

PATHFINDER

ADVENTURE PATH



HELL'S REBELS

THE KINTARGO CONTRACT

by Jim Groves

WAR. 15

KINTARGO



Yolubilis River

Night Road

GREENWALL HOUSE

TANESSEN ESTATE

ALABASTER ACADEMY

DELRONGE ESTATE

Silver Road

AELDERVENK MANOR

KINTARGO KEEP

GREENBRIAR FETTERS' WAREHOUSE

Yolubilis River

KELIMBER'S DRY GOODS AND SUPPLIES

LUCKY BONES

CLOVEN HOOF SOCIETY

ARGO ISLE

Ravounel Road

0 1,200 FEET

PATHFINDER ADVENTURE PATH

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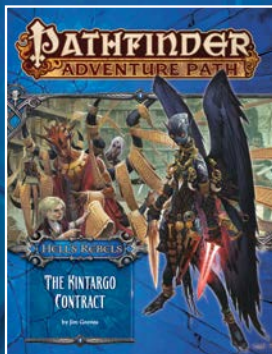
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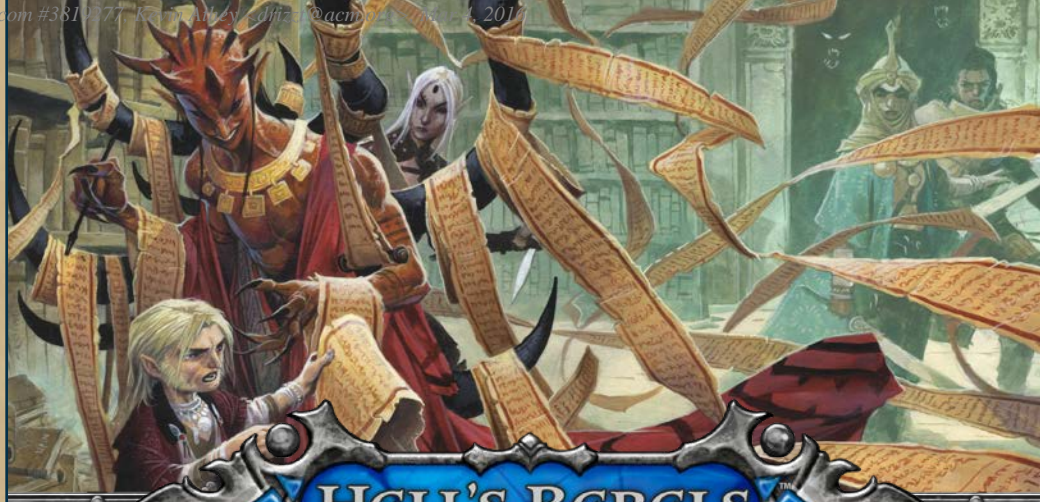
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ON THE COVER



Wayne Reynolds brings life to the strix slayer Solmestria, who may just end up an ally despite *really* hating humans, while Lem does his best to parse the fine print of Odexidie's infernal contract!



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REFERENCE

This book refers to several other Pathfinder Roleplaying Game products using the following abbreviations, yet these additional supplements are not required to make use of this book. Readers interested in references to Pathfinder RPG hardcovers can find the complete rules of these books available online for free at paizo.com/prd.

<i>Advanced Player's Guide</i>	APG	<i>Ultimate Equipment</i>	UE
<i>The Inner Sea World Guide</i>	ISWG	<i>Ultimate Magic</i>	UM



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HELL'S REBELS



REBUILDING KINTARGO

With the conclusion of “A Song of Silver,” the Silver Ravens free the city of Kintargo and defeat one of Cheliah’s most powerful Thrunes. The church of Asmodeus stands emptied, allies of the former lord-mayor either flee or swiftly change political allegiances, and those who the week before had been forced to hide their beliefs and faiths can now walk the city streets in relative comfort and safety. The liberation of Kintargo is a significant climax, and achieving it two-thirds of the way through the campaign may come as a surprise to the players. But in fact, the tale of the Hell’s Rebels Adventure Path covers more than just rescuing Kintargo from one despotic ruler—it’s the story of Kintargo, and indeed all of Ravounel, escaping from Chelish rule and becoming its own free nation. This volume’s adventure, “The Kintargo Contract,” follows the heroes of the Silver City as they travel the length and width of Ravounel to secure alliances and fulfill hidden

obligations in the eponymous contract, all to ensure that the region will not simply fall to Thrune rule again once Her Infernal Majestrix’s armies finish dealing with the Glorious Reclamation to the south.

But the PCs aren’t the only ones rebuilding Kintargo. Other citizens and notable NPC allies are involved as well, and as such, this adventure assumes the PCs aren’t directly concerned with these efforts. If a player is particularly interested in, for example, helping to get the Kintargo Opera House back on its feet or aiding in the rebuilding of a destroyed structure like the Silver Star or the Thrashing Badger, feel free to spend some time roleplaying encounters with NPCs directly aiding these projects. The downtime rules in *Pathfinder RPG Ultimate Campaign* can be of assistance here.

One project of note is the restoration and consecration of the cathedral atop Temple Hill. It was once a house of worship dedicated to Aroden, and for the past several

decades served as a temple of Asmodeus, but the events of the previous adventure should have left this structure largely deserted. If devils or evil effects still linger in the temple, the PCs should be called upon to return to the edifice and finish cleansing its halls of evil. Once this is done, the religious leaders of Kintargo wish to transform the building into a multi-denominational church where the faithful of numerous deities can worship. The NPCs most directly involved in this effort are Hetamon Haace (for Milani), Jilia Bainilus (for Cayden Cailean), Mhelrem Gesteliel (for Abadar), Shensen (for Sarenrae), and Zachrin Vhast (for Shelyn). Other individuals—including the PCs—may join to ensure their own faiths are represented in the temple as well. You can assume that local clerics handle the majority of the temple’s refurbishing, but PCs with divine spellcasting are welcome to contribute spells like *consecrate* or *hallow*. This work continues throughout the adventure—the timing of the culmination of these efforts are left for you to decide, but once the work is finished, the temple’s priests offer all healing and spellcasting to the PCs free of charge, asking only for the coverage of expensive material components and foci for spells they cast for the characters.

WHERE IS BARZILLAI’S HEART?

One of the big discoveries awaiting the PCs between the end of the previous adventure and the start of this one is the fact that Barzillai’s heart is missing. Strive to present this epiphany in a dramatic fashion—perhaps as the PCs are searching his body for loot and clues, they peel away his armor to reveal an empty hole in his chest where his heart was once located. If you want to add more mystery, feel free to have the inquisitor’s chest wound be healed over, perhaps with just a strange scar. You might even want to require a successful Heal or Perception check to notice something unusual. You don’t want to make finding the *Chelish Crux* hidden in Barzillai’s chest too difficult, of course, since its contents are what propels this adventure forward. At the very least, if the PCs miss this important clue, you can have an allied NPC find the *Chelish Crux* and bring it to them.

In any event, the revelation of Barzillai’s missing heart should startle the PCs, and in time they’ll need to track down the missing organ to address the fact that killing Barzillai hasn’t stopped his nefarious plan to become a genius loci—and in fact, doing so may have sped up the process (although at a significant cost to Barzillai’s mind). Seeking his heart is a significant plot element of the next adventure; if you have access to *Pathfinder Adventure Path #102: Breaking the Bones of Hell*, feel free to use the notes in that volume to determine how the PCs fare in searching for the missing heart, but until Barzillai’s spirit begins manifesting in Kintargo, locating his heart should be very difficult. The heart itself resides not wholly in this plane, bathed as it is in the energies of

the *soul anchor* in the upper Darklands below Kintargo. If the PCs use powerful divination magic to seek out his heart early, try to provide answers that encourage them to first strive for Kintargo’s safety (and thus the accumulation of more experience and gear). *Discern location*, in particular, won’t currently reveal the heart’s location, but if a PC casts the spell in an attempt to do so, a successful DC 20 Knowledge (arcana) check is enough to suggest that wherever Barzillai’s heart may lie, it must be in the presence of a powerful ward—perhaps an artifact or even the will of a deity—that blocks the spell from functioning. (In fact, the *soul anchor* keeps the heart hidden from such efforts.)

KINTARGO REBORN

With Barzillai defeated and Kintargo freed, the city’s statistics change significantly from those presented in *Pathfinder Adventure Path #97: In Hell’s Bright Shadow*. Some of its qualities remain (such as cultured and defiant—see page 59 of that volume for specific details of how these city qualities work). Others, such as its martial law and the overlord government, are gone. Use the following stat block for Kintargo from this point forward in *Hell’s Rebels*.

KINTARGO

CG large city

Corruption +2; **Crime** +3; **Economy** +3; **Law** +0; **Lore** +4; **Society** +4

Qualities academic, cultured, defiant, rumormongering citizens, strategic location

Danger +10

DEMOGRAPHICS

Government autocracy

Population varies (depends on results of “A Song of Silver”)

Notable NPCs

Headmaster Iylvana Desdoros of Alabaster Academy
(LN female half-elf transmuter 7)

Lictor Octavio Sabinus of the Order of the Rack (LG male human fighter 5/Hellknight^{TSWG} 6)

Lord-Mayor Jilia Bainilus (CG female human aristocrat 9)
Shensen (CG female half-elf bard 8/fighter 4)

MARKETPLACE

Base Value 8,800 gp; **Purchase Limit** 50,000 gp;

Spellcasting 8th

Minor Items 4d4; **Medium Items** 3d4; **Major Items** 2d4

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THE KINTARGO CONTRACT

PART 1: DETAILS IN DISTRUST 6

The heroes travel to Hell itself to discover the Kintargo Contract's true history and purpose, and return home to turn it to their advantage. Meanwhile, a series of grisly murders rocks the city.

PART 2: LEVERAGE OVER LAW 18

The heroes must see to the ratification of Kintargo's lord-mayor—a task complicated by the fact that on the matter of the city's future, not everyone sees eye to eye.

PART 3: DEFENDERS OF SILVER 23

The region of Ravounel must be united with the Silver City in order to be protected by the Kintargo Contract.

PART 4: THEY HAVE NOT GONE GENTLY 45

The heroes locate Mangyhune's secret lair, but even more chilling than this fiend's work are the broader implications his unique nature carries regarding the late Barzillai Throne.

ADVANCEMENT TRACK

"The Kintargo Contract" is designed for four characters and uses the medium XP track.

13 The PCs begin this adventure at 13th level.

14 The PCs should be 14th level before they start Part 4.

The PCs should be 15th level by the adventure's end.

ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

History and truth are far from synonymous, particularly in Cheliox, where the official records depict a bold, confident House Thrune that bridled the powers of Hell to restore order to a war-torn nation. While the end result is somewhat accurate, countless facts and details have been revised and redacted by the government over the years. In fact, when Queen Abrogail I signed the Cheliox Covenant with Asmodeus to end the Chelish Civil War, she did so not with bombast and confidence, but with trepidation and anxiety. She held no delusion about her soul's inevitable destination, but worried more about the possibility that her damnation would be for nothing. Fears that the bargain could contain an obscure clause that might permit the Church of Asmodeus or Hell itself to seize power out from beneath House Thrune plagued her. And so, with typical Chelish arrogance, she set about to cheat the Prince of Devils at his own game.

The Cheliox Covenant between House Thrune and Asmodeus is a series of incredibly complex and interconnected contracts. Abrogail realized that no matter how she tried to revise the contracts prior to signing, Asmodeus's lawyers would spot her efforts and counter them. So rather than change the primary contract, she sought out an ambitious contract devil named Odexidie, who agreed to aid her in securing a sort of "escape clause" in one of the supporting documents—the Kintargo Contract. The Silver City and its surrounding region of Ravounel were never officially made a part of the empire of Cheliox on paper (due to a series of clerical errors and oversights through the years), and as such the Kintargo Contract contains a small amount of legal wiggle room. Odexidie made a subtle alteration to that document that slipped through the cracks, and when the government later redacted information about pre-Thrune Cheliox, they also expurgated the clerical errors that revealed Ravounel's independence—sealing the deal and making the escape clause in the Kintargo Contract all but invisible to modern scholars.

As a result, the Kintargo Contract contains the key to Kintargo's, and indeed all of Ravounel's, freedom from Chelish rule. A proviso in the Cheliox Covenant grants a region's leaders permission to bring in the Church of Asmodeus (and thus Hell itself) to provide protection and support to that region. It is this fundamental agreement that allowed Thrune to seize control of Cheliox so completely, for no other claimant to rule could stand against those backed by Hell itself. Yet the slightly altered wording of the Kintargo Contract provided Abrogail I her "back door." This revision required the lord-mayor of Kintargo to be appointed and ratified by a Board of Governors as the official leader of the city, and technically the leader of Ravounel, because of the old clerical error that left the region unofficially part of Cheliox. Since Kintargo was technically not an official part of Cheliox at

the time of the signing of the Cheliox Covenant, the city's Board of Governors was grandfathered in, making this the one region in the new Cheliox where a leader could be officially appointed by non-Thrune agents.

Queen Abrogail I knew that if, in the future, some obscure proviso raised its head that would allow the Church of Asmodeus to seize control of Cheliox, she could relocate to Kintargo and bribe the Board of Governors to ratify her as lord-mayor. In such an event, Queen Abrogail would have abandoned her control over Cheliox, and in so doing would retain ownership of her soul and have protection against reprisals from her family and the Church of Asmodeus. If House Thrune did move against Ravounel and Kintargo, Hell would not be able to directly support them without voiding the entire Cheliox Covenant—in effect, plunging the nation back into the chaos of a second civil war.

The Queen destroyed her copy of the Kintargo Contract, leaving the one remaining copy in Odexidie's possession. Her secret contingency plan persisted in oral form only on the Material Plane, but as it happened, the contingency was never required. Queen Abrogail I was never forced to renege on her bargain and by all accounts was satisfied with House Thrune's conquest of Cheliox, her reign, and Hell's support. When she died, she took the secret of the Kintargo Contract to the Great Beyond with her.

That is, until Barzillai Thrune noticed the missing contract. Eager to find any leverage he could against his own house or the Church of Asmodeus should either catch wind of his plans to become a genius loci, Barzillai sought out Odexidie and convinced the devil to provide a copy of the Kintargo Contract. Since Odexidie still hoped some day to see his clever adjustment to the contract come to light and thus bolster his own fame in Hell, he readily agreed to aid the inquisitor. When Barzillai discovered the loophole in the contract, along with its implications, he knew he had a powerful defense against any attempt from his family or his church to prevent his plans from coming to fruition.

During the events of "A Song of Silver," the player characters likely defeated Barzillai Thrune and secured the *Chelish Crux*. The Silver Ravens now have in their hands a way to ensure the safety of Kintargo and its environs from both House Thrune and the Church of Asmodeus. Yet their greatest enemy, the slowly metamorphosing soul of Barzillai Thrune, continues to grow. His death did not disrupt his transformation into a genius loci—it merely stalled it. Worse, this unexpected development strained the *soul anchor*, which alerted another who used its magic not so long ago: the notorious Temple Hill Slasher, who now returns to Kintargo in secret to ensure the *soul anchor* remains active, and perhaps to engage again in some of the delightful atrocities he once visited upon the Silver City.

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PART 1: DETAILS IN DISTRUST

Now that Kintargo has been freed from Lord-Mayor Barzillai Thrune, the Silver Ravens are somewhat obsolete. While Kintargo still needs heroes to protect it, the role of leadership is now largely filled by legitimate government agencies. Supporters of Thrune and of the Church of Asmodeus either flee the city or swiftly change their tune, and the city returns to the place of anti-establishment freethinkers it was before the Night of Ashes. Of course, a city so brazenly defiant will swiftly attract military reprisals from Thrune, and as Kintargo recovers from its rebellion, its leaders and movers and shakers turn to the PCs for advice.

Bolstering Kintargo's defenses may help to protect the city from reprisals by House Thrune, and for the moment, the Chelish government remains focused on larger rebellions to the south (at this point, the city of Westcrown is fully under the control of the Glorious Reclamation, as detailed in the latter half of the Hell's Vengeance Adventure Path). Yet everyone in the Silver City understands that it's only a matter of time before a retaliation occurs. Preparing for Kintargo's defense includes more than just shoring up its military and securing alliances. The key to Kintargo's future as a free city, and to all of Ravounel's independence, lies within a document the PCs may not realize they control as the adventure begins—the Kintargo Contract.

This adventure assumes Barzillai Thrune has been slain by the PCs, and if they don't have his physical remains, at the very least they should have secured the *Chelish Crux* hidden in his torso where his heart once resided. If for some reason the PCs missed this, you should have one of their allies recover the *Chelish Crux* from some of Barzillai's remaining valuables. If the PCs don't examine the *Chelish Crux* and its contents soon, their allies should encourage them to do so.

CHELISH CRUX		PRICE 2,000 GP
SLOT none	CL 9th	WEIGHT 5 lbs.
AURA moderate conjuration		

A *Chelish Crux* is a cunning puzzle box that, when closed, contains an interior space far larger than its exterior would suggest. A *Chelish Crux* appears to be a 6-inch-diameter wooden-and-metal dodecahedron (similar in shape to a d12). Each of the crux's 12 surfaces is carved with a different shape or rune, and when an observer looks at the item, she has the unsettling sensation that too many sides can be seen at once. Shaking or rolling the box reveals that it is hollow, as objects within rattle and shift (though no amount of shaking can damage the objects within).

In order to open a *Chelish Crux*, a person must trace the outlines of these runes and images with the tip of a finger in the proper order. Each time one is traced in the correct order, it glows with a soft red light, but whenever one is

traced out of order, the runes flash brightly; this burns the person attempting to open the crux and causes all faces to deactivate, forcing the opening process to start anew. Failure to open a crux eight times in a row causes the box to randomly establish a new activation order.

A character can attempt a DC 35 Disable Device check or a DC 25 Intelligence check to try to open the puzzle box. Each attempt takes 1 minute, and the check can be retried with a cumulative +1 bonus on the roll, to a maximum bonus of +7, after which the crux resets its order (at this point, the bonus reverts to +0 and the character must start anew). Failure on either of these checks causes the crux to flash with fire and deals 2 points of fire damage plus 2 points for each previous failure to the character (Reflex DC 15 half); the amount of damage resets to 2 if the activation order is reset.

A *Chelish Crux* can be forced open with a successful DC 28 Strength check or destroyed through physical damage (hardness 10, hp 30). If a crux is forced open in either of these ways, it explodes into a 10-foot-radius burst of fire, dealing 3d6+6 points of fire damage (Reflex DC 15 half) to all creatures and objects within the burst, including any objects held within the crux. If forced open or destroyed, the crux crumbles to ashes, and any objects it contained fall to the ground at the site of the fiery burst.

When opened properly, the crux unfolds into a 2-foot-square flat sheet of metal and wood. Any objects the crux contains sit on the center of the sheet. An unfolded crux automatically folds up again as soon as a character attempts to bend any of the sheet's four corners (a move action). The crux automatically folds up around any objects that sit upon its face at this time—objects that would exceed the crux's capacity are pushed gently aside by the refolding action. Once a particular crux's combination is known, a character can open it automatically with 3 consecutive full-round actions.

A *Chelish Crux* can hold up to 200 pounds of objects. As an object that creates an extradimensional space, a *Chelish Crux* functions as a *bag of holding* for the purpose of determining how long a living creature within can survive, or what happens when the box is placed in another extradimensional object like a *portable hole* (*Pathfinder RPG Core Rulebook* 501)

CONSTRUCTION REQUIREMENTS	COST 1,000 GP
Craft Wondrous Item, <i>fire trap</i> , <i>secret chest</i>	

THE KINTARGO CONTRACT

The scroll tube within the *Chelish Crux* (see page 7) holds Barzillai's copy of the Kintargo Contract has been disguised by a *secret page* spell (CL 10th) cast by Odexidie to make it appear to be a lengthy prayer to the archdevil Mephistopheles. The scroll's actual contents can be revealed by speaking the word "kasnum," which was known to Barzillai and is still known to Odexidie. If the PCs can remove the *secret page* effects, they are

free to study the document—the contract’s stat block is presented below. (Full details regarding how to read an infernal contract stat block appear on page 66.) The Kintargo Contract is only one part of a much larger infernal contract known as the Cheliox Covenant; with a successful DC 10 Knowledge (history, local, or nobility) check, a PC recalls that the Cheliox Covenant is the document Queen Abrogail I used to secure the alliance between House Thrune and Hell, allowing her family to seize control of Cheliox and end the civil war in 4640 AR.

A read-through of the Kintargo Contract reveals its basic purpose—that Kintargo and all of Ravounel agree to be defended by House Thrune and the Church of Asmodeus. The contract goes into great detail defining the region of Ravounel (as it exists today), but also reveals that Ravounel is not officially an archduchy, a revelation that may well shock the PCs. Furthermore, the contract reveals that only an officially appointed lord-mayor of Kintargo may grant House Thrune and its allies (including the Church of Asmodeus, and thus, by extension, Hell itself) permission to enter the region en masse. The contract goes on to define the method of officially appointing a lord-mayor via a majority approval of a “Board of Governors,” which is itself further defined as a group of five individuals whose titles are hereditary through the generations. While the document does not list those five familial bloodlines, it indicates that the signer (Queen Abrogail I) and the contract’s author (Odexidie) are aware of them.

The initial read-through implies that should the Church of Asmodeus or House Thrune move on Ravounel without the permission of an officially appointed lord-mayor, the ramifications for the entire Cheliox Covenant would be dire. By depleting the contract’s kp, the PCs can learn the document’s hidden condition and termination information.

THE KINTARGO CONTRACT

CR 15

XP 51,200

Devil special (Odexidie)

Creation Time 1d8 months

Benefit The Kintargo Contract grants the government of Cheliox and the Church of Asmodeus the support of Hell in any and all military actions taken in Ravounel.

Payment As long as yearly sacrifices are made by a ranking member of House Thrune to maintain the Cheliox Covenant, the Kintargo Contract remains in effect.

RESEARCH

Description The Kintargo Contract is a complex document of densely worded clauses in Infernal, written on a tightly rolled 5-foot-long scroll of fine parchment.

Complexity 50

Specialized Skills Knowledge (geography), Knowledge (local), Knowledge (nobility)

kp 45

INSIDE THE CRUX

Once the PCs open the *Chelish Crux*, the following two objects are revealed. If the PCs force the crux open, the burst of fire scorches the objects within but can’t do enough damage to destroy either of them.

Mithral Scroll Tube: This watertight scroll tube is etched with patterns of coiled serpents. There seems to be no way to open it, but a successful DC 30 Perception check reveals a tiny sliding slot near one end that, when pushed toward the end of the tube, causes the tip to pop open. The scroll tube itself is worth 800 gp, and contains three parchments: a copy of the Kintargo Contract, a copy of Barzillai’s infernal contract with Mephistopheles to aid him in performing the Heart’s Harvest ritual, and a short message from Odexidie to Barzillai regarding the strange talisman also found in the crux (see below).

Strange Talisman: This is a *melancholic talisman* that can be used to open a portal to Odexidie’s domain.

Hidden Condition (kp 22) If a lord-mayor is not officially appointed and ratified by the Board of Governors, neither House Thrune nor its allies need permission from the lord-mayor to take military action within the region. Since the Board of Governors hasn’t been active for decades (the tradition was abandoned by the city a few years after Abrogail I’s death), Lord-Mayor Jilia Bainilus wasn’t officially the city’s lord-mayor, and thus when Barzillai Thrune took over the city during the Night of Ashes, his actions did not imperil the contract. However, if a properly ratified lord-mayor denies House Thrune permission to intercede, any direct military action against Kintargo or its associated holdings of Ravounel by Cheliox or the Church of Asmodeus terminates the Cheliox Covenant, removing Hell’s support of the nation of Cheliox.

Termination Clause (kp 0) The Kintargo Contract cannot be terminated as long as the Cheliox Covenant is active, but as soon as the Cheliox Covenant is terminated, the Kintargo Contract is voided.

UNIQUE FEATURES

The Kintargo Contract is particularly vexing, and gains a +10 bonus to its complexity as a result. With the aid and advice of the contract’s primary author, Odexidie, this bonus is removed and the contract reverts to its normal complexity of 40.

THE HEART’S HARVEST CONTRACT

The second parchment held in the mithral scroll tube is a full infernal contract between Mephistopheles and Barzillai Thrune. The revelations in this contract foreshadow events in the final adventure and help the PCs prepare for the campaign’s climax. The curious

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addendum that requires the contract be carried on Barzillai's person at all times may intrigue the PCs, but the actual reason Mephistopheles had for including this clause (to ensure the contract falls into the hands of Barzillai's slayers, should he be killed before his time) will likely remain a mystery until the campaign's climax, when the PCs might just have a chance to ask Mephistopheles about the contract!

HEART'S HARVEST CR 15**XP 51,200****Devil special** (Mephistopheles)**Creation Time** 1 year

Benefit This unique contract grants two significant boons to the contracted mortal (Barzillai Thrune). First, it guarantees to Barzillai that Mephistopheles will provide him with exacting details on how to perform the occult ritual to prepare his soul for eventual transformation into a genius loci (exact details of the ritual's requirements and the benefits granted for becoming a genius loci are, unfortunately, not included in the contract—see *Pathfinder Adventure Path #102: Breaking the Bones of Hell* for ways the PCs might be able to learn more about these mysteries). Secondly, the contract grants Barzillai Thrune the ability to survive without his heart, granting him the heartless special ability that made him so difficult to slay (see Barzillai Thrune's statistics on page 64 of *Pathfinder Adventure Path #100: A Song of Silver* for details of the heartless ability).

Payment The contracted mortal must transform a loyal follower into a devilbound creature, binding that creature to a diabolic servitor of the devil issuing the contract. In addition, the contracted mortal must carry the contract on his person at all times.

RESEARCH

Description Infernal contracts created by Mephistopheles tend to be quite lengthy and elegantly written, yet not always particularly difficult to decipher—provided the point of the contract isn't to hide an important secret!

Complexity 40**Specialized Skills** Knowledge (arcana), Knowledge (planes), Knowledge (religion)**kp** 45

Hidden Condition (kp 12) If Barzillai Thrune dies from violence or misadventure before passing on from natural causes at the end of his natural lifespan, his soul and the souls of all those who served him directly in life are forfeit to Mephistopheles, but such a doom only delays Barzillai's eventual transformation into a genius loci.

Termination Clause (kp 0) If Barzillai's heart is returned to his body while he lives, the contract ends. On the

other hand, if his heart is returned to his new, diabolic body after his death and rebirth in Hell as a devil, his transformation into a genius loci will be forever prevented from occurring.

UNIQUE FEATURES

This contract can be destroyed only once it has been terminated by having Barzillai and his heart reunite, either in life or after death.

**THE KINTARGO CONTRACT****THE MELANCHOLIC TALISMAN**

Apart from the mithral scroll tube and its contents, only one other object is found within the *Chelish Crux*—a sickly yellow talisman made of some sort of unknown, greasy stone, carved in the shape of an amphisbaenic worm coiled around itself in a knot. This object is a *melancholic talisman*, and a short note from the mithral scroll tube, written in Infernal on fine vellum (reprinted on

page 9 as Handout #1), explains how to use it.

With a successful DC 20 Knowledge (planes) check, a PC identifies the Fallen Fastness as a vast library, said to be the greatest in all of Hell, where the sins of all mortals are cataloged and untold armies of scholarly devils toil. With a successful DC 30 Knowledge (planes) check, a character has heard of Odexidie, a contract devil who has long served in the Fallen Fastness as a vice barrister specializing in the acquisition, processing, and disbursement of matters associated with the infernal ownership, governance, and colonization of realms on the Material Plane. With a successful DC 35 Knowledge (planes) check, a PC identifies the name Gingorox as that of a hellmouth—a massive wormlike being whose body connects the Hellish realms of Dis and Caina, and who can be called upon to open gateways in other realms to provide a route to either location.

The item mentioned in the note is the *melancholic talisman*, a magical item capable of calling upon the hellmouth to which it is linked to provide transport to Hell from any location in the Great Beyond. Although alive, hellmouths lack a way of interacting with reality other than providing a means of travel to Hell. The PCs can use the *melancholic talisman* to conjure the Caina end of Gingorox to the Material Plane, but after 10 minutes, that hellmouth reverts to its normal location, effectively stranding the PCs in Dis. Full details on *melancholic talismans* can be found on page 40 of *Pathfinder Campaign Setting: Princes of Darkness, Book of the Damned, Vol. 1*.

Finally, the note mentions a special word that can be used not only to remove the *secret page* effect on the Kintargo contract, but also as a password to avoid the wrath of the guardians of Odexidie's office. This word is

HANDOUT #1

Paracount Barzillai Thrune,

Your visit to my offices was most educational and informative. Even though you are not my client in the traditional sense, I consider myself to be a zealous advocate of our mutual interests in Ravounel. Should you require additional consultation on the Kintargo Contract, I would be delighted to clear my schedule. For your convenience, please find enclosed a small magical trinket. Use it to call the hellmouth Gingorox to expedite transport directly to my offices. My staff are instructed to interrupt me if necessary and I will be with you shortly.

Of course, my staff are also tasked with protecting my holdings, so should you need to return to my offices to speak with me again via Gingorox or any other method, use the word I gave you to unmask the copy of the Kintargo Contract that I supplied you; my staff will recognize it as my guarantee of your safe passage. I shall not repeat that word here. If perchance you have forgotten, you will need to fight or bluff your way through my guardians, I fear. In such an event, I shall not hold damages done to my staff against you. Minions are a simple matter to replace, after all.

Regards, Odexidie, Vice Barrister of Terrestrial Prospects, Fallen Fastness of Dis

the nonsense word “kasnum,” an anagram of “unmask.” If the PCs have access to Barzillai’s corpse, a *Speak with Dead* spell could reveal this word to the PCs, as could spells like *Commune* or *Contact Other Plane*.

