but a successful DC 30 Perception check suggests the stone here was magically manipulated—a PC who succeeds at a DC 25 Knowledge (arcana) can confirm that *wall of stone* and *stone shape* seem to have been used here. Digging the tunnel out would take some time without the use of powerful magic, but determined PCs can use this route to enter the dungeon. They should take care about getting in over their heads if they're still lower than 12th level, though!

E3. OFFERING ROOM (CR 9)

Numerous niches have been carved into the walls of this room, many of which contain vases and urns. A central stone pillar is carved with a spiral band of spiky runes.

This level of the dungeon is where the Groetan priests buried their dead—and when the end of Thassilon came, it is the level to which the surviving priests retired to perform the suicides that would transform them into eternal undead guardians. The words written on the pillar are prayers to Groetus written in Thassilonian, blessing this level of the dungeon as a place of rest. The section of wall Ardathanatus sealed with *walls of stone* to the west can be detected as detailed in area E2. The stairs to the south lead up to area D6.

Trap: The door to the east is locked with a *doomsday lock*, but has further been warded by a *greater glyph of warding* placed by Ardathanatus. This loud trap isn't meant to kill the PCs so much as alert the dungeon level's denizens that intruders are near. If the trap goes off, the guardians of area E4 come to investigate at once.

GREATER GLYPH OF WARDING CR 9

XP 6,400

Type magic; Perception DC 31; Disable Device DC 31

EFFECTS

Trigger location; Reset none

Effect spell effect (*greater glyph of warding*, sonic blast glyph, 7d8 sonic damage, DC 21 Reflex save for half damage); multiple targets (all creatures in area E3)

E4. GUARDIAN CRYPT (CR 12)

This room is empty, save for four stone sarcophagi sitting in the room's corners

Creatures: The four sarcophagi contain the ancient bones of four Groetan clerics who offered themselves

BEYOND THE DOOMSDAY DOOR

up for transformation into greater shadows to guard the crypt. The shadows now serve Ardathanatus, and swiftly emerge to attack anyone who enters this room, or move west into area E3 to attack anyone who triggers the trap there. The shadows fight until destroyed, and pursue foes throughout this level (although not to areas E1–E2).

GREATER SHADOWS (4)

CR 8

XP 4,800 each

hp 58 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 245)

E5. OSSUARY

The walls of this room are pockmarked by hundreds of narrow niches in which sit thousands, even tens of thousands, of bones.

The bones stored in this room make up the bulk of those who died serving the temple of Groetus over its centuries of operation during Thassilon's height. The bones are quite fragile, and crumble to dust if handled. Evidence of such handling lies in a few niches, where Ardathanatus investigated and decided that the bones were too fragile to serve as the components of a bone golem. Each niche explored carries a 25% chance of exposing the searcher to a not-quite-dormant strain of leprosy carried in the dust (Fortitude DC 12 negates—see *Core Rulebook* 557).

E6. CRYPT OF THE FAVORED ACOLYTES (CR 12)

This large crypt contains six stone sarcophagi, each decorated with a carved image of a skull-shaped moon and lines of runes. To the south, a section of tunnel has partially collapsed, leaving a two-foot-tall crawlway in its place.

A successful DC 25 Knowledge (religion) check made while studying the sarcophagus by someone who can read Thassilonian is enough for her to determine that the bodies buried here were favored acolytes—as new favorites died, the oldest bones were moved to the ossuary at area E5.

The tunnel leading south to area E10a collapsed when Ardathanatus was attempting to build a complex trap here, involving magical manipulation of the walls to make a crushing trap similar to the one that wards the passageway to area E7. A character who studies the collapsed rubble to the south and succeeds at a DC 25 Perception check notes several blocks of stone bearing damaged but faint etchings of runes—this discovery makes dealing with the trap to the east easier, granting a +4 bonus on Perception checks and Disable Device checks against that trap.

A Medium character can wiggle the rough the gap to area E10a by making a successful DC 20 Escape Artist check—Small creatures can move through the area, treating it as

difficult terrain. Each time someone passes through the tunnel, there's a 25% chance the walls and ceiling collapse the rest of the way (treat as a collapse; see *Core Rulebook* 415).

Trap: Ardathanatus was more successful in trapping the hallway from area E6 to area E7. As soon as someone walks within 5 feet of area E7 in this hallway, the walls of the entire hall suddenly ripple with magic as if they had turned to liquid—a second later, thousands of stony spikes lance out of both walls, impaling all creatures in the hallway. Once the trap is triggered, the stone spikes immediately retract into the wall, instantly resetting the trap (which fires again if anyone remains in the trigger zone).

SPIKED WALL TRAP

CR 12

XP 19,200

Type magic; Perception DC 34; Disable Device DC 34

EFFECTS

Trigger location; **Reset** automatic (after 1 hour); **Bypass** avoiding contact with walls, floor, and ceiling
Effect Atk +20 melee (6d6+10/x3); multiple targets (all creatures in hallway between areas E6 and E7)

E7. LIGHTS OF THE DEAD (CR 12)

The rough walls of this ancient chamber are decorated with luminous designs that create a lattice of spirals, with lunar symbols and tiny skulls decorating the ceiling. One set of designs on the face of the room's central pillar is larger than the others, and seems to be a line of runes.

The carvings on the wall here can be identified with a successful DC 30 Knowledge (religion) check as prayers to Groetus—specifically, prayers to honor the favored of the faith's dead. The phrase carved in the central pillar reads (in Thassilonian), "Present a key to the End Times and utter the Groetan invocation favoring the dead and be counted as acolytes of the Harbinger of Last Days." A character who holds high a *doomsday key* in this room and utters the proper 10-second prayer from Groetan scripture (knowing the words requires a successful DC 30 Knowledge [religion] check, but actually reciting the prayer requires no check—language is irrelevant) feels a sudden oppressive weight, as if the air itself has grown heavier, and takes a –4 penalty on initiative checks for 1d4 hours as a result. If this ritual is not observed within 1 minute of anyone entering the room, however, greater repercussions occur—the walls of the room flash with a cold blue light, and all creatures within the room must each make a successful DC 15 Will save or become shaken for 1d6 minutes. This is a mind-affecting fear effect.

Creatures: The luminous glow of the designs on the walls represents this chamber's guardians—a rare form of variant will-o'-wisps known as a "Groetan candles."

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These creatures are found only where worship of Groetus is performed, yet they have little concept of time and can linger at such a site for ages. Groetan candles function as advanced will-o'-wisps, save that they deal cold damage rather than electricity damage, and are effectively immortal unless killed by violent means. These creatures wait to attack until the pulse of fear fills the room (or until anyone attempts to attack them or damage the room)—they're immune to the chamber's *fear* effect. When they attack, the Groetan candles appear as vaguely skull-shaped globes of blue light surrounded by a nimbus of strange, shifting runes. The Groetan candles pursue foes throughout this dungeon, seeking out intruders even if they left the room before the minute delay of their attack ends.

GROETAN CANDLES (6)

CR 7

XP 3,200 each

Advanced will-o'-wisp (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 277, 294)

hp 76 each

E8. PREPARATION ROOM

Several long tables sit in this room, each with a large number of embalming and surgical tools lying atop it. Ancient dark stains mar the surface of each table.

Treasure: This room is where the Groetan cultists prepared their dead for the process of mummification—with a successful DC 25 Knowledge (religion) check, a PC can confirm that the tools here are specifically those needed by a powerful cleric to transform the dead into mummies. Curiously, some of the tools have been altered in strange ways that would suggest they were intended to be used on oneself. As a set, the strange embalming tools are worth 500 gp. This entire room is under the effects of a permanent *desecrate* effect—consequently, the mummies in area E10 and E11 have an additional +2 hp per Hit Die, since they were created in this chamber.

E9. SACRED TREASURE ROOM

The door to this room is protected by a *doomsday lock*.

Several large, ancient-looking pottery vessels sit in this room amid a scattering of ancient coins and shining gemstones.

Treasure: The treasure in this room consists of 4,352 sp scattered over the floor—the coins are of an ancient Thassilonian make, and to a collector are worth 1 gp apiece. Amid the coins are 50 minor gemstones or pieces of coral, each worth 100 gp. The five urns once contained the temple's greatest treasure—waters harvested from the River Styx, though this water has long since evaporated away, leaving behind a foul crust within each urn (this

crust can be identified as Stygian residue with a successful DC 30 Knowledge [planes] check). Each urn was also used to store a specific magic item sacred to the temple—unfortunately, these items have become cursed after their long soak in the otherworldly waters. These items include an *amulet of inescapable location*, *bracers of defenselessness*, a *medallion of thought projection*, a *ring of clumsiness*, and a *stone of weight*.

E10. CRYPTS OF THE FINAL PRIESTS (CR 12)

Four sarcophagi, each decorated with a carving of a skull-faced moon, sit in the corners of this large, square crypt. A central pillar supports the ceiling above.

Creatures: In these three rooms, the 12 final priests of the order were put to rest after their high-priest, Kandamereus, aided them in transforming themselves into undead—into mummies, to be exact. Today, all 12 mummies lie in wait inside their sarcophagi, still loyal to their master Kandamereus, who in turn has pledged his loyalty to Ardathanatus.

The 12 mummies in these three rooms have an unusual trait—they share one mind and can sense the contents of the rooms as if seeing and hearing through their sarcophagi. Since these mummies possess a hivemind of sorts, they are difficult to flank or surprise. If the mummies notice the PCs entering these rooms, they lie in wait until the PCs attempt to move closer to area E11 by any method (such as by moving from area E10a to E10b, or from E10b to E10c), or until one of their sarcophagi is opened. At such a point, all 12 push aside the lids to their stone coffins and rise up to attack the intruders. They pursue foes who flee toward area E11, but not those who flee to the north; otherwise, they fight to the death.

GROETAN MUMMIES (12)

CR 5

XP 1,600 each

Variant mummy (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 210)

hp 76 each

Hivemind (Su) As long as there are at least two Groetan mummies within 300 feet of each other, if one Groetan mummy in the group is aware of a particular danger, they all are. No Groetan mummy in a group is considered flanked or flat-footed unless all of them are.

E11. KANDAMEREUS'S TOMB (CR 14)

Four large bronze braziers send flickering orange light through this large crypt. A single sarcophagus sits over a dais near the middle of the west wall, its side decorated by the carving of a skull-faced moon. A set of double doors stands to the southwest, each bearing a skull-shaped lock.

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The doors to the southwest are both locked with *doomsday locks*—opening them requires a pair of *doomsday keys* used simultaneously. If the PCs have only one key, the other lock may be picked, but such a process is dangerous because of the fact that these doors are warded with a *labyrinth without walls* trap identical to the one in area **A10** (see page 17). The braziers in the corners of the room are lit with *continual flames*.

Creature: This crypt is the tomb of Kandamereus, the powerful undead leader of the Groetan priests and the voice of the God of End Times. Although Kandamereus is preserved as a mummy similarly to his underlings in area **E10**, the procedure that he underwent was quite different—and not only because he performed the procedure on himself. Kandamereus’s transformation retained his personality and some (although not all) of his clerical class levels, resulting in a much more powerful creature than those the PCs encountered in area **E10**.

When the PCs enter this chamber, they encounter the mummified high priest of Groetus standing before his sarcophagus. If Kandamereus notices the PCs, he raises his hands and commands them to stop in an imperious voice, speaking in Thassilonian (and activating his aura of despair as he does to help “encourage” the PCs to stand still). This command causes any mummies that are pursuing the PCs from area **E10** to stop as well; the mummies stand at attention but cease all attacks. If the PCs continue on into the room or attack any of the mummies, Kandamereus fights as detailed below.

But the PCs need not fight this ancient guardian in order to defeat him. As he has pondered the actions of Ardathanatus and the nature of the world, Kandamereus has grown doubtful that the elven qliptho worshiper truly wants to trigger the end times—suspecting that, perhaps, Ardathanatus merely wants to trigger a local apocalypse, or even worse, merely seeks personal power over the region but otherwise wishes to retain it as a place for him to rule.

When he commands the PCs to halt, the ancient mummy begins questioning them, again speaking in Thassilonian. His seven questions are listed below. Each time the PCs answer a question, one of the PCs must make a DC 30 Diplomacy check (other PCs can aid another this check with a successful DC 10 Diplomacy check). Kandamereus seeks the truth as the PCs see it—if the PCs attempt to lie to the mummy, they must instead make Bluff checks opposed by Kandamereus’s Sense Motive, but take a –10 penalty on the checks. In the unlikely event that the PCs still have Jasper Kandamereus traveling with them (see the free web enhancement for *Pathfinder Adventure Path* #62, available at paizo.com), his advice and presence grants a +10 circumstance bonus on the primary Diplomacy check

but not on any Bluff checks. The questions Kandamereus asks are as follows.

1. “What became of Thassilon after the end of the world?”
2. “What became of my temple of Groetus after the end of the world?”
3. “Has the world recovered from the apocalypse that destroyed Thassilon?”
4. “Is my lord Groetus still worshiped in this day?”
5. “What do you know of the elf Ardathanatus and his plans for the Domsday Door?”
6. “What are your plans for the Domsday Door, should you defeat Ardathanatus?”
7. “Do you accept the inevitable?”



KANDAMEREUS

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Regardless of how the PCs respond, Kandamereus listens calmly to their answers. If they succeed at a minimum of four of the seven Diplomacy and/or Bluff checks, the ancient mummy nods his head in approval as they make their final answer. At this point, he turns his attention to any other mummies who might be present, and tells them with a wave of his hand that their services to Groetus are no longer required—that new champions of the God of the End Times have come. At this command, the other mummies sigh and collapse into dust. Kandamereus turns back to the PCs and informs them that if they seek to defeat Ardathanatus, he will aid them, but only if they agree to allow him to continue his stewardship over the *Doomsday Door* once the final battle is resolved. If the PCs disagree, Kandamereus sighs with deep regret, then attacks them, planning on animating their bodies as mummies so that he'll have a more loyal group of minions to aid him in his plans to defeat Ardathanatus.

Kandamereus was a tall, lean person in life, and these features were only enhanced by his mummification. He wears the same bronze jewelry of the other warrior-shamans, and a tall headpiece encrusted with gemstones. As his personal weapon, he carries a *doomsday staff*, one of the most sacred magical items of his order.

KANDAMEREUS

CR 14

XP 38,400

Male mummy cleric of Groetus (Groetus) 11 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 210)

CE Medium undead

Init +5; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +27

Aura despair (30 ft., paralyzed for 1d4 rounds, Will DC 18 negates)

DEFENSE

AC 31, touch 14, flat-footed 30 (+5 armor, +3 deflection, +1 Dex, +10 natural, +2 shield)

hp 229 (19d8+106)

Fort +16, **Ref** +11, **Will** +21

DR 5/—; **Immune** undead traits; **SR** 23

Weaknesses vulnerable to fire

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee slam +21 (2d6+10 plus mummy rot)

Special Attacks aura of madness (DC 20, 11 rounds/day), channel negative energy 7/day (DC 19, 6d6)

Domain Spell-Like Abilities (CL 11th; concentration +16)

8/day—touch of darkness (5 rounds), vision of madness (+/–5)

Spells Prepared (CL 11th; concentration +16)

6th—*antilife shell*, *phantasmal killer*^D (DC 21)

5th—*slay living* (DC 20), *spell resistance*, *summon monster V*, *summon monster V*^D (summons 1d3 shadows)

4th—*chaos hammer* (DC 19), *confusion*^D (DC 19), *divine power*, *sending*, *unholy blight* (DC 19)

3rd—*deeper darkness*^D, *dispel magic* (2), *invisibility purge*, *meld into stone*, *protection from energy*

2nd—*blindness/deafness*^D (DC 17, only to cause blindness), *death knell* (DC 17), *hold person* (DC 17), *shatter*, *silence* (DC 17), *spiritual weapon*

1st—*command* (DC 16), *divine favor*, *lesser confusion*^D (DC 16), *obscuring mist*, *protection from law*, *sanctuary* (DC 16), *shield of faith*

0 (at will)—*bleed* (DC 15), *detect magic*, *light*, *mending*

D Domain spell; Domains Darkness, Madness

TACTICS

Before Combat Kandamereus casts *shield of faith*, *spell resistance*, and *invisibility purge* before combat if he gets the chance.

During Combat Kandamereus casts *antilife shell* at the start of combat—if he's fighting with the PCs, he makes sure to be in a position where this spell won't impede his living allies. He then focuses on casting *summon monster V* for the first few rounds, following up with his ranged damage spells or spells from his *doomsday staff*. If attacked in melee, he uses touch of darkness to cloud the vision of those attacking him before he attacks with slams and *inflict wound* spells.

Morale Once combat begins, Kandamereus fights until destroyed.

STATISTICS

Str 24, **Dex** 12, **Con** —, **Int** 10, **Wis** 20, **Cha** 18

Base Atk +14; **CMB** +21; **CMD** 32

Feats Ability Focus (despair), Blind-Fight, Combat Casting,

Improved Initiative, Improved Lightning Reflexes, Improved Natural Attack (slam), Improved Vital Strike, Lightning Reflexes, Power Attack, Toughness, Vital Strike **Skills** Knowledge (planes) +18, Knowledge (religion) +18, Perception +27, Sense Motive +13

Languages Thassilonian

SQ eyes of darkness (5 rounds/day)

Combat Gear *doomsday staff*; **Other Gear** *bracers of armor* +5, *cloak of resistance* +3, *ring of force shield*, mithral and opal holy symbol of Groetus worth 800 gp

Trap: If two *doomsday keys* are used to open this door, and each is used with the correct combination, the *labyrinth without walls* trap on these doors can be bypassed. Otherwise, an incorrect combination or lack of a key used in attempting to open the door triggers the trap. If the PCs have recruited Kandamereus's aid, he warns them about the trap and suggests they find two *doomsday keys* to bypass it. While two of these keys were kept here, Kandamereus knows that Ardathanatus took one and gave the other to a hideous frog-faced man—Zolerim. He suspects that a third key kept above is long lost—in fact, this key was the one kept by the Masked Abbot and was given by Ardathanatus to his medusa minion.

LABYRINTH WITHOUT WALLS

CR 12

XP 19,200

See page 18.

Story Award: If the party recruits Kandamereus's aid, award them XP as if they had defeated him in combat.

BEYOND THE DOOMSDAY DOOR

E12. FINAL GUARDIANS (CR 13)

The walls of this T-shaped junction tower nearly forty feet overhead. To the north, a pair of double doors, each fitted with a skull-faced lock, stands tall and imperious, while to the west, a collapsed flight of stairs once led down to deeper levels.

The doors to the north are both fitted with *doomsday locks*, but they are not warded by a trap. The stairs to the west once descended to a much deeper level of chambers that once served the temple of Groetus as a prison for enemies of the faith, but these chambers were not as well protected as the rest of the complex and they collapsed during Earthfall.

Creatures: This foyer to the Temple of the *Doomsday Door* is the last line of defense protecting Ardathanatus, and he has stationed two stone golems carved to resemble himself before each of the doors leading into area E13—these golems, creatures he crafted using resources in Hollow Mountain many years ago, are under orders to let no one, even the mummy Kandamereus, enter. The thunderous sound of their attacks is more than enough to alert the denizens of area E13 that trouble has reached their very doorstep.

STONE GOLEMS (2)

CR 11

XP 12,800 each

hp 107 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 163)

E13. TEMPLE OF DOOMSDAY (CR 16)

The interior of this great, forty-foot-high cathedral shimmers with a nauseating pale green light. The room seems even larger for the lack of furnishings, save for a few crumbling pews and four immense pillars. To the north, a pair of towering wood-and-metal doors lie closed—it is from the edges of these looming doors that the foul green light emanates, as it seems to leak out along the walls in writhing streams. Twisted bodies of strange not-quite-humanoid forms lie strewn about the north end of the room, and a strangely disturbing wind seems to pulse in the very air.

This chamber served the temple of Groetus as its inner sanctum, and the double door to the north is one of the infamous *Doomsday Doors* of Groetan myth. More of these doors are said to exist elsewhere on the Material Plane—Groetan dogma holds that as soon as all of the *Doomsday Doors* are opened, the End of All Worlds will begin, but whether or not opening these doors causes that end or is merely a symptom of the end is unclear. The doors have opened only once before: during Earthfall. They closed a week later, this act unseen by any of the temple's priests, for Earthfall was not the true end of the world.

The door itself would not normally be poised to open again at this time, but several weeks of blasphemous

rituals led by Ardathanatus and accompanied by a small army of his minions have changed that. The bodies to the north are composed of two dozen sacrificed sinspawn, their bodies and souls used in Ardathanatus's ritual not only to coax the door ever closer to opening, but to reroute the door's destination from whatever unknown reality it normally connects to the Abyssal realm of Sekatar-Seraktis. If Ardathanatus's ritual succeeds, he forges a permanent and direct connection between this chamber and the realm of his qliphoth master, Yamasoth (see page 66). The exact amount of time that remains in this ritual is kept fluid—this adventure shouldn't be on a timer, per se, but if the PCs assault the denizens of this room and fail to prevail, feel free to say that Ardathanatus is only a few days or even hours away from success, forcing further attempts to stop the cultist to become ever more urgent.

In addition to the denizens of this chamber, the PCs must contend with a disturbing sensation in the temple, as if the *Doomsday Door* itself were breathing. Each round, a foul wind blows through the room. On odd-numbered rounds, the wind blows north toward the door, while on even-numbered rounds, the wind blows south away from the door. On each inhalation (odd-numbered round), lawful- and good-aligned living creatures take 2 points of damage (or 4 points of damage for creatures that are lawful good) as a tiny portion of their life is absorbed by the door. On each exhalation (even-numbered round) chaotic- and evil-aligned living creatures heal 2 points of damage (or 4 points of damage for creatures that are chaotic evil).

The *Doomsday Door* is currently only slightly ajar. While the ritual to force it open has taken Ardathanatus days to perform (and will likely take days more), closing the door is relatively simple. To close the door again, a *doomsday key* must be inserted into the *doomsday locks* in each of the door's two portals. Both keys must then be simultaneously turned seven times in a clockwise manner to seal the door shut—each full rotation takes a full-round action. A successful DC 30 Spellcraft check made while studying the door's strong aura of conjuration is enough for a PC to discern this method of closing the door, but the mummy Kandamereus, if asked, can give this information as well—he may even volunteer the information once this chamber's denizens are defeated, as he does not presume to know what his god has not told him and does not want the door to open before the appropriate hour, as predetermined by Groetus. Closing the door in this manner ends the strange “breathing” effect and cancels the built-up magic of Ardathanatus's ritual.

Creatures: Ardathanatus spends all of his time in this chamber, relying upon *lesser restoration* to fight the fatigue brought on by lack of sleep and *heroes' feast* whenever he gets hungry. (The other creatures with him in this chamber all gain 11 temporary hit points, included in their hit point

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listings below, as a result of partaking in this feast.) He spends the bulk of his time of late performing the complex ritual to refocus the *Doomsday Door* to Sekatar-Seraktis, periodically sacrificing one of his blindingly loyal sinspawn minions with the aid of two natives of that Abyssal realm, a pair of gongorinan qliploth. Unfortunately for the PCs, Ardathanatus's focus on the ritual is not so complete that he cannot prepare for battle against them.

The elven cultist has very little desire to speak to the PCs when they arrive, and attacks on sight—this could well make things difficult for player characters who seek to redeem the elf rather than simply slay him. The easiest route here is to defeat Ardathanatus in a way that doesn't kill him, but rather simply disables him—reducing him to negative hit points and then stabilizing his wounds works, as does using magic like *hold person*, *dominate person*, or the like to secure his compliance. If Ardathanatus is defeated, his sinspawn and qliploth minions do their best to either avenge his defeat or rescue him, but take note of possible developments below if Ardathanatus is killed or rendered unconscious.

ARDATHANATUS CR 14

XP 38,400

hp 217 (see page 54)

GONGORINANS (2) CR 11

XP 12,800 each

hp 148 each (see page 90)

SINSPAWN GUARDS (4) CR 7

XP 3,200 each

hp 88 each (see page 37)

Development: One of the key components of the refocusing ritual is that Ardathanatus must remain conscious for the weeks it takes him to perform the ritual. If he ever loses consciousness or dies, the delicate and chaotic energies create a sudden and dangerous backlash. As Ardathanatus loses consciousness, the light flickering along the walls and from the *Doomsday Door* itself suddenly turns black. An instant later, the door is flung open, the portal to Sekatar-Seraktis momentarily established to an extent even greater than Ardathanatus could have hoped. The portal opens directly upon the baleful presence of the Polymorph Plague Yamasoth himself (see page 66)!

The portal isn't strong enough, fortunately, for Yamasoth to come through completely, but the qliploth lord can certainly reach his tentacles (including those that serve as bite attacks) through to attack anything within 30 feet of the door itself. If Ardathanatus is in this reach, the tentacles attempt to grab the elf and pull him through the portal—they do not attempt to do the same to the PCs, but do make attacks against them as well. Fortunately for the PCs, the

warped and unstable nature of the portal not only imposes a 50% miss chance on all of Yamasoth's attacks, but also imparts a -20 penalty on all of the qliploth lord's attack rolls and combat maneuver checks.

The portal remains open for only 2 rounds. Yamasoth makes his attacks (also exposing all in the room to his horrific appearance—but again, the warped nature of the portal somewhat lessens these effects, and all saving throws against these attacks are made at a +10 circumstance bonus) on the first round. On the second round, he opens his central maw, exposing all in the room to the effects of his gaze (again, saves against this effect are at a +10 circumstance bonus) and retracts his tentacles. At the end of the second round, the *Doomsday Door* slams shut and the portal energies dissipate—using the *doomsday keys* as described above can lock the door tight once again. During this second round, the PCs have one final chance to rescue Ardathanatus if he's been grabbed by the qliploth lord—casting *freedom of movement* on the elf makes it easy to pull him loose, as does making a touch attack against the elf and then using a teleport effect to retreat. A successful DC 35 combat maneuver check also works to wrench the elf free. If the PCs are unable to rescue Ardathanatus, he is pulled into Sekatar-Seraktis and his redemption (or indeed his survival) is no longer an option.

Note that if the PCs manage to lock the *Doomsday Door* before Ardathanatus loses consciousness, this backlash doesn't occur. Instead, as the door is locked, a thunderous hammering pounds through the room as Yamasoth's tentacles thrash against the door. The portal shakes, but it holds fast as the ritual's energies disperse and safely dissipate. If the PCs manage to dominate or otherwise mind-control Ardathanatus, he may even suggest closing the door in this way—but if his minions still live, they certainly do their best to prevent this development!

Story Award: If the PCs close the *Doomsday Door*, award them 25,600 XP.

CONCLUDING THE ADVENTURE

If the PCs rescued Koriah Azmeren, she suggests returning to Magnimar to report to Sheila Heidmarch what happened here. She may well decide to stay on at Windsong for a time to help the priests rebuild, but if she's started to forge a strong relationship with the party or a specific PC, at your option she may well remain with the group as a cohort or GM-controlled ally.

In any event, the reconstruction of Windsong Abbey is a long-term goal, and one that, while the PCs may wish to take part in it, plays no further official role in the Shattered Star Adventure Path. If the PCs wish to help support the rebuilding, the priests certainly accept any donations the PCs are willing to give, but they won't be able to repay this kindness in full for many months, perhaps years, to come.

BEYOND THE DOOMSDAY DOOR



In the meantime, though, the priests are certainly willing to provide any spellcasting services the PCs may need free of charge.

The undead priest of Groetus Kandamereus may present an additional ethical challenge to some parties. While the deity he worships is chaotic neutral, Kandamereus is unabashedly evil and chaotic. He claims to want nothing more than to continue his service as a guardian of the *Doomsday Door*, but the PCs may indeed be right to be suspicious of his intents. Kandamereus plays no further official role in the Shattered Star Adventure Path, so if the PCs decide the mummy cannot be trusted, they may well have one last fight on their hands before moving on. Likewise, if they agree to let the mummy stay on as the keeper of the deep levels below Windsong, the ultimate repercussions of that choice are left to you.

The PCs should return to Magnimar to report their adventures to Sheila Heidmarch, if only to pick up the

next *ioun stone* they'll need. Once the PCs provide a detailed report and maps of their adventures to the Pathfinders (a process that should take no more than a day's work of writing), the Fame scores of any PCs who are members of the Pathfinder Society faction increase by 12 and these PCs earn 12 Prestige Points for their accomplishments.

Once the PCs are ready for the next stage in their quest, they need only focus on the *Shard of Envy*. Doing so grants them another vision—this time they see a towering green spire emerging from a ragged landscape. The next stage of their adventure leads them east once again, well into the giant-ruled realms of the Storval Plateau, to the ancient Thassilonian ruin of Guiltspur. What awaits them there will put them to a greater test than any of the ordeals yet, for while the final two shards lie in close proximity, to earn them the PCs must clash with one of Varisia's most notorious dragons!

ARDATHANATUS

The name “Ardathanatus” is well known among the priests of Windsong Abbey—as a nightmare, a bogeyman, and a monstrous traitor from the dawn of the Age of Lost Omens.

ARDATHANATUS

CR 14

XP 38,400

Male elf cleric of Yamasoth 15

CE Medium humanoid (elf)

Init +4; Senses low-light vision; Perception +17

DEFENSE

AC 29, touch 17, flat-footed 29 (+12 armor, +4 deflection, +1 insight, +2 profane)

hp 205 (15d8+134)

Fort +13, Ref +7, Will +17; +2 vs. abjuration effects, +2 vs. enchantments, +4 vs. fear and poison

DR 3/—, 10/adamantine (150 points); Immune sleep; Resist acid 20; SR 27

Weaknesses curse of envy

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft.

Melee *flaying halberd* +20/+15/+10 (1d10+9/x3)

Special Attacks channel negative energy 4/day (DC 18, 8d6), fury of the Abyss 8/day (+7 attack, +7 damage, –2 AC), scythe of evil 2/day

Domain Spell-Like Abilities (CL 15th; concentration +20)
8/day—acid dart

Shattered Star Spell-Like Abilities (CL 15th; concentration +20)
1/day—*dispel magic*

Cleric Spells Prepared (CL 15th; concentration +20)

8th—quicken *cure critical wounds*, *earthquake*^D (DC 23)

7th—*blasphemy*^D (DC 22), quicken *cure serious wounds*, *repulsion* (DC 22)

6th—*blade barrier* (DC 21), *heal*, *heroes' feast*, *stoneskin*^D

5th—quicken *cure light wounds*, *flame strike* (DC 20), *spell resistance*, *plane shift* (DC 20), quicken *shield of faith*, *wall of stone*^D

4th—*air walk*, *cure critical wounds* (2), *freedom of movement*, *greater magic weapon*, *spike stones*^D (DC 19)

3rd—*cure serious wounds* (2), *dispel magic*, *magic vestment*, *meld into stone*, *rage*^D

2nd—*cure moderate wounds* (2), *lesser restoration*, *sound burst* (DC 17), *soften earth and stone*^D, *spiritual weapon*

1st—*command* (2, DC 16), *cure light wounds* (3), *doom*^D (DC 16), *sanctuary* (DC 16)

o (at will)—*bleed* (DC 15), *detect magic*, *light*, *read magic*

D Domain spell; **Domains**

Demon^{APG}, Earth

TACTICS

Before Combat Ardathanatus casts *lesser restoration* every day to remove the effects of fatigue brought on by lack of sleep, then casts *heroes' feast* so that he and the creatures

that aid him in his long-running ritual can be fed. He casts *magic vestment* on his armor and *greater magic weapon* on his halberd

every day. Once he knows that the PCs are drawing near, he also casts *air walk*, *freedom of movement*, *stoneskin*, and *spell resistance* on himself.



During Combat Ardathanatus casts quickened *shield of faith* on the first round of combat (this bonus is already calculated into his AC above along with *repulsion* to prevent PCs from approaching him). He then remains at the northern end of the chamber and uses ranged magic such as *blade barrier*, *flame strike*, and *blasphemy*. He resorts to using his halberd in melee once foes come to him, or in the unusual event that he has used up his ranged attack options. Whenever he's reduced to fewer than 150 hit points, he uses a quickened cure spell on himself. He saves *heal* for when he's fallen below 50 hit points.

Morale Ardathanatus fights to the death, as long as his faith in Yamasoth remains unshaken (but see his Side Quest). If faced with certain defeat, he casts *earthquake* in a last-ditch attempt to bring down the dungeon on both himself and his enemies.

STATISTICS

Str 18, **Dex** 10, **Con** 14, **Int** 12, **Wis** 20, **Cha** 13

Base Atk +11; **CMB** +16; **CMD** 34

Feats Craft Magic Arms and Armor, Craft Construct, Craft Wondrous Item, Improved Initiative, Quicken Spell, Selective Channeling, Toughness, Weapon Focus (halberd)

Skills Knowledge (arcana) +14, Knowledge (history) +7, Knowledge (religion) +9, Linguistics +6, Perception +17, Spellcraft +19 (+21 to identify magic item properties)

Languages Abyssal, Common, Elven, Necril, Thassilonian

SQ elven magic, mark of Yamasoth, weapon familiarity

Gear +1 *adamantine full plate*, *flying halberd*, *belt of physical might* +4 (Str, Con), *cloak of resistance* +2, *doomsday key*, *headband of inspired wisdom* +2, *Shard of Envy*, spell component pouch, unholy symbol of Yamasoth, diamond dust (for casting *stoneskin*, worth 750 gp)

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Curse of Envy (Su) Ardathanatus suffers from the curse of the *Shard of Envy*. He becomes sickened whenever he's within 30 feet of a cleric or elf. Physical contact with another cleric or elf (including being the target of or while delivering touch spells) nauseates Ardathanatus unless he makes a successful DC 20 Fortitude save.

Mark of Yamasoth (Su) Ardathanatus has pledged his soul to Yamasoth by undergoing a foul ritual, at the climax of which he gouged out and ate his own left eye. As a result, he gains a +2 profane bonus to his Armor Class and an additional +4 hit points per Hit Die—but only as long as he remains of value to Yamasoth. In addition, he takes no penalties on Charisma checks made while interacting with conjured qliphoth.

^{APG} See the *Advanced Player's Guide*.

Very tall for an elf, Ardathanatus is also haggard and pale, almost to the point of looking undead—although most of the time he wears a suit of imposing adamantine full plate that covers his entire body. Ardathanatus gouged out his own eye in offering to Yamasoth, and the socket is now nothing more than an angry pit of scar tissue. His thin, livid lips are often bent into a grin of insane cruelty.

An aristocrat from a small but ancient elven community, the young, inquisitive, and ambitious Ardathanatus took his grandiloquent-sounding name when he joined the church of Pharasma and spent several years as an adventuring cleric. After outliving his boon companions, Ardathanatus joined Windsong Abbey, but with Aroden's death, he went mad and murdered several priests before fleeing into the wilds. Eventually he found a new faith in the qliphoth lord Yamasoth deep under Hollow Mountain, and today longs to usher in his new god to finish the task he began at the dawning of the Age of Lost Omens.

CAMPAIGN ROLE

If the PCs can redeem Ardathanatus (see his Side Quest, below), he takes the restoration of Windsong Abbey as one of his primary goals for rebuilding his faith in Pharasma.

SIDE QUEST

A character who prays before the statue of Sarenrae in the Temple of Sunset (area C3) receives a vision of Ardathanatus and feels the pain and horror that he wrought upon Windsong Abbey a century ago when he went berserk, but also becomes convinced that the elf's soul is not lost forever. The vision confirms that an ember of his old faith in Pharasma still smolders and could be rekindled. With this vision, the PC knows that in order to give Ardathanatus the chance to be redeemed, the cleric must not be killed.

To complete this quest, Ardathanatus must be captured alive—using mind-affecting effects like *charm person* suffices, as does simply rendering him unconscious but binding his wounds before he perishes. Once he's been defeated but captured alive, he must be shown the error of his ways. This requires succeeding at three consecutive DC 41 Diplomacy checks made over the course of several 1d4-hour-long discussions (at a rate of no more than one discussion per day, to provide Ardathanatus some time to ponder the words). A worshiper of Pharasma gains a +10 circumstance bonus on these Diplomacy checks. If the speaker incorporates Ardathanatus's notes from area D2, she gains a +5 bonus on the Diplomacy checks. Up to three additional people can use the aid another action to bolster the primary roller's Diplomacy check. Once these three checks are successfully made, Ardathanatus loses his faith in Yamasoth and begins the long road to redemption—at this point, no further checks are needed and the elf becomes an ex-cleric eager to regain his good standing in Pharasma's religion.

Reward: Aside from earning XP normally for defeating Ardathanatus, the PCs gain an additional 51,200 XP as soon as they redeem him from his evil ways. Ardathanatus also offers them all of his magic items, save his *doomsday key*, which he keeps for himself to prevent further miscreants from abusing the power hidden within the dungeons below Windsong Abbey.

CASAMIR AZMEREN

Casamir has been a part of Windsong Abbey for many years—and now that he is one of the abbey's sole survivors, he is in desperate need of aid!

CASAMIR AZMEREN

CR 7

XP 3,200

Male middle-aged half-elf cleric of Desna 8

CG Medium humanoid (elf, human)

Init +3; **Senses** low-light vision; Perception +5

DEFENSE

AC 18, touch 14, flat-footed 14 (+4 armor, +3 Dex, +1 dodge)**hp** 35 (8d8–4)**Fort** +6, **Ref** +6, **Will** +10; +2 vs. enchantments**Immune** sleep

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.**Melee** +2 *starknife* +7/+2 (1d4+1/x3)**Ranged** +2 *starknife* +11/+6 (1d4+1/x3)**Special Attacks** channel positive energy 7/day (DC 16, 4d6), holy lance (4 rounds, 1/day)**Domain Spell-Like Abilities** (CL 8th; concentration +11) 6/day—bit of luck, touch of good**Cleric Spells Prepared** (CL 8th; concentration +11)4th—*freedom of movement*^D, *holy smite* (DC 17), *sending*3rd—*create food and water*, *dispel magic*, *meld into stone*, *protection from energy*^D, *searing light*2nd—*aid*^D, *consecrate*, *hold person* (DC 15), *silence* (DC 15), *sound burst* (DC 15)1st—*detect undead*, *divine favor*, *obscuring mist*, *protection from evil*^D, *sanctuary* (DC 14), *shield of faith*o (at will)—*create water*, *detect magic*, *read magic*, *stabilize***D** Domain spell; **Domains** Good, Luck

TACTICS

Before Combat Casamir casts *create food and water* every morning.**During Combat** Casamir spends the first few rounds of combat preparing defenses, casting *freedom of movement* and *shield of faith* on himself, then casting *sanctuary* so he can move with greater ease on the battlefield. He focuses his spellcasting on healing allies, using attack spells only if no allies appear to be greatly wounded.**Morale** Casamir tries to flee back to safety (preferably to the Pharus Pharasmae) if reduced to fewer than 10 hit points while no allies are nearby to protect him, wanting to try to stay alive so that he can at least call for help again via *sending* or report what happened to Windsong Abbey.

STATISTICS

Str 9, **Dex** 16, **Con** 8, **Int** 13, **Wis** 16, **Cha** 14**Base Atk** +6; **CMB** +5; **CMD** 19**Feats** Combat Casting, Dodge, Extra Channel, Point-Blank Shot, Skill Focus (Survival)**Skills** Diplomacy +9, Knowledge (local) +5, Knowledge (nature) +5, Knowledge (religion) +12, Perception +5, Survival +14; **Racial Modifiers** +2 Perception**Languages** Common, Elven, Varisian**SQ** elf blood, good fortune (1/day)**Gear** +1 *studded leather*, +2 *starknife*, *cloak of resistance* +1, Pharus Pharasmae statuette, silver holy symbol of Desna, spell component pouch, 32 gp

A nearly lifelong resident of Windsong Abbey, Casamir is thin and tall, with blue eyes, a receding chin, and a broad smile. His handsome face is starting to finally show his age in the form of a few wrinkles, but his hair remains as luxuriously red as it was in his youth. Normally a patient, cheerful man, Casamir has been severely shocked by recent events—being confronted with the death of several friends and the manifestation of the very horrors stories told in his childhood was but a cruel prelude to the defeat and petrification of his daughter, Koriah.

Casamir was born to a human woman who lived in the small village near Windsong Abbey, and was the result of a passionate but ultimately fleeting tryst with a traveling elven adventurer—his mother never even learned his father's name. She raised him as a worshiper of Desna, and as he grew older, he became enamored not only with these teachings, but with the majesty of Windsong Abbey itself. Not even tales of the monster Ardathanatus, who had murdered so many not quite 2 decades before he was born, could blunt Casamir's love for the monastery, and when his mother died, he officially joined Windsong Abbey.

For the next several decades, Casamir served as an acolyte under the tutelage of another half-elf, a beautiful woman named Melusia. Over those decades, the two worshipers of Desna slowly nurtured a bond stronger than faith, but Melusia worried that Casamir had not properly experienced the wonders of the world. She loved him dearly, but knew that should they wed, he would be

even more unlikely to travel. And so, when on his thirtieth birthday he finally worked up the courage to ask for her hand in marriage, she sadly issued him an ultimatum. She would marry him, but only if he brought her three gifts: three pots of soil harvested by him from three diverse grasslands—the Rostland Plains in Brevoy, the M’neri Plains in Sargava, and the Plains of Paresh in Qadira. Of course, these three locations were not idly chosen, for in traveling to these distant lands, Casamir would wander the width and length of the Inner Sea region. Of course, being a priest of Desna himself, Casamir instantly understood his lover’s request, and he did not despair. Instead, he secured permission for a leave of absence, and when he returned, successful, a year later, he and Melusia were wed.

The half-elven priests of Desna tried several times to have a child, yet after three miscarriages, the couple sadly accepted that a family would not be in their future. Instead, they threw themselves into their work, and were more instrumental in recruiting additional priests to the abbey than any other. Then, in 4679 AR, a miracle and a tragedy struck when Melusia gave birth to a daughter, yet died in childbirth. Distraught, Casamir had a crisis of faith, for there were no clerics at Windsong at that time capable of casting *raise dead* now that Melusia had died, but his love for his newborn daughter Koriah helped the cleric weather this crisis, and in the end, he found his faith even stronger than before. He raised Koriah as best he could, and when she came of age and went out into the world to become not only a successful adventurer but also a well-respected and famous Pathfinder, Casamir came to feel that Koriah was the best thing he’d ever been involved in—he regards her as his greatest triumph.

CAMPAIGN ROLE

Casamir’s initial role in the adventure is to inform the PCs of some of the backstory about what’s happened to Windsong Abbey. He recognized Ardathanatus during the battle from old depictions of the elf in artwork, and can also help the PCs with healing, as detailed further in area A5. While he’s hesitant to accompany the PCs on their adventures, there’s one thing he can certainly do for the PCs before they venture into the dungeons—inform them of a large stash of emergency magical supplies stored in the Temple of the Windsong (area C2) that he’s relatively sure none of the abbey priests were able to reach before the attack was over. If provided with drawing materials, he can also sketch a map of the upper levels of the dungeon—he knows nothing, however, of the chambers beyond doors sealed by *doomsday locks*.

Once the adventure is over, Casamir wishes to stay on at Windsong Abbey to help its restoration and rebuilding efforts. If the PCs redeemed Ardathanatus, Casamir may need to be convinced of the wisdom of allowing the onetime traitor to remain active at the abbey, but

assuming the PCs rescued his daughter and comported themselves well during the adventure, he’s willing to trust their judgment and decisions. In the long term, he certainly offers the PCs his lasting friendship, and should they ever return to the abbey in the future, he’ll be more than willing to ensure they receive both healing and room and board free of charge.

SIDE QUEST

When the PCs first meet him, Casamir’s greatest concern is not for the abbey’s or even his own well-being, but for the rescue of his daughter, petrified and taken away by Ardathanatus’s medusa minion. He suspects Koriah’s statue is still located aboveground, but has no way to provide for her restoration to flesh—yet still begs the PCs to save her.

Reward: 9,600 XP for restoring Koriah to flesh and reuniting her with Casamir.



KORIAH AZMEREN

Opinionated and quick to act, often to the point of being rash, Koriah Azmeren has made more than a few enemies during her rapid rise through the ranks of the Pathfinder Society. She is an expert on the Darklands, but her recent encounter in Windsong Abbey has proven to be more than she could handle.

KORIAH AZMEREN

CR 10

XP 9,600

Female half-elf ranger (deep walker) 11 (*Pathfinder RPG Ultimate Combat* 66)

CG Medium humanoid (elf, human)

Init +5; **Senses** low-light vision; Perception +24

DEFENSE

AC 25, touch 17, flat-footed 19 (+4 armor, +1 deflection, +5 Dex, +1 dodge, +3 natural, +1 shield)

hp 142 (11d10+77)

Fort +12, **Ref** +12, **Will** +5; +2 vs. enchantments

Defensive Abilities evasion; **Immune** sleep

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft.