DEFENDING KINTARGO

After even a single read-through of the Kintargo Contract, it becomes apparent that until the city follows the procedure for ratifying a lord-mayor as laid out in the document’s text, House Thrune cannot be constrained by the loopholes and rules of the document. The PCs, or perhaps their NPC allies, should soon come to the conclusion that consulting with the contract devil Odexidie is a necessary evil, whether to learn which five family lines are required to reconvene the Board of Governors, to seek advice on the contract’s wording, or even to learn how to read the contract in the first place through the *secret page’s* password.

At your discretion, it may be possible to learn the identities of the Board of Governors via other methods: perhaps consulting a member of a long-lived race such as an elf or dragon who remembers the names could work, but as written, Kintargo (a predominantly human city), has no currently living citizens who retain this knowledge, with one possible exception—the elven swashbuckler known as Jackdaw. If she still lives and has been rescued from her prison in Kintargo Keep, the PCs could well ask Jackdaw about the Board of Governors. She can provide the relevant family names, but there remains a large amount of other information that only a visit with the devil Odexidie can provide. Seeking out other solutions may well be an adventure in and of itself, but will likely be a time-consuming task—consulting with Odexidie remains the most expedient solution.

With a successful DC 20 Knowledge (history) check, a PC confirms that the last time the Kintargo Contract was strictly adhered to was in 4640 AR, when House Thrune conquered Cheliah. Technically there has been no legally appointed lord-mayor since then—at least in the eyes of the contract. Neither Jilia Bainilus nor Barzillai Thrune was truly the lord-mayor, just a pending appointee, and even if the PCs saved Jilia from vampirism and restored her to life, her appointment as lord-mayor must still be ratified by a reconvened Board of Governors made up of members of the appropriate family lines to meet the contract’s requirements. See Part 2 on page 18 for more details regarding the contract’s requirements.

THE FALLEN FASTNESS

This adventure assumes the PCs use the *melancholic talisman* to travel to Odexidie’s office in the Fallen Fastness via the hellmouth Gingorox. When they do so, the air before the talisman’s user ripples, then seems to tear open as what appears to be an immense hell hound’s face chews through reality before opening its jaws wide, revealing a 10-foot-diameter portal that leads to area A1 of the contract devil’s office. The portal remains open for 10 minutes or until the user of the talisman commands it to vanish, whichever comes sooner, otherwise functioning as a one-way *gate* to Hell.

The Fallen Fastness is a vast library located near the heart of the infernal city of Dis. This adventure is concerned only with the small suite of rooms that serve Odexidie as personal offices; the Fallen Fastness itself is a sprawling building on a scale far greater than any on the Material Plane, and full details of the location are well beyond the scope of this adventure. However, certain qualities of Hell impose themselves upon the PCs during

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A. ODEXIDIE'S OFFICES



their visit (see page 192 of *Pathfinder RPG GameMastery Guide* 192 for information on Hell's planar traits).

A. ODEXIDIE'S OFFICES

Odexidie is a powerful and notable employee of the Fallen Fastness, but far from being one of the building's most powerful devils. His station, however, does grant him enough prestige to own a section of office space on a higher floor. The office does not have direct access to the greater library—this prevents clients from wandering where they shouldn't go, and when Odexidie needs to travel to other parts of the library, it's a simple matter for him to teleport there. Here and there, windows and balconies offer a vertiginous view of the skyline of Dis, but in most of the chambers, only the faintly audible shrieks of damned souls in the distance serve as a reminder that this complex exists in a realm far more sinister than Golarion.

ODEXIDIE'S OFFICES FEATURES

All rooms in the offices have the following features unless otherwise noted. They are not illuminated—devils, after all, can see in the dark. The temperature is warm but tolerable for Material Plane creatures. The ceiling height reaches 20 feet. All doors are constructed of infernally enhanced iron (hardness 20, hp 60, break DC 32) and automatically lock when closed (Disable Device DC 35). Each door contains a 1-inch-diameter peephole sized perfectly for an *arcane eye* to pass through. The walls, floor, and ceiling are made of infernal stone that is quite

difficult to damage (hardness 20, hp 900, break DC 65). At your discretion, PCs who insist on damaging the walls of the structure attract the attention of some of the Fallen Fastness's structural guardians: the first time, a pair of rust devils (see page 82) teleports in to sternly warn the PCs about damaging the building; these creatures attack in endless waves after a second infraction. Damage to the doors is generally beneath the notice of these devils; they're interested in the maintenance of structures, not access points within the structures themselves.

A1. LOBBY (CR 13)

The snarling face of an immense canine looms along one wall of this room, its open jaws revealing a pulsating, raw tunnel that coils off into the infinite. The rest of the room has a strangely mundane appearance, with wood-paneled walls and a pair of leather sofas facing each other across the room, giving the chamber the look of a sort of waiting room. Near the wall opposite the hellmouth sits a simple wooden desk. Flickering fires burn in lamps hanging from the walls.

Clients who visit Odexidie are intentionally made to wait here while his staff confirm their appointments. *Continual flames* burn in the lamps on the walls, providing the room's illumination.

Creatures: A pair of barbed devils are stationed here as receptionists and, if necessary, a first line of defense against unwanted visitors to the offices. Both devils stand behind the desk at military attention, but sneer at the PCs

as they arrive. The hamatulas do not immediately assume the PCs are invaders, but gruffly inquire whether they have an appointment. Regardless of the answer, one of the pair telepathically confers with Odexidie in area **A9**, who orders the devil to secure the password from the PCs. The devil conveys this demand to the PCs, noting that if they truly have arranged for an appointment, Master Odexidie would have given them this information. Providing the word “kasnum” surprises the devils, but they swiftly nod, unlock the door leading out of area **A1**, then escort the party to area **A2a** to await Odexidie.

If the PCs fail to give the password, the devils growl and inform the PCs that they are interrupting their master’s work merely by being here, and order them to immediately leave. With a successful DC 34 Diplomacy check or DC 24 Intimidate check, the PCs keep the devils from attacking at once, but if Odexidie learns that intruders have pushed his devils around, he orders them to attack the PCs immediately. A mind-controlled devil will certainly comply with a PC’s orders to serve as a guide and is unlikely to alert Odexidie via telepathy. Of course, simply attacking the devils is always an option—in this case, they fight to the death.

In any event, Odexidie doesn’t know who the PCs are, but the further they push into his offices, the more curious he grows. Once warned by the devils of the visitors, Odexidie casts *arcane eye* and sends the sensor through the holes in the doors to observe the PCs.

Each of these two devils carries keys that unlock all of the doors in Odexidie’s offices.

BARBED DEVILS (2)

CR 11

XP 12,800 each

hp 138 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 72)

A2. CONFERENCE ROOMS

A long table of highly polished wood occupies the center of this room, surrounded by six padded chairs neatly tucked in on either side. Lighting is provided by flickering brass lamps hanging from the ceiling in the room’s corners. A sideboard holding several bottles and fine crystal stands in the northern corner opposite the doors, while a tented placard rests on the table.

Add the following read-aloud text for area **A2a**.

A sweeping window in one wall affords a shocking view: a vast iron city that stretches as far as the eye can see. The city carries an unmistakable aura of menace. Its razor-sharp spires reaching up to a darkened sky, and it is lit by a crawling network of fire-filled canals and burning monuments. Palaces beyond the scope of mortal achievement burst from the bones of fallen citadels, while minarets jab skyward like a thousand accusing fingers.

The placard on each table reads, “For the use and comfort of our guests.” The window in area **A2a** cannot be opened and has the same physical features as a wall for the purposes of breaking it. It looks out upon the cityscape of Dis itself, which a PC can recognize with a successful DC 20 Knowledge (planes) check.

Areas **A2c** are washrooms that each contain a simple commode, a washbasin with clean running water, and a mirror. Fresh washcloths are stacked on the counter. The doors to these two rooms do not lock.

Treasure: The crystal glassware in each sideboard is worth 150 gp, while each collection of wine and liquor is worth 1,000 gp per room in all. In addition, each sideboard is stocked with a single *sustaining spoon* that creates unusually delicious and fine-smelling food when placed in an empty container. Unfortunately, the food the spoon creates is highly unsettling in appearance, manifesting as the most unappetizing meal the user can imagine. Other than these cosmetic effects, these *sustaining spoons* function identically to those detailed in the *Pathfinder RPG Core Rulebook*.

Development: If the PCs gave the password to the barbed devils, they’re escorted to area **A2a**, where they are left to wait for 3d6 hours before Odexidie bothers to make an appearance. The contract devil observes them now and then via an *arcane eye*, but the length of the wait is only partially to test the PCs’ patience. The contract devil’s sense of time is somewhat skewed when compared to that of a mortal creature—he’s currently involved in putting the final touches on a contract and sees no reason to rush the work of lettering the document’s last few words to proper perfection.

If the PCs wait out the 3d6 hours, Odexidie finally arrives to greet them—see Meeting Odexidie on page 16 for more details.

A3. CENTERPIECE (CR 13)

The domed ceiling of this octagonal chamber rises to twenty-five feet at its apex, from which numerous iron chains suspend a sixteen-foot-tall sculpture of dull black stone and metal. The sculpture appears to be of a fallen angel, its wings twisted, arms broken, and feet bound together by metal bands. What appear to be spiked manacles are affixed to the sculpture’s torso. The sculpture hangs above an octagonal pit seething with coiling lengths of flickering hellfire. Iron plaques hang over the two double doors exiting the room.

The suspended statue is a deactivated construct known as an akaruzug, an infernal monstrosity normally powered by the living soul of a creature crucified on its chest. This akaruzug has long been disabled, and hangs here as a gothic work of art rather than a potential guardian. The fiery pit below provides dim lighting, but is actually an infernal furnace shaft that cuts through

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the entire height of the Fallen Fastness into the molten bowels of Dis. A fall into the pit likely invites death, for after plummeting 500 feet, a victim plunges into molten iron, taking 20d6 points of damage from the fall and 20d6 points of damage from hellfire per round (half the damage caused by hellfire is fire damage, while the other half is unholy damage; evil creatures take no damage from this unholy energy, but good creatures take double damage from it). There is no other exit from this pit.

The plaques over the doors are inscribed with short messages in Infernal. The plaque above the door to area **A4** reads "Ratification Room," while the plaque above the other door reads "Inner Offices of the Vice Barrister of Terrestrial Prospects." Any PC who succeeds at a DC 10 Perception check hears the sound of a man screaming in pain through the door to area **A4**.

Creature: Another of Odexidie's guardians stands sentinel in this chamber—a looming ice devil who stands impassively just before the nonfunctional akaruzug. Unlike the devils in area **A1**, this guardian has little interest in discussion. If it notices intruders not accompanied by barbed devil escorts, it attacks on sight while notifying Odexidie via telepathy. If the PCs attacked the barbed devils, Odexidie alerts this ice devil, which takes the time to create a *persistent image* of a solid floor over the pit in the center of the room, hoping to trick intruders into a devastating fall.

ICE DEVIL**CR 13****XP 25,600****hp** 161 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 77*)**A4. RATIFICATION ROOM (CR 14)**

The first time the PCs open the door from area **A3** into this area, they are greeted by the sound of a man screaming in agony. This is Tavoul Abramos, who has decided, too late, that the infernal contract he's about to sign isn't worth the pain.

A long, polished iron table sits in the middle of this room, flanked by tall-backed, leather-covered chairs. In a nearby alcove stands a table strewn with numerous blank scrolls of parchment and vellum, and a wealth of iron quills with razor-sharp nibs. The cloying, metallic smell of blood hangs heavy in the air.

While most infernal contracts can be signed anywhere, tradition holds in the Fallen Fastness for them to be signed in ratification rooms like this, outfitted with a supply of fine parchment and quills crafted expressly for the use of drawing blood for signatures. So long as the contracted mortal is present for the duration, the devil reduces the amount of time needed to create an infernal contract by 2 of the relevant units (minimum 1); contracts with fixed creation times rather than a die roll, such as

the Curse of the Ever-Soul, cannot be modified in this way by a ratification room.

Creatures: Tavoul Abramos is an eager and egotistical Garundi sculptor from the city of Nisroch in Nidal, and in preparation for his life's work of crafting a series of towering statues commemorating Zon-Kuthon, he approached a rust devil to secure an infernal contract to bolster his skill at sculpture. The devil he contacted convinced Tavoul to accompany it to Dis and use this room to speed the process along, and was joined by another rust devil eager to observe the signing. The two devils have only recently completed the drafting of the contract (it lies on the table but is yet unsigned), and are in the process of extracting payment from Tavoul in the form of a rib and 2 points of Constitution drain—a particularly painful process that Tavoul now regrets agreeing to.

The rust devils do not take well to disturbances. They do their best to ignore the PCs, and if left to their work, complete the extraction of Tavoul's rib in a mere 2d4 hours of slow torture. If they are attacked, the contract on the table is threatened, or any attempt is made to speak to them or their client, both devils swiftly turn their wrath on the PCs.

Tavoul has been strapped to a chair at the head of the table; he's currently at 67 hp as a result of the rib extraction, but has not yet lost the 2 points of Constitution. If he notices intruders, his cries of pain swiftly become cries for help, promising to reward the PCs handsomely if they rescue him. Once the battle with the rust devils begins, though, Tavoul spends each round attempting to escape via DC 20 Strength checks to break the chair. If he succeeds, he snatches his +3 *chain shirt* from the table and flees into the offices to seek out Odexidie to beg for a way out of Dis. His efforts lead only to his being charmed by the handmaiden devil in area **A8**; should the PCs meet Tavoul again in that room, he is prepared to defend his new mistress if she is attacked.

RUST DEVILS (2)**CR 12****XP 19,200 each****hp** 162 each (see page 82)**TAVOUL ABRAMOS****CR 13****XP 25,600**

Male human rogue 14

LE Medium humanoid (human)

Init +8; **Senses** Perception +18**DEFENSE****AC** 24, touch 16, flat-footed 19 (+7 armor, +1 deflection, +4 Dex, +1 dodge, +1 natural)**hp** 108 (currently 67 hp; 14d8+42)**Fort** +8, **Ref** +13, **Will** +7**Defensive Abilities** improved evasion, improved uncanny dodge, trap sense +4**OFFENSE****Speed** 30 ft.

Melee +1 icy burst spiked chain +14/+9 (2d4+4/19–20 plus 1d6 cold)

Special Attacks sneak attack +7d6 plus 7 bleed

TACTICS

During Combat If forced into combat, Tavoul attacks a flat-footed enemy with his spiked chain on the first round and then flees using fast stealth. He repeatedly uses hit and run tactics, avoiding drawn-out melee combat if at all possible. When fighting alongside allies, Tavoul prefers to flank foes with heavily armored allies.

Morale Tavoul flees combat if reduced to 25 hit points or fewer, or surrenders if no escape is apparent. Only when cornered against foes he knows will offer no quarter does he consider fighting to the death.

STATISTICS

Str 14, **Dex** 19, **Con** 14, **Int** 10, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 8

Base Atk +10; **CMB** +12; **CMD** 28

Feats Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (spiked chain), Great Fortitude, Improved Critical (spiked chain), Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Skill Focus (Stealth), Toughness, Weapon Focus (spiked chain)

Skills Bluff +16, Craft (sculpture) +15, Disable Device +29, Intimidate +16, Knowledge (local) +10, Knowledge (planes) +7, Knowledge (religion) +7, Perception +18, Sense Motive +11, Sleight of Hand +20, Stealth +26, Use Magic Device +16

Languages Common, Osiriani

SQ rogue talents (bleeding attack +7, combat trick, fast stealth, improved evasion, resiliency, slippery mind, weapon training), trapfinding +7

Gear +3 chain shirt, +1 icy burst spiked chain, amulet of natural armor +1, boots of elvenkind, ring of protection +1, masterwork thieves' tools

Treasure: Tavoul's +3 chain shirt sits on the table unless he snatches it up upon being released. The bloodbond insight contract Tavoul was in "negotiations" over sits on the table as well, but as it was tailor-made for Tavoul, it is of little material worth to the PCs. The razor-sharp iron quills in the alcove, 20 in all, are each worth 20 gp as novelties. Finally, one of the rust devils carries a scroll of plane shift intended to send Tavoul back to the Material Plane after the contract was signed—this scroll can, of course, be used by the PCs to return home as well.

Development: If the PCs rescue Tavoul, the rogue proves to be sullen and moody; he's ashamed of how his attempt to forge an infernal contract descended into faintheartedness, and would rather leave the whole thing behind him. He was depending on the rust devils for his return trip to Nidal, and if they're dead, that dependence shifts to the PCs. He promises to aid them in fights for the rest of the PCs' time here if they commit to bringing him along when they return to the Material Plane—he may even promise them his chain shirt or spiked chain in payment once he's

safe on his home plane. Of course, Tavoul doesn't intend to keep his word—the first chance he gets, he uses Sleight of Hand to attempt to steal the scroll of plane shift, then tries to use it via Use Magic Device to flee on his own.

Story Award: If the PCs arrange to return Tavoul to his home without him resorting to theft of the scroll of plane shift or otherwise taking his escape into his own hands, award them XP as if they had defeated him in combat.

A5. OUBLIETTES (CR 6 AND 6)

The floor and lower walls of this bare stone cell are caked with all manner of filth and dried fluids. No concession toward comfort exists within the bleak, foul-smelling chamber.

Creatures: Odexidie keeps a dozen damned souls imprisoned here, divided between these two oubliettes. He relaxes and unwinds by tormenting some of these petitioners, but for the most part he keeps them on hand as currency to trade with other devils. All



TAVOUL ABRAMOS

of these damned souls were once mortals who forged contracts with Odexidie. These hapless creatures appear as they did in life, albeit naked, wretched, and tortured. Each oubliette contains six of these pitiful petitioners, who know nothing but pain. If either door is opened, they wail and shriek, as they expect the PCs to torture them; a petitioner who is attacked fights back if it survives the blow, but the others continue cowering until they are harmed.

DAMNED SOULS (12)**CR 1****XP 400 each**LE petitioners (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 2* 208)**hp** 16 each**A6. GUEST ROOM**

This cell is rather spacious, as far as prison cells in Hell go, but dark and damp. A single cot covered in blankets swarming with parasites, a table with a rough and uneven surface, and a single wooden chamber pot with a ragged, splintery rim are the cell's only features. A rickety bookshelf opposite the infested bed contains six shabby tomes.

Odexidie keeps this room on hand for special situations. While it may appear to be a cell, it is, in fact, a guest room for mortal visitors. The books on the shelves are well read and badly damaged novels about good people meeting bad ends, all written by Odexidie. They are, in fact, unusually compelling in their plots, yet the last few pages of each book, where the story's conclusion and the hopeful redemption of the books' characters would normally be revealed, have been torn out.

If any of Odexidie's minions capture the PCs, they place them here, stripped of their gear. Captured PCs wait here for 3d6 hours before Odexidie visits them to speak to them—see Meeting Odexidie on page 16 for more details. Every 1d4 hours, one of the zebub archers from area A7 teleports invisibly into this room, attacks one random PC with a single sneak attack with its bow, then teleports out with a giggle, all part of Odexidie's twisted notion of hospitality. The PCs' gear is placed in area A9 in the meantime; if Odexidie agrees to release them, he returns all of their confiscated items save one each, taking each PC's favorite item as payment for his trouble.

A7. AERIE OF RAGING WHISPERS (CR 14)

This room's door does not lock instantly when closed.

A stone walkway stretches south from this room's only door to connect to a hexagonal platform hanging suspended over a pit containing a sea of bones fifty feet below. The chamber is cavernous and dark; its sheer walls disappear into a tangle of cobwebs fifty feet overhead. Fifteen feet above the central platform, four smaller platforms cling to the walls. An

unsettling susurrus fills the room, as if thousands of unseen lips were whispering threats into the empty air.

The ceiling of this room rises another 30 feet above the cobwebs before ending in a filth-encrusted iron dome. Below, the room is filled with the bones of Odexidie's victims over the eons; these bones fill only half of the 100-foot-deep pit. The whispers in the air are an unsettling but harmless manifestation of the torments of all those who died at Odexidie's whims.

A fall into the pit below deals 5d6 points of falling damage and 1d6 points of piercing damage from the bones. A PC must succeed at a DC 30 Climb check to scale the relatively smooth walls.

Creatures: Odexidie maintains an aerie of specially trained accuser devils here, often sending them to other planes in search of desperate souls. In addition, the zebub archers serve as guardians—they linger here, one on each of the platforms, awaiting his call to come to his aid. They do not immediately attack any intruders and instead observe quietly while remaining invisible on their ledges. The zebub in the northwest corner is in range to telepathically alert Odexidie to the PCs' actions, and the contract devil sends an *arcane eye* to observe them as well if he hasn't done so already. If the PCs notice the invisible devils but do not immediately attack, the devils warn the PCs to return to the conference room (area A2a) to await their master.

ZEBUB ARCHERS (4)**CR 10****XP 9,600 each**Accuser devil rogue 9 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 2* 84)

LE Small outsider (devil, evil, extraplanar, lawful)

Init +7; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +17**DEFENSE****AC** 23, touch 17, flat-footed 17 (+4 armor, +5 Dex, +1 dodge, +2 natural, +1 size)**hp** 123 each (13 HD; 9d8+4d10+61)**Fort** +10, **Ref** +17, **Will** +5**Defensive Abilities** evasion, improved uncanny dodge, trap sense +3; **DR** 5/good or silver; **Immune** fire, poison;**Resist** acid 10, cold 10**OFFENSE****Speed** 20 ft., fly 60 ft. (perfect)**Melee** bite +13 (1d6+2 plus 1d6 acid plus poison)**Ranged** +2 *composite longbow* +21/+16 (1d6+4/x3)**Special Attacks** disease, sneak attack +5d6 plus 5 bleed**Spell-Like Abilities** (CL 8th; concentration +10)At will—*greater teleport* (self plus 50 lbs. of objects only), *invisibility* (self only)3/day—*grease*, *summon swarm*, *whispering wind*1/day—*summon* (level 3, 1 zebub or 1d4 lemures, 40%)**TACTICS****Before Combat** The zebubs have *invisibility* active at all times.**During Combat** The zebub archers take turns using Dazzling

Display to permit their comrades to use Shatter Defenses, thus gaining sneak attacks with their shots. One zebub per round uses *grease* on the platform below—a character who falls prone while adjacent to the edge must succeed at a DC 12 Reflex save or fall into the pit below.

Morale A zebub reduced to fewer than 40 hp teleports to area **A9** to join Odexidie; a zebub in Odexidie's presence fights to the death.

STATISTICS

Str 15, **Dex** 24, **Con** 16, **Int** 9, **Wis** 13, **Cha** 14

Base Atk +10; **CMB** +11; **CMD** 29

Feats Dazzling Display, Deadly Aim, Dodge, Point-Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Rapid Shot, Shatter Defenses, Toughness, Weapon Finesse, Weapon Focus (longbow)

Skills Acrobatics +23, Bluff +9, Disable Device +25, Intimidate +14, Fly +24, Knowledge (planes) +7, Perception +17, Sense Motive +13, Stealth +27

Languages Celestial, Draconic, Infernal; telepathy 100 ft.

SQ infernal eye, rogue talents (bleeding attack +5, combat trick, finesse rogue, weapon training), trapfinding +4

Gear +1 studded leather, +2 composite longbow (+2 Str) with 6 +1 unholy arrows and 14 mithral arrows

A8. LIBRARY (CR 14)

Bookcases stand neatly along and perpendicular to the walls of this large library. An immense study table fitted with a privacy divider sits in the heart of the room, while a small desk and chair sit in a nook near a display case amid the bookshelves.

This room is where Odexidie and visiting associates perform research and prepare their more challenging contracts, and as such, this room offers the same adjustment to the time required to draft infernal contracts as the smaller ratification room (area **A4**). Odexidie has long had a particular interest in the laws of Golarion, which helped get him involved in the Cheliah Covenant many years ago. A search of the books here reveals this interest, as copies of legal statutes from throughout the Inner Sea region and beyond, including Tian Xia and Vudra, are easily the most common topics on the shelves. Use of this library to research any law-related topic associated with Golarion grants a +10 circumstance bonus on appropriate Knowledge checks.

Creature: A handmaiden devil named Elizenblith serves as Odexidie's personal secretary and librarian. Except for his most private dealings, Elizenblith knows all of Odexidie's clients and his personal schedule, and serves as a last line of defense against unwanted meetings. She looks the part, affecting a white, long-sleeved, button-down blouse and metal-rimmed glasses. If the PCs managed to get this far without alerting Odexidie, Elizenblith politely asks the PCs to identify themselves and state whether they have an appointment,



ZEBUB ARCHER

simultaneously consulting telepathically with Odexidie. In this case, Odexidie is impressed that the PCs made it this far and has Elizenblith ask the PCs to wait “a few moments” while he readies himself to meet with them. Once his preparatory spells are cast, Odexidie enters this room to meet with the PCs (see Meeting Odexidie on page 16).

If Odexidie knows the PCs are fighting their way to him, he has informed Elizenblith to stall them long enough for him to prepare for combat. The handmaiden devil first attempts to do so with polite conversation, then by casting *enthrall*, and finally through *charm monster* or *black tentacles* followed by combat; if Tavoul from area **A4** is here, she has one fewer use of *charm monster* available unless 24 hours have passed.

ELIZENBLITH

CR 14

XP 38,400

Handmaiden devil (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 2* 86)

hp 187

A9. ODEXIDIE'S OFFICE (CR 15)

Pristine white carpeting covers much of the stone floor of this spacious room, reaching nearly to the walls. A large desk sits at one end of the room before a large leather chair, its backrest strangely shaped as if to accommodate someone with odd growths or protrusions. A less exotically

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shaped but equally comfortable-looking sofa and two smaller chairs can be found near a large, black piano in a windowed alcove. The skyline of a diabolic city of iron can be seen through the window.

This is Odexidie's private office, the room in which he spends most of his time and the chamber to which he leads the PCs once they secure his interest (see Meeting Odexidie below). The secret door behind Odexidie's desk can be found with a successful DC 40 Perception check—it leads to a staircase that descends to a lower floor of the Fallen Fastness. This does permit PCs to expand their adventures in Hell, but circumstances should suggest they have more pressing priorities back in Kintargo.

Creature: If the PCs manage to quietly infiltrate the office, they encounter Odexidie here, working on a convoluted contract involving an architect who seeks to build a palace to attract the attention of the Lords of Hell to a world where magic does not function. If the PCs startle Odexidie, he applauds their skill while telepathically reaching out to the other devils in the offices to find out which ones still live and are able to teleport into the room to aid him should he require it. Continue with Meeting Odexidie below, but if the PCs insult him or attack, they suddenly find themselves facing all of the surviving devils as they teleport in at once to protect the contract devil.

ODEXIDIE**CR 15****XP 51,200****hp 231** (see page 58)**MEETING ODEXIDIE**

Odexidie's first order of business is to determine the identity of these newcomers. He asks the characters each to tell him their names, goals, and reasons for visiting him; use this as an opportunity to give your players a chance to brag or boast, but also to squirm—let them worry about giving out too much personal information, even though Odexidie has no real reason to abuse this information. Once he learns they're here to find out more about the Kintargo Contract, he makes his decision to help them, though he doesn't want to appear too eager. Consider having each PC attempt a Diplomacy check while speaking to give the illusion of a chance of failure, then allow the PC with the highest result to "win the devil over."

Once he concludes that the PCs will be the ones to capitalize upon the Kintargo Contract's loophole, he invites them to join him in his private office (area Ag), if they aren't there already. He gives the PCs the password to remove the *secret page* on the contract, or congratulates them on their ingenuity if they figured it out on their own. He has little interest in the whys—he doesn't care what the PCs' reasons are for liberating Kintargo, as long as the end results make plain the cleverness of his legal writing

to all of Cheliox (and thus the Church of Asmodeus, and eventually the Prince of Darkness himself).

Likely questions and Odexidie's answers are listed below, but regardless of what the PCs ask, you should strive to make sure they learn the five bloodlines required to form the Board of Governors, as this information leads directly into Part 2 of this adventure.

What is the Kintargo Contract? "It is a subcontract of a larger whole, the Cheliox Covenant, which grants House Thrune the support of Hell in policing its empire. The Kintargo Contract, in particular, concerns the role and governance of Kintargo and its hinterlands under said empire. Other regions of Cheliox have their own contracts, yet the Kintargo Contract is special, because Kintargo and the region you call the Archduchy of Ravounel today were never officially part of Cheliox to start with, and because House Thrune arranged for a hidden clause prior to signing."

How does the hidden clause work? "The Kintargo Contract is so worded that House Thrune or its allies, including the Church of Asmodeus, requires the consent of the city's acting lord-mayor to deploy an army into the city or its holdings. Normally, a lord-mayor in a Chelish city is appointed by the country's ruler, but in the case of this contract, that clause has been revised such that the position is ratified instead by a local Board of Governors. Abrogail apparently didn't trust the Church of Asmodeus to honor its end of the bargain, and if it tried to seize control from Thrune, she figured she could slip away to Kintargo, bribe the Board of Governors to ratify her as lord-mayor, and then deny the Chelish military permission to enter the region. If the military ignored her and invaded anyway, the entire Cheliox Covenant would be voided. The government would lose Hell's support, and just like that Cheliox would be plunged into a second civil war. Abrogail would certainly have lost all of her influence as the nation's leader, yes, but her immortal soul would have been saved in this case. Unfortunately, the Church and Asmodeus never had intentions of betraying Thrune, so she never had to use the clause, and it slipped into obscurity with her death. Rather disappointing, I must say."

Why do you find that disappointing? "Because with the death of Abrogail I, my work on this contract became consigned to insignificance. As the author of the Kintargo Contract, I remain eager to see it play out. Until it does, the cunning skill with which I sculpted the contract's words remains unappreciated. But by using its hidden clause, you could build my reputation as a crafter of fine contracts. We both win, and that's not a bad thing, is it?"