Melee +1 frost mithral bastard sword +13/+8/+3 (1d10+4/17–20 plus 1d6 cold), lashing aklys +13/+8/+3 (1d8+2)

Ranged lashing aklys +17/+12/+7 (1d8+1)

Special Attacks favored enemy (elves +4, undead +4, vermin +2)

Ranger Spells Prepared (CL 8th; concentration +10)

3rd—*cure moderate wounds*

2nd—*barkskin*, *bear's endurance*

1st—*lead blades*^{APG}, *longstrider*, *resist energy*

TACTICS

Before Combat Koriah casts *barkskin*, *longstrider*, and *bear's endurance*, drinks a *potion of bull's strength*, and uses her *wand of cat's grace* before combat.

During Combat Koriah casts *lead blades* on the first round of combat and uses her hunter's bond to grant appropriate favored enemy bonuses to her companions. If she has to move to engage foes in battle, she's fond of making a single attack with her aklys against the target to try to trip it before moving up to attack it. She saves *cure moderate wounds* to use on an ally knocked down to negative hit points in battle, or for herself if she's fighting alone and falls to fewer than 25 hit points before she tries to flee combat.

Morale If reduced to fewer than 25 hit points, Koriah withdraws from combat. She uses her aklys to try to trip foes and deter them from chasing her, but as long as any allies remain in battle, she won't completely abandon a fight.

STATISTICS

Str 16, **Dex** 20, **Con** 20, **Int** 10, **Wis** 14, **Cha** 8

Base Atk +11; **CMB** +14 (+16 tripping with aklys); **CMD** 31

Feats Dodge, Endurance, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (aklys), Exotic Weapon Proficiency (bastard sword), Greater Two-Weapon Fighting, Improved Critical (bastard sword), Improved Two-Weapon Fighting, Skill Focus (Perception), Toughness, Two-Weapon Defense, Two-Weapon Fighting

Skills Climb +17, Craft (writing) +14, Knowledge (dungeoneering) +10, Linguistics +4, Perception +24, Sense Motive +13, Stealth +19

Languages Aklo, Common, Elven, Terran, Undercommon, Varisian
SQ deep knowledge, elf blood, hunter's bond (companions), quarry, rock hopper, swift tracker, track +5, wild empathy +10

Combat Gear *potions of bull's strength* (3), *wand of cat's grace* (6 charges), *wand of cure moderate wounds* (7 charges); **Other Gear** +1 studded leather, +1 frost mithral bastard sword, lashing aklys, ring of protection +1, holy symbol of Desna

Korih Azmeren is a lean and muscular half-elven woman with red hair, blue eyes, and a pale complexion that tends to get more sunburned than bronzed. While she's attractive, her personality tends to make social situations complex, for she is confident in her abilities to the point that someone could rightly call her egotistical. In fact, Koriah has always felt awkward around other people, never quite fitting in with humans, elves, or any large groups, and as a defense mechanism she's cultivated an acerbic wit in addition to an overconfident reliance on her own skills.

Korih's childhood was spent entirely at Windsong Abbey, and while her father doted on her, the death of her mother left him quite overprotective of the young half-elf. She wasn't allowed to play with other children, and was only very rarely allowed outside of the abbey walls. Korih compensated for this by becoming a voracious reader, particularly of the nearly complete collection of *Pathfinder Chronicles* kept at the abbey (a collection that's now destroyed, sadly). Tales of Durvin Gest, Escobar Vellian, and other heroes filled Korih's mind with a longing not only to see these exotic locations and experience these hair-raising adventures, but also, one day, to immortalize herself in print as well.

When she came of age, Korih left Windsong and traveled to Absalom to join the Pathfinder Society. She impressed her

venture-captain with her tenacity and skill on missions, but even more so with her gift at writing, an unanticipated boon granted her by a childhood spent reading everything she could lay her hands on.

As she gained prestige in the society, however, Koriah increasingly found that she clashed with other agents she was grouped with, and she developed something of a reputation as being a snob, a busybody, and an egotistical shrew. Fewer and fewer Pathfinders wanted to work with her—and jealousy over her skill at writing certainly didn't help. Rather than admit to herself that she could, perhaps, be a bit more open and welcoming of others' advice or be a little more empathetic toward her companions, Koriah increasingly sought solo assignments. And through luck and skill, she excelled.

But it was her multi-year solo expedition into the Darklands that would become Koriah's crowning glory. For various reasons, this dangerous frontier had been ill-explored by the Pathfinder Society, and Koriah had noticed. She volunteered for the expedition and convinced her venture-captain to approve the risky endeavour, and after several years spent exploring and mapping the Darklands below central Avistan (including several months in disguise in the drow city of Zirnakaynin, an exhaustive exploration of the Long Walk of Nar-Voth, and even a few necessarily short but very informative descents to Orv), she emerged with enough notes to fill an entire volume of the *Pathfinder Chronicles*. Volume 44 was published, but it immediately became embroiled in scandal because of its revelations regarding the existence of the drow. The Winter Council of Kyonin spent a large amount of money trying to bribe the Society to suppress the volume. The Society refused the bribes, and Koriah's words were the first about the drow and many other underground horrors to reach the public eye—that many regarded this particular volume as more fiction than fact initially annoyed her, but today the volume is regarded as one of the more important among the recent entries in the *Pathfinder Chronicles*.

Since then, Koriah has spent most of her time continuing to explore the Darklands, but of late has been focusing more on Varisia, as homesickness has plucked at her heartstrings. She's volunteered to aid

Sheila Heidmarch in establishing the Pathfinder Society in Varisia, but when she received a panicked *sending* from her father, she foolishly set out on her own to try to help. This time, however, what she found on her solo adventure was more than even she could handle.

CAMPAIGN ROLE

Koriah's latest misadventure may have been the one that finally got through—once she's rescued and restored to flesh, she has a newfound sense of humility and does her best to address her attitude regarding teamwork. Adventuring with the PCs is just the thing she needs. As a Pathfinder who specializes in the Darklands (and who possesses a singular hatred of drow), Koriah can prove a helpful member of the party in the next adventure,

"Into the Nightmare Rift," and will provide some interesting roleplaying opportunities as the PCs are destined to encounter a not necessarily hostile band of drow in that adventure. Koriah's current experience level should remain within one or two levels of the average party level, so that she remains helpful in encounters but doesn't necessarily outshine any one PC. You don't need to track experience points separately for her—simply level her up every time the average party level increases by 1. If you find that having her along is making the adventure too easy, it's a simple enough matter to have her explain that she feels the need to return to Magnimar to report to the Pathfinders on what she and the PCs have learned so far.

SIDE QUEST

If the PCs rescue Koriah and recruit her aid, she wants to do two things.

First, she seeks to ensure her father is safe (him remaining in the Pharus Pharasmae for now is enough to satisfy her). Second, once she learns that the cleric Zolerim played a key role in betraying the abbey, she wants to ensure that he pays for his crimes, and asks the PCs to help her track him down in the dungeons and capture him alive so that he can be brought back to Magnimar to stand trial.

Reward: 12,800 XP if Zolerim is captured alive, brought south to Magnimar, and turned over to the city for trial.



SHATTERED STAR TREASURES

The following unique treasures can be found in “Beyond the Doomsday Door.” Player-appropriate handouts appear in the GameMastery Shattered Star item card set.

CRYSTALLINE STARKNIFE

Aura moderate evocation; **CL** 13th
Slot none; **Price** 20,324 gp; **Weight** 2 lbs.

DESCRIPTION

The original *crystalline starknife* was the weapon of Nugloss, a powerful priestess of Desna who fought for the Linnorm Kings during the Winter War. Made of a crystal-like substance similar in appearance to ice but as hard as steel, a *crystalline starknife* is a +2 *starknife* that deals +1d6 points of damage against crystalline creatures, as the weapon’s edges are particularly adept at shattering and weakening such foes. When thrown in conditions of bright or normal light, a *crystalline starknife* catches the light and creates a whirling disk of prismatic color. A creature hit by a *crystalline starknife* thrown in such conditions becomes dazzled for 1 round—or dazed for 1 round on a critical hit. A successful DC 14 Will save negates the dazzled or dazed condition. When thrown by a worshiper of Desna, a *crystalline starknife* gains the *returning weapon* special ability.

CONSTRUCTION

Requirements Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *daylight*, *shatter*;
Cost 10,324 gp

DEATH BILL

Aura moderate necromancy; **CL** 10th
Slot none; **Price** 14,318 gp; **Weight** 10 lbs.

DESCRIPTION

Death bills are greatly coveted by redcaps, and the loss of a *death bill* is considered a great shame punishable by exile or even death. A *death bill* is a +1 *scythe* that leaves particularly unsightly wounds in its victims’ flesh—these wounds do not bleed, and have dry, flaking edges, almost as if the wound had been desiccated by desert winds. Three times per day, the wielder of a *death bill* can swing the weapon as a standard action to create a scythe-shaped arc of dust that sweeps out from the user in a 30-foot cone. All creatures in this area take 2d4 points of slashing damage plus an amount of additional damage equal to the user’s Charisma modifier, and are staggered for 1 round by the pain of having moisture drawn from their bodies by the supernatural effect. A successful DC 13 Reflex save halves the damage and negates the staggered effect. Once per day as a swift action, as a *death bill* is used to reduce a foe to negative hit points with a melee attack, the user may cast a *death knell* on that victim (Will DC 13 negates).

CONSTRUCTION

Requirements Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *death knell*, *inflict critical wounds*; **Cost** 7,318 gp

DOOMSDAY KEY

Aura moderate necromancy; **CL** 9th
Slot neck (but see text); **Price** 9,000 gp; **Weight** 1 lb.

DESCRIPTION

Created ages before the construction of Windsong Abbey by the cult of Groetus, *doomsday keys* are used by the cult to seal certain doors in their temples, as well as the legendary *Doomsday Doors* themselves. See the adventure in this volume for examples of the types of unique locks that *doomsday keys* can work with.

Up to three times per day as a standard action made by twisting the key in the air (as if unlocking an invisible lock), a *doomsday key* causes up to four creatures chosen by and within 20 feet of the user to become shaken for 1 minute (Will DC 14 negates)—this is a mind-affecting effect. A *doomsday key* can also be used to inflict *bestow curse* (Will DC 14 negates) once per day—this use requires a successful touch attack. While worn about the neck (and thus taking up the neck item slot), a *doomsday key* bestows a +4 resistance bonus on the wearer’s saving throws made against curse effects; this protection does not help against curses the wearer may already be suffering from.

CONSTRUCTION

Requirements Craft Wondrous Item, *bestow curse*, *doom*, *remove curse*; **Cost** 4,500 gp

DOOMSDAY STAFF

Aura strong varied; **CL** 13th
Slot none; **Price** 52,000 gp; **Weight** 5 lbs.

DESCRIPTION

This bulky staff is sacred to the cult of Groetus, and its end bears the god’s holy symbol—a skull-faced moon. This staff allows the use of the following spells.

- *Bestow curse* (1 charge)
- *Confusion* (1 charge)
- *Insect plague* (1 charge)
- *Control weather* (2 charges)
- *Insanity* (2 charges)

CONSTRUCTION

Requirements Craft Staff, *bestow curse*, *confusion*, *control weather*, *doom*, *insanity*, *insect plague*; **Cost** 26,000 gp

SHATTERED STAR TREASURES



FLAYING HALBERD

Aura strong necromancy; **CL** 13th
Slot none; **Price** 24,310 gp; **Weight** 12 lbs.

DESCRIPTION

A *flaying halberd* is a +1 *halberd* that can be used to slice off large swaths of a creature's skin. In combat, a character can denote a maximum of one attack per round to be a flaying strike. This attack deals normal damage, but the resulting wound is particularly painful as skin is torn away from the target's body. This causes an additional 1d6 points of bleed damage, and as long as a victim suffers from this bleed damage, it is staggered. A successful DC 15 Fortitude save made at the time the flaying strike occurs negates the bleed damage and staggered condition. The bleed effect can be stopped by a successful DC 15 Heal check or any spell that cures hit point damage. A flaying strike that results in a critical hit also deals 1d4 points of Charisma damage (no save) to the victim. Creatures immune to ability damage and critical hits are immune to flaying strikes.

CONSTRUCTION

Requirements Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *bleed*, *inflict critical wounds*; **Cost** 12,310 gp

LASHING AKLYS

Aura faint transmutation; **CL** 5th
Slot none; **Price** 4,305 gp; **Weight** 2 lbs.

DESCRIPTION

The *lashing aklys* was first invented by derro magisters to bolster their ability to upend their foes. A *lashing aklys* is a +1 *aklys* that grants a +2 bonus on combat maneuver checks made to trip

foes—this bonus stacks with that granted by Improved Trip. If you have Improved Trip, you can make trip attempts against foes of up to two size categories larger than you with a *lashing aklys*.

CONSTRUCTION

Requirements Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *animate rope*;
Cost 2,305 gp

SOUL JAR

Aura strong necromancy [evil]; **CL** 15th
Slot none; **Price** 5,000 gp; **Weight** 2 lbs.

DESCRIPTION

An empty *soul jar* can be used to contain a soul that has been successfully trapped in a black sapphire gem via *soul bind* by holding the gemstone against the *soul jar's* lid for 1 full round. This action transfers the soul in the gem to the *soul jar* (which can hold the soul of a creature of up to 20 Hit Dice), leaving the black sapphire unharmed and empty of souls 50% of the time. The rest of the time, this transfer of soul from gem to jar shatters the black sapphire. A creature that can use *soul bind* as a spell-like ability (and thus does not use a focus) can automatically place a captured soul in a held *soul jar* as the spell-like ability is used. A soul in a *soul jar* cannot travel to the Boneyard to be judged, but *resurrection* or more powerful magic can restore to life a creature whose soul is caught in a *soul jar*. A *soul jar* can only contain one soul at a time. *Soul jars* are fragile (hardness 1, hp 10); if broken, the soul held within immediately escapes to the Boneyard.

CONSTRUCTION

Requirements Craft Wondrous Item, *soul bind*; **Cost** 2,500 gp

SHATTERED STAR



BEFORE SIN

IN THE TIME BEFORE TIMES, REALITY WAS NOT AS WE KNOW IT TODAY. IN THAT TIME, ALL WAS CHAOS, AND THE INTRODUCTION OF STABILITY AND ORDER BY THE PROTEANS WAS ITSELF AN ACT OF CHAOS. THE QLIPPOTH WERE OLD EVEN THEN, AND THEY LOOKED UPON THE PROTEANS AS MEWLING NEWBORNS. THE QLIPPOTH WERE OLD BEFORE MORALITY ROSE IN MORTAL MINDS, AND THEY PREDATE THE VERY CONCEPT OF EVIL ITSELF. IN MANY WAYS, THE CREATION OF GOOD CREATED THE EVIL IN THE QLIPPOTH, AND AS SUCH, THE HIGHER POWERS OF GOOD ARE THE GREATEST OF HYPOCRITES. FOR BY BECOMING, THEY GAVE THE QLIPPOTH CAUSE.

—BOOK OF THE DAMNED, "BEFORE SIN"

Everyone knows about demons. Everyone knows that demons come from the Great Beyond, that they seek the devastation and destruction of all life, that they embody the worst in humanity by giving shape and flesh to sin. Fear of demonic possession, of demonic conjurations unleashed, of portals to demonic realms ripping open into this reality—the people of the Inner Sea region need not look further than the blasted chasms of the Worldwound or the dripping blight of Tanglebriar to see real-world proof of the dangers of demons. But what few folk realize or grasp is that if the Abyss were a house, the demons are merely its residents. And just as in any old house with a long history, there are other... things... that live in the walls, deep in the nooks and crannies, in the crawspace, or under the basement. Things that the denizens of the house find repugnant, even horrifying. In the Abyss abides an older, more ancient evil than demons, a form of life that existed before all else, a prehistoric primeval presence known only to a few. Yet in all of our deepest, darkest nightmares, we know its touch. These terrors were the first—and if they have their way, they will also be the last. For they are the qliploth.

This article presents a number of observations and examinations of various aspects of the qliploth race, including notes on the realms they rule in the Abyss, their interactions with the Material Plane and demonic life, and the mysterious and powerful qliploth lords—particularly Yamasoth the Polymorph Plague. Since this information supplements the introduction to the qliploth race as presented on page 218 of *Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 2*, the bulk of the material from that book is not repeated in the following pages.

THE QLIPPOTH

The creatures known as qliploth (the singular and plural forms are the same) are as mysterious as they are horrifying, as one might expect of the first form of life imagined by reality. These monsters hail from a time when morality did not exist, when gods and mortals were unknown, when, perhaps, time itself had not yet begun to unfurl. Certainly, the qliploth were old when the first proteans brought order to chaos and discovered the endless tunnels of the Abyss running through the underworld of the Outer Sphere. What the race's goals and desires may have been in that unimaginably distant past is unknown, and more to the point, cannot be known to minds that have only the current reality as a point of reference. Just as reality changes what it touches, so did the introduction of the qliploth to the reality of the Great Beyond change them. Enemies of all they encounter, they warred on any who would dare encroach upon their domains. And when no enemies dared approach, the qliploth took their wars to them, boiling up out of the Outer Rifts in seemingly endless armies.

Some philosophers attribute the creation of demonic life at daemonic hands as one of the greatest ironic deeds ever performed—while the daemons certainly did not have the well-being and safety of the Great Beyond in mind when they first injected mortal sin into a qliploth imbued with Abyssal quintessence, the resulting distraction the fecundity of demonic life posed to the qliploth certainly turned their attention away from the rest of reality. For as the Abyss grew more and more comfortable and skilled at drawing upon mortal sin to populate its pits with demons, the qliploth found themselves waning in number. They were no longer born from the Abyss, which had found a better way to spawn, and they were themselves hunted by these new creatures. Today, the qliploth have retreated to the deepest trenches of the Outer Rifts, to realms where even the demons fear to go, and from these blasphemous bastions they plot the destruction of sin itself—not by slaying the demons born from it, but by destroying those creatures that brought sin into the Great Beyond in the first place. By slaying all mortal life, the qliploth hope to curb the demonic fecundity and retake the realms they view as rightfully theirs.

CONJURING QLIPPOTH

As mentioned in *Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 2*, qliploth are particularly difficult to command when conjured via *planar ally* and similar spells. Once a qliploth is conjured, Charisma checks made to force it to comply with demands take a –6 penalty when made by most humanoids. Those few humanoids who have pledged their souls to the qliploth, and who thus, in death, feed the ravenous maws below the demon-haunted reaches of the upper Abyssal realms, do not take this penalty. Mere worship of a qliploth lord is not enough, though—a humanoid must undertake particularly violent and foul rituals of self-mutilation in order to bind her soul to a qliploth lord and negate this penalty. The elven cleric Ardathanatus clawed out and ate his own eye as part of one such ritual to Yamasoth, and this ritual, when compared to others, is relatively tame and painless.

QLIPPOTH RUNESTONES

The Abyss is an ever-changing plane, a tangle of rifts and canyons so vast in scope as to be effectively infinite. As the eons pass, some abyssal realms collapse, while others crumble open and swallow vast regions of the Outer Sphere. This constant churning of old realms into new ones is relatively slow in the modern age, but when order first came to the chaos of the Maelstrom at the dawn of creation, the Abyss fractured into existence much like a pane of glass shattering under the blow of a hammer. At this time, fragments of the earliest Abyss—the Abyss ruled only by qliploth—were sent hurtling through the

THE GREATEST QLIPPOTH

Some particularly blasphemous tomes and ancient parables whisper of supposed truths that could drastically change the nature of how the world's faiths regard the qliploth race. These whispers state that the Rough Beast Rovagug is, in fact, the mightiest of all qliploth, and that he is thus the most ancient and most powerful of all the gods. Certainly, the fact that it took many of Golarion's most powerful deities, working together, to imprison the Rough Beast in the non-space known as the Dead Vault located at the heart of Golarion itself lends credence to the fact that Rovagug is powerful indeed. If he is in fact also a qliploth (as his shape certainly suggests to those who compare his image with the creeping horror of most qliploth), it is both a comfort and a disquieting notion that he lives on in a prison dimension linked somehow to the very core of the world. One particularly mad philosopher, a woman whose name is now lost, even theorized that the Great Beyond was an impossible coil, and that the mythical "outer shell" beyond the Outer Sphere was in fact the realm known as the Dead Vault wherein Rovagug had been imprisoned, which would mean that the entirety of the Great Beyond was itself contained within the core in which Rovagug now dwells.



planes. In many cases, these fragments landed in places like the elemental planes and good-aligned planes where they encountered raw elemental energies or sacred powers that seared and sundered them to nothingness. In other cases, these fragments hurtled into the vast emptiness of the Astral Plane, where today they still race on an endless voyage into forever.

But a number of these stones made it all the way to the freshly formed universe of the Material Plane. For eons, these stones drifted through the void of space, bathing in the energies of the Dark Tapestry or falling into the gravitational well of stars or black holes. Like the shards traversing the planes, some of these stones were destroyed, others drift still, but in some rare instances, a stone finds itself crossing the interstellar path of an unfortunate planet. In cases where the stones are large enough, such encounters result in the fiery destruction of the hapless world, but now and again the stones are small enough that they break apart in the planet's atmosphere and rain down as fragmentary runestones, embedding themselves in parts of the world like infectious spores or droplets of poison.

Golarion is one such world fortunate enough to have been struck by a fragment of the Abyss small enough to break apart in just this manner. These stones arrived on

Golarion when it was still young, and as continents shifted to the whims of plate tectonics or the tinkering of gods, the stones shifted as well. Some were pulled deep below and remain lodged in cystlike chambers in the Darklands, while others have tenaciously clung to the surface. The presence of these strange stones, marked with twisting runes that denote their link to the ancient qliploth realms, warps and taints their surroundings. There are places on Golarion where no civilized race has dared set foot, which even the greatest of dragons and mightiest of giants avoid. Here, qliploth are strangely common encounters, as are warped and twisted mutations of creatures native to the world. At the heart of each such region may be found a qliploth runestone.

These stones vary in size from a few feet across to megaliths measuring hundreds of feet in height. They always bear strange runes that, with a successful DC 30 Knowledge (planes) check, can be recognized as being ancient Abyssal runes associated with the qliploth. In many cases, these runes are linked to qliploth lords, some of whom may still live on the Abyss. A qliploth runestone radiates an aura of *antipathy*—with a radius measured in many miles—against all creatures, save those who are immune to mind-affecting effects (such as qliploth and vermin). Many have other effects as well, such as transforming all liquid in the region to poison; infusing the area with shifting, partially real nightmare illusions; animating objects and plants; or even periodically opening portals into the Abyss to allow qliploth to slip through. Destroying a qliploth runestone should be akin to the destruction of a minor artifact, with each stone requiring a different and difficult method to remove it from the world.

QLIPPOTH LORDS

Beyond even the iathavos in power are the rarest of qliploth—unique and powerful lords that rule the deepest and darkest Abyssal depths. The number of qliploth lords active today represents only a small fraction of those who existed at the dawn of creation. As the eons wore on, the qliploth lords were opposed by nearly all who learned of their existence. Demon lords, arch devils, empyreal lords, and the deities of the Great Beyond themselves have taken offense at the blasphemy of the qliploth lords, and have long since destroyed many of the more powerful among them. Those who remain are either shadows of the qliploth lords' true glory or are so adept at hiding their true natures that none have yet glimpsed even hints of their forms.

The bulk of qliploth lords are creatures roughly equivalent in power to nascent demon lords, ranging in strength from CR 21 to 25. More powerful creatures akin to demigods in stature may still exist in the deepest

QLIPPOTH LORDS

Qlippoth Lord	Alignment	Areas of Concern	Favored Domains	Weapon
Chavazvug	CE	Fiery consumption, monstrous recursion	Chaos, Evil, Fire, Repose	Heavy flail
Isph-Aun-Vuln	CE	Infestation of the flesh, poisonous wind	Air, Chaos, Evil, Trickery	Longbow
Oaur-Ooung	CE	Tainted oceans, vile fecundity	Chaos, Evil, Plant, Water	Trident
Shiggarreb	CE	Forbidden magic, wartime atrocities	Chaos, Evil, Magic, War	Ranseur
Thuskchoon	CE	Blinding hunger, secrets revealed	Chaos, Destruction, Evil, Knowledge	Greatclub
Yamasoth	CE	Cursed kingdoms, vile experiments	Artifice, Chaos, Earth, Evil	Halberd

parts of the Abyss, but for now, these theoretical qlippoth demigods must remain mysteries.

Of particular note are some qlippoth lords who have chosen to abandon their “roots” and accept the demonic as the new order of the Abyss. Qlippoth lords who accept sin and allow themselves to be transformed often gain a significant boost in power that catapults them out of this lower tier directly into the ranks of demon lords, but only at the cost of forever losing any tenuous alliances they may have had with the true lords of the Abyss. For these qlippoth, that trade-off is more than worth it, since the power they now wield as demon lords is formidable indeed. Demon lords who began existence as qlippoth lords include Cyth-V’sug, Dagon, Jubilex, Mazmezz, Yhidothrus, and Zevgavizeb. Some scholars include Yamasoth as a nascent demon lord, but in fact Yamasoth is a qlippoth lord—a lord who doesn’t take it well when he’s misrepresented as a mere demon!

Yamasoth is presented in full detail on the following pages; other known qlippoth lords include (but are certainly not limited to) the following vile abominations.

Chavazvug: Appearing as a towering tangle of fire-drooling digestive organs that stumbles and crawls on impossibly long, thin legs, Chavazvug is unusual among the qlippoth in that his hatred is not of mortal life but of demonic life. He often invades demonic realms with armies of minions to wage war, content in the knowledge that if “slain,” he merely grows a new body from one of thousands of boiling lakes of bile in his hidden lair.

Isph-Aun-Vuln: One of the most intelligent and subversive of the qlippoth lords, Isph-Aun-Vuln is a monstrous parasite of the soul who, on the rare occasions she manifests outside of a hideously mutated host body, appears as a twisting mass of mist-shrouded, dripping tendrils tangled around a fanged anemone’s maw. Isph-Aun-Vuln is particularly fond of using humanoid hosts to lead nations to suicidal ends in either war or decadence.

Oaur-Ooung: Pallid and poisonous, Oaur-Ooung is an aquatic fungoid horror of eyes and gasping throats of tangled hooks whose floating roots dangle miles below her like the twitching tendrils of the largest jellyfish. Cyth-V’sug is believed to have been spawned from the last of Oaur-Ooung’s blisterwombs, but a new blisterwomb is said to be growing upon her flank—her largest yet.

Shiggarreb: A huge driderlike monster, Shiggarreb has mastered arcane magic and plays a role as a messenger for the qlippoth lords. She is often associated with new qlippoth invasions of Material Plane worlds, and has long crusaded among the qlippoth to reclaim lost Abyssal realms now held by demon lords.

Thuskchoon: A towering spire of clattering limbs and stalked mouths that slithers upon a glistening, sluglike body, Thuskchoon is a nearly mindless force of relentless devastation and consumption. His worshipers expect little from him, and seek to lead him from world to world under the belief that the meandering swath of destruction he leaves behind contains secrets to power.



SHATTERED STAR

YAMASOTH

Writhing, hook-covered tentacles unfurl from this behemoth's body, at the center of which gapes a maw with a red eye in its throat.

YAMASOTH

CR 24

XP 1,228,800

CE Gargantuan outsider (chaotic, evil, extraplanar, qliploth)

Init +11; **Senses** all-around vision, darkvision 60 ft., *detect good, detect law, true seeing*; Perception +35

Aura cloak of chaos (DC 24)

DEFENSE

AC 43, touch 18, flat-footed 35 (+4 deflection, +7 Dex, +1 dodge, +25 natural, -4 size)

hp 526 (27d10+378); regeneration 15 (lawful)

Fort +33, **Ref** +28, **Will** +18

DR 15/cold iron and lawful; **Immune** cold, death effects, mind-affecting effects, poison; **Resist** acid 30, electricity 30, fire 30; **SR** 35

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft., fly 60 ft. (good)

Melee maw +36 (2d10+13/19-20), 4 bites +36 (2d8+13/19-20), 6 tentacles +34 (2d6+6/19-20 plus grab)

Space 20 ft.; **Reach** 20 ft. (30 ft. with tentacles)

Special Attacks constrict (2d6+13), gaze weapon, horrific appearance (DC 29), polymorph plague, rend (4 bites, 2d8+19), tentacle transformation

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 20th; concentration +26)

Constant—*cloak of chaos* (DC 24), *detect good, detect law, fly, freedom of movement, true seeing*

At will—*desecrate, greater dispel magic, greater teleport, statue, stone shape, telekinesis* (DC 21)

3/day—*quickened baleful polymorph* (DC 21), *flesh to stone* (DC 22), *phase door, polymorph any object* (DC 24), *wall of stone*

1/day—*earthquake, summon* (level 9, any qliploth or combination of qliploth whose total combined CR is 20 or lower 100%)

STATISTICS

Str 36, **Dex** 25, **Con** 38, **Int** 25, **Wis** 21, **Cha** 22

Base Atk +27; **CMB** +44 (+48 grapple); **CMD** 66 (can't be tripped)

Feats Combat Reflexes, Critical Focus, Dodge, Greater Vital Strike, Improved Critical (bite), Improved Critical (tentacle), Improved Initiative, Improved Vital Strike, Lightning Reflexes, Multiattack, Power Attack, Quicken Spell-Like Ability (*baleful polymorph*), Staggering Critical, Vital Strike

Skills Fly +45, Intimidate +36, Knowledge (arcana, planes) +37, Knowledge (dungeoneering, history, nature, religion) +34, Perception +35, Sense Motive +35, Spellcraft +37, Stealth +25, Use Magic Device +36; **Racial Modifiers** +10 Fly

Languages Abyssal; telepathy 300 ft.

SQ qliploth lord traits

ECOLOGY

Environment any (Sekatar-Seraktis)

Organization solitary or group (Yamasoth plus 2d6 gongorinans and 2d6 various polymorphed minions)

Treasure triple

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Gaze Weapon (Su) As a free action at the start of his turn, Yamasoth can gape his central maw wide to expose the horrific red eye lodged in what should be his throat. This gaze weapon has a range of 30 feet, and polymorphs creatures affected by it into giant vermin, animals, or magical beasts (Fortitude DC 37 resists). Yamasoth chooses what creatures to transform victims into as they fail their saving throws. This effect otherwise functions as *polymorph any object* (CL 20th), and is a polymorph effect. Yamasoth can keep his maw open for up to 3 consecutive rounds, after which his throat-eye closes and this gaze weapon cannot be used again for 1 minute. The save DC is Constitution-based.

Horrific Appearance (Su) Creatures that succumb to Yamasoth's horrific appearance are stunned. At the start of each round thereafter, a creature stunned in this way can make a choice—fight the overwhelming chaos and horror and attempt a new DC 29 Will save to end the stun effect and act normally on that round, or accept the chaos into its soul and automatically succeed at the save to recover from the stun effect. This latter option immediately shifts the creature's alignment one step closer to chaotic evil. This shift in alignment can be fixed via *atonement*, but counts as a voluntary alignment shift for the purposes of *atonement*'s material component requirements. A creature that becomes chaotic evil as a result of this also becomes a willing minion and ally of Yamasoth.

Maw (Ex) Yamasoth's central maw is a primary attack that threatens a critical hit on a roll of 19-20. A creature hit by Yamasoth's maw while his gaze weapon is active takes a -4 penalty on its next saving throw against the gaze attack.

Polymorph Plague (Su) Any creature that has been affected by one of Yamasoth's polymorph effects becomes "contagious." For 24 hours after the creature's initial transformation, any other creature that touches or is touched by the polymorphed creature must succeed at a Fortitude save (DC = 10 + 1/2 the polymorphed creature's HD + the polymorphed creature's Constitution modifier) to resist polymorphing into a creature identical to the current form of the polymorphed creature.

Qliploth Lord Traits A qliploth lord is a powerful and unique qliploth that rules a significant portion of an Abyssal realm. Qliploth lords possess the following traits.

- Immunity to cold, death effects, mind-affecting effects, and poison.
- Resistance to acid 30, electricity 30, and fire 30.
- *Horrific Appearance (Su)* This ability functions similarly to the typical qliploth ability, save that qliploth lords' horrific appearances often create physical effects and changes in their victims. Despite these physical effects, a qliploth lord's horrific appearance remains a mind-affecting effect.
- *Summon Qliploth (Sp)* Once per day, a qliploth lord can summon any qliploth or combination of qliploth whose total combined CR is 20 or lower. This ability always works, and is equivalent to a 9th-level spell.

- Telepathy 300 feet.
- A qliphoth lord's natural weapons, as well as any weapon it wields, are treated as chaotic, epic, and evil for the purpose of overcoming damage reduction.
- Qliphoth lords can grant spells to their worshipers. Granting spells does not require any specific action on the qliphoth lord's behalf. All qliphoth lords grant access to the domains of Chaos and Evil; in addition, they grant access to two other domains and a favored weapon that vary according to each qliphoth lord's themes and interests.

Tentacle Transformation (Su) At the start of every odd-numbered round, three of Yamasoth's tentacle tips transform into one of three different types of appendages—a serpent's head, a clawed hand, or a metallic blade. The three tentacles all change into the same type of attack, and the change persists for 1 full round, after which the three tentacles revert to normal tentacles on every even-numbered round. While transformed, the limbs make the following types of attacks instead of tentacle attacks.

- *Blade:* talon +36 (3d6+13/19-20)
- *Clawed Hand:* claw +36 (2d6+13 plus bleed damage equal to the damage dealt by the claw)
- *Serpent Head:* bite +36 (1d8+13 plus poison: bite—injury; *save* Fort DC 37; *frequency* 1/round for 12 rounds; *effect* 1d4 Dex drain and slowed for 1 round; *cure* 3 consecutive saves)

Yamasoth, known also as the Polymorph Plague, dwells in the endless cavern realm of Sekatar-Seraktis in the Abyss. Constantly at war with bickering balor lords and other powerful demons, Yamasoth has held his own as the lord of the Abyss's largest, most centralized region: the Kingdom of New Flesh. The "new flesh" in question consists of the qliphoth lord's subjects—men and women from countless worlds who may have been kings and queens at one time, but here are nothing more than base monsters, vermin, and beasts to serve at Yamasoth's whim. Some he feeds upon. Others he keeps for his harem. But the bulk of the denizens of the Kingdom of New Flesh are soldiers. In this army, other qliphoth serve as commanders and generals, particularly Yamasoth's favored minions, the gongorinans (see page 90).

Unlike most qliphoth, Yamasoth does not necessarily prefer to kill but rather to transform. A human who sins and dies produces a soul that fuels the demonic horde, but a dumb beast or feral monster who dies is merely carrion. By transforming free-willed

mortals into monsters, Yamasoth's Army of the New Flesh only becomes more capable of ending worlds. Yamasoth's centuries-long alliance with Runelord Alaznist may have eventually resulted in such an assault on Golarion, but the devastation of Earthfall ended those plans before Yamasoth's burgeoning realm could finalize its gestation—proof that even in the greatest of disasters, some good is wrought.

Yamasoth's interest in transformations goes far beyond mere polymorphing. The qliphoth lord is also fascinated by the act of fleshwarping and reworking life into new forms of mutants. Rumors state that the nature of the experiments that take place deep in the Kingdom of New Flesh closely mimic those the daemons performed in the Abyss so long ago that resulted in the first demons. In fact, some dissident demonologists claim Yamasoth himself is a nascent demon lord, and is in fact that first, primal demon born of daemonic tampering with Abyssal quintessence and sinful souls.





GROETUS

GROETUS (GRO-TUS) IS AN APOCALYPTIC GOD OF UNKNOWN ORIGINS, PERHAPS PREDATING THE CURRENT INCARNATION OF THE PLANES. HE IS DISTANT, ENIGMATIC, AND MALEVOLENT, BUT INCREDIBLY PATIENT IN THE FACE OF AN INDEFINITE WAIT TO FULFILL HIS MYSTERIOUS PURPOSE. BECAUSE HE DOES NOT ACTIVELY CULTIVATE WORSHIPERS, MUCH OF WHAT IS KNOWN ABOUT HIM AND HIS SCATTERED FAITH IS LIMITED AND OFTEN CONTRADICTORY, BUILT FROM SECONDHAND INFORMATION AND PIECES OF LORE REPEATED BY HIS INSANE FOLLOWERS. MOST FOLK PAY HIM NO HEED OR ONLY GIVE HIM THE SCANTEST CONSIDERATION, FOR TANGIBLE AND IMMEDIATE THREATS SUCH AS POVERTY OR BEING DEVOURED BY MONSTERS ARE FAR MORE PRESSING THAN A GOD OF THE END OF ALL THINGS.

GROETUS

Groetus has no obvious connections to other Golarion deities that would explain how he came to be. There are records that he was worshipped in Azlanti and Thassilonian times, though he has no known kinship to other gods of those cultures. No deity claims to have elevated him to godhood, nor is there any evidence of him having once been a mortal or nature spirit who bargained for or stole enough power to become a deity. The proteans and qliphoth have no tales of his appearance or of a time before he existed. He simply exists, unacknowledged and unnoticed.

It is unclear whether Groetus's power is constant, building, or waxing and waning with events in the mortal world, nor is it known whether his strength relates to how closely his moon approaches Pharasma's Boneyard. The appearance of the moon varies slightly from viewer to viewer, and as there is no accurate way to judge celestial distances in the planar realms (where the thoughts of gods or the weight of a million souls may bend space), it is impossible to determine any correlation between the moon and mortal disasters. At its smallest known size, it looks no larger than a thumbnail held at arm's length; at its largest, it appears to be 20 times that size.

Groetus presides over the End Times—the end of the world, or perhaps the destruction of the multiverse itself. Having silently witnessed billions of souls from countless worlds filter through the Boneyard, he is unconcerned by the fates of individual heroes, villages, or even civilizations, any more than an old fisherman is concerned with the number of drops of water in the lake as he waits for his final catch of the day. Despite his chaotic alignment, he is an agent of inevitable fate: All things shall pass. Even gods have free will, and he chose this role for himself, the dispassionate observer in balance against the dispassionate judge.

Where he came from, what he is, and what others think of him are irrelevant; his role is to close the book on this reality when the final page of its story is told. He knows only how the story ends, and with that knowledge he can piece together bits of what is yet to come—a conflict occurs, this entity survives until the end of the story, this other entity does not, and so on—and what to do next once the book is finished. It is for him alone to know these things, and he has the unique capacity to understand them; anyone else subject to this knowledge is driven mad by thoughts and concepts far beyond what the brain can handle, just as if Thassilonian magic were explained to a common ant. Groetus does not intend to create followers or prophets. Their existence is but a side effect of mistaken attempts

to know the forbidden or unknowable (including failed attempts to use *contact other plane* spells). Some sages believe he may not even know he has worshipers.

This indifference means the mad fools who worship Groetus may do terrible things in his name, but the God of the End Times doesn't care. They may instead do generous, noble, or merciful things in his name, and still

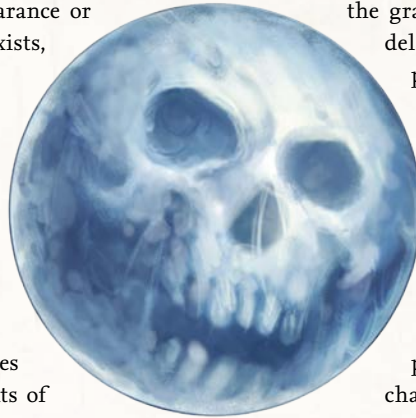
he doesn't care. His attention is on the end goal and the grand cosmic things that may enable or delay that goal—the subtle movement of planes against each other, the brooding thoughts of rising gods, the births and deaths of stars in the remote expanse of space. Whatever trappings mortals create in their pursuit of him are fabricated traditions built from visions of echoes of the great truth of the last moments of the world, and are no more reality than a child playing swords with twigs is a world-changing historical battle—they're merely copies of copies of copies. Some mortals are touched by his power, and some of those gather followers and use that power in the mortal world; so be it. Much like the priests

of Zon-Kuthon, Groetus's clerics are given divine power with almost no responsibility (though with the caveat that they pay for this power with incurable madness).

Groetus rarely appears in human form, but a few records from ancient Azlant describe him as a tall, slender man wearing a long gray-cowled robe that hangs heavily to the floor. He is slightly bent at the neck, as if bearing a great weight on his head, with ashen skin, hollow eyes, and long, smooth hands. His voice is the dry whisper of old paper, his laughter low and breathy, and his inflection archaic or foreign. His feet are bare and covered in soot and ash, like he has walked through an old fire for his entire existence.

Groetus almost never intervenes directly in the mortal world, as if doing so were against some personal, self-defined code. His few positive interventions have been on behalf of his prophets, granting them a few moments of clarity at a critical time when their madness would interfere with his intentions. When he is displeased, madness intensifies or magnifies, phobias are born or triggered, and eyes become cloudy or weep itchy gray fluid.

Formal raiment for the church is usually a light gray robe with pale blue trim. The exact shade varies from region to region and prophet to prophet, but is always some form of gray with blue accents. Most priests put little stock in their appearance (after all, they are anticipating the end of all things), and their clothing tends to become shabby and stained as the years go by. Many priests allow



"All things fall into ruin, and once the world itself has passed..."

—Fragment from a madman's journal

MADNESS

Most of Groetus's priests bear some kind of insanity. They are still able to function in society, but their broken minds hear whispers of the god's will, and they hold beliefs that no sane being would embrace. The *Pathfinder RPG GameMastery Guide* has rules for insanities such as amnesia, mania, and paranoia. Note that Groetus's priests are insane even though none of their mental ability scores have been reduced to 0. Note also that followers of the god do not see this insanity as an affliction; rather they see this connection to Groetus as a gift worth celebrating. A priest's insanity can be cured, but unless she immediately rejects Groetus as a patron deity, she relapses in a matter of hours or days.



their hair to grow long and unkempt, but some shave their heads and color around their eyes with dark blue paint or makeup to represent the dreaded skull-moon image of their strange god.

Groetus is chaotic neutral, and his portfolio is empty places, ruins, and oblivion. His favored weapon is the heavy flail—a deadly weapon evolved from a tool to thresh grain from chaff. Some worshipers suggest this represents the god's role of breaking the world at the end of all things to free the pure essence within ruined matter. His symbol is a full moon with the faint image of a skull seen in the pattern of craters that decorate its surface. His domains are Chaos, Darkness, Destruction, Madness, and Void. Most of his priests are clerics, though a few wizards, summoners, and oracles claim to be prophets of his word, and the true clerics of Groetus do not dispute these claims. He is called the God of the End Times, the God of the End of the World, and the Harbinger of Last Days.

The skull-moon of Groetus looms above Pharsma's Boneyard. Because the ravings of his priests contradict each other, mortals are unsure whether this moon is actually the god, his realm, a shell containing him, or something he protects. The truth is that it is all these things. It is Groetus in physical form, like an impossibly huge avatar, though why he would take on such a strange form is a matter of speculation. It is his realm, much as an ancient tree is both a living thing and a home to smaller creatures (in this case, his servants and petitioners). It is a shell, defining in physical form the metaphysical abstraction between the divine and the not-divine, or between the end times and the moments before it, or between the power to destroy the world and the will to use that power.

These overlapping truths are too much for lesser minds to experience and survive intact. Some that dare set foot upon the moon vanish instantly; others walk for a time and return on their own, twisted in the mind and speaking

fragments of prophecy about the end times. Those who have attempted to scry its surface see strange writing that twists and folds upon itself, leading the viewers' eyes and thoughts deep along intricate paths, eventually driving the sryers mad, turning them into prophets of Groetus, or both. This outcome occurs whether the traveler or diviner is mortal, undead, an outsider, or a servant of another deity. Because of this problem, the other gods and goddesses are very cautious about how they approach Groetus in the infrequent times they need to communicate with him.

Groetus's followers may be insane, desperate, depressed, or the lazy kind of sadists who enjoy the suffering of others but don't seek gratification by inflicting pain. The mad ones are broken people who have seen a glimpse of a powerful, incomprehensible truth and now spend the rest of their lives trying to understand, remember, or forget that truth. The desperate and depressed ones believe the current world is a place of misery and pain, and embrace the idea that it will end soon—whether or not they believe there will be a reward or a new beginning after that end. Those who enjoy the suffering of others believe their victims deserve punishment as part of Groetus's plan, or feel better about their own fate after witnessing harm to another. Many people who deliberately choose to venerate Groetus like the idea of living without long-term consequences; these folk live in the moment, not caring how their actions affect others or that they risk being punished for their slights and crimes. If, as the prophets say, the world is to end soon, there is no point in following laws or customs that promote stability in ownership or culture.

Followers of Groetus who aren't prone to mad ravings or grand plans tend to be skulkers and hangers-on, content to lurk near battlefields or in the rear of adventuring parties, watching the conflict unfold and only taking action at the end of a fight to dispatch the wounded—an act of mercy that still sickly parallels the morbid interests of their god. The desperate and depressed do this out of compassion, and feel jealous for the dead; the casually sadistic do it because it lets them feel important, as tools of the god's will; the mad do it because the voices or visions suggest it must be done. Groetus's cultists are prone to suicide, either as an attempt to join their god before the end times or to gain some measure of relief from their madness or misery.