What is the Board of Governors? "The Board of Governors is to consist of five people from established Kintargan family lines. The families themselves were not included in the Kintargo contract itself for the sake of language clarity, and the fact that your Silver City abandoned the tradition after Abrogail's death does not

impact the legal standing of the contract. But since you're here and asked so nicely, the family names are Delronge, Mayhart, Solstine, Tanessen, and Urvis. Hopefully, you'll be able to find descendants of all five lines, since if any of these lines have died out without a new line being ratified in, I'm afraid you'll be out of luck without having Cheliox's current queen issue an official addendum to the contract. And I assume that's not something you'll be able to count on her doing."

What happens if we get the Board of Governors to ratify a lord-mayor? Will Kintargo be safe from Cheliox? "Assuming a properly ratified lord-mayor does not grant Cheliox permission for its military to enter the city, Cheliox could not take direct action without voiding the entire covenant. If that were to happen, House Thrune would lose Hell's support, and Cheliox's enemies would likely descend upon the nation like vultures upon a ripe corpse. An independent Kintargo is a much lesser pain to Cheliox than that, I should say, and they would certainly not send their military into the city for fear of such a result."

What about Ravounel? Would it be protected? "The Kintargo Contract includes all of the region known as Ravounel. As long as the people of the area accept the lord-mayor of Kintargo as their regional representative or have an extant alliance with Kintargo, they and their lands would be covered by the contract as well."

Why would Asmodeus, his church, or House Thrune ever allow this hidden clause to exist? "Asmodeus's other devils are unaware of it. I altered the document internally and signed off on it, and Abrogail I took the secret to her grave. The non-dissolution clause of the Cheliox Covenant made her nervous. The Kintargo Contract was her back-up plan to trick the church or her family into voiding the primary contract if she became dissatisfied with the whole arrangement, which I gather she never was, in the end. As for the Prince of Darkness himself? I can guarantee he knows about it. The fact that he allowed it to happen is all the proof I need that he approves of it. I do not question this, and neither should you."

What is the non-dissolution clause? "The ruler of Cheliox is free to name her own heir within House Thrune, but the non-dissolution clause prevents House Thrune from being disbanded as a means to nullify the Cheliox Covenant. Likewise, the church must abide by its alliance with House Thrune to the extent that it cannot dissolve the family or its power. Basically, only Asmodeus can give House Thrune permission to cease to exist. Hence the primary contract is perpetual, even if Thrune were to consist of nothing but simpering fools. There's no way for them to quit, so Abrogail wanted another way to force a breach of contract."

What were Barzillai's interests in Ravounel? "Typical human fears of mortality compounded by an atypical skill at securing an escape from said mortality. Barzillai had

secured a method, with the aid of Mephistopheles, I might add, of becoming a genius loci upon his death. As part of the ritual's requirements, he was to have lived out a life in the region to which he bound his soul—in this case, Kintargo and its environs. I suspect that his early exit from the mortal shell has put a significant kink in his plans for immortality. I had hoped the time would come when he would need to exercise the loophole from the Kintargo Contract, but truth be told, it matters not if it is he or another lord-mayor who takes this step. To me, the end results are the same."

What is your interest in Ravounel? "I have little concern for the fate of your little city and duchy. I want only for my work on the contract to be known, and until a lord-mayor of Kintargo acts upon the clause, it will remain obscure."

Development: If the PCs choose instead to attack and manage to slay Odexidie, you should allow them to use his notes and resources (here and in area A8) to piece together all of the above information. Doing so should take several days, during which the PCs may need to defend themselves against attacks from visiting devils curious to find out why Odexidie has gone silent. Canny PCs relocate Odexidie's library back to Kintargo where it can be studied safely!

Story Award: If the PCs manage to secure an audience with Odexidie without resorting to violence, award the party 248,000 XP. This represents the XP they would have gained for defeating him and several of his office's guardians in combat, and should be awarded only if the PCs would otherwise have earned no XP for combat in this part of the adventure. If the PCs fought their way to Odexidie but met peacefully with the contract devil, award them XP as if they had defeated Odexidie in combat.

RETURNING TO KINTARGO

Once the PCs are satisfied with what they are able to learn from Odexidie, they still have to consider their return to Kintargo. This could well pose a problem if no PC has the ability to cast *plane shift*. One of the rust devils in area A4 has a *scroll of plane shift*, and Odexidie himself can use *plane shift* to send the PCs back to the Material Plane. However, the fact that this spell is inaccurate and could well deposit the PCs in locations as far-flung as Varisia, Hermea, or Molthune (to say nothing of locales in the Chelish heartlands) makes it a risky proposition.

Odexidie offers another option, though. He can craft an infernal contract for the PCs to sign that would allow him to send them back to Kintargo with perfect accuracy, and as a contract devil, he can produce said contract as a full-round action. He understands the PCs might be hesitant to sign an infernal contract, and points out that rather than paying with one of their souls, they can instead pay with something else of value to him: the *melancholic talisman* they likely used to travel here in the

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first place. Odexidie has no problem allowing the PCs to take as much time as they want studying the contract, suggesting that if they wish to do so, they should relocate to one of the conference rooms (area A2) so that they'll have food, water, and other comforts.

HOMECOMING PLEDGE**CR 10****XP 9,600****Devil** contract devil (phistophilus)**Creation Time** 1d4 weeks (1 full round for Odexidie)

Benefit The contracted mortal can command the Dis entrance of the hellmouth Gingorox to open while relocating the Caina entrance to a predetermined location on the Material Plane (in the case of this specific contract, the main stage of the Kintargo Opera House). The portal remains active for 10 minutes, or until the contracted mortal commands Gingorox to close. This contract allows only a single use of the hellmouth in this manner.

Payment The contracted mortal must give the contracting devil a magical item of great personal value to that devil (in this case, the *melancholic talisman*).

RESEARCH

Description A homecoming pledge contains a symbolic map showing the planar connections between the point of departure and the point of arrival.

Complexity 30

Specialized Skills Knowledge (arcana), Knowledge (planes)
kp 30

Hidden Condition (kp 15) Until a specific act or event (often not one that the contracting devil makes explicit or obvious) comes to pass, the contracting devil can use the Dis entrance of the hellmouth to travel to and from the same location the contracted mortal uses at will. In this adventure, Odexidie does not take advantage of this hidden condition unless he comes to believe the PCs are not interested in helping to make the loophole in the Kintargo Contract public.

Termination Clause (kp 0) Typically, a homecoming pledge includes an act that, if undertaken by the contracted mortal, terminates the contract. In this case, successfully ratifying a lord-mayor of Kintargo terminates the lingering hidden condition of this contract.

PART 2: LEVERAGE OVER LAW

The most important thing for the PCs to learn from their visit to Hell is the knowledge of the five family lines required to reform the Board of Governors. This part of the adventure covers gathering representatives from the Delronge, Mayhart, Solstine, Tanessen, and Urvis families to serve on the board—but tracking them down is, in some cases, only the start of the job. Not all of these people agree on who the new leader of Kintargo should be, after all. The PCs also need to secure alliances with other groups within the region of Ravounel to further bolster their defense against Thrune reprisals. The order in which

the PCs seek to accomplish these tasks is left to you to determine, but the order as presented on the following pages is in roughly ascending order of danger. Note that while the PCs are completing the tasks in this part of the adventure, events from Part 4 begin to take place as well.

THE KINTARGO RUMOR MILL

Now that the mayhem of “A Song of Silver” has passed, things are back to a relatively normal state in Kintargo. The citizens are returning to their everyday lives, and the city’s rumor mill has kicked back into gear. The PCs have numerous opportunities to learn and overhear rumors about current events in Kintargo and the surrounding regions—many of these rumors could even encourage the PCs to investigate one of the missions presented in Part 3 of this adventure before their attention is specifically drawn to the subject by an NPC. A PC could learn a rumor with a successful DC 15 Diplomacy check to gather information after 1d4 hours of investigation, or perhaps as a reward for spending the time to talk to an NPC. When the PCs learn a rumor, you can randomly determine one of the rumors from the table on page 19 or pick one in particular to lead the PCs toward a specific mission. Information in parentheses after each rumor indicates whether the rumor is merely general scuttlebutt or it links to a specific encounter in this adventure. If you roll a rumor the PCs have already resolved, you should adjust the rumor to account for that fact—having the PCs hear a growing number of rumors about how they solved certain problems is a great way to give them in-game feedback about their continued success.

GATHERING THE GOVERNORS

From Odexidie or his notes, the PCs should have learned the names of the five families from which the members of Kintargo’s Board of Governors must be drawn: the Delronges, the Mayharts, the Solstines, the Tanessens, and the Urvises. Had any of these family lines died out, forming a valid Board of Governors would have required ratification of a new line by the Chelish government, but fortunately for the PCs, members of all five lineages still exist in Kintargo. Unfortunately, securing the cooperation of some of them may prove troublesome. Not all of them initially agree that ratifying a new lord-mayor of the city, and thus investing in Kintargo a leader who can prevent the deployment of the Chelish military into the region is the best idea. This adventure assumes that the PCs ratify Jilia Bainilus as lord-mayor; adjust the following encounters to account for any other NPC (or PC) the heroes wish to back.

Some of the family lines are more difficult to research than others—successful Knowledge checks (typically nobility, but sometimes history or local) are required to learn about the fates of the five lines. If the PCs lack the appropriate Knowledge skills, they can gather

KINTARGO RUMORS

d10	Rumor
1	"Strange, destructive whirlpools have been dragging ships down to a watery grave off the western coast—sailors claim these vortexes are created by a sea monster!" (See <i>Mission 4</i> on page 35 for more details.)
2	"House Thrune is still working to recover Westcrown from the Glorious Reclamation, but it's just a matter of time before the queen turns her attention to Kintargo." (General rumor meant to spur on the PCs.)
3	"Ravounel Forest has long been claimed by a group of flying monsters that wear human forms and prey on those who explore the woods." (Unreliable rumor generated from strix sightings over the years; see <i>Mission 5</i> on page 39 for more details.)
4	"Nidal still has agents in the region, even though they've abandoned their holdings in Kintargo. That strange pyramid in the North Plains, for example—they say the sun never shines on it!" (See <i>Mission 3</i> on page 28 for more details.)
5	"Barzillai's gone and the Asmodeans are on the run, but Chelish slavers are still alive and well, operating in hiding in the city. Someone needs to run them off!" (See <i>Mission 1</i> on page 24 for more details.)
6	"The weather's always been violent and unpredictable over and around Ravounel Forest, but it's been worse of late—they say the cult of Rovagug has an interest in these storms." (See <i>Mission 5</i> on page 39 for more details.)
7	"They may have executed the Temple Hill Slasher over a hundred years ago, but his office at Alabaster Academy has been locked up since then. It's haunted by his ghost, you know!" (Foreshadows Part 4 of this adventure.)
8	"The priesthood of Asmodeus has been defeated, but I'm sure there are ghosts and devils and worse still lurking in the temple!" (General rumor meant to prompt the PCs into clearing out the temple if they haven't done so yet.)
9	"They say Barzillai Thrune didn't have a heart! Can you imagine? Maybe that has something to do with the people who claim to have spotted him hiding in the shadows, still alive?" (False rumor that foreshadows the events in "Breaking the Bones of Hell.")
10	"The streets may be safer than they have been, but someone—or something—is still murdering people in the back alleys." (Foreshadows Part 4 of this adventure; feel free to substitute more specific details for the latest murder perpetrated by Mangvhune for this rumor.)

information (using Diplomacy or via the Silver Ravens using a Gather Information check) or consult an NPC ally who knows about Kintargo's nobility, like Cassius Sargaeta, Jilia Bainilus, Rexus Victocora, or Shensen.

Story Award: For tracking down a family line, award the PCs 4,800 XP (or 2,400 XP if they're forced to recruit the aid of an NPC ally). The XP award for convincing three of the five to ratify Jilia as lord-mayor is part of the final XP award (see page 23).

ARCHBARONESS MELODIA DELRONGE

A PC needs to succeed at only a DC 10 Knowledge (nobility or local) check to know that the Delronge family remains one of Kintargo's significant aristocratic lines. It's currently led by Archbaroness **Melodia Delronge** (LE female human aristocrat 2/bard 8), a confident, cosmopolitan, and unapologetically patriotic Chelish woman. A successful DC 15 Knowledge (nobility) check reveals that she and her family remain staunch supporters of House Thrune, but now that Barzillai has been defeated, the Delrongs have taken up the stance of quietly disdaining the change to the status quo. Melodia suffered through the city's anti-establishment "phases" before Barzillai, and she is content to outlast this latest one as well, confident that once House Thrune cleans up this problem with the Glorious Reclamation, things in Kintargo will quickly "get back to normal."

Contacting the archbaroness is a simple task: with a successful DC 15 Diplomacy check, the PCs can set up a

meeting with Melodia to discuss her joining the Board of Governors. She knows of the antiquated institution and the prospect of adding another political quill to her hat delights her. Unfortunately, she's not a fan of Jilia Bainilus, and has in fact long been an outspoken critic of the woman. She demands another in Bainilus's place, preferably someone who has stronger ties and loyalties to the Chelish government (and incidentally, someone who is unlikely to play along in denying the government permission to enter Ravounel in a military fashion).

Fortunately for the PCs, Melodia's financial interests and her fondness for hunting and horse breeding make her eminently susceptible to bribery, something a PC can determine with a successful DC 20 Knowledge (local or nobility) check. During the discussion with the PCs, she will even hint to them that, were a proper donation to be made to certain business interests, she would feel more comfortable in ratifying Jilia Bainilus as lord-mayor. "After all, should these enterprises have the security of guaranteed funding, I would be less inclined to fret about a stable local government," she adds, with an avaricious twinkle in her eye.

The archbaroness is looking for a bribe of no less than 10,000 gp in value, although if the bribe is made using items associated with horseback riding, racing, or hunting, this amount is halved. She would prefer to let the PCs make the initial offer, at which point she accepts the bribe if it is more valuable than her minimum. If the bribe is less than the minimum amount, the PC offering

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the bribe can attempt a Diplomacy check to convince her to take it, or a Bluff check to trick her into thinking an offered object is more valuable than it actually is. The DC for either check is 20 + 5 per every 1,000 gp by which the offer falls short of Melodia's minimum value.

For example, if the PCs offer 8,000 gp, the DC of the Diplomacy or Bluff check to convince her to accept is 30. The absolute minimum she'll accept is a bribe of 1,000 gp (500 gp for horse- or hunting-themed items), and only after a successful DC 65 skill check. Each time a PC fails this Bluff or Diplomacy check, Melodia's absolute minimum bribe rises by 2,000 gp.

Alternatively, since the PCs need Melodia's cooperation only long enough for her to ratify Jilia's appointment, they could use mind-control magic to secure her cooperation. Intimidation won't last long enough, but *charm person* or *dominate person* likely would. Melodia has a +9 Will save, but if you suspect the PCs might take this route to securing her cooperation, you should probably prepare a full stat block for her, and for several of her guards (she favors 6th-level human fighters—use the statistics for dottari captains from “A Song of Silver”).

Finally, if the PCs managed to secure an alliance with Manticce Kaleekii, Vyre's Queen of Delights, in “Dance of the Damned,” inform the PC to whom Manticce took a particular liking that perhaps Melodia would appreciate being introduced to the Queen of Delights to secure more business relations with Vyre. If offered a chance to have a meeting with Manticce (which the Queen of Delights consents to if the PC asks), Melodia agrees to vote for Jilia when the meeting takes place.

CARLISS MAYHART

A successful DC 20 Knowledge (history or nobility) check is sufficient to learn that the Mayharts have fallen on hard times since the height of the family's power near the end of the Age of Enthronement. Before the civil war, the Mayharts owned several silver mines in the southern parts of Ravounel, but they had lost control of all of them by the time House Thruene took over the nation. Their membership on the Board of Governors was the family's final claim to fame, and when that political entity dissolved following the death of Abrogail I, the Mayharts faded from prominence, though they never truly gave up their pride at being one of Kintargo's noble families.

Today, only one heir to the Mayhart line remains alive: **Carliss Mayhart** (CN male human warrior 4). A PC can determine with a successful DC 20 Knowledge (local) check that Carliss lives in Villegre, where he works as

a guard in the Newt Market, but a visit to his home (a tenement in the north side of Villegre called Greenwall House) reveals an empty apartment. On a result of DC 30 or more on the Knowledge (local) check to identify him (or

alternately, if the PCs visit his tenement and ask his landlord or neighbors where he is), the PCs

learn that Carliss has spent the past several months in Kintargo Keep for the murder

of another minor aristocrat named

Lerish Aeldervenk. With a successful

DC 20 Knowledge (nobility) check,

a character recalls that these two

families, the Mayharts and the

Aeldervenks, held a long-standing

feud before the civil war due to

conflicts over mining claims in

the Menador foothills. With another

successful DC 15 Knowledge

(local) check, a PC hears further

information on the matter:

Carliss challenged Lerish

to an illegal midnight duel

on Bleakbridge (now known

as the Silver Span) that ended

with Lerish falling from the bridge

into the Yolubilis River. No body

was recovered, and the Aeldervenks used their political

influence to ensure Carliss went to prison. They had been

pushing for an execution, but the Night of Ashes took

place soon after Carliss's imprisonment, and the matter

was swept aside.

With respect to the Kintargo Contract, this development

is a disaster. Not only can Carliss not join the Board of

Governors while serving out a sentence of life imprisonment

for the murder of a noble, but even if he were to escape,

Chelish law dictates that his inherited rights (including

his position on the board) are forfeit for the murder of a

noble (as a PC knows with a successful DC 15 Knowledge

[local] check). As the restoration of these rights requires the

approval of a ranking member of House Thruene, Carliss

Mayhart may at first appear to be a lost cause.

The PCs are free to visit Carliss Mayhart in Kintargo

Keep (you can use the map of the Keep interior from

“A Song of Silver” if you wish, but a map shouldn't be

necessary for this encounter). Since the defeat of the

Hellknights, the city's new dottari are scrambling to

reestablish guards and a warden for the prison. Unless

the PCs have said otherwise, Lictor Octavio Sabinus is

currently handling the complex task of getting the keep's

prison management back under control. As such, visiting

Mayhart is a simple thing to arrange.

Carliss is eager to speak with the PCs, and anxious to

learn the truth of what has been happening in Kintargo

over the past several months. He may have even seen

the PCs themselves as they sped through the prison



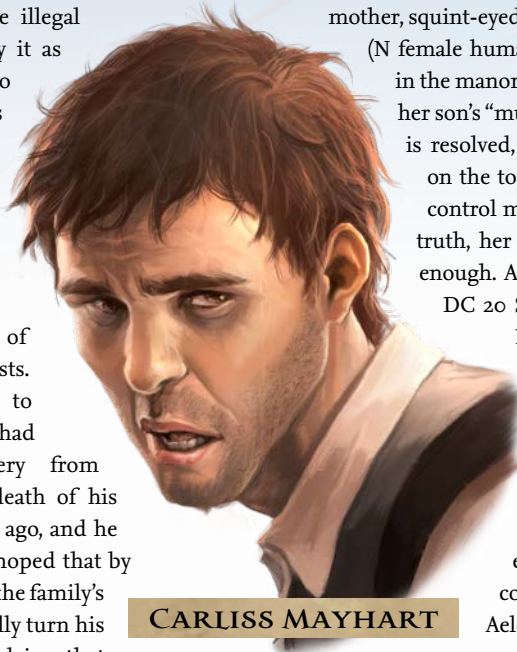
MELODIA DELRONGE

on their way to rescue Jackdaw in the last adventure. If questioned about the murder, Carliss is relieved to be able to tell his side of the story. He admits to challenging Lerish to the illegal duel, but attempts to justify it as a final desperate attempt to regain some of his family's honor—he blames the Aeldervenks for his family's fall, claiming (rightly) that the other family took advantage of events during the civil war so many years ago to engineer the ruin of the Mayhart mining interests. As the sole surviving heir to the Mayhart line, Carliss had endured increased mockery from the Aeldervenks since the death of his brother's family at sea a year ago, and he had finally had enough. He hoped that by defeating Lerish Aeldervenk, the family's proudest scion, he could finally turn his fortunes around. Instead, he claims that Lerish leaped purposefully from the bridge during the duel. The only witnesses were Aeldervenk loyalists, and even Carliss's own second turned against him (Carliss suspects, again rightly, due to blatant bribery from the Aeldervenks); all of these reported Carliss having fatally stabbed Lerish and pushing him into the river.

Carliss suspects now that the whole thing was staged, that he was goaded into issuing the challenge and that Lerish isn't even dead. His belief that the Aeldervenks are involved in a conspiracy to finish the job they started during the civil war and wipe out his family line entirely by engineering his execution may sound outlandish, but as it happens, these theories are entirely true.

In fact, **Lerish Aeldervenk** (CN male human aristocrat 5) is still very much alive, and has been hiding in the family manor for months. After his leap from the bridge, Lerish traveled underwater with the aid of a family heirloom (a *helm of underwater action*) to the north of the city, then snuck back into town to hide out. He and his family assumed they would need keep him in hiding only for a few weeks—a month at most—until Carliss would be executed, at which point Lerish planned on a miraculous return to life after spinning a story of how he had been rescued and nursed back to health by a group of aquatic elves. Of course, when Barzillai took over the city, the whole plan got put on indefinite hold. With Carliss alive but imprisoned and his execution no longer a priority, Lerish has had to spend the entirety of this Adventure Path's events in hiding.

If the PCs can prove that Lerish still lives, there is no longer any justification for Carliss's imprisonment and



CARLISS MAYHART

his hereditary rights are immediately and automatically reinstated. A visit to Aeldervenk Manor in the Greens puts the PCs in contact with the family matron and Lerish's mother, squint-eyed and nervous Lady **Jenna Aeldervenk** (N female human aristocrat 5). She receives visitors in the manor's parlor but is evasive on the topic of her son's "murder," claiming that until the matter is resolved, she has been advised to not speak on the topic. While mind-reading and mind-control magic can convince her to give up the truth, her own guilty conscience may well be enough. As the PCs speak to her, a successful DC 20 Sense Motive check is enough for a PC to get the idea that she is hiding something. A PC must succeed at a DC 37 Diplomacy check to get her to give up the truth, but only a DC 14 Intimidate check to do the same. In this case, intimidation has no lasting ill effects, as the PCs have no need of continued good relations with the Aeldervenks. Divination spells, such as *scry* or *locate creature*, can also reveal the truth: viewed magically from afar, the image of Lerish dining on sardines and crackers by candlelight is proof enough of his survival.

In any event, once Carliss Mayhart is free, he eagerly joins the Board of Governors and votes as the PCs wish for their choice of lord-mayor.

Treasure: If the PCs come to a diplomatic solution and do not use force or intimidation to browbeat the Aeldervenks into revealing the truth, Lady Aeldervenk gives the PCs her father's *helm of underwater action* if they agree to let bygones be bygones and don't bring her family into public shame over the matter.

RAENNA SOLSTINE

Through a successful DC 15 Knowledge (nobility) check, a PC can learn that the Solstine family is still very much active in Kintargo, though after the dissolution of the Board of Governors, the Solstines more or less lost interest in politics. Still one of the city's noble families on paper, the Solstines haven't taken part in the aristocracy or politics for decades, preferring instead to live lives of comfort in Redroof. Many of the Solstines are artists or performers of middling to fair skill, yet they have done little to stand out, almost as if the family were aggressively pursuing mediocrity.

Raenna Solstine (N female middle-aged half-elf commoner 2/expert 2) is the family's current matriarch, an 85-year-old grandmother who remembers her father's role on the Board of Governors—particularly, the frustrations he felt with overly complicated bureaucratic matters and politics. Currently, Raenna is in mourning

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over the death of two of her grandchildren, a pair of hot-headed would-be rebels who were killed fighting in the name of the Silver Ravens. She is no supporter of Thrune, and is relieved that Barzillai has been removed from power, but nonetheless bears a grudge against the Silver Ravens for these deaths. At your option, you can have one or both of these grandchildren be minor named NPCs whose deaths the PCs witnessed.

Raenna has little interest in participating in the political engine of Kintargo, and must be convinced that joining the Board of Governors is in the best interest of the city's future. This requires a successful DC 30 Diplomacy check. If the PCs attempt to buy her cooperation by offering a bribe (even if the offering is presented as restitution for her family's heartache), she becomes offended, saying, "My grandchildren's sacrifices are not resources to be bought or sold!" This results in a -10 penalty on the Diplomacy check (though you might allow a DC 20 Sense Motive check as a player makes such an offer to give him a hint that such a tactic might backfire).

On the other hand, if during this conversation a PC expresses sorrow and offers condolences for the death of Raenna's grandchildren, grant a +5 bonus on the Diplomacy check. Further, if the PCs point out that her vote for Jilia can help prevent further bloodshed by protecting Kintargo from Chelish invasion, the PCs gain an additional +5 bonus on this Diplomacy check. Finally, if the PCs offer to resurrect her grandchildren, she is impressed enough with the offer that no Diplomacy check is needed, but she turns the offer down, noting that "It wouldn't be fair for my own losses to be so conveniently addressed when so many others lost children during these dark times." Mind-control magic or intimidation can also convince her to join the Board of Governors, but if the effect does not last through the vote for ratification, Raenna spitefully reneges on her promise at the last moment and votes against the ratification.

COUNT GEOFF TANESSEN

As with the Delronges, it takes only a successful DC 10 Knowledge (nobility or local) check for a PC to recall that the Tanessens are one of Kintargo's most powerful families. A visit to the Tanessen estate results in an automatic meeting with the family patriarch, Count **Geoff Tanessen** (LN male human aristocrat 2/wizard 6). He has certainly heard of the Silver Ravens, and while he and his family have long supported House Thrune, recent events have eroded his political leanings. The Tanessens have long been involved in the civic defense of Kintargo and have made numerous donations to the

city's guard and defensive works. Seeing those defenses fail against an uprising from within has all but convinced Geoff that House Thrune may not be the sure thing his family has long considered it to be.

However, he is wary about making his change of heart too well known, for several others in his family do not share this outlook. In particular, his twin sons are more eager than ever to see Kintargo returned to Thrune rule. Geoff considers this to be a symptom of impetuous youth, but also doesn't want to risk a rift in his family by attempting to turn their political leanings toward his own.

As the PCs make known the need for Geoff to join the Board of Governors, he nods in understanding; he is a student of history and is somewhat familiar with the board's place in historic Kintargo, yet the news that they have the power to ratify a lord-mayor is exciting news to him. He agrees to join the board, but cautions the PCs that voting in Jilia Bainilus may have political repercussions within the city. "Many folk," he says, "consider her to be a failure

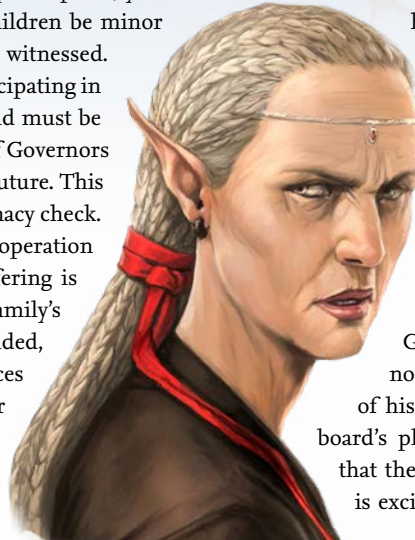
still, and worry that her return to the role of lord-mayor will invite another rebellion. She's been defeated once before, after all, and the Thrune loyalists remaining in Kintargo would jump at the chance to defeat her again."

Count Tanessen needs no convincing to join the Board of Governors, but before he agrees to cast his vote for Jilia Bainilus, he needs to believe that Kintargo will become more than merely a "state of expatriates and rebels." If asked what could secure his vote, Count Tanessen muses that a new trade agreement would go a long way. If the PCs were to secure new trade agreements with the nearby city of Vyre to continue doing business with Kintargo should Ravounel successfully secede from Chelias, Count Tanessen guarantees he will vote for Jilia, and thus vote for independence.

Full details on securing Vyre's support appear in Part 3 of this adventure. At your option, accomplishing one of the other missions in Part 3 (such as gaining the support of the Ravounel Forest strix, or perhaps rescuing one of the count's children after they are abducted by slavers) could suffice as well. Alternately, of course, a series of Diplomacy checks or the like could be all that PCs need to obtain Geoff's cooperation.

ALVEDA URVIS

Of the five family lines, the Urvis family proves to be the most difficult to track down, for time has not been kind to this lineage. In fact, as a successful DC 20 Knowledge (history or nobility) check reveals, the Urvis family has



RAENNA SOLSTINE

been extinct for decades, after a particularly devastating hereditary illness brought about the slow madness and deaths of each and every one of matriarch Alveda Urvis's children during the Chelish Civil War. Rumors held that these deaths were in fact engineered by none other than House Thruene, and certainly many of the details about the Urvis family have been redacted, but the classified notes recovered from both the Records Hall and the Temple of Asmodeus provide the PCs with an important clue.

With a successful DC 25 Knowledge (history) check, or a successful DC 20 Linguistics or DC 30 Perception check while sifting through old documents liberated from the Records Hall, the PCs learn that in the final days of her family, sole survivor Alveda Urvis was faced with the threat of having her family holdings revert to House Thruene upon her death. In poor health, Baroness Urvis bequeathed the entire estate, along with all rights and privileges, to her loyal halfling caretaker, Peletera Talltallow. Additional documents reveal that Urvis's unscrupulous barrister not only used loopholes in the law to deny Peletera her employer's bequeathment, but sold her into slavery before liquidating the Urvis holdings to add to Thruene's coffers. Urvis Manor burned to the ground some time after, and there the matter would seem to end.