THE DOOMS OF GROETUS

Just as there are dozens of world-ending prophecies, and the exact definition of "the end of all things" varies among religions and destructive races, there are many interpretations of Groetus's role in armageddon. Most of his cultists follow one of these ideologies (called "dooms"), and each doom can be considered a splinter cult of the god's vague faith. However, their identification with these dooms is not because of any reasoned preference

for or aversion to a particular ideology, but instead is a reflection of the cultists' particular forms of madness and the visions these types madness inspire (both the madness and the visions are often the result of exposure to the god's presence or will). Two worshipers with different ideologies may ally with each other or ignore each other; only rarely do they fight to determine who is correct, for time itself will prove one or both of them wrong.

The best-known dooms of Groetus are as follows.

MOUTH OF APOCALYPSE

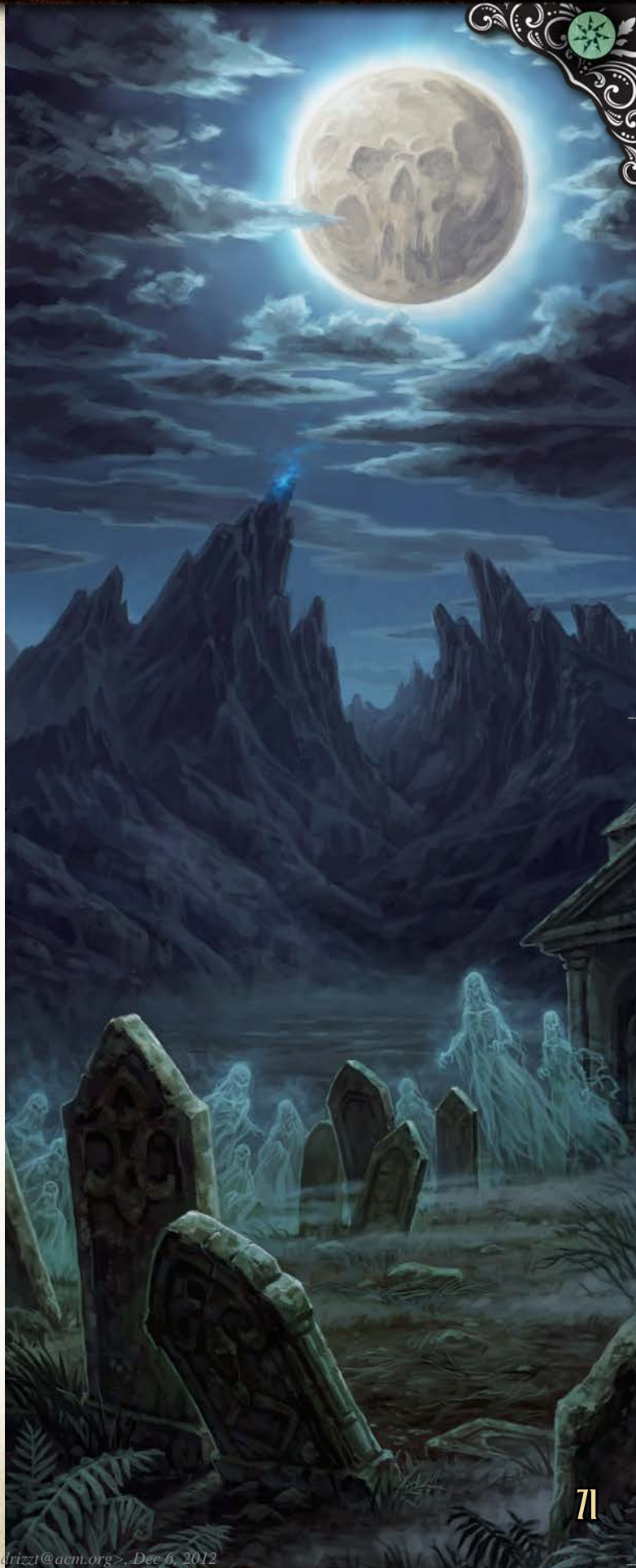
When the end times come, Groetus will consume the shattered pieces of the planes, all the judged souls, and the remnants of every once-living creature, until he is the last thing in the multiverse, floating alone in an endless dark void. Stories differ as to whether the god will literally consume all with his mouth, or whether he will indirectly devour everything through unspecified fanged servants that he will then absorb, or even if all physical and spiritual matter will fly through the void to embed itself within his core. Fanatics of this doom are called the Teeth of Oblivion, and live recklessly, as they expect the world to end at any moment. They often ally with the cult of Urgathoa because of a common interest in indulgence, though the nihilists scoff at the idea of living forever as undead.

PORTAL OF INCARNATION

As the last soul is judged and creation erodes, Groetus collects the greatest essences of heroes, villains, dragons, earth, fire, and other fundamental concepts. While the multiverse collapses and is reformed into something greater than its current state, he shelters these essences from destruction and distills them into purer forms so they may become the first gods and the raw materials for the next reality. He will then wait countless ages for the cycle to end again. The members of this cult are the Heralds of the Incarnate Moon, and they believe the current world is an impure predecessor to the next, clarified world. They wish to hasten the cycle so the next world comes sooner, and believe that their souls will be part of the next cycle's gods.

SIGN OF THE DESTROYER

Groetus is merely a sign that the end times are nigh, not actually an agent of destruction. He is part of the natural order. Just as ants, humans, and even gods are born and die, so too must all of creation. When his moon approaches the Boneyard and turns red, Golarion's own moon will bear the shadow of a skull to let all mortals know that the end of the world is but days away. Members of this cult call themselves the Followers of the Gray Sign, and they are the most benign members of Groetus's doomsday cult. They are mostly content to preach warnings and observe omens rather than trying to accelerate the end of the world, but they are still



SHATTERED STAR

prone to unexpected mercy killings and other creepy habits. They do not know whether the end will be gentle or violent, sudden or drawn out, but—like the death of any mortal—it is inevitable.

TEMPLES AND SHRINES

Members of the cult of Groetus have little interest in devoting time to building; they usually take over abandoned or ruined temples of other faiths, or any ruin of a building that was once a popular and celebrated place. The more popular sites are ones with windows or holes in the ceiling that allow a view of the full moon.

The oldest temples—ones that have been used by the cult for thousands of years—tend to conceal strange portals called *Doomsday Doors*. These secret doors are said to open onto horrific realms. When the end of the world is nigh, all of these doors will open and unleash various apocalypses onto the world. Loot-crazed adventurers have managed to temporarily open some of these portals; few

have defeated the horrors that crawled out and even fewer have investigated what lies beyond the doors—none have ever returned sane or whole.

For a small cult run by lunatics, the church has a remarkable number of tiny shrines. Most are large rocks carved with faint skull symbols aligned toward lunar conjunctions. Strange whispers hiss from the rocks on some nights, especially when prompted by the blood of heroes or the essence of destroyed magic.

A PRIEST'S ROLE

Groetus has no organized faith. Most of his worshipers are loners—either madmen who live on the street and prophesize the end of the world, or more dangerous megalomaniacs who actively seek methods to bring about the end of existence and please their insane god. They may act alone or attract like-minded followers, establishing whatever organization (or lack thereof) that is comfortable for their insanities. Because Groetus does not provide any direction for them, they are left to their own devices, and an individual priest's activities and duties depend on which doom she believes is paramount.

Priests of the Mouth of Apocalypse encourage others to live as if armageddon were only days away. They steal, murder, and pillage as they see fit, and may ally with doomsday cults to celebrate the arrival of the end of everything. Priests of the Portal of Incarnation scrutinize everyone they meet, mentally cataloguing those whose essences are worthwhile and dismissing those who have no value (though this perception is filtered by madness and may have no basis in reality). They may sacrifice the “worthy” ones to speed their essence to the afterlife and Groetus's collecting. Priests of the Sign of the Destroyer speak prophecies in public, warn others about horrible fates, and generally make nuisances of themselves in peaceful societies.

Regardless of their dooms, the priests have a morbid curiosity about the dead and dying, and frequently use *deathwatch* to observe others. They are unpopular among adventurers because they often refuse to heal even the most gravely injured allies—believing that healing only staves off the inevitable deaths dealt by monsters.

HOLIDAYS

Despite their rampant madness and tendency to group in independent cells, the faithful of Groetus are united in celebrating one holiday.

The Final Day: On the last day of the year, the faithful observe silent prayer for an hour at sundown, hoping for guidance from Groetus or a sign that the end times will come soon. Some cults follow this with other rituals such as sacrifices and chanting.



APHORISMS

The god's mad prophets often utter these phrases.

The Patient Moon Pulls the Tides: The moon creates the high and low tides that wear away the shores and strand sea creatures on the beach. Even the mightiest cliffs eventually collapse into the water. Haste and urgency may not be the best course. Wait. Persist. Watch.

Ruin for Everything: Every single living thing—even the world, and even the planes—is doomed, and will be torn apart at the end of everything. Do not grow attached to friends, wealth, or even the familiar configurations of mountains and rivers, for one day they will be gone, and that foolish sentimentality will have been wasted.

HOLY TEXT

As most of his clergy are insane, there is no codified list of Groetus's teachings, only fragments collected from the journals of the mad, scrawled ramblings written on asylum walls, and the inked skins of murder victims. Some of it is unclear or contradictory. The more rational members of the church keep scraps of lore called the *Book of the Last Moon*; most readers find it disturbing and have nightmares after reading it.

RELATIONS WITH OTHER RELIGIONS

Groetus has little to do with any other deities. Some suspect he is allied with Rovagug because of their common interest in destruction, but he has no overt ties to the Rough Beast. Even Pharasma does not contact him more than once every so often. It is known that the souls in Pharasma's Court draw his moon-realm closer, and a few know that the crystallized souls of true atheists repel him—both incidentally by their proximity, and sometimes directly when the Lady of Graves “feeds” him the essence of one (though whether this is a literal feeding or a transfer of essence is unknown) to push him farther away. The accepted premise is that a planar apocalypse will occur when his moon contacts the Spire itself, and even the most violent gods agree that is something that should be forestalled as long as possible.

PLANAR ALLIES

Groetus makes no effort to create unique servants, but many creatures have fallen under his power by traveling to his moon-realm. The following are well-known supernatural servitors of Groetus, suitable for conjuring with *planar ally* or similar spells.

Geg Noam Gyeg: This insane barbed devil is paranoid and adorns its spikes with the eyes of its victims so it can watch in all directions. It prefers payment in silver mirrors and divination-based magic items.

Yles: This gray naunet protean (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 2* 216) is more insane than others of its kind, and constantly

CUSTOMIZED SUMMON LIST

Groetus's priests can use *summon monster* spells to summon the following creatures in addition to the normal creatures listed in the spells.

Summon Monster II

Akata* (*Bestiary 2*) (CN)

Summon Monster VI

Chaos beast (*Bestiary 2*)

Mothman* (*Bestiary 2*)

* This creature has the extraplanar subtype but is otherwise normal for its kind.

babbles narration of its current activities. It collects spellbooks and other magical writings.

NEW SPELL

Clerics of Groetus may spontaneously cast *death knell* and *deathwatch*. Clerics with the Madness or Void domain may prepare *lesser confusion* as a 2nd-level spell and *confusion* as a 4th-level spell. His clerics also have access to the following spell.

CURSE ITEM

School necromancy [curse]; **Level** cleric 2 (Groetus)

Casting Time 1 minute

Components V, S, DF

Range touch

Target object touched

Duration instantaneous

Saving Throw Will negates (object); **Spell Resistance** yes (object)

The object becomes flawed and prone to failure. The effects of this spell depend on the nature of the object.

Magic Item: The item functions intermittently, gaining either an unreliable curse or a random dependent curse (*Pathfinder RPG Core Rulebook* 536).

Nonmagical Armor or Shield: The item gains the fragile armor quality (*Pathfinder RPG Ultimate Equipment* 8).

Nonmagical Weapon: The item gains the fragile weapon quality (*Ultimate Equipment* 22).

Tool: The item gains the broken condition if a creature rolls a natural 1 while making a skill check with the tool.

Other Item: Each day it is used, the item has a 5% chance of gaining the broken condition.

This spell does not affect artifacts. The item can be sold or discarded as normal (the bearer is not compelled to keep it). If a cleric of Groetus is using an item that is affected by this spell, he or she may make a DC 20 Will saving throw to override the item's curse for 1 day (using it as if the item were not cursed).



A GLEAMING IN THE DARK

PATHFINDER'S JOURNAL: LIGHT OF A DISTANT STAR 4 OF 6

After an afternoon spent sneaking through the home of my former employer and a night fraught with blood and magic, my only desire was to return to my room at the Sated Shark and get some long-overdue sleep. Or if not sleep, then at least some quiet time reflecting on the ramifications of what I had learned in the run-down warehouse of the Char Street Clippers. Wererats? Gleam? What did either have to do with Gundsric? And more importantly, what did they have to do with me?

But Kostin would have none of it. This was the culmination of his grand heist, and even if things had

not gone according to plan, in the end they had worked out just fine. After I turned Mordimor loose to forage for insects and rodents, I joined my Magnimarian friends in their rather unenthusiastic celebration. The night, of course, belonged to Kostin. From the Watercress where he threw dice and played a dozen hands of Hobgoblin, to the Stolen Rudder which saw him quaff jack after jack of strong Ulfen mead, Kostin managed to retain our company for several hours, all the while seemingly oblivious to our mood while enjoying himself to no end.

Gyrd was the first to leave. Having rapidly achieved a state of drunkenness on Kostin's silver, he suddenly

A GLEAMING IN THE DARK

kicked back his chair, snatched the bottle of Korvosan brandy we had been sharing from the center of the table, and stomped off, muttering in Skald. Shess explained he was off to look for a fight or a place to sleep, whichever he happened upon first. I believe part of her wanted to go with him, to make sure the big northerner didn't get into too much trouble, but the trauma of having her closest friend nearly murder her earlier that night had put a barrier between them, and subdued the normally unflappable gnome.

"He wouldn't have done it," Kostin said to her at one point later in the evening, trying to brighten her mood. "You know that. Aevy says it can't make people do things that they would never do." He tapped the potent scepter for emphasis. He had wrapped it in an old cloak, but on several occasions I had seen him unravel the cloth for a peek at the magnificent artifact. It was worth a king's ransom for its craftsmanship and material alone, but when one considered its power to coerce and command, the scepter's value became almost incalculable.

It was this power that Kostin alluded to with unchecked enthusiasm throughout the evening, playfully suggesting we use the item on various card dealers, money changers, wait staff, or guards for reasons that ranged from the absurd to the near-diabolical. But Kostin had had a good night, and been lucky enough already, so he took his losses at the gaming table in stride and limited his musings about the scepter to jokes and speculation. For the time being, it stayed wrapped up in its old cloak.

"Just think what we can do with it, Aevy. Talk about smoothing the rough edges—this thing is a long con gold mine. I say we delay our return to Magnimar for a few more weeks at least."

"Don't be a damned fool," Aeventius snapped. His face and lip were painfully swollen where Gyrd had struck him, the skin bruised a livid purple. He had sipped his wine carefully all evening from one side of his mouth, and said very little as we followed Kostin from venue to venue. But this last remark had rekindled his earlier anger. He slammed his hand on the table and stood up, knocking over his half-full glass in a crimson cascade. "Put it in a lock box until we're gone from this wretched town, which can be none too soon." The wizard ignored Kostin's parting remark as he strode away and out the door.

I had not been good company that evening, either, preoccupied as I was with my own problems. I had told Shess about finding the gleam at Gundsric's, and once or twice I had asked her about the drug—after all, her association with the Clippers must have given her some insight into its effects and possible origins. But she said very little, and spent the evening tying and untying knots in a length of sisal twine. I had never seen her like that

before. She seemed somehow less vibrant, her bright palette diluted by lesser pigments.

"D'ja want to hold it, Tal?"

I had been lost in my own thoughts, my hand on the vial of Gundsric's potion in my pouch, not daring to let myself believe my latest suspicions about its contents. It was very late, and other than Shess, Kostin, and I, only a handful of other patrons sat around the common room of the Stolen Rudder. At his slurred statement, I looked up to see Kostin, drunk, with his feet on the table and the unwrapped scepter in his lap. He leered at me, bleary-eyed and suggestive.

"I'd sooner hold a dead rat," I said.

"Tha'sh not how you felt on th' boat." His drunken grin grew wider.

I gaped at him, cheeks growing hot. Here was the whole reason I had been avoiding him since we made landing at Riddleport, and he threw it back in my face as if it were some kind of joke. As if our night together had meant nothing more to him than one of his serving wenches or barroom trollops. I stood up, furious but somehow also afraid, not trusting myself to say anything. I pushed in my chair and began walking away, hoping I looked more composed than I felt—not that either of my companions were in any state to notice.

"I'm sh-sorry, Tazza!" I turned back and saw him waving the scepter uncoordinatedly in my direction. "Return t' me, my Exthplorer-Queen!"

I left and did not look back.

The night was a cool breath on my hot skin, and a welcome relief from the beery confines of the alehouse. Raising my hood and loosening my dagger in its sheath, I prepared to take Wharf Street south to my lodgings, where Mordimor would no doubt be waiting for me to let him in. I did not want to think about what had just happened.

"Wait!" piped a child's voice behind me.

Shess trotted up as I turned around. "Can I stay with you?" she asked, looking up at me with her green eyes shimmering in the reflected light of the gas lamps.

I put out my hand. She took it, and together we walked away.

The next day, to my relief, my gnomish friend seemed her old self again. In fact, she was nearly overflowing with information about the Char Street Clippers, their deals with Boss Ziphras's wererat gang, and the various places they had been selling gleam.

"Gleam is real new stuff, and that fat ol' Croat has nothing to do with it." Shess wolfed down her third pickled herring that morning. The herring had followed a sticky bun, a clump of stewed radishes, and half a blood sausage in strange succession on Shess's plate. Not

exactly what I would have chosen to break the fast, but Shess attacked her dishes with evident relish. I limited myself to a few stale bread rolls as she rambled on about the drug trade in the Wharf District.

"It wasn't really my thing, you know," she continued, her meal finished. Leaning back in her chair, she blew on a mug of black Chelish tea and smiled. "I don't think Garso really trusted me yet with that kind of information. Plus, he said people don't like to buy from gnomes—you never know what you're getting. Which is probably true, as I remember this one fella Wallowclip out of Gastleburrow, real tall for a gnome, who *claimed* he had an ointment that could get rid of any kind of rash, any at all, except for the kind that necromancers sometimes get around their—"

"Yes," I interrupted quickly, "that's interesting, Shess, but what about the gleam?"

"Well... I know a few places we could check, where maybe we could find out who the rats get it from. But I'm not sure if Garso ever knew himself, so what those guys can tell us might just be rumors. You're worried it's this dwarf you were working for?"

"I'm not sure. I don't know if he just buys it himself or if... well, he is an alchemist. And completely unscrupulous, as near as I can tell. What I'm really worried about," and here I removed the potion from my pouch and held it up to Shess, not liking the thrill I got at the feeling of the cool glass on my skin, "is that he's been giving it to me in this."

Shess's eyes widened as she saw the faintly glowing solution, and I proceeded to tell her about my time with Gundsric, about the secret door and his undoubted observation of me, and of my discovery of the box of gleam in proximity to the translation potions I had consumed on a daily basis. I told her too of the effects I had experienced under the influence of the potions, and of the difficulty I was having simply refraining from downing the elixir as we spoke. I put the vial away again in the bottom of my pouch, not wanting it to be within easy reach.

"It sounds a bit like gleam, but maybe not. Seeing in the dark, sure, but then again you can see just as good as me when it's dark. The other stuff, like guessing the layout of a place or spotting a secret door—never heard anything like that."

Shess stopped as a yawning Mordimor bumbled down the stairs to join us. The two had bonded last night after a brief conversation in which Shess had effortlessly cast the spell that I myself used to speak with him. As with all of her magic, Shess had no real idea how or why she did this. Her earliest memory of her talent, she told me, had been of speaking with the creatures of the countryside as she played and explored in the wilderness around Whistledown. Mordimor gave me an affectionate nip

before bounding awkwardly up into Shess's lap. She giggled, again seeming a young girl despite being nearly twice my age, hugging the badger while the innkeeper looked on in unconcealed disapproval.

"Have you been drawing?" she asked, taking me aback somewhat. I told her I didn't know what she meant.

"Gleamers are always scribbling," she said, scratching Mordimor behind the ears, turning his eyes into slits of contentment. "Go to one of their dens and there's stuff all over the walls, patterns and spirals and things. You see it on buildings too, sometimes. It's how you know they're around."

I told her I hadn't done anything like that and she seemed to relax. Leaving some silvers on the table, we readied ourselves to leave, Shess having promised to take me to a few likely spots to get some information. While my own possible exposure to gleam was still uppermost on my mind, my desire for information about its source was not entirely due to health concerns. The idea occurred to me that, if Gundsric was indeed the origin of the drug and his fortune was due to its sale rather than some fabled underground wealth he was rumored to have unearthed, such information could be used as leverage against him. Leverage enough to obtain the journals of Jan Lortis, or whatever information the dwarf might be hiding as to their whereabouts. If I were to ever look the Heidmarchs in the eyes again, I would have to at least make the attempt.

Unscrupulous as it was to deal with a drug peddler, it was still a more elegant plan than trying to break into Gundsric's house through an unlocked window. And maybe—just maybe—once I had what I wanted, I could double-cross him. Wouldn't he do the same to me if he could?

Shess, having more to say, interrupted my train of thought. "Well, glad you weren't doing those drawings then, because that's the worst thing. They say once the gleamers start that, it isn't long before they go blind."

"Blind?" A lump of ice suddenly formed in the pit of my stomach. "You mean I could lose my eyesight?"

Shess looked at me in surprise. "You mean you didn't know? Gleamers don't go nearsighted or anything. They go dead. Dead with their eyes scooped out of their faces. Happens to all of them eventually, though they sure don't tell you that when they're trying to sell you the stuff."

We walked out of there and into the morning heat. All I could think about was the threat the wererat bitch had made the night before. She had promised to take my eyes when the time came.

And she had seemed certain it was to come soon.

We spent the morning bouncing from place to place, not really finding anything of value. Many of the people

A GLEAMING IN THE DARK

Shess had expected to see at various dives, dens, and hangouts around the Wharf District were gone without a trace, and more than a few of the ones we could find were understandably distrustful or downright hostile. At one point we came upon a runner for the Clippers getting a beating from a trio of thugs from a rival gang. We were investigating a brothel the Clippers used as a staging area for gleam distribution when the sounds of the thrashing prompted us to look in the dingy alley running behind it. Shess didn't hesitate, and after whispering a few words in what sounded more like Gnome than the arcane tongue of magic, called into being a convincingly real—and convincingly menacing—illusion of one of the Overlord's gendarmes. The assailants took one look at the brawny fighter walking slowly in their direction, a spiked mace in his fist, and ran off down the alley. Shess laughed as the gendarme winked out of existence, though not before the illusory enforcer aimed a rude gesture at the backs of the departing gang.

The runner knew nothing of gleam, though his gratitude was genuine enough. He had been sent by one of the Clippers' minor lieutenants in an effort to secure the continued loyalty of the brothel madam—a septuagenarian halfling who had apparently gotten wind of Garso's death last night and fled with her girls and everything else of value in the place. The runner's eyes widened when Shess outlined the events of the prior evening for him, leaving out a few of the more incriminating details.

"Forget all this Clipper stuff and go get on the first ship outta here," Shess said. "You know, being a pirate is actually pretty fun if you have the right hat." She flipped the startled boy—he could hardly be older than fifteen—her Galtan tricorne.

"You should probably take that ear off first," I said to him as he turned to go. He looked down, embarrassed, at the single ear that hung from a thong around his neck. Tugging it off and dropping it in the street, he thanked us again before darting off.

The Clippers, it seemed, were going the way of an ant colony that had lost its queen. If we were to find anyone with useful information, we would have to find them soon.

It was while poking around in a run-down bunkhouse on Gill Street that we finally did. The place was badly kept. From the outside, the flaking away of the graying shingled walls made the bunkhouse look like a dead fish shedding its scales. It had once been a lodging for workers at a nearby sailmaker, before the money dried up and the business folded under pressure from one boss or another.

"Couple of street-level dealers stay here. I thought one or the other of them might still be around." Shess

inspected the mess. The place wasn't just empty; it had been tossed, the meager possessions of the inhabitants strewn around the floor in a broken array. On the walls the telltale scribbles of the gleam-addicted caught my attention. Here, in charcoal, chalk, and what I suspected was blood, was a whole panoply of strange symbols. There were whirls and abstract shapes that seemed to follow no known schema, and runes and ciphers unlike anything I had ever seen—with one exception.

Here and there, peeking from the mass of mad art, were the ten-pointed runes that topped every box of gleam, shining forth like a constellation of sooty stars. Without noticing, my fingers had crept to Gundsric's potion where it lay buried in my pouch. I snatched my hand away.



"Shess never fails to keep things interesting."

A few clipped barks from Mordimor drew my attention. With a start, I turned to see Shess, sword in hand, prying up a floorboard against the far wall while Mordimor alternately sniffed and snarled at the floor beneath her.

Shess revealed the handle of a secret hatch while Mordimor danced around its edges in excitement. She took hold and hauled it open, exposing a dark recess under the house. As the light hit the figure below the floor, it let out a pitiful wail.

"Idrek!" Shess said, seemingly familiar with the man who huddled in the space under the floor.

"Ah, it's you!" the man shrieked. "Don't kill me!" He stared at Shess with luminous, red-rimmed eyes, peering through tangles of unkempt black hair. I noticed that he had elven blood, same as I did.

"Idrek, why would I kill you? Look how dirty your fingernails are."

Idrek cocked his head to one side, much as I had seen Mordimor do, and looked at Shess in confusion.

"How about you answer some questions for my friend and me?" she said.

"I didn't tell them nothing!" he pleaded, eyes shifting furtively in the dark. He flinched as I drew nearer, and I put my hands up so he could see I bore no weapons.

Shess made a *tsking* sound and rummaged through her belt pouch. She produced a parchment envelope, which she then waved in Idrek's face.

It was gleam. I hadn't seen her take it last night, and perhaps she hadn't. We had debated what to do with the drug, finally opting to dump it in the shallow waters of the bay outside the Clippers' headquarters. Not even Kostin had wanted to risk trying to sell it after Shess had explained that possession of that much of the stuff would be a death sentence from both Cromarcky and Croat, whoever caught you first. Assuming, of course, that every other two-copper thug, cutpurse, pirate, and thief in Riddleport somehow missed us in the meantime.

Idrek reached a trembling hand out for the drug, and Shess pulled it back with a giggle. She could be cruel sometimes.

"Flowers need water, Idrek, same as fish. First you gotta tell me who was here. What did you tell them?" She shook the packet for emphasis.

Idrek, eyes fixed on the envelope of gleam with such intensity that I almost expected it to burst into flame, choked back a sob before answering. "Hrushgak... I think. And a bunch more."

"Croat's boys? They messed this place up good. And what did you tell the big, bad half-orcs?"

"Nothing! They didn't find me." Idrek glanced at Mordimor, who had kept the addict in his steely gaze the whole time. "But maybe they'll come back?"

"Don't worry!" Shess beamed, patting Idrek on the head with the flat of her sword. He flinched, crouching half upright in the crawl space, clad pathetically in clothes that were little more than rags. "Bet you're confused, though," she said, and proceeded to tell Idrek an abbreviated version of the fall of the Char Street Clippers. In this new version, however, it seemed that Aeventius—described by Shess as "Aroden's Tall, Dark, and Chosen One"—had destroyed the gang single-handedly. Shess's own involvement was left out.

"So," she finished, "you need to tell us where we can find some answers about gleam. And just maybe we're the only ones that can keep it on the street now that Garso is gone. Besides, you know what they say about gnomes, Idrek."

Idrek looked blankly at Shess, his eyes straying to the packet in her hand.



"What does Idrek know?"

A GLEAMING IN THE DARK

“They say that we’re only as tall as we need to be—but that’s really only half true. So where’s the place that Garso never talked about? I know every den, front, and flophouse the Clippers ever ran gleam out of, but there’s something else that was a big secret. I know you know what it is.”

Idrek’s eyes darted around the room as if he sought a way out of a trap. But always they returned to the gleam. Shess started humming a popular pirate shanty, swaying and dipping the envelope in her hand to match the rhythm of her song.

“Garso is gone, Idrek,” I said as gently as I could, “and the Clippers with him. Why keep their secrets?”

He swallowed once, hard, and nodded his head. “The Forty Fathoms.”

Idrek reached an arm out for the envelope and Shess smacked it away.

“A cheap alehouse in Rotgut? It’s not even Clippers’ territory.”

“Shows what you know!” Idrek, angry now, straightened up out of his hiding spot and shook a knobby finger at Shess. “That’s where they take them. Would have taken me if I didn’t have the right friends on the street. That’s where Gleamers go to die blind and screaming, the light of the universe burning out their eyes!”

He advanced on Shess, fingers hooked into claws, madness in his bright eyes. I could see his withered chest clearly, the rags barely covering it. Carved there in the pale skin, weeping blood where the scabs had cracked open, was the ubiquitous ten-pointed star.

Mordimor snarled. Shess raised her sword and took a quick hop backward, flinging the packet of gleam at Idrek as she did so.

He stopped, all menace in him gone. Slumping to the floor, he clutched the envelope in bony hands and sobbed. Idrek’s head hung low, his hair drooping down like the filthy seaweed that roped the pylons of the dockyards. The tips of his ears, so like mine, could clearly be seen protruding from the black snarl.

“Thank you, Idrek,” I said softly, placing a restraining hand on Shess’s shoulder. “I wish we had more for you. I suspect you’re heading for a tough time, so try to make that last.”

As we walked out of the bunkhouse, Idrek’s hollow laughter spilled out after us, running up my spine like an arctic wind. I looked back and saw the twin lamps of his eyes glowing in the dark. He nodded at me as if in formal farewell—or was it recognition?—and I wondered what it was he saw in my own eyes.

Shess knew every shortcut and alleyway in Riddleport’s seedy shoreside, and it wasn’t long before we found ourselves on the verges of the Rotgut district, mere blocks from Gundsric’s home. Could the location be simple

coincidence? If the alchemist were somehow connected to the gleam trade, it would explain why he might desire to live in such a squalid section of town. I thought then of my last encounter with him: Had I really stumbled upon some hidden, ugly truth, or just panicked over my own transgressions? And even if the dwarf was connected to gleam, even if he had been giving it to me for whatever twisted purpose, was digging through every Clipper hideout and drug den in the city really going to get me any closer to the journal of Jan Lortis? Shouldn’t I have just kept to my appointments in his home, waiting for another chance to search for it undetected?

No, I decided. This was the story I had chosen for myself, and its irresistible pull was all the evidence I needed to know I was on the right track.

The Forty Fathoms alehouse leaned drunkenly at the end of a row of run-down, three-story buildings, all faintly out of square. This was fairly typical of construction in the poorer sections of town. It was said that, on a windy day, parts of Riddleport creaked as much as any pirate brig under full sail. As we drew closer, we could see light flickering through the thick, cheap glass of the windows. We slowed, moving against the walls of the neighboring buildings, not wanting to be seen by anyone inside the Forty Fathoms.

But the place was empty.

We waited, peering through the windows, staying low. Passersby seemed unfazed by this—perhaps such clandestine behavior was a common sight in Rotgut. The common room of the Forty Fathoms was a jumble of rude benches and tables presided over by a single flickering lantern, but details were difficult to discern through the distortion of the glass.

“Someone had to light that lantern,” I said to Shess, and she nodded. After a time we grew tired of waiting for some hint of movement within, and decided to go inside.

The door was unlocked, but I didn’t stop to wonder why an unlocked alehouse should be empty at this time of day. It opened outward, and I stepped inside ahead of Mordimor and Shess, my eyes scanning the far sides of the room. It was dark and still, the single lantern just enough to reveal the tomb-thick coating of dust that clung to the furniture and battered bar top.

But the dust on the floor told a different story, one of multiple footprints and a maelstrom of drag marks. I started forward, intent on the tale written in dust and grime there on the planks, curious about the bare section of floor immediately in front of me.

I heard Shess’s warning shout just as I took the step that triggered the device. With a click like the snap of bone, the floor gave way beneath me, pivoting upward on the far side of a fulcrum as it dropped under my feet. I flailed futilely for the lip of the hole and fell into darkness.



BESTIARY

WHAT STRANGE HORRORS WE'VE SEEN ON THIS JOURNEY! AT FIRST IT APPEARED TO BE JUST ANOTHER ROCK IN THIS BOULDER-STREWN CAVERN, BUT AS WE APPROACHED THE BEAST STOOD ON ITS STOUT INSECTOID LEGS. AS ITS ILLUSION DISSOLVED, WE SAW FOUR GROTESQUE APPENDAGES SPROUT FROM THE BEAST—EACH WITH A DIFFERENT METHOD OF INFLECTING HARM. ITS STRANGE, RASPING MOUTH SCREECHED FORTH SOMETHING IN SOME FOUL TONGUE, WORDS SHREDDING OUT OF ITS MAW LIKE JAGGED STEEL ON SMOOTH STONE. NEVER BEFORE HAVE I SEEN SUCH A FIEND, AND I HOPE NEVER TO SEE ONE OF ITS KIND AGAIN.

—FROM THE JOURNAL OF MARLIS NALATHANE, EXPLORER

This month's Pathfinder Bestiary is a special treat, in part because every entry was written by someone in the office. First, former intern Jerome Virnich writes of the watchful cephalophores, stony depictions of martyred saints. With much of this volume's adventure dealing with Windsong Abbey and the strange goings-on beyond the *Doomsday Door*, there's no better time to showcase some new extraplanar creatures. Sean K Reynolds writes about the herald of Groetus to go along with the article on this apocalyptic god; James Jacobs brings us a strange qliphoth that's been crawling around in his head since he was a kid making adventures for his friends and family; and F. Wesley Schneider delivers two of his favorite outsiders (aside from devils, of course) with a new kyton and psychopomp.

CHANCE MEETINGS, MALCONTENTS, AND MONSTERS

Throughout the course of the Shattered Star Adventure Path, the PCs make their way to a handful of interesting sites in the wilds of Varisia. While PCs at this level may have access to magical transportation such as *overland flight* and *teleport*, many characters find themselves instead traveling the old fashioned way. In the case of this volume's adventure, the PCs can visit Windsong Abbey by boat via the Varisian Gulf, on horseback, or simply by walking, and random encounters like the ones presented on this page make for perfect opportunities to break up such long periods of travel.

Some of the creatures on the Lost Coast Encounters table can be confronted along the shores of the Varisian Gulf, while others can be found in the hills and forests surrounding Windsong Abbey. If a random encounter roll doesn't fit the PCs' current location, roll again on the table or simply choose an appropriate encounter from the listed selections. The table and the following entries build upon some of the typical encounters to be had in this hazardous region.

Spriggan Ambush (CR 10): A wretch of a man, Dintran Malgor (use the stats for a champion on page 263 of the *GameMastery Guide*) was booted from his order of Hellknights only to come across four spriggans (*Bestiary* 2 257) in his subsequent wanderings. The villains formed an alliance based on bloodlust, and the group now prowls the foothills of the Fogscar Mountains south of the Churlwood looking for travelers to harass—and Varisians to slaughter. They hope to bring on other monstrous creatures and other unsavory humanoids to form a band of brigands, and ultimately want to establish a base of operations with a range of influence greater than that of their small camp. Dintran and the spriggans set up ambushes for caravans and travelers, allowing the spriggans to leap out of hiding before Dintran himself wades into the fray.

LOST COAST ENCOUNTERS

d%	Result	Avg. CR	Source
1–5	1d4 bulettes	9	<i>Bestiary</i> 39
6–10	1 nuckelavee	9	<i>Bestiary</i> 3 203
11–14	1d6 chuuls	10	<i>Bestiary</i> 46
15–19	1d8 highwaymen	10	<i>GameMastery Guide</i> 259
20–24	1d12 leucrottas	10	<i>Bestiary</i> 2 178
25–29	1d8 sea drakes	10	<i>Bestiary</i> 2 109
30–34	1d4 aurumvoraxes	11	<i>Bestiary</i> 2 35
35–39	1 elder mud elemental	11	<i>Bestiary</i> 2 121
40–43	1d4 giant snapping turtles	11	<i>Bestiary</i> 2 273
44–47	1d6 giant tarantulas	11	<i>Bestiary</i> 2 256
48–52	1d8 pukwudgies	11	<i>Bestiary</i> 3 223
53–57	1 thunderbird	11	<i>Bestiary</i> 2 264
58–61	1d4 tick swarms	11	<i>Bestiary</i> 2 265
62–66	1 athach	12	<i>Bestiary</i> 2 33
67–70	1d6 baykoks	12	<i>Bestiary</i> 3 35
71–74	1d8 bodaks	12	<i>Bestiary</i> 2 48
75–82	1d12 hill giants	12	<i>Bestiary</i> 150
83–89	1d8 mohrgs	12	<i>Bestiary</i> 208
90–99	2d8 redcaps	12	<i>Bestiary</i> 2 233
100	1 banshee	13	<i>Bestiary</i> 2 41

Possessing a Shadow (CR 11): Marlon and Endrek have long been friends after saving each other's life a number of times in battles throughout western Avistan. They have since signed on with an expedition leading into the frontier of Varisia, but after passing through Nidal, the pair of sellswords (*GameMastery Guide* 283) picked up some unwanted company. As the two passed through the Mindspin Mountains, they became possessed by two shadow demons (*Bestiary* 67). Now, the four have traveled to the Lost Coast in a campaign of corruption and murder, and the human soldiers have fully embraced their demonic riders.

Lord of the Forest (CR 12): Deep in the Churlwood a threat lingered in seclusion for decades, but now it stirs. An adult green dragon (*Bestiary* 96) controls a portion of the forest 40 miles west of Wolf's Ear, and has grown discontent with her humble domain. The dragon spends much of her time sleeping, relying on her goblin minions to bring her meals. However, once a month the beast flies from her hidden forest den to plague the Lost Coast. The dragon rampages for 3 or 4 days before returning to her lair to slumber. She tends not to target communities, instead plucking off individual travelers or devouring small camps of Varisian wanderers; ruined wagons and acid-burned tents are frequently all that remain.

SHATTERED STAR

CEPHALOPHORE

Holding its own severed head in its hands, this marble statue looms forbiddingly over what it protects.

CEPHALOPHORE

CR 8



XP 4,800

N Large construct

Init +2; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Perception +1

DEFENSE

AC 23, touch 11, flat-footed 21 (+2 Dex, +12 natural, -1 size)

hp 96 (12d10+30)

Fort +4, **Ref** +6, **Will** +5

Defensive Abilities shatter weapons; **Immune** construct traits; **SR** 20

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft.

Melee 2 slams +18 (2d6+7 plus dazing strike)

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

Special Attacks dazing gaze, dazing strike

STATISTICS

Str 25, **Dex** 14, **Con** —, **Int** —, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 1

Base Atk +12; **CMB** +20; **CMD** 32

SQ shatter weapons, statue

ECOLOGY

Environment any

Organization solitary or pair

Treasure none

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Dazing Gaze (Su) As a standard action, a cephalophore can hold up its severed head to make a gaze attack that affects all seeing creatures within a 60-foot radius. These creatures must succeed at a DC 16 Will save or be stunned for 1 round. Creatures that successfully save are instead sickened for 1 round. This is a mind-affecting fear effect, and the save DC is Wisdom-based.

Dazing Strike (Su) Any creature struck by the cephalophore's slam attacks must succeed at a DC 16 Will save or be dazed for 1 round. Those who save against this affect are instead sickened for 1 round. This is a mind-affecting fear effect, and the save DC is Wisdom-based.

Shatter Weapons (Ex) Whenever a character strikes a cephalophore with a weapon (magical or nonmagical), the weapon takes 3d6 points of damage. Apply the weapon's hardness normally. Weapons that take any amount of damage in excess of their hardness gain the broken condition.

Statue (Ex) If a cephalophore stands perfectly still, it is indistinguishable from a normal statue. An observer must succeed at a DC 20 Perception check to notice the cephalophore is alive. If a cephalophore initiates combat from this pose, it gains a +6 bonus on its initiative check.

Adventurers wandering among forgotten ruins, abandoned temples, or moldering graveyards may have a chance

encounter with an enigmatic cephalophore standing watch over the site. At a cursory glance, these guardians appear to be looming statues of decapitated humanoids, their severed heads held aloft in a gruesome warning or cradled in their hands like a precious prize. To benign passersby, these marble constructs remain inert, their stone gazes producing only an unnerving sense of watchfulness. However, those who attempt to raid or desecrate the cephalophore's holy site quickly find that this seemingly immovable statue is anything but. Consequently, many adventurers and tomb raiders have come to see cephalophores as a type of good-luck omen, because when one finds a cephalophore, a dangerous and treasure-filled ruin—hopefully still unlooted—is surely not far away.

Part guard and part trap, most of these hulking figures were constructed millennia ago to stand watch over culturally vital holy sites. Cephalophores are the perfect sentinels—they remain completely still, without fatigue or complaint, for centuries, until a specific set of circumstances triggers them. These triggers are far from universal, and each individual cephalophore has a different set of transgressions that it is constitutionally bound to prevent. For many, it's the perturbation of certain relics within its tomb or temple, but some cephalophores are bound to attack any who pass by without performing a now-long-forgotten ritual or incantation.

A typical cephalophore stands 10 to 15 feet tall and weighs up to 4,000 pounds. Cephalophores are made of solid marble, which makes attacking them with standard weaponry inefficient at best.

ECOLOGY

Cephalophores are intimately linked to specific tombs or temples, with each constructed to stand guard over a single location. While the ravages of time do little to diminish the single-minded dedication of these creatures, the sacred edifices to which they are bound seldom stand so firmly against the ages. Consequently, cephalophores are often found amid ruins or deep in the wilderness, standing vigilant guard over a site that has been long forgotten by mortal society. Many cephalophores lie buried beneath sandy dunes, overgrown by unchecked jungle foliage, or entombed within collapsed caverns.

Not entirely immune to aging, cephalophores do decay very slowly, their marmoreal forms flaking and crumbling over centuries. This process is hastened in climates where exposure to local weather conditions is especially ruinous or erosive. It is for this reason that the majority of intact cephalophores are discovered in arid climates or enclosed habitats like caves or catacombs. This leads some to mistakenly believe these creatures prefer such environs. In reality, preference has nothing to do with it—they are simply better preserved in dry conditions. Cephalophores

subjected to centuries of high winds or dripping water sometimes deteriorate into featureless columns, the details of their forms washing away with the elements. Consequently, those having come in contact with a malformed cephalophore often chalk up the encounter to a spiteful earth elemental, and have no idea how close they were to an ancient treasure trove or forgotten tomb.

HABITAT & SOCIETY

Designed to perform a single, lonely function and constructed to be mindless, cephalophores are not at all social creatures. Any vestige of identity the constructs have is left over from their makers, who designed them in accordance with the aesthetics of their own cultures. Most scholars of Golarion suspect the first cephalophores were constructed during the height of the ancient city of Ninshabur in present-day Casmaron, whose influence extended as far west as Ancient Osirion and present-day Taldor. These scholars also posit that the cephalophores were made in an attempt by the Ninshaburians to emulate the living monoliths of Osirion, with whom Ninshaburian phalanxes were likely to have come into contact. The Ninshaburian origins of the cephalophores are evidenced by both their appearance and their geographic locations.

One obvious indicator of the cephalophores' link to Ninshabur is the facial characteristics of the animate statues. Many of the constructs feature stylistically arched eyebrows and ferocious grimaces, in keeping with the characteristics of many known Ninshaburian statues of lammasus and sphinxes. Further, the locations of known cephalophore sites are consistent with the territory of the once-influential empire. Though the highest concentration of cephalophores is undoubtedly in eastern Qadira, they have also been encountered throughout Andoran, Cheliox, Galt, Isger, Varisia, and even Nex in eastern Garund. Many of these territories were never officially conquered by the marauding Ninshaburians, but it's possible some of their cultural practices and techniques spread to other societies, prompting a variety of sects to create their own cephalophores.

Scholars debate whether ancient cephalophores were originally statues, chiseled from stone and then imbued with deadly purpose, or whether they were once living creatures that were immortalized through some forgotten ritual. If it's true that the Ninshaburians were inspired by the divine guardians of Osirion, then it's likely both methods were used at different times.

Rock carvings found in the abandoned temple complex of Tabsagal indicate that the characteristic decollation of cephalophores was tied to a ritual wherein highly venerated holy warriors (akin to present-day paladins or clerics) were offered near-immortality in exchange for their service to Ninshabur. The majority of the ritual seems to have consisted of oath-taking, wherein the terms of the heroes' guardianship were made clear. However, to seal the pact, these warriors were then required to offer their own heads in homage to their ancient gods. After their beheading, the soldiers' bodies rapidly turned to stone, and they were then moved to their eternal resting places as guardians of Ninshabur's holiest sites.

A cephalophore's grisly pose is a perfect representation of the self-sacrificial zealotry of Ninshaburian warriors. Those who chose to become Ninshabur's longstanding holy guards forsook all freedom and everlasting rest to ensure that their empire's sacred artifacts remained unmolested. Those who would stir the dust of Ninshabur must risk the wrath of these ever-watchful martyrs and the single-minded dedication that drives them.