Except for one thing: a Talltallow yet lives, and there's a chance that the PCs know this. One of their very first allies in the Hell's Rebels campaign, the halfling Laria Longroad, was born into slavery as Laria Talltallow. Otherwise, once she hears the news, Laria contacts the PCs, revealing nervously that Peletera was her grandmother. Laria's choice of Kintargo as a place to build her new identity was as much because Kintargo had a reputation for welcoming the lost as because it was her grandmother's home town. Laria knew only that Peletera served a noble from Kintargo in her time, and never knew the identity of that noble until the PCs uncovered this paperwork in their research. Certainly the revelation that she is the legal Urvis heir is a shock. Even though no actual estate or monetary holdings remain, the position on the Board of Governors is very much hers to claim, particularly with the recovered documents revealing the illegal trickery the barristers used to swindle Peletera out of her inheritance and sell her into slavery.

Development: If, in your game, Laria has not survived to this point in Hell's Rebels, you can either choose to keep things as written (in which case the PCs will need to organize for her resurrection), or instead change Peletera's identity, making her the grandmother of a

different NPC, preferably a minor ally the PCs met in the first adventure, such as the tiefling Zea.

CASTING THE VOTE

In order to officially ratify a lord-mayor of Kintargo, a majority (3 out of 5) vote from a fully-staffed Board of Governors must be recorded before no fewer than a dozen witnesses. Traditionally, the Board of Governors met during city council meetings in Castle Kintargo, but this was mostly a matter of tradition—the PCs are free to make the ratification of Jilia Bainilus as public or private as they wish. Many of the PCs' allies, in fact, advise a private ratification to be followed by a public celebration or festival to officially welcome Jilia Bainilus back as Kintargo's lord-mayor.

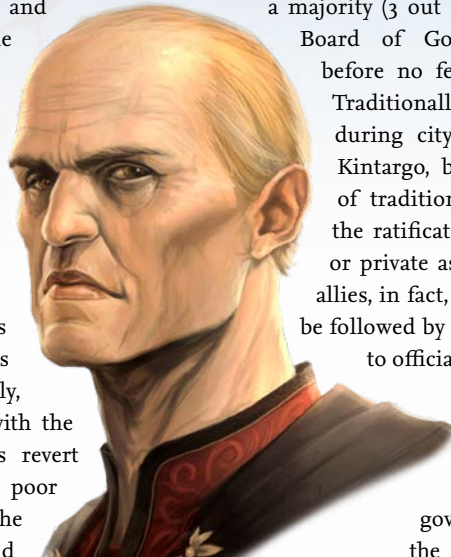
Once Jilia is ratified, she drafts a letter to be delivered to Egorian informing the government that, pursuant to the stipulations mentioned in the Kintargo Contract, permission for the military to enter Kintargo is not

granted. House Thruene's initial response to this is fury and indignation, but when they consult their copy of the Cheliox Covenant (which includes seeking out Odexidie for another copy of the Kintargo Contract) and confirm the implications with barristers both mortal and infernal, they realize their situation. A reply from Queen Abrogail II is delivered quickly via a surly horned devil who teleports into the city, wordlessly hands Jilia (or perhaps one of the PCs) a sealed letter bearing the queen's seal, then teleports away without a word. The contents of the letter are presented on page 24 as Handout #2. As mentioned in the missive, agents of Thruene will soon contact Kintargo's leadership regarding the repercussions of the city's relatively quiet secession from Cheliox. These events are detailed at the beginning of "Breaking the Bones of Hell."

Story Award: Once the PCs convene a full Board of Governors and ratify Jilia Bainilus as Kintargo's official lord-mayor, award them 51,200 XP.

PART 3: DEFENDERS OF SILVER

As the PCs seek to defend Kintargo from Cheliox's reprisals, and perhaps as they seek to protect her citizens from the ravages of the Temple Hill Slasher, additional missions and quests vie for their attention. In these missions, the PCs shift from the role of heroes fighting to liberate a city from an oppressor to heroes fighting to maintain their hard-won freedom, yet the end result—the safety and security of Kintargo—remains the same. The timing of these quests is left to you to determine. You can certainly run them in the order presented;



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Lord-Mayor Jilia Bainilus,

We thank you for your notification that all is well in beloved Kintargo. It does us good to know at least one of Our cities has found peace in these trying times. After consulting with the church, the military, and Our trusted advisors, We have come to a similar conclusion: at this time, an official Chelish military presence in Kintargo is unwarranted. Should this change at any point in the future, know that We eagerly await an opportunity to bolster your fine city with Our troops, who remain ever vigilant and ready at a moment's notice to come to Kintargo to provide such aid as We can. We shall be in contact soon to discuss further ramifications of Kintargo's situation, and We sincerely hope that all Ravounel remains quiet and safe. Know that unrest still plagues Cheliah, and We cannot guarantee the safety and well-being of Kintargan or regional citizens of Ravounel should they find themselves in areas of open conflict. Likewise, know that from this point forward, official transport of supplies and resources from Cheliah must needs be focused further on securing Our nation's safety. We trust and hope you have enough to get by on your own for the immediate future, yet Our arms remain open should you require Our aid in the future.

We shall speak soon.

*Her Infernal Majestrix Abrogail II of the Thrice-Damned House of Thrune,
By the Might of Asmodeus, Queen and Empress of Cheliah, and of Its Other
Realms and Territories*

HANDOUT #2

alternately, you can use these quests to augment or complicate other parts of this adventure as you see fit. For example, the ally abducted in the Greenbriar Fetters mission could be one of the potential governors, and the PCs would thus need to complete this mission before the vote to ratify Jilia can take place.

MISSION 1: THE GREENBRIAR FETTERS

As word of Barzillai Thrune's defeat spreads throughout Cheliah, House Thrune and the Church of Asmodeus are not the only ones to take notice. A group of slavers who operate under the name "Egorian Procurement Services," but who are known in other circles as the Greenbriar Fetters, see these latest developments as a declaration of open season on Kintargo's citizens, and move swiftly to set themselves up in a partially rebuilt but abandoned warehouse to begin harvesting "choice product" for discerning customers in the Chelish heartlands. In other words, they come to Kintargo to take slaves from a citizenry that they suspect the government no longer seeks to protect.

The Greenbriar Fetters have ties to House Thrune, yet are strictly a mercenary company, and any attempt to place blame on the government for these slavers' actions in Kintargo is doomed to failure. Of course, the reverse also holds true—the slavers know that they're operating without a safety net, and that if they are caught, they can't rely upon House Thrune to save them. As such, they seek to limit their predations to those who won't be missed, and while the first few unfortunates they snatch up and

prepare for shipment out of Ravounel fit this category well, their latest victim is, unbeknownst to them, someone with some very powerful friends.

Exactly whom the Greenbriar Fetters snatch up is left to you. Choose an NPC who isn't too powerful (and who thus has little to no hope of escaping on his own) and with whom the PCs have formed at least a passing relationship. Depending on the nature of this relationship, the PCs may first become aware that the NPC has gone missing when they attempt to pay him a visit and find the NPC missing, or they might be contacted by another ally who noticed the NPC was missing and came to the PCs for aid. The matter of locating the NPC should be relatively simple for the PCs—it is best if the PCs do so quickly and easily not only to make the players feel that they have become high-level forces to be reckoned with, but also so you can move swiftly on to the action. (Part 4 of this adventure has plenty of investigation and hunting for clues to scratch that itch.) *Locate creature* is the most likely way in which the missing NPC can be found, but a series of successful Survival checks by an expert tracker works too, as would a number of successful Diplomacy checks made among witnesses in the neighborhood. Do your best to tailor this to your party's strengths to make the PCs (and thus the players) feel like they're on the job!

The Greenbriar Fetters have selected a partially renovated but abandoned warehouse in Yolubilis Harbor as their hideout and base of operations. The slavers have nearly reached their limits to how many captives they can handle when they first come to the PCs' attention, and

are currently drawing plans to leave the city with their “harvest” once their leader’s partner, the captain of a ship who has agreed to smuggle the slaves out of Kintargo, arrives in the city in a few weeks. Details on this partner are not presented here, as it is assumed that the PCs break up the Greenbriar Fetters before the ship arrives, and the ship’s captain simply writes off the venture when she reaches Kintargo to find the Greenbriars destroyed.

THE SLAVERS (CR 15)

The Greenbriar Fetters are a relatively small group, but their members are experts at capturing, holding, and transporting halflings and tieflings, the two races most often sought by Chelish nobles, to sell as slaves—or, in the case of the tieflings, as sacrifices, to cleanse Cheliah of the shame of their existence. Including their leader Delexia, there are seven slavers in the group. The slavers are accompanied by a barbed devil named Krittorax, a special envoy attached to the group as an unofficial agent of the Church of Asmodeus.

Creatures: Delexia was raised as an experiment by an ignorant and racist Thruene scholar: could a young half-orc slave be raised as a Thruene and be taught focus and moderation? The fact that Delexia engineered the blistering death of her “teacher” not long after he showed her to his associates in Egorian would indicate his experiment was an unqualified success, for the cunning method through which Delexia orchestrated her revenge on the oppressive father figure not only left her completely innocent in the eyes of Chelish law, but brought such shame on her “father” that his name and accomplishments were soon thereafter redacted by his one-time allies. Ironically, Delexia now turns her training to the capture and processing of slaves—as a slave herself, she had seen how respected and how feared the taskmasters were, and had long lusted for that power for herself. Delexia pays lip service to Asmodeus, but most of her training as a monk has been self-taught.

When Delexia formed the Greenbriar Fetters, she sought support and financing from the Church of Asmodeus. The church was eager to agree to her terms—they get first opportunity to purchase any slaves the Greenbriars capture, and the slavers are afforded a great deal of autonomy and freedom to practice their trade in Cheliah as long as they keep the barbed devil Krittorax as part of the group. Krittorax isn’t officially an agent of the church, but remains loyal nonetheless, and often serves as a messenger between the Greenbriars and church elders in Egorian. Krittorax enjoys both preventing the slaves from escaping and protecting the captives from abuse at the slavers’ hands—being feared by both his companions and their cargo appeals to the devil. Krittorax focuses on preventing anyone from helping or rescuing slaves in combat and takes care not to hurt any slaves with his area effect spell-like abilities.

Each of the Greenbriar Fetters is a ranger specialized in the art of tracking, capturing, and transporting their favored cargo—living slaves.

DELEXIA CR 11

XP 12,800

Female half-orc monk 12

LE Medium humanoid (human, orc)

Init +5; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +17

DEFENSE

AC 24, touch 22, flat-footed 18 (+2 armor, +1 deflection, +5 Dex, +1 dodge, +5 Wis)

hp 117 (12d8+60)

Fort +12, **Ref** +14, **Will** +11; +2 vs. enchantments

Defensive Abilities improved evasion, orc ferocity;

Immune disease, poison

OFFENSE

Speed 70 ft.

Melee +1 *unarmed strike* flurry of blows +16/+16/+11/+11/+6 (2d6+1/19–20)

Special Attacks flurry of blows, stunning fist (12/day, DC 18)

TACTICS

During Combat Delexia uses Vital Strike in any round in

which she has to move to engage a foe, saving her stunning fist for a first attack in a full attack action. When facing foes who wield weapons one-handed, she generally devotes at least one attack per round to a disarm attempt; if successful, she prefers to hold the weapon but eschews attacking with it. If she wrests away a second weapon, she drops the less intimidating one as far away from a foe as she can. Delexia takes an endurance approach to combat, trusting in her Combat Reflexes, defenses, and allies to keep her in the fight rather than attempting to do lots of damage quickly.

Morale Delexia fights to the death.

STATISTICS

Str 10, **Dex** 20, **Con** 16, **Int** 13, **Wis** 14, **Cha** 8

Base Atk +9; **CMB** +17 (+19 disarm); **CMD** 31 (33 vs. disarm)

Feats Agile Maneuvers, Combat Expertise, Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Improved Critical (unarmed strike), Improved Disarm, Improved Unarmed Strike, Mobility, Stunning Fist, Toughness, Vital Strike, Weapon Finesse

Skills Acrobatics +20 (+48 when jumping), Craft (traps) +14, Intimidate +16, Perception +17, Survival +14;

Racial Modifiers +2 Intimidate

Languages Common, Infernal, Orc

SQ abundant step, fast movement, high jump, ki pool (8 points, cold iron, lawful, magic, silver), maneuver training, orc blood, slow fall 60 ft., wholeness of body (12 hit points)

Gear *amulet of mighty fists* +1, *belt of physical might* (Dex, Con) +2, *bracers of armor* +2, *cloak of resistance* +1, *ring of protection* +1, keys to all doors and the chest in area B6

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GREENBRIAR SLAVERS (6)**CR 8****XP 4,800 each**

Human ranger 9

LE Medium humanoid (human)

Init +2 (+6 urban); **Senses** Perception +15 (+19 urban)**DEFENSE****AC** 23, touch 13, flat-footed 20 (+7 armor, +2 Dex, +1 dodge, +3 natural)**hp** 99 each (9d10+45)**Fort** +9, **Ref** +8, **Will** +6**Defensive Abilities** evasion**OFFENSE****Speed** 30 ft.**Melee** +1 *short sword* +13/+8 (1d8+5/19–20), +1 *short sword* +13 (1d8+5/19–20)**Special Attacks** combat style (two-weapon combat), favored enemy (halflings +4, native outsiders +2)**Ranger Spells Prepared** (CL 6th; concentration +7)2nd—*barkskin*1st—*lead blades*^{APG} (2), *longstrider***TACTICS****Before Combat** The slavers cast all of their spells before combat—*barkskin* to increase their armor class, *lead blades* on both weapons, and *longstrider* to increase their speed.**During Combat** The slavers work together to flank foes, but prefer to focus on halflings first, tieflings or aasimars second, and other foes thereafter. One slaver in the group makes sure to activate his hunter's bond to grant Delexia and Krittorax combat bonuses against an appropriate target.**Morale** As long as their leader remains standing, the slavers fight to the death. If Delexia is incapacitated, they switch tactics to attempt to secure her and retreat with her to safety; if she is slain, a slaver flees if reduced to 20 hit points or fewer.**STATISTICS****Str** 18, **Dex** 14, **Con** 16, **Int** 8, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 10**Base Atk** +9; **CMB** +13; **CMD** 26**Feats** Alertness, Dodge, Double Slice, Endurance, Iron Will, Power Attack, Toughness, Two-Weapon Fighting, Weapon Focus (short sword)**Skills** Intimidate +12, Knowledge (local) +8, Perception +15 (+19 urban), Sense Motive +12, Stealth +10 (+14 urban), Survival +13 (+17 urban)**Languages** Common**SQ** favored terrain (plains +2, urban +4), hunter's bond (companions), swift tracker, track +4, wild empathy +9, woodland stride**Gear** +1 *chainmail*, +1 *short swords* (2), *belt of giant strength* +2, thunderstone, 13 pp**KRITTORAX****CR 11****XP 12,800**Male barbed devil (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 72)**hp** 138**B. SLAVERS' WAREHOUSE**

The Greenbriar Fetters' warehouse is an unassuming wooden structure located on the boardwalk in central Yolubilis Harbor. The building is tall, with a two-story office in its eastern corner. There are no windows to the outside and only one double door entrance opens out onto the boardwalk itself. The walls are strong and sturdy (hardness 5, hp 60, break DC 20), while all doors are made of wood (hardness 5, hp 15, break DC 18). Only the double doors between area **B1** and **B2** are kept locked (Disable Device DC 30), and Delexia carries the sole key.

If the PCs wish to use their spies or saboteurs to gather additional information before they make their move against the Greenbriar Fetters, they can do so. With a successful DC 20 Secrecy check, a team of Silver Raven spies determines the exact number of slavers hiding out in the warehouse. A successful DC 15 Secrecy check allows a team of saboteurs to discover the trap in area **B1** and give the PCs exact details on how to avoid it.

When the PCs first arrive at the warehouse, three of the slavers are resting in area **B5** while the other three are on guard with Krittorax in area **B2**. Delexia is in area **B6**, going over the books to make some final adjustments to schedules and pricing to ensure she gets the best prices possible for her latest shipment. If combat begins, the slavers move to engage the PCs as quickly as they are able, but prefer to fight inside the building so as to avoid attracting too much attention.

The individual locations in the warehouse are summarized below.

B1. Entrance: The exterior doors are kept unlocked, but the interior doors to area **B2** are always locked. This room contains a trap built by Delexia herself that the slavers hope to use to catch as many intruders as possible. If the door to area **B2** is jostled or someone attempts to open it without the key, the exterior door slams shut and locks while four repeating heavy crossbows mounted in hidden panels on the walls open fire on creatures in the room. The crossbows fire poisoned bolts at four random targets in the room every round for 5 rounds. The trap is rather noisy once it is triggered, and is more than enough to alert all the slavers in the building.

POISON BOLT TRAP**CR 14****XP 38,400****Type** touch; **Perception** DC 30; **Disable Device** DC 30**EFFECTS****Trigger** mechanical; **Reset** manual**Effect** Atk +20 ranged (1d10/19–20 plus purple worm poison); repeats every round for 5 rounds; multiple targets (up to 4 creatures in area **B1**)

B2. Warehouse Interior: The ceiling of this large, windowless room is 20 feet high; the lighting is provided by several everburning torches in wall sconces. A number

of relatively crude cages built from timbers have been fashioned here. Several of the cages are occupied by unconscious men and women slumbering on piles of straw and blankets, and the cages themselves are quite clean. The walls and doors of the cages are as strong as those found elsewhere in the warehouse; the prisoners are also kept dosed with striped toadstool, which keeps them unconscious from Wisdom damage. In addition to the victim the PCs have come to rescue, 2d6 other unfortunate Kintargans slumber in various cages here as well. Feel free to have some of these additional victims be characters the PCs might recognize—otherwise, they are merely experts or commoners who had the unfortunate luck to be a bit stronger or more attractive than normal, making them ideal potential slaves. Each day, as the prisoners naturally heal enough Wisdom damage to wake, they are ushered into the privy to relieve themselves, fed and watered, then poisoned again until they once more fall unconscious. Three slavers and the devil Krittorax stand guard here.

B3. Privy: This room serves as a privy for the slavers and victims alike.

B4. Storage: The slavers keep spare manacles, coils of rope, food and water, and a stash (24 doses) of striped toadstool poison here.

B5. Guard Quarters: The three beds in this room provide a place for off-duty slavers to rest. The first time the PCs visit the warehouse, three of the slavers are resting here. They move quickly to don armor and gather their gear once the alarm is raised.

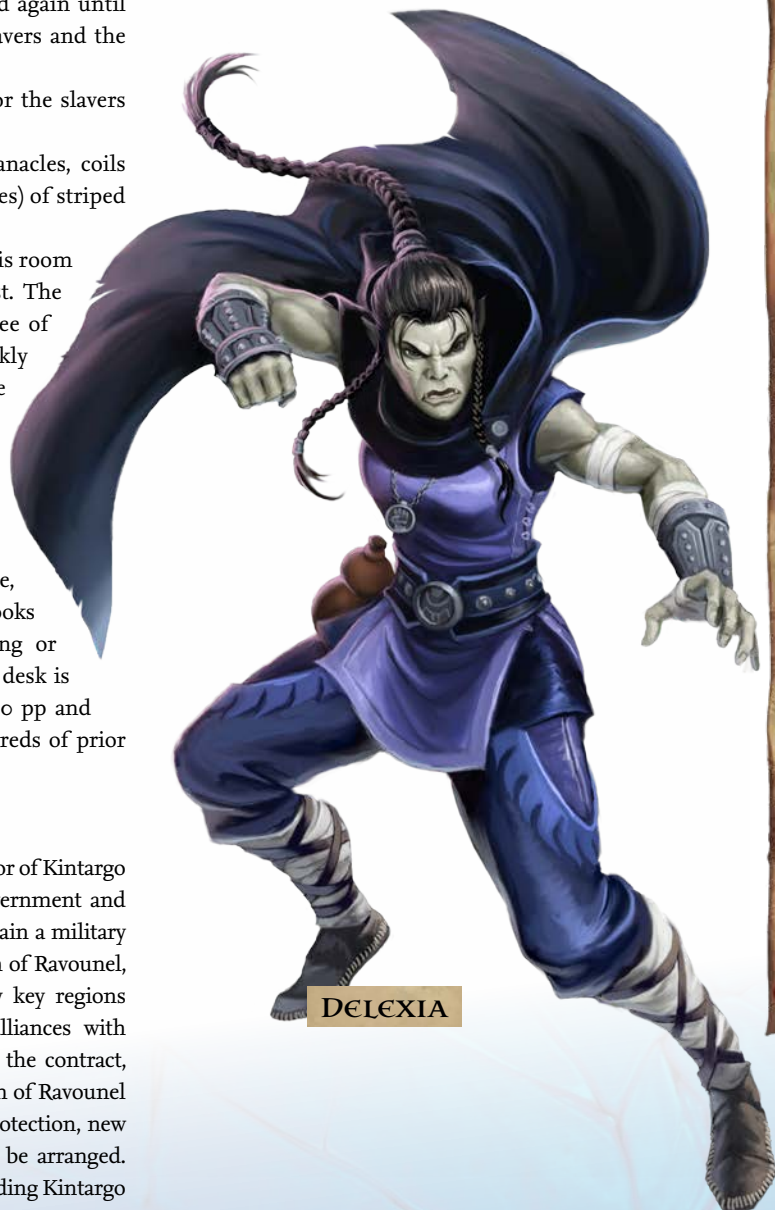
B6. Upstairs Loft: This large room is used by the slavers for meetings and to discuss their operations, but also as a personal retreat for Delexia. She sleeps here on a folding cot, takes her meals here, and spends the time she's not balancing books or making plans for the future meditating or practicing her martial arts. A chest under a desk is locked and contains the slavers' funds: 1,200 pp and 3,400 gp, along with ledgers detailing hundreds of prior transactions throughout the country.

MISSION 2: UNITING RAVOUNEL

The Kintargo Contract provides the lord-mayor of Kintargo the ability to allow or deny the Chelish government and the Church of Asmodeus the ability to maintain a military presence in the city and its the greater region of Ravounel, yet as the situation currently stands, many key regions in Ravounel have not officially declared alliances with the recently liberated city. As the PCs study the contract, inform them that in order to include as much of Ravounel as possible under the Kintargo Contract's protection, new accords with the region's leadership should be arranged. According to the contract, the region surrounding Kintargo

is categorized into four specific territories: the North Plains (which encompasses the region east of the Yolubilis River), Ravounel Forest (which encompasses the region to the west of the Yolubilis River), the numerous islands off the coast (focused particularly on the city of Vyre), and the waters from both mainland and island coastlines out to a range of 15 miles from Ravounel's coastline. The Menador Mountains define the region's southern border and, assuming the agreement of people of power among the four territories can be secured, the northern foothills of these mountains are automatically included.

North Plains: Much of Ravounel consists of rolling hills and grasslands known collectively as the North Plains. Here, the inhabitants of numerous small hamlets and villages (primarily humans and halflings) have long toiled at farming, hunting, fishing, and mining to support Kintargo in exchange for periodic protection



DELEXIA

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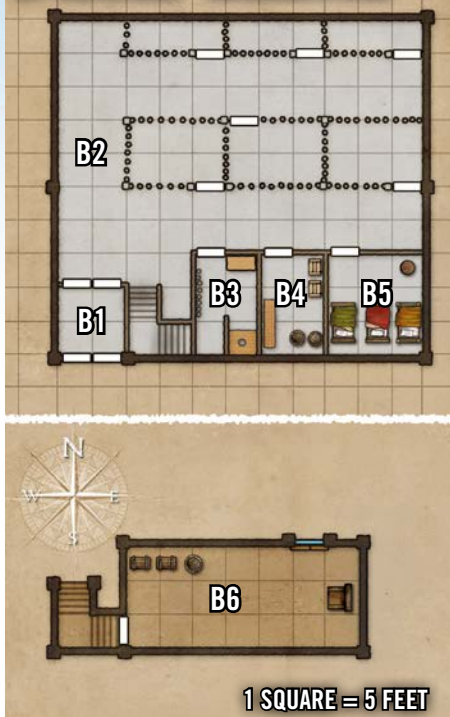
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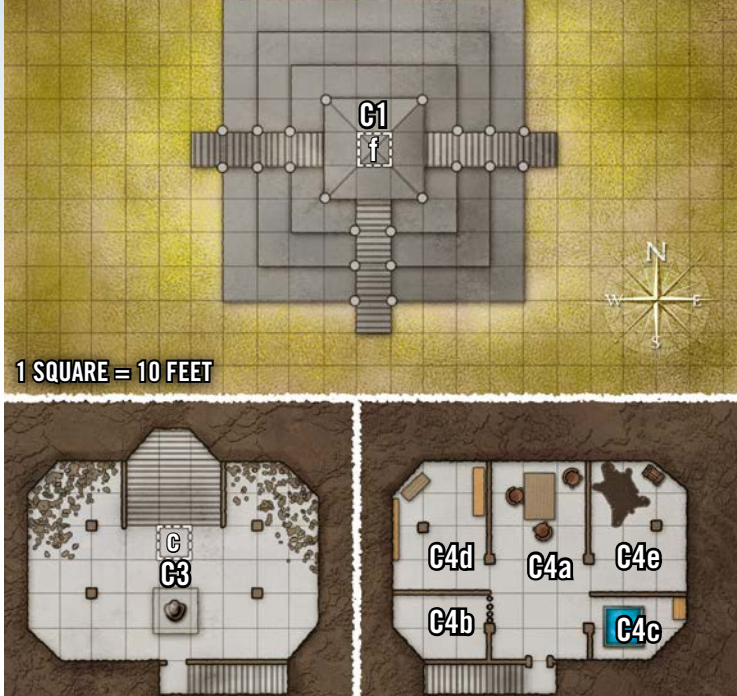
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B. SLAVERS' WAREHOUSE



C. THE TERAPASILLION



from monsters and banditry. The North Plains have no official leader per se, but gaining the support of one of the regions' most respected and powerful priestesses, Xerelilah of Cypress Point, is sufficient for the contract's purposes. See Mission 3 below for more details.

Coastal Waters: The PCs should have already secured an alliance with the aquatic elves who dwell off of Ravounel's coast in this campaign's third adventure, but once a lord-mayor is officially ratified, the Kintargo Contract requires this alliance to be "re-signed" to be in effect. Securing the agreement of Athannah Quhurill in Dismal Nitch's small village of Acisazi once again should prove no problem to the PCs, assuming they secured her support already in "Dance of the Damned." However, the PCs learn in Mission 4 (see page 35) that the elves have one more task to ask of the defenders of Ravounel. Regardless of the PCs' response to this threat, Athannah is eager to sign an agreement to receive Kintargo's protection and doesn't require the PCs to complete this mission before doing so.

Ravounel Forest: The expanse of Ravounel Forest is the most vexing area to secure, for while the Kintargo Contract specifically calls for a representative of the large woodland to sign off on the alliance in order to protect western Ravounel, the forest has no official ruler and is largely regarded as a dangerous wilderness. Rumors of tribes of silent slayers and strange creatures capable of controlling the weather persist about the area. The PCs must explore the forest and learn more of its mysterious residents if they hope to secure the lands west of the

Yolubilis River under the Kintargo Contract's protection. See Mission 5 on page 39 for more information on this dangerous task.

Ravounel Isles: Securing Vyre's allegiance to Kintargo should be a relatively simple matter, assuming the PCs already made such an alliance during "Dance of the Damned." Having just one of Vyre's leaders (likely Queen of Delights Manticce Kaleekii) sign a document agreeing to an alliance with Kintargo is all that is required to incorporate Vyre Island, Deepmar, and all other isles off the Kintargan coast under the contract's protection. Getting this signature can take as much or as little roleplaying as you wish, but in the end, it should be a simple task accomplished with a short trip to Kintargo's neighboring city. Unlike with the previous three regions, no specific mission is involved in securing Vyre's alliance, especially if a PC retains a friendship with Queen of Delights Manticce Kaleekii.

Story Award: Once the PCs have managed to secure the support of all four regions of Ravounel, award them 25,600 XP.

MISSION 3: THE TERAPASILLION'S SHADOW

The small town of Cypress Point (population 1,850) may be in decline, yet it remains the largest settlement in Ravounel east of the Yolubilis River. Located about 40 miles northeast of Kintargo, on the point of land furthest north on the Chelish coast, Cypress Point is in theory represented by Archbaroness Eldonna Aulamaxa. In fact, the Aulamaxas haven't held an interest in their

holdings at Cypress Point for generations, and since the language of the Kintargo Contract requires the assent of a resident representative, the PCs need to travel to the town to speak with a local to secure the alliance between the North Plains and Kintargo. Fortunately, the aged Desnan priest **Xerelilah** (CG female old human cleric of Desna 8) commands the perfect combination of social gravitas and respect throughout the North Plains that her signature will ensure the lands east of the river remain protected under the Kintargo Contract.

Yet as eager as Xerelilah is to ensure safety from Cheliah, she has other worries as well. The Kintargo Contract offers no direct protection from Nidal. While that country is unlikely to openly invade Ravounel, a show of force or a diplomatic interaction with one of the shadowy nation's footholds in the region would go a long way to securing Xerelilah's peace of mind. Events in "A Song of Silver" likely resulted in the death of Kintargo's high priest of Zon-Kuthon, and regardless, any surviving Kuthite priests of Kintargo's Shadowsquare fled to Nidal soon after the previous adventure's end, and are no longer appropriate contacts. Yet Xerelilah has a suggestion. Agents of Nidal have long dwelt at a mysterious and shadowy location deep in the North Plains known as the Terapasillion under agreement from Cheliah. While a diplomatic mission to secure the cooperation of these mysterious agents might be enough to keep Nidal away from Ravounel and Kintargo in the immediate future, so might a show of force.

In any event, Xerelilah signs on for protection under the Kintargo Contract regardless of whether or not the PCs make a trip to the Terapasillion. Securing the cooperation of the Nidalese agents who dwell in the ancient structure has little bearing on the events of Hell's Rebels, as Nidal doesn't intend to invade Ravounel anytime soon, but exploring the location can certainly earn the PCs some additional experience and treasure that will come in handy later. Furthermore, if you wish to continue your Hell's Rebel's campaign after "Breaking the Bones of Hell," early steps to handle international relations with neighboring Nidal here could well have a significant impact on future events, as detailed in "Continuing the Campaign" in *Pathfinder Adventure Path* #102.

C. THE TERAPASILLION

Any character who speaks Shadowtongue knows that the name *Terapasillion* translates from that language into Common as "Ziggurat of Night." The Terapasillion, located near the Nidalese border far to the southeast of Cypress Point, lies on a stretch of the North Plains where few locals dare to travel, for the Terapasillion was once the lair of a legendary umbral dragon named Ithanothaur. While there have been no verified sightings of the dragon in decades, recent rumors suggest that other shadowy Nidal

agents have taken up residence in the ziggurat. Whoever dwells there now may have had (and may continue to have) contact with the Chelish government, but none of the locals dwelling in the North Plains have ventured within several miles of the site in generations.

With a successful DC 25 Knowledge (history) check, a character recalls that the Terapasillion was already old when the first Taldan settlers arrived in the region—and in fact was already old long before Taldor even launched its First Army of Exploration. The structure is said to hail from Nidal's earliest days, and is reputed to have been built by shadow giants during the Age of Darkness as a scouting post for their forays into this world from the Plane of Shadow. More recently, the ziggurat was known to have served as the lair of the umbral dragon Ithanothaur, although he has not been seen in the region for decades, and many presume the dragon either to be dead or to have relocated to other lands.

With a successful DC 30 Knowledge (planes) check, a PC recalls that the boundaries between the Material Plane and the Plane of Shadow are thin in the region around the Terapasillion, and that the structure is likely constructed of shadowstuff drawn into this world from the other plane.

A PC who succeeds at a DC 30 Knowledge (arcana) check has heard some tantalizing tidbits about the obscure dragon. Despite being an umbral dragon, Ithanothaur had no real ties to Nidal, and in fact chose the Terapasillion as his lair in part to keep an eye on what he regarded as a "nation of shadow-worshiping monkeys." Ithanothaur kept mostly to himself, but did periodically raid nearby villages or ships for his own mysterious ends.

If the PCs succeed at both the Knowledge (arcana) check and the Knowledge (history) check, they uncover a bit of additional information: apparently, Ithanothaur was forced to abandon the Terapasillion by a cabal of Kuthite monks and priests not long after the Chelish Civil War ended. Ever since, agents of Nidal have been said to maintain a watch over the site, both to ensure the dragon doesn't return and to keep an eye on northwestern Cheliah—but the nature of these shadowy agents remains mysterious.

THE TERAPASILLION FEATURES

A PC can determine the rough location of the Terapasillion in the North Plains with a successful DC 25 Knowledge (geography) check. Barring this, Xerelilah can certainly give the PCs directions. The structure is impossible to miss, being the only landmark in a roughly 15-mile-radius stretch of grassy hills. Small copses of trees dot some of these hills, but none grow within a mile of the black ziggurat.

The government of Nidal has long had an interest in the Terapasillion, along with other strange structures that emerged from the landscape as Zon-Kuthon's influence grew during the Age of Darkness. The

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Terapasillion is one of very few such structures located outside of Nidal's current borders. All of these structures correspond to sister structures on the Plane of Shadow, yet no direct link exists between the Terapasillion and its Plane of Shadow counterpart (a cathedral-like structure used by a cabal of shadowy vampires known as the Septimix Society). Still, the Terapasillion's interior is infused with shadowy energies that are dangerous for natives of the Material Plane, and as such, the Nidalese government has entrusted the care of this site to a group of allied shadow giants. The ziggurat's current caretakers, a couple named Boloovhaar and Phaandrae, enjoy the solitude. They have little interaction with Nidal's government, but as visitors to the ziggurat will swiftly learn, they don't appreciate visitors from other areas either.

The material that makes up the ziggurat and the walls of its two underground levels is similar to black, dull granite, yet it feels strangely cold to the touch. On closer inspection, the stone seems slightly translucent, and a PC who succeeds at a DC 25 Knowledge (planes) check can identify the material as solidified shadows (known to some scholars as shadowstone), which must have been extruded in times long past from the Plane of Shadow. This material is immune to effects that target stone (such as *stone shape*, *stone tell*, and *transmute rock to mud*), but is otherwise similar to magically treated unworked stone (hardness 16, hp 1,800, break DC 85).

The most unsettling feature of the Terapasillion, though, is the aura of shadows it exudes. This aura extends out for a radius of 100 feet from the ziggurat's center. From outside the aura, it appears as though the entire area were in deep shadow—as if a massive disk were blocking the light of the sun from above during the day, and as if pale moonlight were illuminating the region even in the darkest of nights—creating a permanent area of dim light.

C1. THE ZIGGURAT OF NIGHT

A four-tiered ziggurat of some kind of dull black stone looms atop the low crown of a strangely shadowed grassy hill. The ziggurat's tiers rise ten feet each, while at the apex, four twenty-foot-tall pillars support a pointed roof of black stone. Flights of steep stairs rise along the east, west, and south faces, while to the north, a ten-foot-square slab of eerie carvings decorates the center of the face of the lowest tier.

The steep stairs are difficult terrain for Medium and Small creatures. A 10-foot-square section of floor in the center of the top tier appears to be the same as the surrounding stone, but is in fact immaterial shadow that functions as an *illusory wall* covering a pit (CL 20th, Will DC 18 to disbelieve). The door at C2 and this pit both provide access to area C3. It is a 60-foot fall from the top of the ziggurat to the floor of the chamber below. A PC can descend 40 feet into pit with a successful DC 30

Climb check, but the shaft opens into the ceiling of area C3 20 feet above the floor with no further way to descend.

The four pillars supporting the roof feature ornate bas-relief carvings of gigantic figures in breastplates, loincloths, plumed helmets, and strange swords visiting pain and suffering upon fleeing armies of humanity.

C2. THE SHADOW SLAB (CR 14)

A ten-foot-square section of bas-relief carvings adorns the central portion of the ziggurat's lowest tier, depicting skeletal spirits and towering, deformed humanoids rampaging through an idyllic countryside, laying waste to villages and crushing fleeing armies of humanoids. Above them all looms an enormous winged bat-like creature that seems to be absorbing the souls rising from the slaughtered people in the fields below.

This slab of shadowstone is a magical doorway providing access to a steep flight of stairs that leads down into area C3 below the Terapasillion. With a successful DC 24 Knowledge (planes) check, a PC can identify the creatures depicted in the slab as greater shadows, shadow giants, and above them all, a nightwing.

Creature: The slab of stone is in fact a living nightwing under an effect similar to that generated by a permanent *statue* spell, save that while in slab form, it has hardness 16. The nightwing remains in slab form, blocking access to the Terapasillion's interior, unless touched by a creature it recognizes as a denizen of the Plane of Shadow, whereupon it reverts to its true form and flies into the air for a few rounds to allow access to the chamber within. Any attempt to damage it or otherwise bypass the stone slab also causes the nightwing to assume its true form, whereupon it attacks the intruders. It can revert to slab form only while positioned at the entrance to area C3. Note also that certain events or conditions within the Terapasillion can also compel the nightwing to animate (see area C3 for details). The nightwing doesn't pursue foes out of the Terapasillion's aura of shadows during the day, but pursues foes for miles after dark, returning to the Terapasillion only under threat of being caught out after sunrise.

NIGHTWING CR 14

XP 38,400

hp 195 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 2* 203)

C3. SANCTUM OF MIDNIGHT (CR 13)

A steep flight of stairs to the north leads upward, out of this cold, dark room. Skulls impaled on spikes adorn the dark walls and the sides of four support columns that brace the ceiling twenty feet above. Piles of old, brittle bones, mostly humanoid, litter the northern wall. A ten-foot-tall spire made of dozens, perhaps hundreds of skulls stuck together by glistening tarlike

sludge rises atop a five-foot-high pedestal in the center of the southern end of the chamber. Beyond this spire, an archway in the south wall opens into a second staircase that descends deeper, while above, the vaulted ceiling rises to a ten-foot-square shaft leading upward into darkness.

The viscous substance that holds the spire of skulls together seems to slither and writhe, causing the skulls to periodically grind and shift; the stuff is semi-fluid shadowstone that holds the skulls together in an ancient shrine devoted to Zon-Kuthon. With a successful DC 30 Knowledge (religion) check, a character recognizes it as an obscure and largely outdated style of altar to the Midnight Lord. This altar is the focus of an *unhallow* spell (CL 20th), but more disturbingly, the skulls can sense the arrival of the living and begin to moan and hiss softly as soon as any living creature who is not a native to the Plane of Shadow comes into view (the skulls have the ability to see through darkness and possess Perception +20 for the purposes of spotting intruders).

Trap: The skulls are a magical trap created many years ago by the dragon Ithanothaur. Once they notice intruders, their moans and whispers rapidly increase in volume, enough to alert the denizens of the chambers below and triggering a mental *alarm* in the dragon's own mind. Once he hears this *alarm*, he immediately sets out via *shadow walk* to the Terapasillion to investigate. Ithanothaur's arrival in the area is detailed on page 33.

Further, once the skulls notice intruders, they begin channeling negative energy once per round, filling a 30-foot-radius area with a swirling vortex of shadows that deal 2d6 points of negative energy damage at the start of each round to each living creature in the area. The first time a creature is damaged by this trap, the vortex rips free a portion of the creature's shadow, creating a greater shadow in a square adjacent to that creature. This doesn't directly harm the target, but greater shadows created in this way attack at once, each preferring to target the creature from whose shadow it was created. They do not have the ability to create spawn, and vanish after 2 minutes of existence, restoring the source creatures' shadows to normal. Once a creature has had a portion of its own shadow used to create a greater shadow in this way, it is immune to this particular effect of the trap for 24 hours (though it continues to take negative energy damage from the trap's channeled negative energy as normal).

If the nightwing in area C2 hasn't been defeated, it assumes its true form and crawls down into this room to join the fight as soon as the trap is activated. The negative energy unleashed each round by the trap can simultaneously damage living creatures and heal undead creatures in its area of effect. The trap ceases unleashing negative energy on any round in which it cannot perceive any living creatures in the room not native to the Plane of Shadow.

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SHADOW VORTEX CR 13

XP 25,600

Type magical; Perception DC 32; Disable Device DC 32

EFFECTS**Trigger** visual (see *in darkness*, Perception +20); **Reset** automatic**Effect** *alarm* (mental alarm, Ithanothaur), channeled energy (2d6 negative energy, Will DC 20 half), create spawn (greater shadow—see text); multiple targets (all creatures within a 30-ft. radius)**GREATER SHADOWS** CR 8hp 58 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 245)**C4. SHADOW GIANT LAIR (CR 15)**

A huge stone table with three enormous chairs sits on the north side of this room. Archways open into antechambers on either side. The archway to the northwest opens into what looks like a shrine devoted to a gaunt, eviscerated statue, while the archway to the southwest is blocked by a set of iron bars, creating a prison cell. To the northeast, a third archway reveals what appears to be a bedchamber furnished with an immense mound of furs, while to the southeast, a final archway opens into a room containing a large pool of inky black liquid. Large, brick-shaped chunks of shadowy stone lie here and there against the walls.

This suite of rooms has served for many years as the home to a mated pair of shadow giants stationed here by Nidal's Umbral Court to serve as caretakers and guardians. The giants use the central room (area **C4a**) to take their meals and entertain themselves. Numerous books are piled on the table—enormous volumes of grisly fiction and illustrated (and well read) treatises on torture. They have no real intrinsic value, but the residents enjoy them immensely. The prison (area **C4b**) usually contains wild animals or humanoids the giants have caught for meals, but it is currently empty. The dark pool in area **C4c** is 10 feet deep and contains liquid shadows; this substance restores 2d6 hit points per round to any living native of the Plane of Shadow within the waters—the giants use the pool to soak, relax, and heal from wounds. The shrine (area **C4d**) doubles as a workshop where the giants worship Zon-Kuthon daily, their prayers serving to preserve the shadowy aura that surrounds the Terapasillion. Finally, the bedchamber (area **C4e**) is where the giants spend their days and store their treasure.

Creatures: The shadow giants Boloovhaar and Phaandrae spend their days sleeping in area **C4e**, but during the night, one of them can usually be found offering prayers in areas **C4d** while the other spends time reading in area **C4a**. There's a 20% chance both giants are in area **C4a**, in which case they're engaged in a game of

their own design wherein one opens a book at random, reads a passage, and then challenges the other to recite the next passage from memory. Of course, if the trap in area **C3** has been sprung or combat takes place in that room, both giants prepare for combat, regardless of the time of day.

BOLOOVHAAR AND PHAANDRAE CR 13

XP 25,600 each

Male and female shadow giants (*Pathfinder Campaign Setting: Inner Sea Bestiary* 15)

LE Large humanoid (extraplanar, giant)

Init +6; **Senses** darkvision 120 ft., low-light vision; Perception +22**DEFENSE****AC** 30, touch 11, flat-footed 28 (+7 armor, +2 Dex, +12 natural, -1 size)**hp** 218 each (19d8+133)**Fort** +18, **Ref** +8, **Will** +9**Defensive Abilities** rock catching, shadow cloak**OFFENSE****Speed** 30 ft.**Melee** +2 *spiked chain* +27/+22/+17 (2d6+20/19-20 plus energy drain) or2 *slams* +20 (1d8+6 plus energy drain)**Ranged** shadowstone brick +11 (1d8+18/19-20)**Space** 10 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft.**Special Attacks** energy drain (1 level, DC 21), rock throwing (180 ft.)**TACTICS****Before Combat** If they are alerted, the giants turn the table on its side to give themselves cover; they activate their shadow cloaks just before combat begins if possible.**During Combat** If the giants have upended the table, they use it as cover while throwing immense shadowstone bricks at the PCs. When engaged in melee, the giants use Power Attack and move to flank foes, using Improved Vital Strike on rounds where they can't make full attacks. When they make full attacks, they attempt to sunder a foe's weapon with their first attacks each round. If a giant is reduced to fewer than 100 hit points, it attempts to enter the pool of liquid shadow in area **C4c** to both heal and gain cover against foes.**Morale** These giants fight to the death.**STATISTICS****Str** 34, **Dex** 15, **Con** 24, **Int** 10, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 15**Base Atk** +14; **CMB** +27 (+31 sunder); **CMD** 39 (43 vs. sunder)**Feats** Combat Reflexes, Greater Sunder, Improved Critical (spiked chain), Improved Critical (shadowstone brick), Improved Initiative, Improved Sunder, Improved Vital Strike, Iron Will, Power Attack, Vital Strike**Skills** Intimidate +15, Knowledge (religion) +10, Perception +22 (+26 in dim light), Stealth -5 (+3 in dim light)**Languages** Giant, Shadowtongue

SQ militant

Gear +1 *breastplate*, +2 *spiked chain*

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Energy Drain (Su) A shadow giant's energy drain attack functions through its slam or any weapon it wields.

This ability triggers only once per round, on the first successful hit, regardless of the number of attacks the giant makes.

Militant (Ex) A shadow giant is proficient with all simple weapons, all martial weapons, and one exotic weapon of its choice; these giants are proficient with the spiked chain.

Shadow Cloak (Ex) Because of shadow giants' connection with the Plane of Shadow, as a move action in any illumination other than direct sunlight, a shadow giant can cloak itself in moving shadows that act as per the spell *blur* for 1d6+6 rounds. A shadow giant can use this ability three times per day.

Treasure: A large chest in area **C4e** contains a sizable amount of treasure the giants have gathered over the years, most of which came from unfortunate travelers and adventurers the giants attacked and eventually ate. The chest is unlocked, and contains a +2 *champion*^{UE} *breastplate*, a *beaststrike club*^{UE}, a *ring of the sea strider*^{UE}, a *lesser maximize metamagic rod*, a pair of *shoes of lightning leaping*^{UE}, a *glove of storing* that holds an *orb of utter chaos*^{UE}, a bejeweled silver holy symbol of Desna worth 500 gp, a single aquamarine worth 320 gp, a velvet pouch containing 10 pearls worth 120 gp each, 732 pp, 1,950 gp, and 4,300 sp.

Development: If both giants are slain and no prayers are offered in area **C4d**, the shadowy aura surrounding the Terapasillion and the liquid shadow in area **C4c** fade away after 24 hours.

ITHANOTHAUR'S ARRIVAL (CR 15)

The umbral dragon Ithanothaur still lives, but hasn't dwelt in the Terapasillion since he was driven off by agents of the Umbral Court in 4641 AR, though he has always retained fond memories of the site. If the PCs trigger or disarm the trap in area **C3**, a silent mental *alarm* alerts the dragon, who is surprised by the development and immediately curious as to what is going on in his old lair. Currently dwelling in a remote cave network under the Menador Mountains just south of the North Plains, Ithanothaur decides to travel via *shadow walk* to the Terapasillion to investigate. It is easiest to simply assume the dragon arrives at the Terapasillion while the PCs are still inside the structure, so when they emerge from the building after defeating the giants, the dragon is there, waiting for them.

Ithanothaur is a dangerous foe, but he isn't particularly looking for a fight. When he spots the PCs emerging

from the ziggurat, the dragon rumbles a pleasant but somewhat sinister greeting, asking them, "And how is my old lair looking these days?" The dragon takes no aggressive actions at first, but is swift to respond with a fight if the PCs move to attack.

If the PCs decide to speak with the umbral dragon, they may find an unlikely ally in the making. Ithanothaur is not like most umbral dragons—he has never felt any particular urge to spread pain and misery, and is not actually evil-aligned. Ithanothaur is also an avowed atheist who finds the very notion of faith illogical, while simultaneously intrigued by the question of why people put so much stock in powers beyond their understanding. In particular, he finds the people of Nidal to be particularly vexing and curious. As a native of the Plane of Shadow, he has a greater understanding of that realm's workings, and while he is forced to admit that the shadowcasters of Nidal are talented, their obsession with Zon-Kuthon and the worship of shadows baffle him.

Ithanothaur is willing to converse at length with PCs of faith or divine spellcasters; while the dragon doesn't believe the gods are worthy of worship, he is well versed in the lore of many religions. He is also curious as to who the PCs are, why they were in his old lair, and what their intentions are. Ithanothaur may be no ally of Nidal, but neither is he particularly eager to come to the PCs' aid against Cheliox. But if the PCs impress the dragon by succeeding at either a DC 25 Diplomacy check or a DC 20 Knowledge (religion) check made during a rousing discussion of matters of faith, the dragon takes a liking to the party. Furthermore, with the defeat of the shadow giants, Ithanothaur decides to reclaim the Terapasillion as one of his lairs and informs the PCs of his intention to move back into the structure, as its proximity to the Nidalese border makes it a much more convenient place from which to stage investigations and observations of the "shadow-worshipping monkeys" who populate that nation.

Ithanothaur has no significant role to play in the remainder of the Hell's Rebels Adventure Path, but he might be able to help somewhat with the haunts that will soon plague Kintargo. Should you decide to play up a conflict with Nidal after the campaign's end as part of the "Continuing the Campaign" article in *Pathfinder Adventure Path* #102, Ithanothaur's aid may prove helpful in that circumstance as well.

ITHANOTHAUR

CR 15

XP 51,200

Male mature adult umbral dragon (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 2 102)

CN Huge dragon (extraplanar)

Init +4; **Senses** dragon senses; Perception +27

Aura frightful presence (210 ft., DC 24)

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HELL'S REBELS

DEFENSE

AC 39, touch 11, flat-footed 39 (+4 armor, +3 deflection, +24 natural, -2 size)

hp 218 (19d12+95)

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

DR 10/magic; **Immune** cold, death effects, negative energy, paralysis, sleep; **SR** 26

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft., fly 200 ft. (poor)

Melee bite +26 (2d8+13/19-20), 2 claws +26 (2d6+9), tail slap +21 (2d6+13), 2 wings +21 (1d8+4)

Space 15 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft. (15 ft. with bite)

Special Attacks breath weapon (50-ft. cone, 14d8 negative energy, Reflex DC 24 half, usable every 1d4 rounds), crush (Small creatures, DC 24, 2d8+13), shadow breath (50-ft. cone, 7 Strength drain and blindness 1d4 rounds, DC 24, 3/day)

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 19th; concentration +24)

At will—*darkness*, *shadow walk* (DC 21), *vampiric touch*

Spells Known (CL 9th; concentration +14)

4th (5/day)—*charm monster* (DC 19), *dimension door*

3rd (7/day)—*dispel magic*, *inflict serious wounds* (DC 18), *slow* (DC 18)

2nd (7/day)—*command undead* (DC 17), *inflict moderate wounds* (DC 17), *invisibility*, *mirror image*

1st (8/day)—*alarm*, *grease*, *inflict light wounds* (DC 16), *mage armor*, *sanctuary* (DC 16)

0 (at will)—*arcane mark*, *bleed* (DC 15), *detect magic*, *ghost sound* (DC 15), *mage hand*, *mending*, *message*, *open/close*

TACTICS

Before Combat Ithanothaur casts *mage armor* before entering combat.

During Combat Ithanothaur opens combat by blasting the party with his shadow breath. He then takes to the air for a few rounds while he casts *invisibility* and *mirror image*, before swooping down to make a few Flyby Attacks (using Arcane Strike with his bite attack) while his breath weapon recharges. He then blasts the party again with his shadow breath before landing amid them to fight in melee, using Arcane Strike to bolster his attacks. If reduced to 100 or fewer hit points, he uses *dimension door* to retreat to area **C4a**, then uses his *inflict wounds* spells to heal his damage before returning to combat above. The dragon would prefer to defeat the PCs without killing them if possible, so that he can interrogate them after they recover, but if the PCs attack a second time, he won't hesitate to kill.

Morale If reduced to 50 or fewer hp, Ithanothaur flees, preferably by using *shadow walk* to return to his lair in the mountains to the south. Whether or not the umbral dragon seeks revenge on the PCs at a later date is left to you to decide.

STATISTICS

Str 29, **Dex** 10, **Con** 21, **Int** 20, **Wis** 21, **Cha** 20

Base Atk +19; **CMB** +30; **CMD** 43 (47 vs. trip)

Feats Arcane Strike, Craft Wondrous Item, Empower Spell, Extend Spell, Flyby Attack, Great Fortitude, Improved Critical (bite), Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes

Skills Fly +14, Intimidate +27, Knowledge (arcana, geography, local, planes, religion) +27, Perception +27, Sense Motive +27, Spellcraft +27, Use Magic Device +27

Languages Abyssal, Common, Draconic, Infernal, Shadowtongue, Undercommon

SQ ghost bane, umbral scion

Gear *ring of freedom of movement*, *ring of protection* +3

Story Award: If the PCs secure the dragon's friendship, award them XP as if they had defeated him in combat.



ITHANOTHAUR



D. URCHIN'S MAW



MISSION 4: THREAT FROM THE ARCADIAN DEEPS

The PCs might hear rumors of strange whirlpools forming in the waters off the western Ravounel coast before they pay a visit to their aquatic elf allies or make a trip to Vyre, or they could hear of this development from an ally like Captain Sargaeta, the lictor of the Order of the Torrent, or one of their own merchant lords who relies upon sea trade. Regardless of how this development comes to the PCs' attention, the first time they go to either Acisazi or Vyre to gain a representative's support, they learn of a disturbing development in the nearby seas.

Grisly warnings have begun to appear in the harbors of the major Ravounel cities and towns: torsos of dead sailors upon which crude lettering has been inscribed with a sharp instrument. These body parts are strangely resistant to decay and have, curiously, been avoided by scavengers, and each bears an identical message in Common: "The crew of any ship that sails from treasonous Ravounel without the blessing of Father Cheliox can expect death."

If ignored, these grisly messages and additional whirlpools begin to cause increased fear and worry to Ravounel's citizens, and whispers that the Silver Ravens aren't interested in defending the waters or, worse, may be in cahoots with the mysterious source of these vortexes grow more widespread. Few seem to know much about the source of these attacks, with the exception of aquatic elves. If consulted, the elves

of Acisazi (including any who still serve the Silver Ravens as an allied team, or at your option, the aquatic half-elf Shensen) can provide the PCs with valuable additional information—an immense monster known as a charybdis has been spotted in the oceans of late. Fortunately, a creature the size of a charybdis can't hide well, and several aquatic elves have spotted the monster coming and going from an underwater cave known as Urchin's Maw, located almost 70 miles west of Acisazi. Armed with this knowledge, the PCs can locate the charybdis's lair with a successful DC 20 Knowledge (geography) check while aboard a ship in the general region.

However, the creature's arrival in the region explains only part of the mystery, for while they have the ability to create vortexes identical to those said to have sunk the ships, they are relatively unintelligent and wouldn't be able to send grisly threats scrawled on undecaying torsos. The true source of the dangers in Urchin's Maw is the sorcerous drowning devil Sluucoroth, recently conjured by Thrune agents and tasked with disrupting sea travel in the region as an attempt to test Ravounel's nautical defenses. Sluucoroth wasted no time recruiting the aid of a small group of highly trained skum as his personal guard, and also arranged for the transport of the fiendish charybdis Baraagama from Stygia's brackish seas to aid him in his task. In order to remove the threat, the PCs must defeat not only this extraplanar charybdis, but its diabolic master, Sluucoroth, as well.

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Located about 80 miles northwest of the village of Acisazi, the entrance to the submerged cavern of Urchin's Maw gapes from the side of the continental shelf, overlooking a precipitous drop into the inky depths below. The cave entrance (and the chambers beyond) are at a depth of 450 feet below the surface; the ocean here is in perpetual darkness. The denizens of Urchin's Maw rely on their darkvision and other senses to navigate the area, but the darkness is likely the least of an air-breathing group's worries. In addition to finding methods of breathing underwater, the PCs need to contend with the crushing pressure; each minute, a diver takes 4d6 points of damage unless she succeeds at a Fortitude save (DC 15 + 1 for each previous check). None of the cave's denizens have to cope with this hazard, as they are acclimated to the pressure. Certain magic items, such as the *vest of the deep* (*Pathfinder Adventure Path #99: Dance of the Damned* 16) can prevent pressure damage, as can specific spells like *life bubble*^{APG}. It's recommended that you allow *freedom of movement* to grant complete protection from pressure damage as well. Without such protection, the PCs may need to make a number of relatively quick forays into Urchin's Maw in order to defeat its many diabolic denizens.

The entrance to the cave earns its name from the riot of sizable (but noncombative) deep sea urchins that dwell on the rock face surrounding the cave entrance. At your discretion, feel free to have some of these urchins be dangerous spear urchins (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 5 223), but the true dangers dwell in the caves beyond.

D1. ABYSSAL CAVERN (CR 14)

The walls and floor of this large cavern bear deep scratches and gouges, as if the claws of some great beast had been used against them.

Creature: Baraagama, the fiendish charybdis that has been causing the whirlpools in the area, dwells in this cave, but when the PCs first arrive in the caverns, the monster may not be present. An investigation of the cavern walls, along with a successful DC 28 Knowledge (dungeoneering) check, confirms that the likely denizen of the area is a charybdis, for these creatures have claws that are particularly devastating when targeting objects, and their use would explain the deep gouges on the walls here.

The timing of the PCs' encounter with Baraagama is left to you. If adding a CR 14 creature to another fight is likely to overwhelm the PCs, they can simply encounter it here. Alternately, it could return as the PCs exit the caves for the first time, or—for a particularly challenging encounter—it might come surging in when another fight is in progress.

BARAAGAMA

CR 14

XP 38,400

Fiendish charybdis (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 2 292, 56)

hp 184

D2. GUARD POST (CR 10)

A grisly mess of humanoid bones litters the floor of this rocky, undersea cave—strangely, none of the bones include spines or rib cages.

The bones scattered here are the picked-clean remnants of sailors and other unfortunates taken by the skum for food and for transformation into the grisly messages they've been allowing to wash up in harbors in the region.

The area just north of this cave is kept constantly warded by an *alarm* spell that has been cast by one of the skum rangers.

Creature: One of the four skum rangers recruited by Sluucoroth stands guard here, hidden near the western exit. The skum posted here is always the one who cast the most recent *alarm* spell in the northern tunnel, and as soon as this silent mental *alarm* is triggered, the skum sends her shark companion to alert the others in area D3 while she prepares for a fight. The remaining skum and their sharks come to join the battle as quickly as possible.

SKUM RANGER

CR 10

XP 9,600

Skum ranger 8 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 253)LE Medium monstrous humanoid (aquatic) **Init** +3 (+7 water); **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +14 (+18 water)

DEFENSE

AC 25, touch 14, flat-footed 21 (+7 armor, +3 Dex, +1 dodge, +4 natural)**hp** 123 (10d10+68)**Fort** +11, **Ref** +12, **Will** +6**Defensive Abilities** improved evasion; **Resist** cold 10

OFFENSE

Speed 15 ft., swim 40 ft.**Melee** mwk trident +17/+12 (2d6+6), +1 *bite* +16 (1d8+4), +1 *claw* +16 (1d6+4)**Special Attacks** combat style (natural weapon), favored enemy (aquatic humanoids +4, humans +2)**Ranger Spells Prepared** (CL 5th; concentration +6)2nd—*barkskin*1st—*alarm*, *lead blades*^{APG}

TACTICS

Before Combat The skum drifts back into the shadows of the western tunnel and casts *barkskin* and *lead blades* before combat, as do any other skum once the alarm is raised.

During Combat The first skum to attack the party on her own fights defensively for the first few rounds of combat, hoping to be joined soon by her companions. Once all four skum are here, they fight normally, using Power Attack to gain a +6 bonus on damage rolls while taking a -3 penalty on attack rolls.