CONSTRUCTION

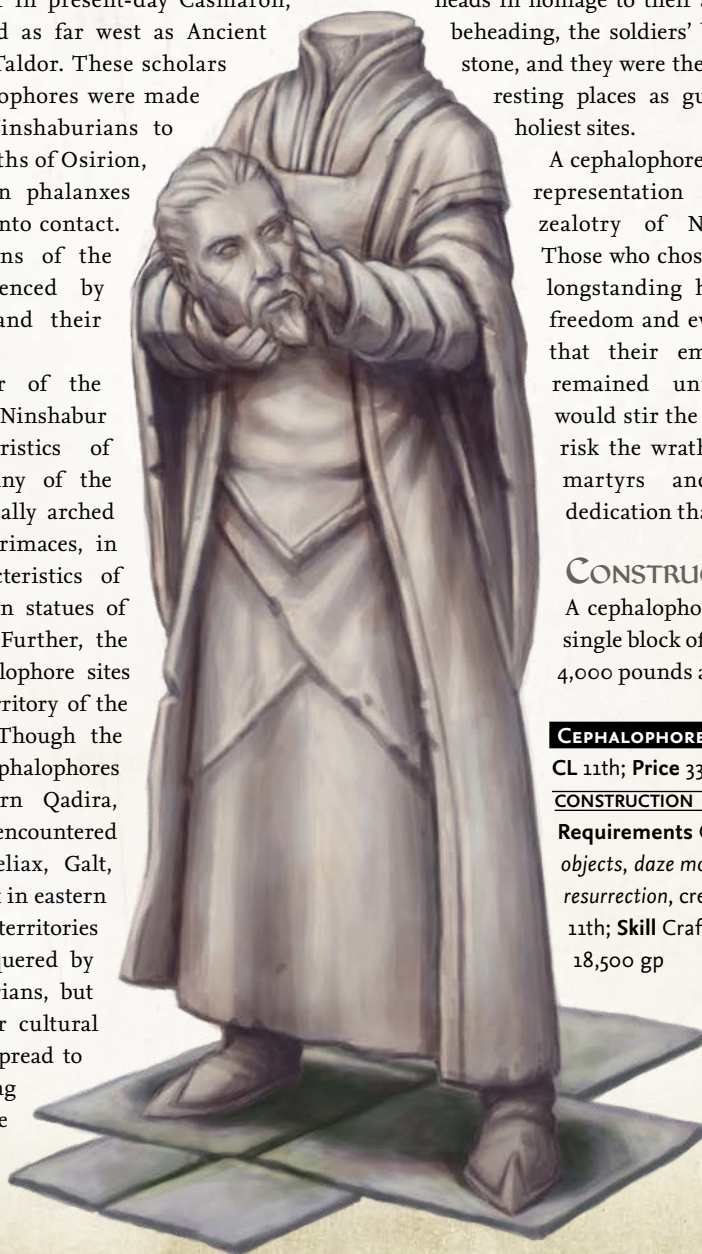
A cephalophore is constructed from a single block of marble weighing at least 4,000 pounds and costing 3,500 gp.

CEPHALOPHORE

CL 11th; Price 33,500 gp

CONSTRUCTION

Requirements Craft Construct, *animate objects*, *daze monster*, *geas/quest*, *resurrection*, creator must be caster level 11th; **Skill** Craft (sculpture) DC 20; **Cost** 18,500 gp



SHATTERED STAR

END'S VOICE

A long crimson cloak drapes over the form of this large faceless being, which floats just above the ground on footless legs as its menacing flail crackles with blue currents of electricity.

END'S VOICE

CR 15



XP 51,200

CN Large outsider (chaotic, extraplanar)

Init +7; Senses darkvision 60 ft., trueseeing; Perception +21

DEFENSE

AC 31, touch 15, flat-footed 27 (+3 Dex, +1 dodge, +2 insight, +16 natural, -1 size; never surprised or flat-footed)

hp 225 (18d10+126); fast healing 5

Fort +18, Ref +11, Will +19

DR 10/law and magic; Immune confusion, insanity; Resist acid 30, cold 30, electricity 30, fire 30; SR 26

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft., fly 40 ft. (average)

Melee +1 shock heavy flail +23/+18/+13/+8 (2d8+7/17-20 plus 1d6 electricity and maddening strike)

Space 10 ft.; Reach 10 ft.

Special Attacks destructive aura

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 18th; concentration +24)

Constant—*foresight* (self only), *true seeing* (self only)

At will—*arcane eye*, quickened *bleed* (DC 16), *hideous laughter* (DC 18), *knock*, *magic missile*, *shatter* (DC 18), *telepathic bond*, *touch of idiocy*, *true strike*

5/day—*confusion* (DC 20), *contact other plane* (see below), *feeblemind* (DC 21), *greater teleport* (self plus 50 lbs. of objects only), *mind fog* (DC 21), *nightmare* (DC 21), *phantasmal killer* (DC 21)

1/day—*break enchantment*, *disintegrate* (DC 22), *harm* (DC 22), *insanity* (DC 23), *mage's disjunction* (DC 25), *mass invisibility*, *moment of prescience*, *power word kill*, *weird* (DC 25)

STATISTICS

Str 18, Dex 17, Con 24, Int 17, Wis 16, Cha 22

Base Atk +18; CMB +23 (+25 sunder); CMD 39 (41 vs. sunder, can't be tripped)

Feats Combat Casting, Combat Expertise, Dodge, Improved Critical (heavy flail), Improved Initiative, Improved Iron Will, Improved Sunder, Iron Will, Weapon Focus (heavy flail)

Skills Disable Device +18, Fly +16, Intimidate +24, Knowledge (geography) +18, Knowledge (history) +21, Knowledge (religion) +21, Perception +21, Sense Motive +21, Spellcraft +18, Stealth +17, Use Magic Device +24; Racial Modifiers +4 Acrobatics when jumping

Languages Aklo, Ancient Osiriani, Azlanti, Common, Cyclops, Draconic, Orvian; telepathy 100 ft.

SQ madness, no breath

ECOLOGY

Environment any (Astral Plane or Pharasma's Boneyard)

Organization solitary

Treasure standard (Large +1 shock heavy flail, other treasure)

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Adaptable Life Force (Su) Any effect that heals living creatures and harms undead or heals undead and harms living creatures (such as cure spells, inflict spells, and channeled energy) always heals the herald, even if the source of the power intended to harm it.

Contact Other Plane (Sp) This ability functions as the spell *contact other plane*, but the herald can only ask questions on the behalf of another creature, the questioner (not the herald) must make the Intelligence check (if any) to avoid losing Intelligence or Charisma, and the loss is permanent rather than temporary.

Destructive Aura (Su) As a swift action, the herald can emit a 30-foot aura of destruction for 15 rounds per day. All attacks made against targets in this aura (including the herald) gain a +7 morale bonus on damage rolls, and all critical threats are automatically confirmed. These rounds do not need to be consecutive.

Maddening Strike (Su) If the herald successfully hits a creature with its flail, as a swift action it may force the opponent to make a DC 25 Will save. If the creature fails its save, it is confused for 1 round. The save DC is Charisma-based.

Madness (Ex) The herald uses its Charisma modifier on Will saves instead of its Wisdom modifier, and is immune to insanity and confusion effects. Only a *miracle* or *wish* can remove its madness. If this occurs, the herald gains 6 points of Wisdom and loses 6 points of Charisma; it automatically reverts to its insane state 1d10 minutes later.

Telepathic Bond (Sp) This ability functions like *telepathic bond*, except any creature linked to the herald's disturbing thoughts takes 1 point of Wisdom damage every 10 minutes.

Groetus's herald is End's Voice, an enigmatic creature that is both more and less mysterious than its master. It looks like a giant shrouded figure floating above the ground, legless and faceless, wielding a heavy flail with ends made of glowing energy. Its visage is often confused with a reaping undead, though it is a living outsider and acts mildly insulted when others assume it to be otherwise. Its voice is hollow and distorted, as if echoing from the far end of a long metal tube, and colored with accents from ruined empires and dead languages. It rarely comes to Golarion, and for most of these visits it is merely a silent witness to a great slaughter upon the battlefield or the last gasp of a dying city, though it may strike out with its weapon or magic at a seemingly random wounded or dying target, as if making sure the creature dies as expected.

The herald may be insane from associating with Groetus, but it has a clarity unknown to mortal worshippers of the God of the End Times; perhaps its vast knowledge somehow protected it from a truly insane fate, or its status as a herald may give it a kind of lucidity that pierces the fog of madness. It does not cackle at itself like

a madman, respond to unheard voices, kill for pleasure, or exhibit any of a dozen other obvious signs of insanity typically exhibited by the mad followers of Groetus.

ECOLOGY

End's Voice does not eat, drink, or breathe; it lacks a face or mouth, and cannot be bribed with food or pleasure. It acts like an unfeeling thing, more patient than a mountain, slowly scouring away at existence like the ocean's tide or a desert wind. It has no role in the creation of life, and does not seem to take any part in the cultivation or upbringing of creatures or civilizations.

Though it is known to kill without being provoked, it only does so if the target has already suffered serious harm or is on the brink of death, and even these it may ignore; it has drifted over a bloody battle, passing hundreds of dying heroes and officers, only to strike at a single common soldier before vanishing. Once, it killed a human woman moments after a difficult but successful birth, and chose to spare the child. It acts in this callous way toward mortals, undead, outsiders, and even dragons, but never against mindless creatures or those with animal-level intellect. Perhaps these killings are the directive of Groetus, steering a soul's course in the afterlife or preventing some future event; perhaps they represent an obscure code, with the time of death and name of the deceased unlocking a cipher over the course of a millennium; or perhaps they are just random acts of violence, the only evidence of the creature's tightly suppressed lunacy. If attacked, End's Voice retaliates, though sometimes it ends combat simply by driving some or all of its opponents insane and then retreating. It may return to dispatch these defeated foes days, months, or years later, even on the victim's deathbed, or it may ignore them utterly and show no recognition if the healed opponents confront it again.

When called by mortals, the herald demands specific deeds of death, injury, or property damage, for End's Voice always seeks to further the end of times. For example, it may ask that every third adult male in a village be branded on the face with a mysterious symbol, or that a prince with black hair be nearly drowned, or a castle's eastern wall be cracked but left standing. Usually, these acts have no apparent link to the needs of the herald's conjurer, and most create a series of events that takes years or decades to play out. It favors the burning of incense

and exotic woods, lingering over the fragrant smoke and making strange contortions.

HABITAT & SOCIETY

When not serving Groetus or called by the faithful to perform a specific task, the herald flies over the surface of Groetus's moon, pausing to alter parts of the writing on the surface or draw runes on a blank area untouched by the god's madness. Sometimes it can be seen curled up there on the moon or reclining somewhere on the Astral Plane as if sleeping, though the eerie being is clearly not at rest. It makes no gestures of friendship or comradeship toward other divine servants of Groetus, though it accepts their presence (and their insanity) as if used to them. On one occasion, it absorbed a servitor into itself, inhaling the creature like smoke, then expelling it a year later with no explanation or apparent harm to the creature.



SHATTERED STAR

KYTON OSTIARIUS

Cloaked in shadows, every curve and sculpted muscle of this vision of physical perfection suggests some new gasping pleasure or titillating torture.

OSTIARIUS

CR 5



XP 1,600

LE Medium outsider (evil, extraplanar, kyton, lawful)

Init +6; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +16

DEFENSE

AC 18, touch 12, flat-footed 16 (+2 Dex, +2 natural, +4 shield)

hp 52 (7d10+14); regeneration 2 (good weapons and spells, silver weapons)

Fort +7, **Ref** +4, **Will** +11

Immune cold, *magic missile*

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee 2 touches +2 (1 plus 1d4 bleed)

Special Attacks compel courage, unnerving gaze (30 ft., DC 21)

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 7th; concentration +11)

Constant—*shield*

At will—*calm emotions* (DC 16), *darkness*, *enthrall* (DC 16), *major image* (DC 17)

3/day—*crushing despair* (DC 17), *shadow walk*, *silence* (DC 16)

1/day—*plane shift* (to the Material Plane and Plane of Shadow only, lawful evil creatures only), *shout* (DC 18)

STATISTICS

Str 10, **Dex** 15, **Con** 14, **Int** 19, **Wis** 18, **Cha** 19

Base Atk +7; **CMB** +7; **CMD** 19

Feats Alertness, Blind-Fight, Improved Initiative, Iron Will

Skills Bluff +14, Diplomacy +14, Escape Artist +9, Heal +14,

Intimidate +14, Knowledge (planes) +14, Perception +16,

Perform (oratory) +14, Sense Motive +16, Stealth +12

Languages Common, Infernal; telepathy 100 ft.

SQ shadow traveler

ECOLOGY

Environment any (Plane of Shadow)

Organization solitary, pair, or synod (5–9)

Treasure standard

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Compel Courage (Ex) An ostiarius can inspire courage as a 5th-level bard using bardic performance, granting a +2 morale bonus on saving throws against charm and fear effects and a +2 competence bonus on attack and weapon damage rolls. This ability has a range of 50 feet and affects those creatures the ostiarius chooses who also willingly accept the benefits of the effect (no saving throw required). The ostiarius's performance compels creatures to perform at dangerous extremes. Any living non-outsider that benefits from this ability takes 1 point of bleed damage. A creature that accepts these benefits for multiple consecutive rounds gains additional points of bleed damage that stack with one another (to a maximum of 5). This is an audible,

mind-affecting effect and can be countered by a bard's countersong ability.

Shadow Traveler (Ex) When an ostiarius uses *plane shift* to travel to the Plane of Shadow, it arrives at its intended destination with complete accuracy. When an ostiarius uses *shadow walk*, it moves at a rate of 100 miles per hour.

Unnerving Gaze (Ex) A creature that succumbs to an ostiarius's unnerving gaze becomes sickened for 1d4 rounds. This is a mind-affecting fear effect. The save DC is Charisma-based.

Ostiariuses mind the gate between the world of mortals and the endless excruciating delights of the Plane of Shadow. Their role is twofold: admitting their brethren to the Material Plane using their powers of extraplanar travel, and, more insidiously, convincing mortals to willingly journey with them to their shadowed homeland. They are the emissaries of their people, encouraging susceptible mortals to turn away from the tired philosophies of their dull traditions and dim imaginations and to embrace inconceivable possibilities in a realm of inscrutable darkness. Their guidance leads those they counsel to a path of taboo indulgences and selfish excesses, gradually indoctrinating them in the unsqueamish methods and gluttonous mindset of the kyton race. Eventually, when a mortal is deemed worthy—which is to say, irredeemably corrupted and likely having set others down the same path—the ostiarius leads her into the dark of the Plane of Shadow, where it and its kin gorge themselves upon this newly trapped scrap of flesh and thwarted expectation.

An ostiarius might superficially appear to be of any gender or completely androgynous, often undergoing physical manipulation to present an appealing figure to those it would court. Extremes of exotic tattooing, piercing, or body modification often mark their forms, and some ostiariuses go so far as to fuse flesh, shining accoutrements, and dark clothing into a single epidermal layer. Most proudly stand over 6 feet tall, though their weights range from exceedingly light to grossly heavy due to interior cavities either scraped empty or filled with the most perversely beautiful but utterly superficial organs.

KYTON RHETORIC

Ostiariuses are infamous for their half-truths and honey lies. As the reputation of the kyton race does not lead most mortals—even those with the most stained souls—to embrace the pain-tasters' cruel mortal enlightenment, it falls to ostiariuses to turn minds against their own bodies, encouraging philosophies of suffering to take root and override their natural fear and revulsion of kytons' so-called "gifts." To such ends, ostiariuses claim absolute openness with those they court, and deftly—supposedly

candidly—answer even the most pointed questions about their insidious natures. The following are just a few of the questions commonly put to kytton ostiarius, and their well-rehearsed answers to each.

Kyttons are evil. Why should I trust you?

“Evil? Such a small word to sum up my people, our culture, and our millennia-old dogma. I have little belief in the concept. I’ve seen holy men sacrifice innocents and be called saints. I’ve seen mothers who stole only to feed their children go to the gallows. I perceive evil to be an artificial construct, a mere description created by frightened clerks so they can determine whether one’s actions fall within or outside their narrow visions for what reality should be. But am I evil? I believe in potential. I believe that some creatures are without significance and not worthy of my hand raised to save them. Conversely, I believe the multiverse blesses some beings with extraordinary traits, with the potential to do—to be—great things. The fact that I exist to seek out such potential and help it flourish means that regardless of what you believe about such small words like ‘good’ and ‘evil,’ inarguably the cosmos has guided me to you, and as I believe in the power of that cosmos, I believe in you.”

My magic says you’re evil. Why shouldn’t I slay you?

“Pause to consider the source of that information. Something has told you that I am evil, and why wouldn’t it? I seek to enlighten. To reveal secrets of reality, rebirth, immortality, and divinity that no creature that calls itself ‘good’ would wish to see revealed. Surely my words are heresy in every faith where the blind follow the sighted, for I promise to reveal wonders inherent in every worthy soul, wonders the deities claim are theirs alone.”

Your race hails from the Plane of Shadow. Why do you dwell in such a terrible place?

“My people seek to escape form, to escape prejudice, to escape all restrictions that wantonly engage us. To this end, my people voluntarily migrated to the one place in all existence where the body becomes muted, and voices, philosophies, and sensations are amplified. My people are ascetics, the darkness our endless meditation.”

Your people originated in Hell. Care to explain?

“Surely you know there are angels as well as devils in Hell. In the home of the righteous, there must be a single law. All who refuse to bow to that law are rebels in the eyes of the empowered, and so must be outcast. Those who refuse to bend to righteousness—or worse, who hold their own visions of righteousness—are exiled to the burning hinterland. But, were my people prisoners of Hell, were we truly damned, could we have left so easily? My people have been pilgrims in many lands, and have come to understand many truths

of the cosmos. Hell was merely the last of many realms through which we’ve passed.”

Your methods indulge in fear and suffering. Why would I embrace such destruction?

“Pain. Sorrow. Fear. These are not emotions. These are instincts of animals, of lesser beings. Do you think the rat feels contentedness, the snake either love or lust, the sow ecstasy? We are without the vestigial mental reflexes of mortals. Yet such enlightenment is not our purview alone. We would teach all with minds to understand how to be more than what an evolution of meat and tears would constrain. We offer possibility and revelations of enlightenment, states your kind are predisposed to distrust, to view as revolution, but which those with the potential for greatness clasp as rungs upon the ladder of exultation.”



SHATTERED STAR

PSYCHOPOMP, KERE

This unnaturally pale woman is dressed in the somber garb of a mourner, her countenance covered by a lengthy black veil.

KERE

CR 10



XP 9,600

N Medium outsider (psychopomp, extraplanar)

Init +9; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision, spiritsense; Perception +24

DEFENSE

AC 22, touch 15, flat-footed 17 (+5 Dex, +7 natural)

hp 114 (12d10+48)

Fort +8, **Ref** +15, **Will** +13

DR 10/adamantine; **Immune** death effects, disease, poison;

Resist cold 10, electricity 10; **SR** 21

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft., fly 30 ft. (perfect)

Melee 2 claws +17 (1d4+3 plus 1d6 cold), shroud +17 (infectious fear)

Space 5 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft. (15 ft. with shroud)

Special Attacks infectious fear (DC 20), veil of tears

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 11th; concentration +15)

At will—*ghost sound* (DC 14), *grave tell*, *greater invisibility*, *hide from undead* (DC 15), *minor image* (DC 16), *searing light*, *whispering wind*

3/day—*fog cloud*, *mage's faithful hound*, *mirage arcana* (DC 19), *speak with dead* (DC 17), *waves of fatigue*

1/day—*gate* (to the Boneyard or Material Plane only; planar travel only)

STATISTICS

Str 16, **Dex** 21, **Con** 18, **Int** 13, **Wis** 20, **Cha** 19

Base Atk +12; **CMB** +15; **CMD** 30

Feats Alertness, Combat Reflexes, Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes, Stealthy, Weapon Finesse

Skills Escape Artist +7, Fly +28, Intimidate +19, Knowledge (history) +16, Knowledge (religion) +16, Perception +24, Sense Motive +24, Stealth +24

Languages Abyssal, Celestial, Common, Infernal

SQ grave dependent, grave meld

ECOLOGY

Environment any (graveyards or the Boneyard)

Organization solitary

Treasure standard

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Grave Dependent (Su) A kere is mystically bonded to a single gravestone—typically the most impressive or oldest in a graveyard—and must never stray more than 300 yards from it. A kere who moves 300 yards beyond her bonded grave immediately becomes visible and unable to use any of her spell-like abilities. A kere who is out of range of her bonded grave for 24 hours takes 1d6 points of Constitution damage, and another 1d6 points of Constitution damage every day of separation that follows—eventually, this

separation kills the kere. A kere can break this bond or forge a new bond with a new grave by performing a 24-hour ritual and making a successful DC 20 Will save. If a kere is not bonded with a grave, she must either actively try to forge a new bond or attempt to return to the Boneyard (where she takes no penalties from not being bonded).

Grave Meld (Su) A kere can meld with any gravestone or funerary sculpture, similarly to how the spell *meld into stone* functions. She can remain melded with such a structure as long as she wishes.

Grave Tell (Sp) This ability functions as the spell *stone tell*, but only affects stone funerary structures, like gravestones, cemetery monuments, lych-gates, mausoleums, and similar constructions.

Infectious Fear (Su) Any creature struck by a kere's shroud must succeed at a DC 20 Will save or become frightened for 2d4 rounds. Any creature that physically touches a creature frightened by this effect must succeed at a DC 20 Will save as well or also be frightened for 2d4 rounds (though the fear of the creature touched is not contagious). The save DC is Charisma-based.

Shroud (Ex) A kere's shroud is an insubstantial thing that only a kere can touch. Creatures that come into contact with this shroud find it to be as insubstantial as mist—though they often do feel the terror it inspires. A creature that is unaware of a kere and is struck by her shroud is not aware that a weapon has struck it. A kere's shroud vaporizes upon its owner's death.

Spiritsense (Su) A psychopomp notices, locates, and can distinguish between living and undead creatures within 60 feet, just as if she possessed the blindsight ability.

Spirit Touch (Ex) A psychopomp's natural weapons, as well as any weapon it wields, are treated as though they had the *ghost touch* weapon special ability.

Veil of Tears (Su) Any graveyard that hosts a kere is gloomier and more solemn. All exterior areas within such a graveyard are perpetually affected by *darkness* and *mind fog* (Will DC 20). Additionally, any undead creature that enters the area is also affected as per the spell *slow* (Will DC 20). Those who save against these effects are immune to the graveyard's veil of tears for the next 24 hours. Those who fail are affected by these penalties for as long as they remain in the graveyard. A veil of tears can be raised or lowered by the resident kere as a free action. The veil disperses if a kere leaves the graveyard or is destroyed, and rises upon her return. The veil can also be dispelled for 1 day by casting *dispel magic* or a similar spell upon the kere's bonded gravestone. The spell effects are cast at the kere's caster level (usually 11th). The saving throw DCs are based on the resident kere's Charisma.

Certain places are sacred, settings meant to remain free of the raucous sounds and defiling touch of the living. Graveyards number among some of the most obvious of such places, where stone guardians and the buried weight

of the dead bear on visitors with undeniable gravity. But certain forces disregard the fundamental sanctity of such ground—mortal and deathless heretics who use such places to hunt, feed, or cloak fouler deeds. Yet not all cemeteries are unguarded, and the vaporous shadows and palpable dread of some burial grounds suggest not corruption, but the custody of an ominous otherworldly guardian.

Keres, like all psychopomps, are emissaries of the Boneyard, the necropolis that all mortals must traverse at the end of life. While most psychopomps concern themselves with the souls of the recently deceased, keres mind the resting places of the dead. Their stewardship derives not from any otherworldly care for the deteriorating dust left in the wake of mortal life, but rather from an interest in those who come seeking the dead where they lie. Such creatures often engage in perversions keres seek to oppose. To this end, keres take up lonely residences amid the tombs and monuments of graveyards, spreading an ominous air and giving rise to tales of hauntings and strange encounters to deter even the boldest intruders from trespassing upon the fields they tend.

Keres appear as pale, sickly women standing about 5 feet tall and weighing less than 100 pounds.

ECOLOGY

As otherworldly natives, keres have little direct impact on the world of the living, but the atmosphere they intentionally create is undeniable. To deter the living from treading upon the cemeteries they mind, keres employ tactics similar to those of mournful ghosts and mythical beings from storytellers' tales of spirits and haunts. Their presence fills the area they guard with a palpable dread, and they fill these cemeteries with baleful howling, somber illusions, and glimpses of their own ghastly forms. While they rarely create phantasmagoric images of the undead—out of a loathing for such perverse creatures—their unsettling displays of dangerous animals, lost children, whispering plants, shuddering gravestones, living statuary, pale doppelgangers, unnatural weather, and other eerie phenomena are typically more than enough to give a graveyard a haunted reputation.

HABITAT & SOCIETY

A kere's exact methods usually matter little, as they tend to keep to more vulnerable, remote cemeteries, and prove most active when night cloaks the dark deeds of trespassers. But, occasionally, overzealous keres come into opposition with a fearful community and those sent to deal with the supposed haunting. Since their aloof nature causes them to avoid speaking directly with mortals, keres usually deal

with would-be exorcists in the same manner they deal with other trespassers—by trying to frighten them away. Those who refuse to be frightened might be attacked, or faced with inquisitive illusions as a kere attempts to divine whether the interlopers are threats to her graveyard or not.

More than once, a kere has been known to grow bored in her vigil and actively attempt to attract mortal visitants, but such attention-seeking psychopomps often find the added excitement isn't worth the bother.

For all of the ambiance and grim reputations cultivated by keres, their primary objective upon the Material Plane is to preemptively thwart the deeds of necromancers and undead. To this end they terrorize grave robbers, harry the work of dark cultists, and openly attack the unliving. Any undead beings who enter or manifest in a cemetery under a kere's care find the weight of eternity crushing down upon them, making the most common sorts easy prey for these sentinel psychopomps. In some cases, though, more powerful undead might find ways to undermine a kere's defenses, or even drive her off. Such desperate keres have been known to grudgingly seek out aid, typically from the church of Pharamasma or fringe-dwelling magic-users, in countering the taint of undeath.



SHATTERED STAR

QLIPPOTH GONGORINAN

This human-sized crablike creature scuttles on six stumpy legs, and each of its four arms sports a different method of inflicting pain.

GONGORINAN

CR 11

XP 12,800

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

Init +10; **Senses** all-around vision, darkvision 60 ft.;

Perception +18

Aura horrific appearance (30 ft., DC 20)

DEFENSE

AC 27, touch 17, flat-footed 20 (+6 Dex, +1 dodge, +10 natural)

hp 137 (11d10+77)

Fort +14, **Ref** +13, **Will** +7

DR 10/lawful; **Immune** cold, acid, mind affecting effects, polymorph effects; **Resist** acid 10, electricity 10, fire 10; **SR** 22

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft., climb 40 ft.

Melee +1 scimitar +19/+14/+9 (1d6+7/15–20), claw +17 (1d8+6 plus bleed), sting +15 (1d4+3 plus poison), pincer +15 (1d6+3 plus grab)

Special Attacks bleed (1d6), constrict (1d6+7), oviposition, web (+17 ranged, DC 22, 11 hp)

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 11th; concentration +16)

Constant—air walk, freedom of movement

At will—statue

3/day—baleful polymorph (DC 20), protection from law

1/day—dimension door, mass reduce person (DC 19), polymorph any object (DC 23)

STATISTICS

Str 23, **Dex** 23, **Con** 24, **Int** 13, **Wis** 18, **Cha** 20

Base Atk +11; **CMB** +17 (+21 grapple); **CMD** 34 (42 vs. trip)

Feats Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Improved Critical (scimitar), Improved Initiative, Multiattack, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (scimitar)

Skills Acrobatics +20 (+24 when jumping), Climb +28, Disguise +16 (+24 as a boulder while in statue form), Knowledge (arcana) +15, Perception +18, Stealth +20 (+28 among rocks), Swim +17; **Racial Modifiers** +4 Acrobatics when jumping, +8 Disguise as a boulder while in statue form, +8 Stealth among rocks

Languages Abyssal; telepathy 100 ft.

ECOLOGY

Environment any underground (the Abyss)

Organization solitary, pair, or cast (3–10)

Treasure standard (+1 scimitar plus other treasure)

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Horrific Appearance (Su) Creatures that succumb to a gongorinan's horrific appearance become confused for 1d4 rounds.

Oviposition (Su) A gongorinan can implant a stony egg the size of a human heart in the body of any Small or larger pinned, helpless, or willing creature as a full-round action that provokes an attack of opportunity. This action deals 1d4 points of Constitution damage to the victim. If the victim survives this damage, the egg takes root deep in the victim's body, links to his mind, and begins gestating. The egg grows rapidly, dealing 1 point of Intelligence drain every day to a minimum score of 1. Once this Intelligence drain affects a creature that already has an effective Intelligence score of 1, the egg "hatches" inside of the victim. This causes the victim to immediately transform into a horrid animal, aberration, magical beast, or vermin (the exact choice is made by the gongorinan according to its



strange goals and unknowable desires), whereupon it begins living out its new life via pure instinct—this effect otherwise functions as if it were *baleful polymorph* to which the creature had failed its secondary Will save to retain its personality.

A gongorinan can command the actions of a creature that has undergone this transformation as if the victim had been affected by *dominate monster* (this works even on creatures that are normally immune to such effects as a result of being mindless) as long as the gongorinan is within 120 feet of the creature. The effect can be reversed by *break enchantment* (DC 22—treat the gongorinan's Hit Dice as its caster level), but cannot be dispelled.

Poison (Ex) Sting—injury; *save* Fort DC 22; *frequency* 1/round for 6 rounds; *effect* 1d3 Strength damage and staggered for 1 round; *cure* 2 consecutive saves. The save DC is Constitution-based.

The gongorinans are the spawn of the nascent qliploth lord Yamasoth, although one could be forgiven for thinking them of them less as offspring and more as parasites. A gongorinan's basic shape resembles that of an immense, stocky crab, save that they lack all of the features crabs have adapted for an aquatic life—gongorinans are terrestrial creatures. A typical gongorinan possesses no fewer than a dozen stalked eyes, and is capable of extending these eyes from the upper edges of its body just above its mouth to a length of nearly 3 feet, giving it extraordinary vision in all directions. A gongorinan's mouth is a complex tangle of sliding plates and toothy ridges that rasp and shriek against each other as it speaks and chews, but despite their frightening shapes, these mouthparts are ill-suited for making physical attacks; the gongorinan relies upon its arms for that. Each gongorinan has four of these, and each arm is a different, highly specialized appendage. The humanoid arm is used for fine manipulation or the wielding of weaponry, while the mantislike claw is used to shred flesh and create deep, bleeding wounds. The needle-covered tentacle is used to sting and inject a painful poison to stagger foes, while the pincer is used to snatch and hold victims close for oviposition.

A typical gongorinan stands about 6 feet tall and weighs 800 pounds. When at rest, a gongorinan retracts its limbs into its rock-encrusted body, allowing it to appear remarkably like nothing more than a large, misshapen boulder. Larger specimens known as elder gongorinans exist (and often possess additional and even more dangerous arms), but these are quite rare on the Material Plane save for in the depths of Hollow Mountain.

ECOLOGY

All gongorinans carry within their bodies a brood of horrific egg masses, yet these eggs are not used for the propagation of their kind (that process is governed by a more traditional and yet more nightmarish method best

left unspoken). Instead, these eggs carry within their stony shells a raw quintessence of the Abyss, infused with the ichor-seed of the gongorinans' lord, Yamasoth. Whereas most creatures are driven to breed and multiply, the gongorinans are instead driven to seek out humanoid hosts for their eggs. The implantation happens via the gongorinan's mouth and a hideous ovipositor that's not quite tongue and not quite toothed prolapsing throat, but something worse. Fortunately for most who might encounter a gongorinan, the process of oviposition leaves the horrid creature open to attack and cannot be performed quickly, yet to the lone adventurer caught and overwhelmed by a gongorinan, this is small comfort indeed.

Once an egg has been implanted, it takes many days to grow, and the gongorinan prefers to carry the unfortunate host off to restrain it in a hidden location. Victims are often cocooned in webs or left stranded in high cavern ledges far above the ground so that the egg can gestate. As it grows, the egg feeds on the victim's mind, absorbing the victim's intellect until it has reduced the host to a drooling wreck. At this point, the egg doesn't hatch so much as it merely merges with the host, effecting a horrific and permanent transformation into a monstrous form. The gongorinan can influence this ultimate form as it lays its egg. It typically chooses powerful creatures that are already found in the region, for these "young" are loyal to their parent and serve as loyal guardians or playthings. Victims retain no true portion of their previous personality, but those who have been rescued from this horrific fate via powerful magic do retain memories of their time as a transformed monstrosity. Many never quite recover from these ordeals, and often develop a peculiar form of madness in which they regard their monstrous life as having been their true life, and their true life as the curse. The most despondent of these victims eventually seek the promise of peace through suicide rather than endure the dreams of their life as a monster—dreams that carry within them a most horrible longing.

HABITAT & SOCIETY

Gongorinans are an industrious and intelligent breed of qliploth, and where they find themselves, they invariably form hive-like complexes to live in. These gongorinan "cities" are labyrinthine affairs with plenty of chambers for their transformed children to live in. In the Abyss, gongorinan hives can grow truly immense, with populations in the thousands, but even the Material Plane is no stranger to gongorinan hive cities. The largest of these hives are thought to be located deep beneath Hollow Mountain, where Runelord Alaznist lured the Polymorph Plague himself, Yamasoth, into dwelling for a time. While Yamasoth has long vacated the Darklands caverns under Hollow Mountain, they bear the name of his spawn—Gongorina—and his spawn dwell there still.

INTO THE NIGHTMARE RIFT

By Richard Pett

With five shards of the *Shattered Star* secure, visions point toward one of Varisia's most remote corners as the site protecting the sixth fragment of the powerful artifact. Yet the heroes are not the first to search for this shard—upon arriving at the ancient ruin known as Guiltspur, they find a small army of giants said to be ruled by a blue dragon already excavating the site. And as the heroes soon learn, there are other forces searching for the final shards who come from the Darklands below, and even from beyond reality itself, for Guiltspur lies dangerously close to the nightmare realm of Leng!

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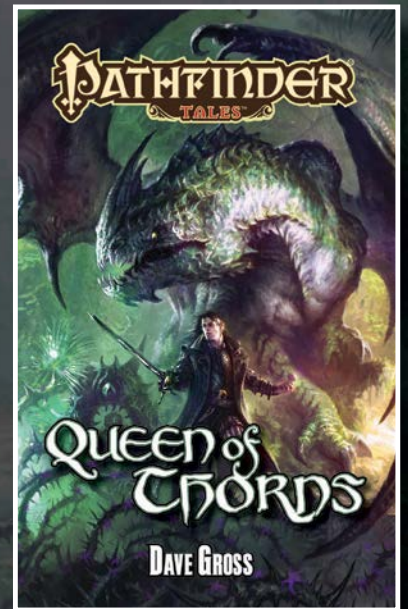
Luma is a cobblestone druid, a canny fighter and spellcaster who can read the chaos of Magnimar's city streets like a scholar reads books. Together, she and her siblings in the powerful Derexhi family form one of the most infamous and effective mercenary companies in the city, solving problems for the city's wealthy elite. Yet despite being the oldest child, Luma gets little respect—perhaps due to her half-elven heritage. When a job gone wrong lands Luma in the fearsome prison called the Hells, it's only the start of Luma's problems. For a new web of bloody power politics is growing in Magnimar, and it may be that those Luma trusts most have become her deadliest enemies...

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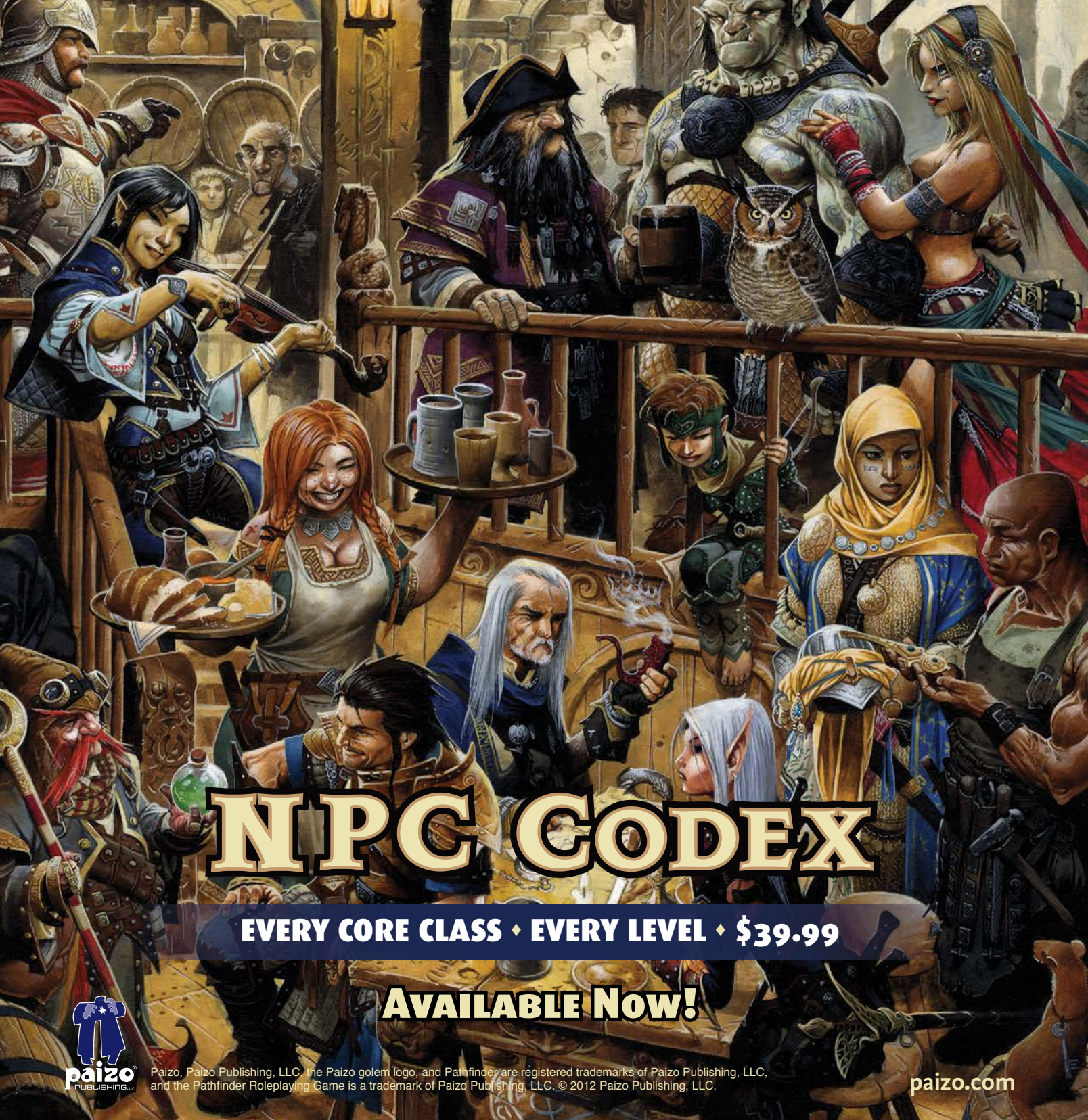
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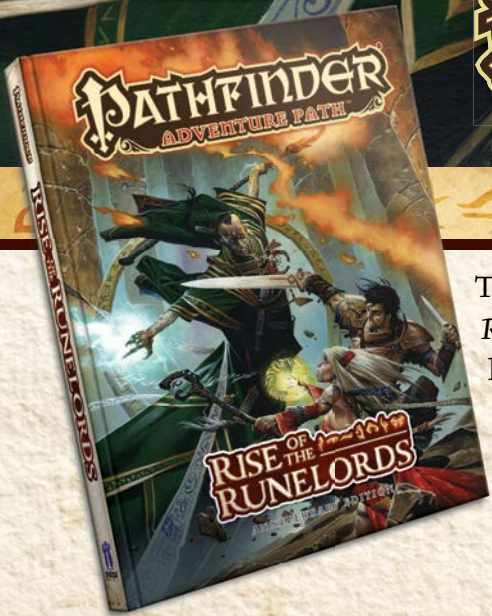
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THE CELWYNVIAN CHARGE

A gift from the elves of the distant Mierani Forest after Magnimar sent a delegation to secure a trade alliance, what was originally nothing more than a curious stony seedpod has, over the decades, grown into a tree-shaped sculpture as tall as a two-story building.

Although the Mierani trade alliance never blossomed in the way Magnimar's

founders had hoped, the strange tree

sculpture the elves gifted the

city has, growing real leaves

that bud and fall at the

appropriate times of year.

Monument Boon: Meditate

for 10 minutes in the shade of

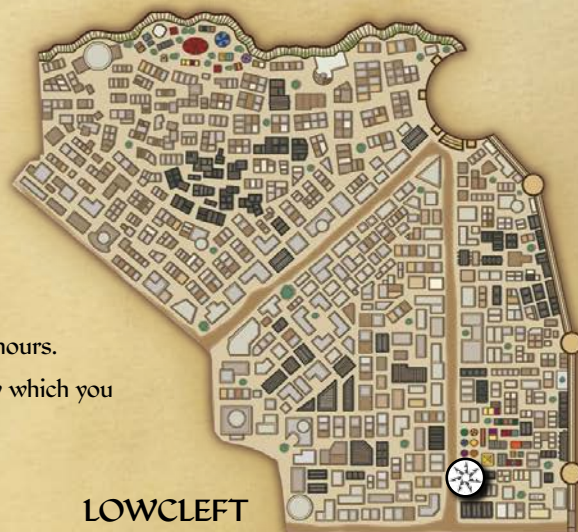
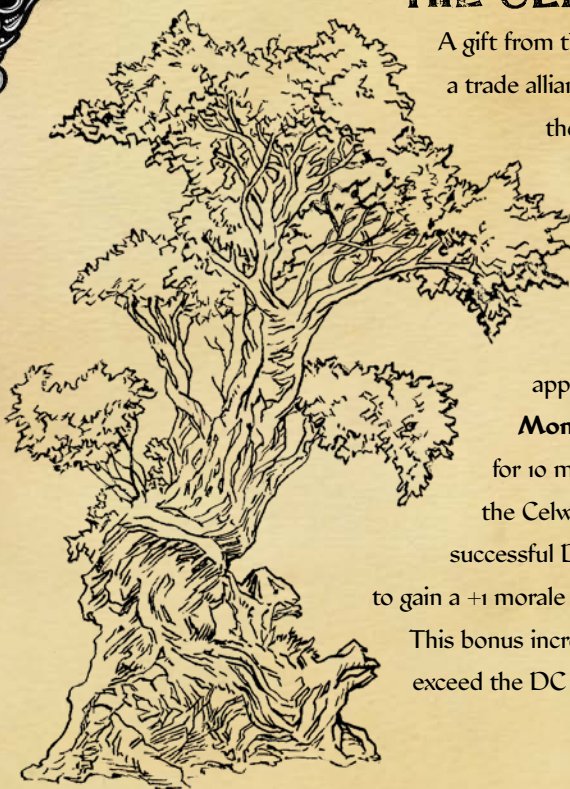
the Celwynvian Charge and make a

successful DC 15 Knowledge (nature) check

to gain a +1 morale bonus on all Reflex saves for 24 hours.

This bonus increases by +1 for every 10 points by which you

exceed the DC 15 Knowledge (nature) check.



LOWLEFT

MAPSTONE MONUMENT

This corner of Seerspring Garden is dominated by a massive block of marble that protrudes 3 feet from the ground. The top of this block of

stone has been meticulously carved into a scale model of the city of

Magnimar. Touch-ups and additions to the carving are performed

yearly to show the rise and fall of buildings in the city by artistic

sculptors from the Church

of Abadar using

stone shape

spells. On some

holidays, effects

like *faerie fire* or *silent images* of tiny crowds are

added to the monument in order to even further increase its appeal.

Monument Boon: Meditate for 10 minutes before the Mapstone Monument

and make a successful DC 15 Knowledge (local) check to gain a +1 morale bonus on

all Will saves for 24 hours. This bonus increases by +1 for every 10 points by which you

exceed the DC 15 Knowledge (local) check.



LOWLEFT

THE END OF DAYS

The hunt for the seven shards of the *Shattered Star* leads the heroes back to the western coast of Varisia, to the multifaith monastery known as Windsong Abbey. The next shard appears to be hidden somewhere within the dungeons below the abbey. But when the PCs arrive, they find the monastery in ruins and held by savage giants and twisted fey! An ancient terror has returned home, and now dwells within the levels beneath the monastery—a terror who hopes to open the dread *doomsday door* within!

This volume of Pathfinder Adventure Path continues the *Shattered Star* Adventure Path and includes:

- “Beyond the Doomsday Door,” a Pathfinder RPG adventure for 10th-level characters, by Tito Leati.
- Delve into the horrors of the Abyssal monstrosities known as qliphoth, by James Jacobs.
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