Morale As soon as two skum perish, the remaining skum retreat to fight at their master's side in area **D5**, leaving behind all of their sharks to continue fighting the PCs to the death.

STATISTICS

Str 22, **Dex** 16, **Con** 21, **Int** 8, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 6

Base Atk +10; **CMB** +16; **CMD** 30

Feats Dodge, Endurance, Improved Natural Attack (bite), Improved Natural Attack (claw), Multiattack, Power Attack, Toughness, Weapon Focus (bite), Weapon Focus (claw)

Skills Handle Animal +11, Intimidate +7, Perception +14 (+18 water), Stealth +13 (+17 water), Swim +24

Languages Aboleth, Undercommon

SQ amphibious, favored terrain (underground +2, water +4), hunter's bond (shark animal companion), swift tracker, track +4, wild empathy +6, woodland stride

Combat Gear *wand of water breathing* (7 charges);

Other Gear +1 *breastplate*, *mwk trident*, *amulet of mighty fists* +1, *belt of giant strength* +2, 145 gp

SHARK COMPANION CR —

N Medium animal (aquatic)

Init +2; **Senses** blindsense 30 ft., low-light vision, scent; Perception +9

DEFENSE

AC 19, touch 12, flat-footed 17 (+2 Dex, +7 natural)

hp 47 each (5d8+25)

Fort +8, **Ref** +6, **Will** +2

Defensive Abilities evasion

OFFENSE

Speed swim 60 ft.

Melee bite +8 (1d6+6)

TACTICS

During Combat This ravenous shark tends to focus on single targets, but has been trained to pursue anyone who flees a battle to finish off the wounded.

Morale This shark fights to the death.

STATISTICS

Str 18, **Dex** 14, **Con** 18, **Int** 1, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 2

Base Atk +3; **CMB** +7; **CMD** 19

Feats Improved Natural Armor, Toughness, Weapon Focus (bite)

Skills Perception +9, Swim +12

D3. SKUM WARREN (CR 13)

Makeshift beds and nests of tightly wrapped seaweed are strewn about this cave. Scattered elsewhere are bones, simple weapons, tools, and other signs of humanoid habitation. A pronged rod of silvery metal protrudes from the floor in the northeast section of the cave.

Creatures: Four skum rangers dwell in this cave in all, but at any one time, only three wait here to be called to the defense of the lone guard in area **D2**, or their master in area **D5** should the PCs manage to slip by the first guard.

SKUM RANGERS (3) CR 10

XP 9,600 each

hp 123 each (see page 36)

SHARK COMPANIONS (3) CR —

hp 47 each (see above)

Treasure: The skum have a small stash of treasure they have collected. Buried beneath one of the seaweed nests are four black pearls worth 70 gp each, 56 gp, 328 sp, and 434 cp. The pronged metal rod is a magically enhanced mithral tuning fork worth 5,000 gp that



SKUM RANGER AND SHARK COMPANION

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weighs 10 pounds. The fork functions as an undersea signal horn, as its low, vibrating sound carries for miles through the water—its magical enhancement protects from corrosion but has little additional effect. A creature can strike this fork as a standard action, which catches Baraagama's attention, and it then returns to the caves swiftly (although the timing of its arrival is left to you).

D4. SIREN'S LAIR (CR 13)

Drifting tangles of decaying seaweed, broken shells, and the occasional scrap of fabric or splintered wood litter this cave. Shallow scratches crisscross the stone floor.

Creature: This cave serves as the lair of a seaweed siren who once hunted along the southern shores of Dismal Nitch. Sluucoroth encountered the creature while he was gathering skum mercenaries, and the drowning devil convinced the siren to return with him to Urchin's Maw to act as a guard in exchange for easy and regular prey brought to it by his skum. Following Baraagama's attacks on a ship or a skirmish with aquatic elves, a skum grabs a survivor, uses her *wand of water breathing*, and drags the victim back for the siren to devour alive. If the siren hears an alarm (be it the tuning fork in area D3 or simply the sound of combat), it moves to the entrance of this cave and attacks foes, giving the devil in area D5 time to prepare for battle. The seaweed siren attempts to flee the caves if reduced to fewer than 30 hp, and if cornered offers to tell it what it knows about Sluucoroth and his capabilities in return for safe passage out of Urchin's Maw. This exchange can reveal as little or as much as you wish—at the very least, the creature can explain to the PCs why the drowning devil is here and what he is doing.

SEAWEED SIREN

CR 13

XP 25,600

hp 184 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 4* 235)

Treasure: The siren has greedily started a little treasure hoard with the takings from its influx of new victims. This hoard contains a suit of +1 *benevolent*^{UE} *studded leather armor*, *magnetist's gloves*^{UE}, 2 *potions of cure moderate wounds*, a *potion of water breathing*, a handful of gold teeth worth 800 gp in all, 13 pp, and 422 gp.

D5. DROWNING DEVIL'S DOMAIN (CR 14)

The walls of this undersea cave are painted with softly glowing depictions of a horned humanoid rising from the waters of a churning sea. Resting against the north and south walls are simple frames constructed of splintered pieces of lumber tied together with seaweed, displaying swaths of what appears to be freshly preserved humanoid skin bearing numerous tattoos. A number of whalebones and ships' planks have been tied together to erect a simple throne suitable for a giant.

The illustrations are painted with a bioluminescent paste made from rare deep-sea fish. On a successful DC 15 Knowledge (religion) check, a PC can identify them as depictions of Asmodeus, perhaps from the perspective of an aquatic species. The stretches of skin are preserved via *gentle repose*—trophies of sailors' tattoos that caught Sluucoroth's eye. The throne is for the devil's use, a gift from his new skum servants.

Creatures: Sluucoroth spends his time here, either touching up the paintings on the cave walls or adjusting



SLUUCOROTH

and organizing his gallery of tattoos. The devil eagerly welcomes the PCs into his den, his arrogance preventing him from imagining a scenario in which he might be defeated by mortals. He hopes to kill the PCs, preserve their bodies, then report back to Egorian to those who sent him on this mission so that he can return to Hell.

SLUUCOROTH**CR 14****XP 38,400**

Male drowning devil sorcerer 10 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 4 52)

LE Large outsider (devil, evil, extraplanar, lawful)

Init +14; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., see in darkness, see *invisibility*; Perception +26

Aura heavy aura (10 ft., DC 21)

DEFENSE

AC 31, touch 23, flat-footed 20 (+4 armor, +3 deflection, +10 Dex, +1 dodge, +4 natural, -1 size)

hp 208 (19 HD; 10d6+9d10+124)

Fort +17, **Ref** +16, **Will** +17

DR 5/good; **Immune** fire, poison; **Resist** acid 10, cold 10; **SR** 19

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft., fly 30 ft. (average), swim 40 ft.

Melee +2 *bite* +25 (2d6+8/19–20), 2 +2 *slams* +25 (1d8+8/19–20 plus poison)

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

Special Attacks drown

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

Constant—see *invisibility*, *water breathing*

At will—*control water*, *curse water* (DC 18), *discern lies* (DC 20), *greater teleport* (self plus 50 lbs. of objects only), *hydraulic push*^{APG}

3/day—*hydraulic torrent*^{APG}, *poison* (DC 21), *protection from good*

1/day—*freedom of movement*, *summon* (level 4, 1 drowning devil 35%)

Sorcerer Spells Known (CL 10th; concentration +17)

5th (4/day)—*feblemind* (DC 22)

4th (6/day)—*black tentacles*, *charm monster* (DC 21), *dimension door*

3rd (8/day)—*dispel magic*, *gentle repose*, *haste*, *lightning bolt* (DC 20)

2nd (8/day)—*darkness*, *detect thoughts* (DC 19), *invisibility*, *mirror image*, *web* (DC 19)

1st (8/day)—*charm person* (DC 18), *comprehend languages*, *grease*, *identify*, *mage armor*, *magic missile*

0 (at will)—*acid splash*, *arcane mark*, *bleed* (DC 17), *dancing lights*, *detect magic*, *light*, *mage hand*, *message*, *prestidigitation*, *read magic*

Bloodline arcane

TACTICS

Before Combat Sluucoroth casts *mage armor* before combat, and if the alarm is raised, *invisibility* and *mirror image* as well.

During Combat Sluucoroth prefers to fight with his spells, using *black tentacles* and *web* for battlefield control. Faced against arcane spellcasters, he opens with *feblemind*, but otherwise defaults to *charm monster* and *charm person* against heavily armored foes. If joined by the skum and their sharks, he casts *haste* on them. Dispelling intruders' water-breathing effects is his other favorite tactic.

Morale Arrogant and eager to succeed at his mission, Sluucoroth fights to the death.

STATISTICS

Str 22, **Dex** 30, **Con** 23, **Int** 18, **Wis** 18, **Cha** 24

Base Atk +14; **CMB** +21; **CMD** 45 (can't be tripped)

Feats Arcane Strike, Combat Casting, Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Eschew Materials, Extend Spell, Great Fortitude, Improved Critical (bite), Improved Critical (slam), Improved Initiative, Power Attack, Weapon Finesse

Skills Bluff +29, Diplomacy +29, Fly +8, Knowledge (nature) +17, Knowledge (planes) +26, Perception +26, Sense Motive +26, Spellcraft +26, Stealth +25, Swim +27

Languages Aklo, Celestial, Common, Draconic, Infernal; telepathy 100 ft.

SQ arcane bond (*amulet of mighty fists* +2), bloodline arcana (+1 DC for metamagic spells that increase spell level), metamagic adept (2/day), new arcana

Gear *amulet of mighty fists* +2, *ring of protection* +3

Treasure: Underneath his throne, Sluucoroth keeps a salvaged metal footlocker filled with valuables to use as bribes for any potential allies he might encounter. The container holds a *wind-caller compass*^{UE}, assorted gemstones worth 6,500 gp, 3 strands of pearls worth 100 gp each, 441 gp, 932 sp, and 1,064 cp.

Development: If both Baraagama and Sluucoroth are defeated, the attempt to terrorize local shipping lanes collapses, and Cheliex doesn't attempt a similar operation again soon. While some captains remain wary of Kintargo's safety, returning to port with a portion of the charybdis as a trophy or proof of its demise swiftly rebuilds morale. This in turn convinces elements in Vyre and among the aquatic elves to sign on under Kintargo's protection, even if previous events in your campaign left these groups unallied with the Silver Ravens.

MISSION 5: STORMS OVER RAVOUNEL FOREST

Of the four regions in Ravounel defined by the Kintargo Contract, the Ravounel Forest may be the most difficult one with which to secure an alliance, for there is no established leader of this large woodland. It is, in large part, an untamed wilderness—but this is not to say that it is without powerful potential representatives. With a successful DC 20 Knowledge (local) check, or a few hours of work gathering information (Diplomacy DC 20) in one of the numerous small villages that dot the countryside between the Yolubilis River and the trackless woodlands

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of the forest, the PCs find that there are at least two powerful groups at work in the forest, yet exact details as to the nature of these two factions is unclear. One is believed to be associated with a religious cult with power over the weather (and as such is generally feared to be a cult of Rovagug worshipers), while the other is thought to be a cabal of murderous fey who are so efficient at capturing and killing intruders in their land that none have seen them clearly and survived to tell the tale. The most these villagers can confirm is having heard the sound of nearly silent wings beating in the sky near their humble towns.

The Ravounel Forest is thus rightly feared by the locals, and no villages exist within miles of the woodland's borders. No significant logging takes place in the forest, and while there are hunters and trappers who brave the woods, they rarely journey more than an hour's trek into the dense forest, preferring to ply their trades along the region's fringes—and even then, only during the day.

Further complicating current matters regarding the Ravounel Forest is the fact that the area is plagued by particularly powerful storms. Locals confirm that, though unusual for the climate, these storms are not uncommon, and when they flare up, they tend to last up to a month or two. General consensus among the locals is that the cult of storm worshipers is clashing against the silent slayers of the woods, and that when the terrible weather dies down, the two sides have decided to relent in their aggression to lick their wounds and prepare for a new clash some months down the road.

In fact, for the past 200 years, control of the woodlands has been contested by two equally dangerous groups. The first is a tribe of isolationist strix rangers known as the Kitkasiticka tribe, which has called the heart of the Ravounel Forest its territory for many centuries. Two hundred years ago, a deadly competitor moved in—a coven of storm hags known as the Grundlescorn Sisters. For the last 2 centuries, the Kitkasitickas have been in an intermittent feud with the Grundlescorns. This conflict has simultaneously kept the strix tribe from growing in size and prevented the storm hags from expanding their influence beyond the forest into the nearby region.

In order to secure the protection of western Ravounel, the PCs must investigate the forest, determine the nature of these two groups, make contact with their leaders, and secure an alliance with one group while ensuring the other is no longer in a position to threaten their chosen representative's control over the woods.

RAVOUNEL FOREST FEATURES

While few of those who live in Ravounel's western settlements know much factual information about the archduchy's namesake forest, powerful characters like the PCs are hardly without resources to learn more. Divination magic can provide the most accurate

information in the least amount of time, with *commune with nature* being an obvious choice. Other methods, like *speaking with animals*, *speaking with plants*, and *stone tell* can fill in more information as well. Feel free to parcel out tidbits of information as you see fit, depending on the nature and order of the players' questions. The next two sections present more details about the Grundlescorns and the Kitkasitickas.

Mundane methods of research can reveal information as well, but may well take longer if the PCs need to rely upon libraries or agents. A successful DC 30 Knowledge (local) check is enough for a PC to recall very old tales of a lost strix tribe said to dwell in Ravounel Forest. On a successful DC 25 Knowledge (history) check, a PC knows that strange storms have plagued the forest for nearly 200 years—if this result exceeds the DC by 10 or more, additional obscure tales of an old coven of storm hags who once tormented ship traffic off the Ravounel Coast about 2 centuries ago might suggest a connection.

In the end, though, physical investigation of the forest is the method most likely to produce results. Simply exploring Ravounel Forest will provoke interactions, as both the strix and the hags take offense at intrusions into territories they consider their own. Ravounel Forest itself consists primarily of oak, fir, and pine trees—the woods are categorized as medium forest for the purpose of determining the presence of undergrowth and trees (see page 425 of the *Core Rulebook*). While the PCs are exploring the forest, feel free to make use of the wandering monster table found on page 81 of this volume. Many of the creatures dwelling in Ravounel Forest are dangerous but intelligent, and a canny party can perhaps turn a fight with a randomly encountered foe into a source of information if they play their cards right. A map of the Grundlescorn lair is provided on page 41, but for additional encounters you'll need to generate your own woodland maps, or use Pathfinder Flip-Mats and Map Packs.

THE GRUNDLESCORN SISTERS (CR 16)

The Grundlescorn sisters are a coven of three ancient storm hag witches named Grava, Mopple, and Polnivaar. These three are well over 3 centuries old, but have grown increasingly frustrated with how long they have spent sparring and skirmishing with the strix over control of the forest. The introduction of the PCs into the equation gives them an edge, they hope, as the strix are unlikely to seek out the PCs because of their isolationist nature and hatred of humanity.

The Grundlescorns use *commune* daily to check up on local events and significant arrivals in the forest, and thus quickly learn of any intruders in the woods. They first attempt to contact the PCs via a *dream* spell, appearing in the dream as a single beautiful dryad



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with butterfly wings who claims to be an agent of Desna and a protector of the woodlands. In the dream, the dryad warns the PCs of a tribe of murderous strix who hope to build enough forces to slaughter their hated human neighbors. The dryad claims that she has been holding these murderous strix in check, but her power is waning. The dream ends with the dryad giving the PC directions to the strix village and asking them to destroy the strix before they can move against the villages of western Ravounel.

Once the dream is delivered, the Grundlescorns hope the PCs fall for the deception and attack the strix. Should the PCs hesitate or spend time trying to seek out the false dryad, one of the sisters adopts the form of a dryad via *veil* and makes contact with the PCs to attempt an in-person communication. The hags know this is riskier than a dream, of course, since it allows the PCs a chance to see through the deception. As the winged dryad, the disguised hag does her best to paint the strix as vile, evil murderers and encourages the PCs to drive them off. If the PCs learn the truth or see through her lies, she does not linger to fight, and instead uses *dimension door* to flee back to her lair and her sisters to prepare for retaliation.

While the PCs might be able to learn the location of the Grundlescorn lair by chance or by magic, it is more likely that they do so from the strix themselves. This adventure assumes that the PCs are accompanied by the strix leader, Solmestria, when they seek out a

confrontation with the hags. Without Solmestria's aid, the fight against the three hags is more dangerous than the PCs might want to face on their own. The sisters dwell in a marshy section of the forest, in a ramshackle hut partially built into the boughs of an ancient oak tree and supported by several crooked but sturdy stilts. The hut looks out over a low hillock in the marsh atop which the hags keep their cauldron and fire pit.

The interior of the Grundlescorns' hut consists of four rooms: three relatively similar bedrooms containing filthy beds, and a central chamber featuring a disturbing statue of Rovagug constructed entirely out of the bones of hundreds of strix children the hags have eaten over the centuries. In fact, this decoration is an advanced bone golem created for the Grundlescorns' amusement by a wizard they captured, charmed, and eventually ate many decades ago. The bone golem follows the commands of any of the sisters, but they generally leave it to simply guard their hut and treasure.

If the PCs manage to reach the area without alerting the hags beforehand, they find the three gathered around the cauldron, cooking a meal of pixie meat. If the Grundlescorns are expecting trouble, however, they take the time to cast *control weather* to cause a thunderstorm to manifest over their region of the woods. In addition, they use *mirage arcana* to make the swampy ground around their hillock and hut appear to be firm grassy ground. In fact, the swampy area is riddled with patches of quicksand, as indicated on the



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map, and even areas without this dangerous terrain feature consist of deep bog (*Core Rulebook* 427). In this case, the hags are still gathered around their cauldron, but maintain a *veil* over themselves to appear as a trio of terrified young strix bound tightly to wooden poles. The trio calls out to the PCs as soon as they are spotted, telling the characters that the “vile witches” are sleeping soundly in the hut and that the heroes should quickly enter the building to kill the witches while they slumber. If the PCs fall for this trick, of course, they give the hags a few extra rounds to prepare for the fight, as detailed in the hags’ stats, while they tangle with the golem that guards the hut.

The Grundlescorns, as the rumors correctly hold, are worshipers of Rovagug, albeit not particularly devout. They each keep a bat familiar, although they are generally loath to risk these creatures in combat.



GRUNDLESCORN SISTER

GRUNDLESCORN SISTERS (3)**CR 13****XP 25,600 each**

Female storm hag witch 10 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 5 235, *Pathfinder RPG Advanced Player's Guide* 65)

CE Medium monstrous humanoid

Init +4; **Senses** child-scent, darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +24

DEFENSE

AC 30, touch 15, flat-footed 25 (+4 armor, +4 Dex, +1 dodge, +11 natural)

hp 180 each (20 HD; 10d6+10d10+90)

Fort +14, **Ref** +16, **Will** +17; +8 vs. mind-affecting effects

Immune electricity; **SR** 18

OFFENSE

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

Melee bite +18 (1d6+3 plus 1d6 electricity), 2 claws +18 (1d4+3 plus 1d6 electricity)

Special Attacks hexes (cackle, evil eye, hag's eye, misfortune, retribution, slumber), storm strike, whipping winds

Storm Hag Spell-Like Abilities (CL 10th; concentration +14)

At will—*bleed*, *gust of wind* (DC 16), *whispering wind*
3/day—*invisibility*, *lightning bolt* (DC 17), *river of wind*^{APG}
(DC 18), *sleet storm*

1/day—*control winds* (DC 19)

Coven Spell-Like Abilities (10th; concentration +14)

At will—*animate dead*, *baleful polymorph* (DC 18),
blight (DC 17), *bestow curse* (DC 17), *call lightning*
storm (DC 18), *charm monster* (DC 17), *clairaudience*/
clairvoyance, *commune*, *control weather*, *dream*,
forcecage, *mind blank*, *mirage arcana* (DC 18), *plague*
storm^{UM} (DC 19), *quench* (DC 16), *reincarnate*, *speak*
with dead, *veil* (DC 19), *vision*, *whirlwind* (DC 21),
wind wall

Witch Spells Prepared (CL 10th; concentration +16)

5th—*baleful polymorph* (DC 21), *cloudkill* (DC 21),
feeblemind (DC 21)

4th—*confusion* (DC 20), *dimension door* (2), *ice storm*

3rd—*dispel magic*, *suggestion* (DC 19), *vampiric*
touch (2)

2nd—*glitterdust* (2, DC 18), *mirror image*, *spectral*
hand, *touch of idiocy* (2)

1st—*charm person* (DC 17), *cure light wounds* (3), *mage*
armor, *obscuring mist*

0 (at will)—*dancing lights*, *detect magic*, *message*, *touch*
of fatigue (DC 16)

Patron trickery

TACTICS

Before Combat Each Grundlescorn casts *mage armor* before entering combat. If they are expecting the PCs, in addition to using their coven spell-like abilities to create a *mirage arcana* and *control weather*, they cast *call lightning storm* and *mind blank*.

During Combat The Grundlescorns begin combat with their coven spell-like abilities, using *forcecage* to capture and isolate PCs, starting with healers and spellcasters. If they manage to whittle the PCs down to

one free foe, they then focus their attacks on that lone victim. Killing a sister or forcing at least one of them more than 10 feet away from the others prevents them from using coven magic. Likewise, the hags abandon this tactic if faced with a foe in melee, since the full-round casting time makes coven magic a poor choice in such circumstances. On the first round of melee combat, or just before they attack, each Grundlescorn sister casts *mirror image* on herself before scattering and using her offensive magic. A Grundlescorn sister who can't get away from foes that threaten her instead calls down a bolt of lightning with *call lightning storm*, uses a hex to put the threatening foe to sleep, or uses *dimension door* to reach a position of safety from which to continue spellcasting. Melee attacks are options of last resort for the Grundlescorns.

Morale As soon as one Grundlescorn sister is slain, the surviving hags fly into a frenzy and focus all of their attacks on the person who killed their sister. If a second witch is killed, the surviving Grundlescorn sister flees, preferably via *dimension door*. Whether or not she returns to vex the PCs in the future is left up to you.

STATISTICS

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

Base Atk +15; **CMB** +18; **CMD** 33

Feats Arcane Strike, Combat Casting, Craft Wondrous Item, Dodge, Empower Spell-Like Ability (lightning bolt), Flyby Attack, Great Fortitude, Improved Natural Armor, Mobility, Vital Strike

Skills Acrobatics +14, Bluff +14, Diplomacy +14, Disguise +24, Fly +21, Intimidate +17, Knowledge (arcana) +24, Knowledge (nature) +24, Perception +24, Sense Motive +21, Spellcraft +29, Stealth +17, Survival +14

Languages Auran, Common, Giant, Strix

SQ storm rider, witch's familiar (bat)

Combat Gear *wand of cure serious wounds* (20 charges), *wand of dispel magic* (15 charges); **Other Gear** *amulet of natural armor* +2, *cloak of resistance* +2, *handy haversack*, *headband of vast intelligence* +4, spell component pouch

ADVANCED BONE GOLEM

CR 9

XP 6,400

hp 112 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 3 290, 133)

Treasure: The hags have hidden their collected treasures in a hollow below the ghastly altar, which can be easily smashed apart. This wealth consists of an *efficient quiver* decorated with depictions of strix hunters, a *gem of brightness* with 9 charges, a *phylactery of positive channeling*, a *ring of major electricity resistance*, two dozen assorted gemstones worth a total of 4,500 gp, a bejeweled gold necklace bearing the holy symbol of Calistria worth 3,000 gp, 840 pp, and 3,400 gp.

THE KITKASITICKAS (CR 15)

The Kitkasiticka tribe has always been small in number, but protected by a small group of particularly ferocious defenders—high-level strix rangers who have trained ruthlessly to hunt the tribe's foes. The tribe's current leader is an exceptionally deadly slayer named Solmestria, and for the past few decades, she and her ranger elite have been the sole reason the Grundlescorn sisters haven't been able to finish the job of eradicating the strix tribe. Solmestria realizes it is only a matter of time before the hags finish her people off, and she has come to realize that the time is finally nigh to seek outside aid. Yet a long life of isolation has left her and her kin with little frame of reference on how best to forge such a unique alliance.

Currently, the tribe consists of Solmestria, four rangers, and 54 low-level strix of various classes (mostly warriors). These additional strix all range from 1st to 3rd level, and as such no statistics are provided for them. The tribe's home consists of a few dozen tree houses built into a particularly large stand of oak and pine trees, well hidden from both the forest floor below and aerial reconnaissance above, but if the PCs follow the directions given to them by the Grundlescorns, they have little problem finding the site. Of course, the hags hope the PCs attack the strix without stopping to talk to them, and if the PCs do so, Solmestria and her four rangers do their best to defend the village.

Hopefully, the PCs don't immediately attack the strix, allowing Solmestria and her rangers the chance to hail them as they approach. Solmestria is somewhat open-minded and accustomed to the hags' trickery, and if the PCs tell her about the "winged dryad," she immediately suspects the Grundlescorns. She explains the situation from her viewpoint before asking the PCs their actual reason for venturing into the forest. Presented with the request to sign an alliance, the strix leader appears thoughtful, then nods her head and tells the PCs that if they accompany her to the Grundlescorn den and aid her in slaughtering the storm hags, she'll agree to do it. If the PCs can convince her to put some of her allies at risk with a successful DC 23 Diplomacy check, she agrees to bring along one of her rangers as well, adding one additional ranger for every 5 points by which the PCs exceed the check DC.

SOLMESTRIA

CR 14

XP 38,400

hp 177 (see page 60)

STRIX ARCHERS (4)

CR 7

XP 3,200 each

Strix ranger 8 (*Pathfinder RPG Advanced Race Guide* 200)
CN Medium humanoid (strix)

Init +4 (+8 forest); **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Perception +12 (+16 forest)

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DEFENSE

AC 21, touch 14, flat-footed 17 (+5 armor, +4 Dex, +2 natural)
hp 72 each (8d10+24)

Fort +9, **Ref** +10, **Will** +5; +2 vs. illusion spells or effects

OFFENSE

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

Melee longsword +10/+5 (1d8+2/19–20)

Ranged +1 *composite longbow* +13/+8 (2d6+3/×3)

Special Attacks combat style (archery), favored enemy (humans +4, lawful outsiders +2), hatred

Ranger Spells Prepared (CL 5th; concentration +6)

2nd—*barkskin*

1st—*gravity bow*^{APG}, *pass without trace*

TACTICS

Before Combat The archers cast *gravity bow* and *barkskin*.

During Combat These archers prefer to stay at range,

abandoning full attacks when needed to do so. They focus their attacks on humans first and other foes second, using *Deadly Aim* to increase their damage.

Morale The archers fight to the death.

STATISTICS

Str 15, **Dex** 18, **Con** 12, **Int** 8, **Wis** 13, **Cha** 8

Base Atk +8; **CMB** +10; **CMD** 24

Feats *Deadly Aim*, *Endurance*, *Great Fortitude*, *Iron Will*, *Point-Blank Shot*, *Rapid Shot*, *Toughness*

Skills Fly +14, *Knowledge (nature)* +10, *Perception* +12 (+14 in dim light or darkness, +16 forest), *Stealth* +14 (+16 in dim light or darkness, +18 forest), *Survival* +12 (+16 forest)

Languages Strix

SQ favored terrain (forest +4, plains +2), hunter's bond (companions), nocturnal, suspicious, swift tracker, track +4, wild empathy +7, woodland stride

Combat Gear *potion of cure serious wounds*, *potion of haste*; **Other Gear** +1 *chain shirt*, +1 *composite longbow* (+2 Str) with 20 arrows, *human slaying arrow*, longsword

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Hatred (Ex) Strix receive a +1 bonus on attack rolls against humans.

Nocturnal (Ex) Strix gain a +2 racial bonus on *Perception* and *Stealth* checks in dim light or darkness.

Suspicious (Ex) Strix receive a +2 racial bonus on saving throws against illusion spells or effects.

Story Award: If the PCs manage a peaceful accord with the strix, award them XP as if they defeated Solmestria in combat. For every additional ranger who joins and survives the raid against the hags, award them an additional 3,200 XP.

SECURING ALLIES

If the PCs help the strix to defeat the hags, Solmestria eagerly signs a document pledging her allegiance to Kintargo. She warns the PCs that her people will not wish to swiftly integrate with their neighbors, but hopes that in time they will be able to forge a lasting alliance.

If the PCs instead slaughter the strix and attempt an alliance with the Grundlescorns, they'll find that the hags have no interest in signing anything and, if approached, attempt to murder the PCs instead. In this case, the PCs may well have to cede control of much of western Ravounel to Cheliax when treaty discussions take place at the start of the next adventure.

If the PCs fail to secure an alliance in Ravounel Forest, reduce their XP award for the completion of Mission 2 on page 28 to 12,800 XP.



STRIX ARCHER

PART 4: THEY HAVE NOT GONE GENTLY

There have been numerous murders in Kintargo recently—slayings perpetrated by relatively small dangers like tooth fairies and more sinister killings inflicted by legitimate maniacs like Varl Wex, to say nothing of the atrocities committed by Barzillai Thrune and his allies. As such, the news of the latest killings might not initially alarm the PCs, though in fact, the inspiration for many of the previous murders has come home to Kintargo.

Doctor Alander Mangvhune was a well-loved professor of anatomy at Alabaster Academy until the truth of his murderous nature came out. He was executed swiftly thereafter. However, he managed to retain his memories upon his soul's subsequent judgment, and attracted the attention of the demon lord of murder, Shax. Today, Mangvhune lives on as a babau assassin, and recent events involving the cause of his unique condition, the *soul anchor*, have brought him back to Kintargo.

Yet Mangvhune did not return alone. He has brought with him several cambion devotees, deadly killers and sadists in their own right. The murderous demon was delighted to find that his hidden laboratory and workshop secreted deep below the academy remained undiscovered, and has now reclaimed the site as his base of operations. As eager as he is to remind Kintargo about his legacy, Mangvhune is just as keen to begin using the *soul anchor* to recruit new followers and help other murderers follow in his footsteps to power.

THE MURDERS

Mangvhune returns to Kintargo between the events of the previous adventure and this one—to be precise, shortly after Barzillai Thrune's death. He doesn't begin his murders anew until after the PCs complete Part 1 of this adventure. After that point, feel free to introduce the following murder scenes into the game at a pace with which you are comfortable. The murders quickly escalate, growing more elaborate and difficult to ignore. The first two may well pass by without the PCs even noticing, but by the time the fourth one occurs, they should know something dire is afoot. The fifth murder presented is intended to be a direct challenge to the PCs—Mangvhune wants his design to be witnessed by the city's heroes, but also wants them to challenge him in his lair, as this represents his best chance to capture and defeat them so that he can move on with his plans unopposed. If the PCs don't take the bait after the fifth murder, feel free to escalate the situation with more slayings that increasingly target their friends and allies.

THE FIRST TWO MURDERS: OLD KINTARGO SLASHINGS

PCs likely won't hear of one of these first two slayings right away, and when they do, it is only via rumor and hearsay. The victims, Doil Redgen and Salluna Noffre,

worked in the trading and fishing industries and had no significant criminal history or personal enemies. They were attacked on the street in Old Kintargo while alone—Mangvhune struck from the shadows and slew them swiftly, without giving either victim a chance to see her doom coming. Both of these killings represent Mangvhune merely testing the waters before getting to the real work of sensational slaying.

Unless you determine otherwise, both bodies are buried in the Temple Hill Gardens soon after they are found, but if the PCs act quickly or later exhume the bodies, an investigation of the remains and a successful DC 20 Heal check both offer the following information. Each victim was cut down from behind by a tremendous blow with a large sword, cutting cleanly through the spine but without quite bisecting the body entirely. Both wounds bear evidence of acid burns as well, as if the blade used were corrosive. *Speak with dead*, *resurrection*, and similar tactics offer no additional clues, as both victims were cut down swiftly and never saw their killers.

THE THIRD MURDER: NURSERY KILLING

Mangvhune steps things up with his third killing, returning a bit to his old sense of grisly style. He chooses as his victim one Gattrus Pinderloch, a tiefling man and a popular chef employed at the Cloven Hoof Society. This society, managed by Strea Vestori, only recently reopened for business after she was rescued by the PCs in the previous adventure (if Strea was not rescued or was killed, the Cloven Hoof Society is instead reopened and managed by Hetamon Haace). Gattrus had served the establishment as a chef before the Night of Ashes, and was well-loved by the tieflings of the Devil's Nursery for his sense of humor and positive attitude—he always had a joke and a hot meal for any tiefling who needed food and hope.

Gattrus was murdered late in the night, while he was alone in the Cloven Hoof Society cleaning the kitchen. Mangvhune teleported into the room while invisible and paralyzed Gattrus with a death attack, then took his time preparing him as a meal. Strea found his limbless body the next day, laid out, cooked up, and carved as a roast, an apple shoved in his mouth and his body festooned with salt, spices, and garnishes. His blood saturates the floor, and evidence suggests the heinous deed was performed with Gattrus's own cooking knives. Disturbingly, his arms and legs are nowhere to be found.

When she finds the body, Strea is swift to contact the PCs with the frightening news. She has no suspects, noting that those who interacted with Gattrus loved him, then bitterly reminding the PCs that even here in Kintargo, many despise tieflings. A PC who succeeds at a DC 25 Heal check while examining Gattrus's grisly remains finds a tiny puncture wound at the base of the neck that bears faint traces of acid burns. This wound

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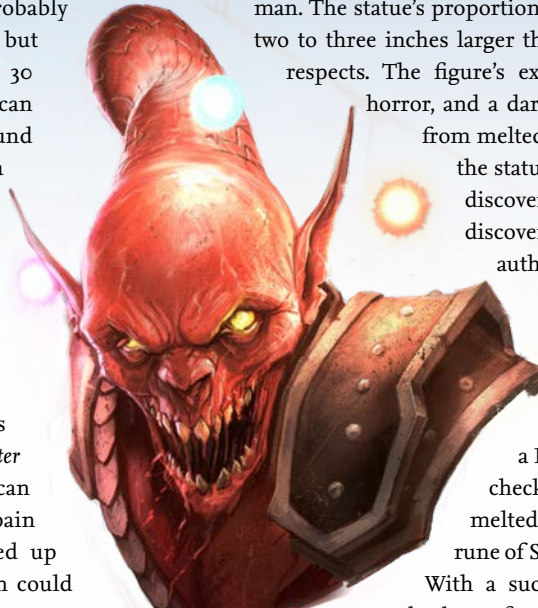
appears to have surgically severed his spinal cord, but his death likely resulted from subsequent blood loss from amputations: Gattrus was probably alive while this event occurred, but paralyzed. On a successful DC 30 Heal or Perception check, a PC can determine that the puncture wound was likely made by a talon or a weapon designed to mimic a talon or long claw.

Speak with dead can provide more information in this case, as can restoring Gattrus to life (CG male tiefling expert 4; Will +4). Mangvhune remained invisible during the entire time Gattrus lived (thanks to his *wand of greater invisibility*), so that all Gattrus can convey was that he felt a stabbing pain in his back, collapsed, was picked up and placed on a counter, and then could do nothing but watch as something unseen stripped him and severed his limbs—death claimed him while his torso was being skinned. Needless to say, if restored to life, Gattrus is terrified and wants nothing more than to flee Kintargo.

THE FOURTH MURDER: THE HUMAN CANDLE

This fourth murder should occur after the PCs have a chance to examine Gattrus's remains, but before they have accomplished much more in their investigation into the crimes. If possible, present the discovery of this astonishing crime while the PCs are actively seeking Gattrus's killer; perhaps it is the PCs themselves who discover the remains of Mangvhune's fourth victim, Maercin Kelimber (LG male human expert 3; Will +4), owner of Kelimber's Dry Goods and Supplies in Redroof. (If the PCs haven't had any interaction with Maercin, consider replacing him with another minor NPC shopkeeper the PCs have met a few times before. Mangvhune selects this victim carefully, wanting to kill someone the PCs know but not someone they have a strong relationship with—that's a gift he's saving for the fifth and subsequent slayings).

Mangvhune used *greater invisibility* and a death attack to quickly murder Maercin in his shop about 10 minutes after he closed for the night (an investigation of Kelimber's store, along with a successful DC 20 Perception or Survival check, reveals a few bloodstains and signs of a struggle, but no additional clues), then retreated back to his lair with the body in his *portable hole* to prepare it in darkness. Several hours later, he returned and placed the body on full display on a street east of the old Temple of Asmodeus for early morning risers to find.



MANGVHUNE

Kelimber's body has been turned into what appears, at first, to be a slightly oversized wax effigy of a nude human man. The statue's proportions are subtly odd, uniformly two to three inches larger than a normal human in all respects. The figure's expression is one of abject horror, and a dark red runic design created from melted wax forms a circle around the statue's base. When the statue is discovered, none touch it and its discovery is swiftly reported to the authorities, who waste no time in alerting the PCs. The player characters should be the first to examine the strange effigy.

A PC who succeeds at a DC 20 Knowledge (religion) check correctly interprets the melted wax on the ground as the rune of Shax, demon lord of murder. With a successful DC 20 Perception check, or after any attempt to scrape away or pierce the wax itself, a character finds that the statue contains a humanoid shape. A few minutes of work are sufficient to chip or melt away enough wax to confirm this fact. If the PCs do not know Kelimber well enough to recognize him on sight, they can identify him with a successful DC 15 Knowledge (local) check.

After removing all the wax and succeeding at a DC 20 Heal check, the PCs discover a similar acid-burned puncture wound at the base of the deceased's neck, identical to that found on Gattrus. No check is required to see that the man's torso has been cut open; his heart has been removed and replaced with a large, heart-shaped blob of red wax. However, after a successful DC 20 Perception check, a PC notices an object embedded within this blob of wax—a dead whippoorwill. A character who succeeds at a DC 15 Knowledge (religion) check recalls that whippoorwills are sacred to the faith of Pharasma, and are often regarded as metaphorical psychopomps. The placement of the dead bird in the chest could easily be taken as a threat that the deceased's soul has been prevented from traveling to the Great Beyond, possibly because he has been turned into an incorporeal undead. In fact, it is merely Mangvhune mocking Pharasma and the process of the soul's death while also hinting at the method Barzillai used to interact with the *soul anchor*.

Interrogating the deceased via magic or after restoring him to life provides few leads—Gattrus's attacker was invisible, but before he died, Kelimber did experience "a hole opening up and falling into its darkness" (his body being deposited in a *portable hole* by the invisible Mangvhune).

THE FIFTH MURDER: AN INVITATION (CR 14)

Mangvhune knows the PCs are canny and smart, but if they don't track down his lair on their own (see Mangvhune's Heart below), he sends the PCs a personalized invitation. The victim he chooses should be an NPC the party is closely associated with, but preferably not one who is particularly powerful. Mangvhune wants to be able to strike down this unfortunate swiftly and simply, after all.

Whoever is chosen, Mangvhune uses the same tactics as before—teleporting in while under the effects of *greater invisibility* to make a death attack against the victim. He then claims the body, teleports back to his lair, and readies a grisly surprise for the first person to find the body. He recruits the aid of his alchemist devotee Nirukni to transform the remains into a devious and dangerous trap. A few hours before sunrise, he places the body somewhere personal to the PCs, such as the above-ground ruins of Lucky Bones or atop the roof of the Opera House. Finally, he uses a *silver raven figurine of wondrous power* to deliver a message to one of the PCs that informs them he has left them a “gift” at the chosen location, signed by the Temple Hill Slasher.

Trap: The victim's remains are on full display, yet unlike with the previous two cases, the body initially appears relatively un mutilated. It bears the same puncture mark at the base of the neck, but has also been impaled on a silver slashing or piercing weapon of a type identical to one favored by one of the PCs (if no PC uses any slashing or piercing weapons, Mangvhune chooses a rapier, calling out the weapon favored by Jilia Bainilus). Closer examination of the body reveals that it has been cut open and stitched shut with lengths of silver wire. Within, the body's organs have been replaced by volatile alchemical solutions inside of fragile silver casings. Undoing any of the silver wires, removing the silver weapon, and jostling the body significantly all have the same effect—a sudden explosion of fire, acid, and silver shrapnel.

EXPLODING CORPSE

CR 14

XP 38,400

Type magical; Perception DC 34; Disable Device DC 34

EFFECTS

Trigger touch; Reset none

Effect alchemical explosion (4d6 fire, 4d6 acid, and 4d6 piercing damage; Reflex DC 20 half); multiple targets (all creatures within a 30-ft. radius)

Development: If the PCs manage to resurrect or otherwise interrogate this victim, you should give them an additional clue to lead them to investigate Mangvhune's old offices in Alabaster Academy (see Mangvhune's Heart below). If the PCs ignore this threat, continue to have Mangvhune attack and murder their

allies—in time, the babau may well grow brazen enough to ambush one of the PCs!

Story Award: If the PCs crack the case and confront Mangvhune in his lair before he reaches this fifth explosive murder, award them 51,200 XP.

E. MANGVHUNE'S HEART

Mangvhune and his minions have been spending the bulk of their time in a small complex hidden under Alabaster Academy. This combination workshop and laboratory was built by talented architects (all of whom were sworn to secrecy and then murdered after their tasks were finished) and had been hidden away from discovery for well over a hundred years now. The PCs need to find this lair and confront Mangvhune and his minions within, but Mangvhune is canny and leaves very few clues as to its location. Nonetheless, he wants the PCs to find him in his deathtrap-filled den, for once they have been added to his list of victims, few in Kintargo will be able to withstand his murderous plans.

You should tailor the method by which the PCs discover the location of Mangvhune's Heart to their own strengths. Mangvhune comes and goes via *greater teleport*, but the PCs are more likely to use the same method his cambion minions used—a hidden *teleportation circle* accessed from his office in the Academy.

The key to finding Mangvhune's lair is, of course, first realizing that the murders all bear a striking similarity to the old Temple Hill slashings. Anyone who succeeds at a DC 15 Knowledge (history) check recalls that not only did the Temple Hill Slasher prefer to stage his victim's bodies in increasingly outlandish and grisly tableaux, but that he tended to kill his victims with expert blows to the neck that paralyzed the body, leaving him free to take his time in dressing the victims for their horrifying presentations.

The use of divination magic can be an excellent way to direct the PCs. Answers from spells like *commune* and *divination* confirm for the PCs not only that the murders are similar to those committed over a century ago by Mangvhune, the Temple Hill Slasher, but also that the key to finding his lair may well be hidden in his old haunts at Alabaster Academy.

The academy never truly recovered from the scandal of one of its most renowned professors being revealed to be a murderer, and even today, headmaster **Iylvana Desdoros** (LN female half-elf transmuter 7) is hesitant to bring up the topic. If the PCs seek her out, she grants them a private audience immediately (they are, after all, famous heroes of the city), and she admits that she fears a copycat killer has taken up the slasher's tactics. She informs the PCs that Mangvhune's old office was closed up following his execution back in 4599 AR, but does confirm that rumors of the office being haunted or cursed have plagued the academy ever since.

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E. MANGVHUNE'S HEART



The headmaster has always discounted the rumors and has worked to prevent their spread out of a desire to move on from this dark time in the school's past. While this may make more conspiracy-minded PCs suspect her, she has no connection to the murders. If the PCs ask to see Mangvhune's office, she readily agrees.

The professor's old office is located in a now-disused wing of the academy's natural sciences building. As headmaster Iylvana escorts the PCs into the abandoned halls, she bemoans the fact that the academy's enrollment numbers never recovered from the scandal Mangvhune caused, and readies a large ring of keys as they approach the door. Yet the five heavy locks she expects to still be sealing the door to Mangvhune's office have all been melted away by what appears to be acid, leaving the door to his office hanging open. The sight disturbs the woman greatly, and she refuses to enter the room beyond, warning the PCs that whoever has taken up the slasher's mantle might be hiding in his office.

Inside, the professor's old office is empty—his notes, books, and belongings were confiscated soon after his execution, leaving only empty bookshelves and dusty furniture. No Perception check is necessary to note the passage of several booted feet through the dust on the floor of the room, or that the tracks seem to approach a bookshelf behind the old oak desk on the north wall but do not appear to return. The secret door built into the shelves can be discovered with a successful DC 15 Perception check. Opening it reveals a narrow crawlway with a ladder leading down to a 10-foot-square room

below. This room is also empty, save for a softly glowing magic circle inscribed in the floor, which can be identified with a successful DC 29 Knowledge (arcana) check as a permanent *teleportation circle*. A message in Common has been written in flowing, drippy letters of blood on the wall opposite: "Welcome to my home, Silver Ravens!"

Story Award: Once the PCs find the entrance to Mangvhune's Heart, award them 25,600 XP.

MANGVHUNE'S HEART FEATURES

Mangvhune's Heart is 60 feet below the foundations of the natural sciences building. The secret tunnels that its builders used to come and go have long since been collapsed, cutting the complex off from physical entry—the *teleportation circle* in the secret room below Mangvhune's office is the main method of coming and going today. Those who use this entry appear in area E1.

The chambers within the complex are unlit—Mangvhune and his allies use darkvision. The walls, floor, and ceiling are made of polished worked stone, the blocks fitted together and then sealed with *stone shape* to leave no gaps. The air remains breathable and fresh because of magical effects woven into the stonework. The walls radiate faint transmutation magic as a result (a successful DC 25 Spellcraft check makes this quality apparent).

The ceilings are 8 feet high, with the exception of those in areas E2, E8, and E9, which are all 25 feet high. All doors are made of strong wood (hardness 5, hp 20,

break DC 23) and cannot be locked unless otherwise noted in a room's description.

All traps here create a fantastic amount of noise when triggered (not to mention the screams of PCs affected by these cruel devices), and as soon as a trap goes off, Mangvhune's disciples move swiftly into action.

E1. ENTRY (CR 14)

The bare stone walls of this room are etched with spiky, curling runes of overlapping writing. A ten-foot-diameter magic circle glows softly on the floor.

The writing on the wall is in Abyssal, and consists of thousands of lines of prayers of devotion to Shax.

Normally, the circle connects to the *teleportation circle* under Mangvhune's office, but the slasher deactivated this circle so that there is no easy way out of these chambers—PCs who lack the ability to teleport or use other methods to escape might find themselves trapped in these chambers as a result (see area E6a for a dangerous alternate route out of these chambers).

The door to the south is barred with a length of iron—breaking it down requires a successful DC 30 Strength check.

Trap: The ceiling of this room is rigged with dozens of razor-sharp spears coated with an Abyssal anticoagulant that creates horrific wounds. The trap is triggered as soon as any creature attempts to open or damage the door leading out of the room; opening it from the opposite side does not trigger the trap (the demons who dwell within teleport in and out of the room as needed and open the door from the opposite side when they must).

CEILING SPEAR TRAP CR 14

XP 38,400

Type mechanical; Perception DC 32; Disable Device DC 32

EFFECTS

Trigger touch; **Reset** automatic

Effect Atk +20 melee (2d8+10 plus 2d6 bleed); multiple targets (all creatures in area E1)

E2. ATRIUM (CR 14 AND 15)

This unusually shaped room runs diagonally northwest to southeast before it wraps around a partial wall. A short flight of steps connects a balcony to the floor below, which contains a few worktables. Two doors line balcony's northern wall, and additional doors exit the room below to the northeast and to the south.

Creatures: This roomy corridor fulfills more of an architectural aesthetic than a practical purpose, although Mangvhune has recently started using it as a guard room. When he traveled back to the Material Plane from

his Abyssal lair, Mangvhune brought with him a small group of loyal demonic minions. These disciples are all cambions—the offspring of succubi in the service of Shax—and they make up the bulk of the Heart's defensive force. There are eight disciples in all in the complex, along with their alchemist leader Nirukni. While Nirukni spends most of his time in area E6, the other disciples react to any sign of intrusion.

Half of the disciples are posted here, waiting to come to Mangvhune's aid or to respond to a trap's triggering.

DISCIPLES OF SHAX (4) CR 10

XP 9,600 each

Male cambion assassin 2/cleric of Shax 7 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 5 75)

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

Init +2; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +17

DEFENSE

AC 28, touch 13, flat-footed 22 (+8 armor, +3 deflection, +2 Dex, +1 dodge, +1 natural, +3 shield)

hp 111 each (12 HD; 9d8+3d10+55)

Fort +13, **Ref** +6, **Will** +13; +1 vs. poison

Defensive Abilities uncanny dodge; **Immune** electricity, poison; **Resist** acid 10, cold 10, fire 10; **SR** 13

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft.

Melee *dagger of venom* +12/+7 (1d4+3/17-20), claw +6 (1d4+1/19-20)

Special Attacks channel negative energy 5/day (DC 15, 4d6), death attack (DC 12), destructive smite (+3, 7/day), sadistic strike, sinfrenzy, sneak attack +1d6

Cambion Spell-Like Abilities (CL 3rd; concentration +5) 3/day—*command* (DC 13) 1/day—*charm person* (DC 13), *death knell* (DC 14), *enthrall* (DC 14)

Cleric Spell-Like Abilities (CL 7th; concentration +11) 7/day—*inspiring word* (3 rounds)

Cleric Spells Prepared (CL 7th; concentration +11) 4th—*cure critical wounds*, *inflict critical wounds*^o (DC 18), *unholy blight* (DC 18)

3rd—*blindness/deafness* (DC 17), *dispel magic*, *magic vestment*^o, *speak with dead* (DC 17)

2nd—*cure moderate wounds* (2), *hold person* (DC 16), *shatter*^o (DC 16), *spiritual weapon*

1st—*cure light wounds* (2), *deathwatch*, *divine favor*^o, *sanctuary* (DC 15), *shield of faith*

0 (at will)—*bleed* (DC 14), *detect magic*, *mending*, *stabilize*

D domain spell; **Domains** Destruction, Nobility

TACTICS

Before Combat Before battle, a disciple of Shax casts *magic vestment* and *shield of faith*.

During Combat These disciples start combat with *unholy blight*, then cast *divine favor* and move to attack in melee. They team up to flank foes, using spells like *hold person* or *blindness/deafness* to help maximize

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sneak attacks. A disciple reduced to 50 hit points or fewer casts *sanctuary* and uses the protection to study a foe before moving in to make a death attack. They generally don't bother with healing in combat, saving those spells to recover from a battle. When surrounded, they channel negative energy. Disciples of Shax are always quick to send telepathic updates and alerts to Mangvhune in area **E9** to keep him apprised of the PCs' most common tactics.

Morale A disciple of Shax fights to the death.

STATISTICS

Str 15, **Dex** 15, **Con** 18, **Int** 11, **Wis** 18, **Cha** 14

Base Atk +9; **CMB** +11; **CMD** 24

Feats Combat Casting, Critical Focus, Dodge, Power Attack, Selective Channeling, Shield Focus

Skills Bluff +13, Disguise +20, Intimidate +8, Knowledge (religion) +8, Perception +17, Sense Motive +10, Stealth +8

Languages Abyssal, Common; telepathy 100 ft.

SQ poison use

Combat Gear *potions of invisibility* (3); **Other Gear** mwk breastplate, +1 *buckler*, *dagger of venom*



DISCIPLE OF SHAX

Trap: The southernmost alcove leading to area **E6** is modeled after a heart valve, but is also trapped with an exceptionally sharp set of spring-loaded poisoned blades that scythe out of the wall to strike at the first creature that rounds the corner toward area **E6**. The trap detects via *true seeing*, and does not trigger if it detects a demon.

SLASHING VALVE

CR 15

XP 25,600

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

EFFECTS

Trigger visual (*true seeing*); **Reset** automatic

Effect Atk +20 melee (3d8+12/18-20 slashing plus giant scorpion venom)

E3. EXAMINATION ROOM (CR 14)

A long table sits against this musty-smelling room's western wall. A blood-stained white sheet has been draped across the table, over what appears to be an incredibly thin humanoid shape—perhaps a skeleton. Another table runs along the north wall, covered with neatly arranged surgical tools and a glass jar filled with a green fluid. Thick layers of dust cover everything.

Haunt: Despite the abandoned appearance of the room, the blood staining the sheet on the table seems quite fresh. Below is the skeletal remains of a long-dead human, missing the left half of its ribcage (the jar of green fluid on the other table contains this skeleton's preserved heart). The remains here are those of an Abadaran acolyte, murdered by Mangvhune in 4598 AR—it was through necromantic interrogations of this poor soul that Mangvhune finally managed to pinpoint the presence of the *soul anchor* deep below Kintargo. He abandoned this room soon thereafter, but the particularly vile torment he put the long-forgotten man through resulted in a particularly devastating haunt. The haunt manifests as soon as anyone disturbs the corpse, its bloodstained shroud, the jar on the table, or the jar's contents.

SOULSTRAIN

CR 14

XP 38,400

CE persistent haunt (area **E3**)

Caster Level 14th

Notice Perception DC 30 (to hear a beating heart, notice the heart in the jar has started to pulse, or to see the blood on the shroud suddenly darken a bit over the missing ribs)

hp 63; **Trigger** touch; **Reset** 1 minute

Effect A victim targeted by this haunt has a vision of himself strapped to the table while an intent man

(Mangvhune as he was before his transformation—see the inside back cover for his appearance) violently cuts the heart out of the victim's chest. The victim endures the excruciating pain of death, and then as he dies, he catches a glimpse of paradise as his soul rises up from his body, only to suddenly be yanked backwards into a vortex of blue energy, becoming trapped in this world instead. The victim is targeted by a *trap the soul* spell (Will DC 22 negates). If the victim resists the spell, the haunt targets him over and over as long as he remains in this room. If the victim succumbs to this effect, his body and soul become trapped in the heart in the jar, which immediately begins beating, filling the room with its thunderous pulsations. At the same moment, the Abadaran's soul, which was previously trapped in the heart, transforms into a dybbuk that immediately attacks the party. Smashing the jar frees the victim, but does not harm the dybbuk.

Destruction If the jar containing the Abadaran's heart and the dybbuk are both destroyed, the haunt is also destroyed.

DYBBUK

CR 15

XP 51,200

hp 207 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 3* 108)

Development: A character who became trapped by this haunt's *trap the soul* effect but is then restored to life carries a scar on her soul from the traumatic experience for the rest of her life. Each subsequent time the character has a brush with death (either via being targeted by but resisting a death effect, or by being reduced to negative hit points), she feels a strange metaphysical tugging, as if some impossible-to-ignore force were trying to anchor her to this world. If the character dies again and is brought back to life, she does not suffer any negative levels from the experience. Finally, if this character's soul is judged, she retains her memories of life after judgment, but whether this is a curse or a boon depends in large part on whether her afterlife is a reward or a punishment. This character will also be helpful in tracking down the location of the *soul anchor* in the last adventure (see *Pathfinder Adventure Path #102: Breaking the Bones of Hell*).

E4. ABANDONED STUDY

A solitary table stands in the center of this room, and a dusty, almost rotted, overstuffed sofa sits against the northern wall. Two bookcases rest against the east and west walls, their volumes musty from age. Several slate boards covered with complex diagrams and notes scribed in chalk (some of which have been wiped away) hang from the walls.

As with the nearby examination room, this chamber hasn't been used in the hundred years since Mangvhune's execution. The diagrams on the chalkboard depict a complicated series of notes written in a combination of Abyssal, Aklo, and Draconic. A character who can read all three of these languages can interpret the notes with a successful DC 30 Knowledge (arcana or planes) check, and learns they are an attempt to map the route a soul takes from a recently slain body to the Boneyard. The calculations and notes seem to indicate that something in the vicinity of Kintargo causes fluctuations and deviations in this process, but some parts of the notes seem to have been erased out of frustration, leaving the actual findings (if any) lost forever.

Treasure: The majority of the books on the shelves bear titles that suggest topics on anatomy, the nature of death, and theories on the soul. Used as research aids, these books grant a +5 circumstance bonus on Knowledge checks made regarding these topics. The collection of books is worth 2,500 gp as a collection, but weighs 200 pounds in all. These books may prove particularly useful in the next adventure when the PCs seek the location of the *soul anchor*.

A character who succeeds at a DC 35 Perception check while looking through the books in this room uncovers a short set of notes in Abyssal on the creation of something called a "recall portal." These notes explain how the portal in area E6a functions.

E5. SHRINE TO THE BLOOD MARQUIS (CR 12)

A raised platform lines the northern wall of this irregularly shaped five-sided room. A statue of a man with avian talons for feet, the head of a stork, and fans of knives and scalpels in his hands stares balefully into the room, looming above a pair of prayer desks. The walls are adorned with disturbing paintings of men and women being tortured by red-skinned demons before a nightmarish cliffside house that seems disproportionately large compared to the landscape around it.

A character who succeeds at a DC 20 Knowledge (religion) check identifies this chamber as a shrine to Shax, demon lord of envy, murders, and lies. The altar is the focal point of an *unhallow* spell tied to a *silence* spell to which chaotic evil worshippers of Shax are immune. When weight is placed on the kneeling boards of the prayer desks, small barbs jab into the knees, dealing 1 point of piercing damage to honor the Blood Marquis.

Creatures: A pair of disciples of Shax are in deep prayer here; each kneels before a desk (and has taken 1 point of damage from doing so), but if they hear combat in area E2, they prepare for a fight here to defend the shrine from intruders. They do not leave this room unless called upon by Mangvhune to do so.

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DISCIPLES OF SHAX (2)**CR 10****XP 9,600 each**

hp 111 each (currently 110 each; see page 49)

E6. LABORATORY (CR 15)

Several oily, iridescent stains mar this room's stone floor, and an acrid, metallic tang hangs in the air. A pair of work tables, each covered with alchemical equipment, sits to the south, while shelves of tinctures and powders and strange alchemical supplies line the walls to the east and west. Brightly glowing crystals mounted on the ceiling fill this chamber with light.

The glowing crystals bear *continual flames*—this room, alone among those in the lair, is well lit, as the ability to perceive alchemical creations in color (impossible with darkvision) is important to the work. A successful DC 35 Perception check reveals the secret door that opens into area **E6a**.

Area **E6a** contains a glowing magical circle—a “recall portal.” This device functions similarly to a *teleportation circle*, save that it works more akin to a *word of recall* spell, sending the one who steps upon it to a place of safety and shelter if she concentrates. This location must be one where the traveler feels comfortable, whether it's her home, a shrine to her deity, or any similar place to which she feels a bond. No return portal manifests at the far side of transport. A character who steps onto the portal without concentrating must succeed at a DC 20 Will save or be whisked away to Shax's Abyssal realm. A set of notes in area **E4** describes how this portal works; alternately, a PC can determine its functionality with a successful DC 35 Spellcraft check made as if identifying a magic item.

The shelves and tables here are well stocked, and function as a masterwork alchemist's lab.

Creatures: A cambion named Nirukni, who is one of Mangvhune's most powerful (and most loyal) followers works in this well-stocked laboratory, designing new poisons, potions, elixirs, and traps for his master's entertainment. This creature not only has aided

Mangvhune in crafting several of the murderer's more sensational slayings, but also has been tasked with discovering how and why Barzillai had used the *soul anchor*. The alchemist is assisted in his efforts by a pair of disciples of Shax. These three do not abandon this laboratory unless called by Mangvhune, but fight to the death to preserve its secrets.

NIRUKNI**CR 14****XP 38,400**Male cambion alchemist 13 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 5 75*, *Pathfinder RPG Advanced Player's Guide 26*)

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

Init +6; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +10**DEFENSE****AC** 30, touch 15, flat-footed 25 (+6 armor, +4 Dex, +1 dodge, +5 natural, +4 shield)**hp** 231 (16 HD; 13d8+3d10+157)**Fort** +19, **Ref** +15, **Will** +10**Immune** electricity, poison; **Resist** acid 10, cold 10, fire 10; **SR** 13**OFFENSE****Speed** 30 ft., fly 60 ft. (good)**Melee** +1 *wounding dagger* +15/+10/+5

(1d4+3/17-20 plus 1 bleed), claw +9

(1d4+1/19-20)

Ranged bomb +19/+14/+9 (7d6+2 fire)**Special Attacks** bomb 17/day (7d6+2fire, DC 18), sadistic strike, *sinfrenzy***Spell-Like Abilities** (CL 3rd;

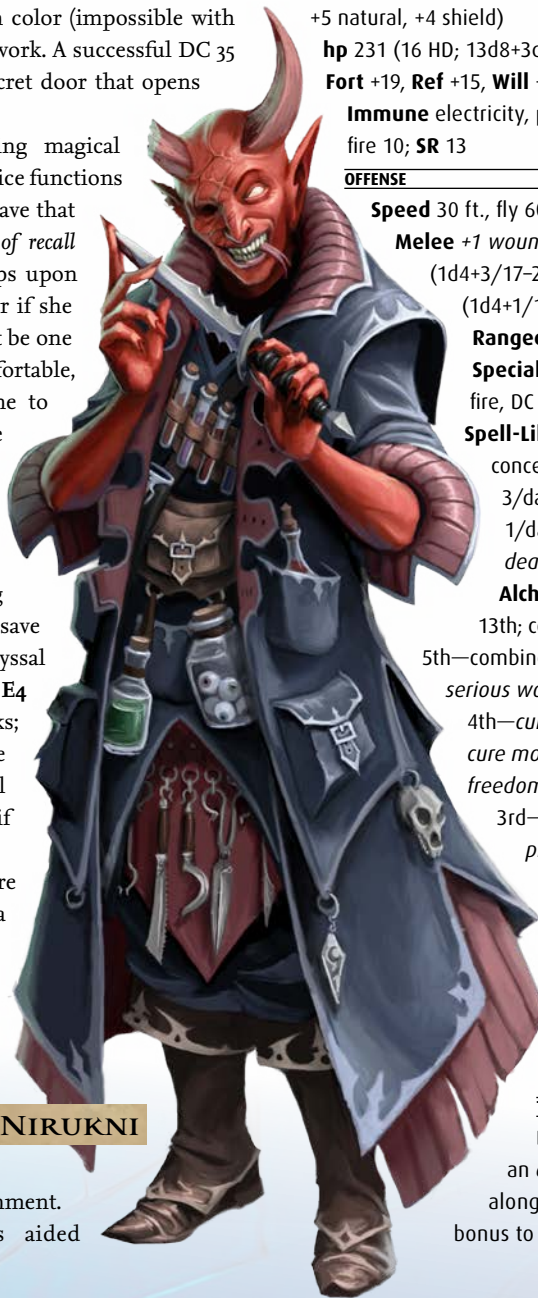
concentration +3)

3/day—*command* (DC 11)1/day—*charm person* (DC 11),*death knell* (DC 12), *enthrall* (DC 12)**Alchemist Extracts Prepared** (CL

13th; concentration +15)

5th—combined *cure moderate wounds/cure serious wounds*4th—*cure critical wounds*, combined*cure moderate wounds/invisibility*,*freedom of movement*3rd—*cure serious wounds*, *haste*,*protection from energy*, *tongues*2nd—*alter self*, *cure moderate**wounds* (3), *detect thoughts*(DC 14), *resist energy*1st—*comprehend**languages*, *cure light**wounds* (3), *disguise self*,*shield***TACTICS**

Before Combat Nirukni drinks an *extract of shield* before combat, along with his mutagen to gain a +6 bonus to his Constitution and a +4 bonus

NIRUKNI

to his Dexterity. He also activates his wings discovery to gain a large pair of white feathered wings for the upcoming fight.

During Combat Nirukni lets the disciples of Shax move in to engage foes in melee while he hangs back to throw bombs; he favors shock bombs, as these won't harm his cambion allies. He uses swift poisoning whenever he attacks. If reduced to fewer than 80 hit points, he drinks one of his healing extracts—if reduced to fewer than 40 hit points, he drinks his combined *cure moderate wounds/invisibility* extract and then uses his other healing extracts to recover as much as possible before rejoining the fight.

Morale Nirukni fights to the death, but if reduced to 10 hit points or fewer, tries to destroy his notes with a bomb (AC 5). The extent of the damage his bomb deals to the notes described in the Treasure section below is left to you to decide, but at the very least the bomb should destroy all the magical items stored there.

STATISTICS

Str 15, **Dex** 22, **Con** 26, **Int** 15, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 10

Base Atk +12; **CMB** +14; **CMD** 31

Feats Brew Potion, Craft Wondrous Item, Dodge, Extra Bombs^{APG}, Iron Will, Mobility, Point-Blank Shot, Shot on the Run, Throw Anything, Toughness

Skills Craft (alchemy) +21, Craft (traps) +19, Fly +12, Heal +20, Knowledge (arcana) +21, Knowledge (planes) +21, Perception +10, Spellcraft +21

Languages Abyssal, Common; telepathy 100 ft.

SQ alchemy (alchemy crafting +13), discoveries (combine extracts, fast bombs, greater mutagen, shock bomb, smoke bomb, wings), mutagen (+6/+4/-2, +4 natural armor, 130 minutes), poison use, swift alchemy, swift poisoning

Combat Gear *potions of cure moderate wounds* (3), *potions of cure serious wounds* (2), *potions of displacement* (2), *potion of gaseous form*, deathblade (4), purple worm poison (6); **Other Gear** +2 chain shirt, +1 wounding dagger, handy haversack, 12 pp, 3 gp

DISCIPLES OF SHAX (2)

CR 10

XP 9,600 each

hp 111 each (see page 49)

Treasure: The bulk of the supplies and notes on the southwest worktable are relatively unremarkable, but the contents of the southeast one are anything but. Here, Nirukni has stored 6,200 gp in raw supplies for the crafting of potions and potion-like wondrous items. In addition, among the vials and containers of supplies are several completed items, including a dose of *dust of dryness*, a dose of *dust of illusion*, an *elixir of fire breath*, two *elixirs of truth*, two *elixirs of vision*, three *potions of cure serious wounds*, two *potions of lesser restoration*, three *potions of resist energy*, a *potion of tongues*, and a full jar of

restorative ointment. Nirukni's formula book sits nearby; it contains all of the formulae for the extracts he has prepared plus an additional 2d4 formulae of each level of your choice.

But perhaps the most interesting to the PCs of the items on this table are Nirukni's extensive notes about the *soul anchor*, particularly on how Barzillai Thruene interacted with it. These notes make clear that Barzillai's interaction with the *soul anchor* drew Mangvhune's attention back to the region, and that the *soul anchor* allows for the retention of personality and memories after death. The notes themselves are, unfortunately, complex and riddled with Nirukni's own shorthand. Several hours of study reveal that the alchemist had been growing increasingly frustrated with not being able to figure out exactly what Barzillai was attempting to do with the *soul anchor*. Other notes involve the organization of an expedition to investigate the *soul anchor*, but these are frustratingly vague. These notes, along with the books in area E4, will help the PCs in the next adventure when they seek out the *soul anchor* themselves, but in the short term, you should simply inform the PCs that further study of these tangled notes requires more time and a less distracting area.

E7. STAGING WORKSHOP

A large cauldron hangs over a stone basin at the eastern end of this room. Worktables stained with blood and covered with stained rags and butcher's tools line the north and south walls. Underneath the tables are several crates. The heavy scent of chemicals and wax is almost overpowering. A single door exits to the southwest.

This workshop, now quiet, is where Nirukni and the cultists helped prepare materials for Mangvhune's more sensational displays, like the human candle and the exploding corpse trap. The cauldron is partially empty and contains hardened wax and traces of blood. The crates contain more wax and trap-making supplies. In addition, numerous notes on trap design can be recovered here; studying the notes takes 10 minutes of work and a successful DC 30 Knowledge (engineering) or Craft (traps) check, after which that character gains a +5 circumstance bonus on all Perception checks and Disable Device checks she attempts against traps in this complex.

E8. PREPARATION ROOM (CR 14)

A flight of stairs leads south from a small balcony down into this room, overlooking an alcove containing a medical table fitted with bloodstained leather straps. Manacles are bolted to the walls in the southeast, alongside a tilted gurney with restraints and gags suitable for an unwilling patient.

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A worktable stands against the southwestern wall, near a door leading northwest.

The manacles and medical equipment are functional, but clearly at least a hundred years old. This chamber is used by Mangvhune's servants to prepare victims for the slasher's work in area **E9**: stripping and washing the body if it's dead, and alchemical immobilizing it if not. A creature strapped into one of the restraining devices can escape with a successful DC 35 Escape Artist check or DC 28 Strength check.

Trap: Any non-demon who enters this room feels a strange sense of mental oppression weighing on her mind. The very walls of this room are infused with Abyssal energies that work to force compliance and submission from non-demons. A character who manages to discover this trap with a successful Perception check notices tiny runes etched in the walls of the chamber, and the effect can be disabled by marring or scratching out key runes. Unlike the other traps in the complex, the submission compulsion is silent, yet it still triggers a mental *alarm* in Mangvhune's mind each time a creature succumbs to it. In such a case, the murderer becomes invisible and then teleports into this room to investigate, preparing a death attack on any creature that has fallen victim to the compulsion.

When this trap targets a creature, it first attempts to dispel any ongoing spell effects that would prevent the compulsion element from functioning (the trap's dispel check is +15). An instant later, a heightened *demand* spell attempts to telepathically compel each victim to strip off her gear and strap herself into one of the restraining devices in the room. The trap continues to trigger each round, so a victim who submits could theoretically spend eternity under the constantly repeating *demand*, yet in practice it won't be long before Mangvhune pays them a visit.

SUBMISSION COMPULSION

CR 14

XP 38,400

Type magic; Perception DC 34; Disable Device DC 34

EFFECTS

Trigger proximity; **Reset** automatic

Effect spell effect (*dispel magic* targets any spell effects that protects from mental compulsions [such as *protection from evil*], *demand* heightened to 9th level; Will DC 23 negates); multiple targets (all non-demons in area **E8**)

E9. SURGICAL AMPHITHEATER (CR 16)

A vaulted ceiling arches above this amphitheater-like room. The center of this chamber is a hexagonal area sunken ten feet into the floor. It contains a surgical table and a few wheeled, wooden carts covered with dissection

instruments. Two doors provide exits from this pit—one to the west and one to the southeast. The room's upper tier features raised wooden benches where a small crowd could sit and observe the surgeries or vivisections performed below.

This room was built in the style of the surgical theater classrooms in which Alander Mangvhune performed so many of his popular lectures at Alabaster Academy, yet no student has ever sat on the benches that ring this hall. Instead, these seats are filled with phantasmal images of people bearing various hideous wounds—reflections of Mangvhune's ever-growing list of victims, both his original victims and those he's killed since his return. Not quite undead, these spectral forms have no ability to interact physically with the world, and despite the fact that they represent the final fates of those Mangvhune murdered, all of these phantasmal spectators seem impressed by and adoring of anything Mangvhune that does in this room, be it preparing a body for display in Kintargo above or attacking intruding PCs. These images cannot be dispelled, but if Mangvhune is slain, they vanish forever.

Creature: Mangvhune spends much of his time in this room, preparing his latest victim for display. When the PCs encounter him here, this victim is whomever would normally be the next murder victim. If the five murders detailed at the start of Part 4 have already taken place, then the victim here is a new, sixth victim who is likely someone the PCs know. Whether or not the unfortunate victim is dead or still alive is for you to decide.

In the unlikely event that the PCs catch Mangvhune unprepared, they find the babau demon hard at work preparing his victim; he smiles as he notices the PCs and takes a few moments to engage in pleasantries with them, congratulating them on finding his lair and asking curiously how they tracked him down. While he talks, he studies one PC (preferably a healer), and after 3 rounds makes a death attack against that PC, following up with his combat tactics as detailed on page 56.

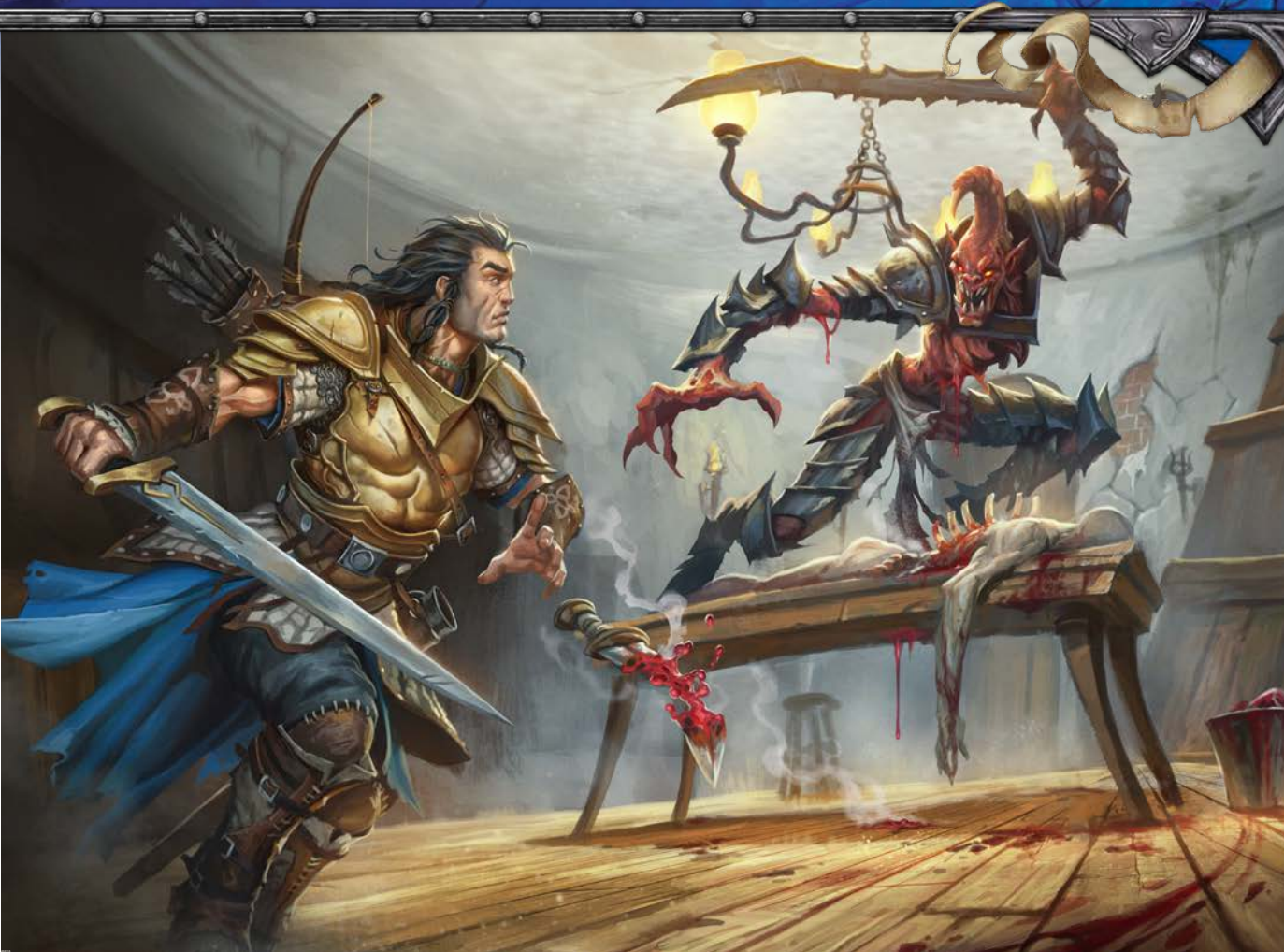
If Mangvhune is alerted to the PCs' intrusion, the babau demon leaves the body on the table and engages in telepathic conversations with his minions spread throughout the complex. Once he determines where the PCs are hiding, he uses his *wand of greater invisibility*, teleports in, and engages in cat-and-mouse tactics to try to destroy them, eventually confronting them in this amphitheater for a final showdown.

MANGVHUNE

CR 16

XP 76,800

hp 270 (see page 56)



THE
KINTARGO
CONTRACT

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E10. MEAT LOCKER

Four wheeled stretchers stand in the center of this otherwise empty room. A vaguely human shape lies atop each stretcher under a stained sheet. The air in the room stinks of decay.

Mangvhune stores victims in this room, either to let them ripen when he wants to reveal a particularly grisly display, or when he's forced to temporarily interrupt a project. A permanent *gentle repose* effect keeps all bodies in the room from further decaying, but the four corpses under the sheets had already been rotting for a time before Mangvhune collected them. The identities of these four are left to you to determine, but all four should be the remains of enemies or allies the PCs know, and whose bodies remained relatively intact after death. Mangvhune plans to eventually animate the bodies as undead minions to torment the Silver Ravens, but hasn't yet set those plans in motion.

The door to this room is magically reinforced iron (hardness 20, hp 120, break DC 35) and closes automatically at the end of any round. Any object wedging the door open is pushed aside—the door closes with an effective Strength score of 24 for the purposes of determining what it can push (3,500 pounds). Once closed, the door cannot be opened from the inside without forcing or destroying it.

CONCLUDING THE ADVENTURE

The events of “The Kintargo Contract” can take place in almost any order, but two things should happen before you proceed with the final adventure in the Hell's Rebels Adventure Path. First, the PCs should reach 15th level—the challenges that lie ahead in “Breaking the Bones of Hell” are significant! Second, the city of Kintargo and its surrounding regions should be under the protection of the Kintargo Contract. Once the PCs have secured and ratified a lord-mayor and have renewed the alliance agreements with key individuals from the outlying areas, Cheliaz can no longer simply ignore the situation. Although her attentions remain focused on reclaiming Westcrown from the Glorious Reclamation, Queen Abrogail II takes time to arrange a diplomatic mission to Ravounel, selecting one of her most accomplished ambassadors and negotiators for the task. “Breaking the Bones of Hell” begins when this negotiator, the bard Nereza Religo, contacts the Silver Ravens to set up a meeting with them. This event can occur before the PCs are finished with this adventure's content, including their pursuit of Mangvhune. Once the PCs sign their treaty with Cheliaz, though, conditions in Barzillai Thrune's contract activate, allowing the dead inquisitor a chance to accelerate his plans to become a genius loci and begin haunting the city he once ruled!



MANGVHUNE

Once a brilliant surgeon and charismatic professor, Mangvhune became Kintargo's most notorious serial killer. His capture and execution only made him more powerful, for in death he became a babau assassin deeply devoted to completing his murderous work.

MANGVHUNE

CR 17

XP 102,400

Advanced babau assassin 10 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 294, 57)

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

Init +10; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., *see invisibility*;

Perception +31

DEFENSE

AC 32, touch 14, flat-footed 29 (+8 armor, +3 Dex, +1 insight, +10 natural)**hp** 270 (17 HD; 10d8+7d10+187)**Fort** +18, **Ref** +16, **Will** +10; +5 vs. poison**Defensive Abilities** improved uncanny dodge; **DR** 10/good or cold iron; **Immune** electricity, poison; **Resist** acid 10, cold 10, fire 10; **SR** 17

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft. (20 ft. in armor)**Melee** +3 *corrosive bastard sword* +27/+22/+17

(1d10+13/17-20 plus 1d6 acid), bite +19 (1d6+5), claw +19 (1d6+5)

Special Attacks death attack (DC 25), quiet death, sneak attack +7d6 plus 7 bleed, swift death 1/day, true death (DC 25)**Spell-Like Abilities** (CL 7th; concentration +11)Constant—*see invisibility*At will—*darkness*, *dispel magic*, *greater teleport* (self plus 50 lbs. of objects only)1/day—*summon* (level 3, 1 babau 40%)

TACTICS

Before Combat Mangvhune uses his *wand of greater invisibility* to become invisible.**During Combat** Mangvhune's signature move is to use a death attack to paralyze a foe by damaging the victim's spinal cord at the base of the neck. When attacking a victim who's alone, he gives the victim several rounds to comprehend her doom before performing a second death attack to kill the victim in the same manner. Mangvhune much prefers delivering death attacks with his claws. When facing a group of foes, though, he switches tactics, preferring a cat-and-mouse game of death attacks made every 3 rounds while under the effects of *greater invisibility*. When he becomes visible, he gleefully spends several rounds attacking foes, flanking with allies if possible and making sneak attacks, or using *darkness* and his darkvision otherwise. If reduced to 100 or fewerhit points, he teleports to a remote area, uses his *wand of cure critical wounds*, then returns to finish the job. His *wand of magic missiles* is his sole ranged attack.**Morale** Mangvhune fights to the death.

STATISTICS

Str 30, **Dex** 22, **Con** 30, **Int** 20, **Wis** 17, **Cha** 18**Base Atk** +14; **CMB** +24; **CMD** 41**Feats** Babau Rogue Talent (bleeding attack), Combat Reflexes, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (bastard sword), Flensing Strike, Improved Critical (bastard sword), Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Medium Armor Proficiency, Toughness**Skills** Acrobatics +23 (+19 when jumping), Bluff +24, Disguise +18, Heal +20, Knowledge (local) +22, Knowledge (planes) +18, Knowledge (religion) +15, Perception +31, Sense Motive +23, Stealth +31, Use Magic Device +24**Languages** Abyssal, Celestial, Draconic, Halfling, Infernal, Shadowtongue; telepathy 100 ft.**SQ** angel of death, hidden weapons, hide in plain sight, poison use, protective slime**Combat Gear** *wand of cure critical wounds* (11 charges), *wand of greater invisibility* (10 charges), *wand of maximized magic missile* (CL 10th, 10 charges); **Other Gear** +2 *black dragonhide breastplate*, +3 *corrosive bastard sword*, *dusty rose prism ioun stone*, *pale blue rhomboid ioun stone*, *pink rhomboid ioun stone*, *portable hole*, mithral surgical tools worth 500 gp

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Babau Rogue Talent Mangvhune can apply the bleeding attack rogue talent to sneak attacks. This feat first appeared in *Pathfinder Campaign Setting: Demons Revisited*.**Flensing Strike** Mangvhune can make sneak attacks that, rather than striking deep into vital organs, cut shallowly and slice away large swaths of skin. If such a sneak attack deals bleed damage, the victim becomes sickened by the pain and its natural armor bonus is reduced by 7 points; these effects last as long as the bleed damage persists. The bleed damage from multiple strikes against the same foe does not stack, but the reductions to its natural armor bonus do stack, up to a maximum reduction equal to the target's total natural armor bonus. This feat originally appeared in *Pathfinder Campaign Setting: Demons Revisited*.

Doctor Alander Mangvhune was born and raised in Vieland in Ustalav, and upon achieving adulthood studied the mechanisms of the living body at Lepidstadt University. The more he studied the complexities of anatomy, the more he came to realize there was too much to learn about the nature of life in a single life span. His research into prolonging life revealed something that unsettled him profoundly: after death, his soul would be “rewarded” by being turned into something else—something that wouldn’t carry his mind into the hereafter. His powerful ego could not abide the thought of losing his individuality, and so Mangvhune devoted years to gaining an understanding of the soul’s fate after death. It was at this time he first heard of the theoretical corruption of the soulstream known as a *soul anchor*. When his research suggested a *soul anchor* existed somewhere below the city of Kintargo, he transferred to Alabaster Academy in 4592 AR.

Over the next few years, Mangvhune became the darling of Alabaster Academy. His lectures on anatomy were always standing-room-only events that drew audience members from far beyond the walls of the academy. Mangvhune maintained the public facade of the perfect gentleman scholar, all while hiding his lifelong obsession. Frustrated in his attempts to locate the *soul anchor*, Mangvhune eventually took up a much more sinister method of research. He theorized that a departing soul would sense the location of the *soul anchor*, and driven by this theory, he committed his first murder in 4596 after secretly constructing a hidden laboratory in which he could pursue his research.

But again and again Doctor Mangvhune met with frustration and failure. Using scrolls he purchased anonymously on the black market and his skill at using magical devices, he tried speaking with the dead and interviewing those freshly raised from the dead, only to meet with frustration time and time again. *Speak with dead* allowed communication with only the physical remains of the dead, and thus it could offer no insight into departed souls’ observations. And those he murdered and raised had to be put down once again when it became apparent

they remembered nothing but vague memories of their brief time in death.

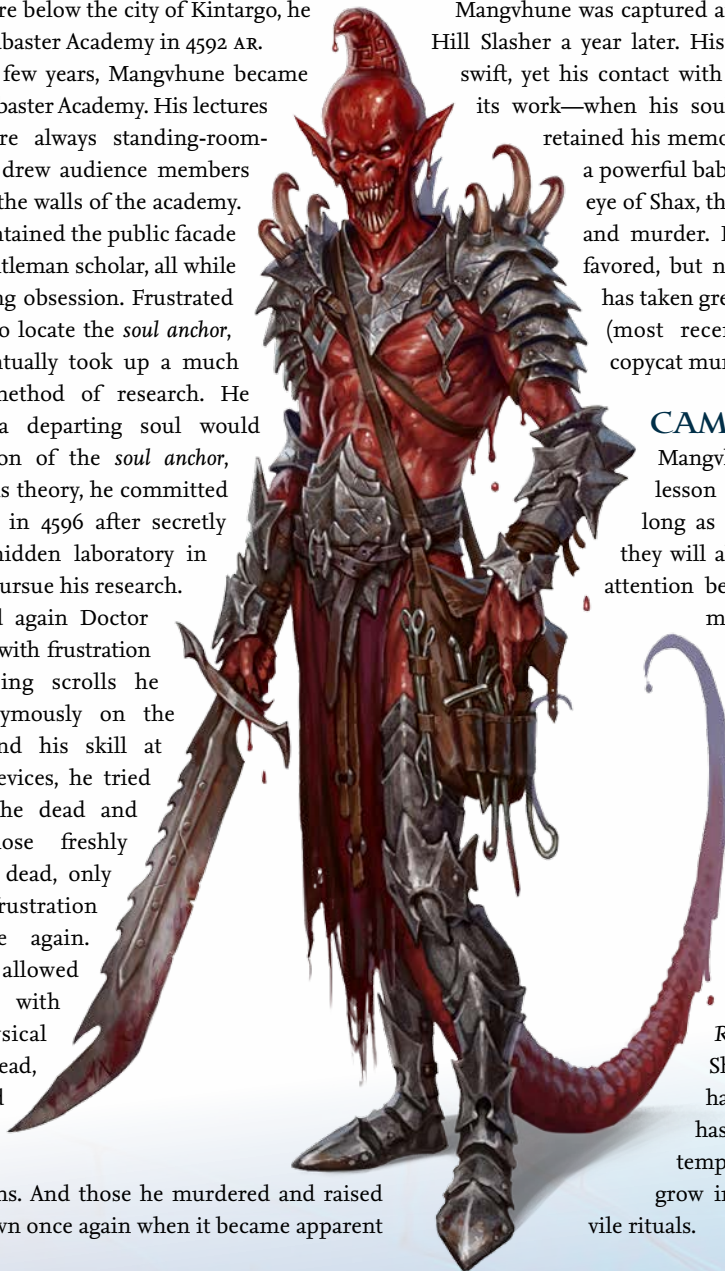
It wasn’t until he hit upon the tactic of torturing someone to the brink of death repeatedly and then snatching his victim back to life at the last moment that he had a breakthrough. After using a *scroll of breath of life* on a freshly murdered Abadaran acolyte in 4598, he learned of an unmistakable tugging upon the soul. After a few more murders, he was able to “triangulate” the source—the *soul anchor* lay not in Kintargo, as he had assumed, but rather deep below in the Darklands. His journey to this source was dangerous and harrowing, but in the end he achieved success and bathed in the energies of the *soul anchor*, then returned to the city above to continue performing the torturous murders for which he had acquired a taste.

Mangvhune was captured and exposed as the Temple Hill Slasher a year later. His trial and execution were swift, yet his contact with the *soul anchor* had done its work—when his soul arrived at the Abyss, it retained his memories and he manifested as a powerful babau demon who caught the eye of Shax, the demon lord of envy, lies, and murder. He became one of Shax’s favored, but never forgot Kintargo, and has taken great delight in seeing others (most recently Varl Wex) perform copycat murders.

CAMPAIGN ROLE

Mangvhune teaches a harsh lesson to the Silver Ravens: so long as Cheliox remains a threat, they will always have to divide their attention between local and national matters. He and his work also foreshadow the return of Barzillai Thrune in the Adventure Path’s final installment. His latest murders and other subtle clues intimate that matters concerning the late lord-mayor are anything but resolved.

Mangvhune was first presented in *Pathfinder Campaign Setting: Demons Revisited*. His favor with Shax has since grown, as has his power—he now has the advanced creature template, and hopes to further grow in power using additional vile rituals.



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ODEXIDIE

The scheming contract devil Odexidie conspires to invert the nature of Hell itself. He would step outside its rules and laws in pursuit of personal power, but in doing so gamble everything, from the fate of Cheliax to his very existence.

ODEXIDIE

CR 15

XP 51,200

Male contract devil wizard 10 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 3 76)

LE Medium outsider (devil, evil, extraplanar, lawful)

Init +14; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., see in darkness; Perception +37

DEFENSE

AC 39, touch 24, flat-footed 28 (+4 armor, +3 deflection, +10 Dex, +1 dodge, +7 natural, +4 shield)

hp 231 (23 HD; 10d6+13d10+125)

Fort +14, **Ref** +21, **Will** +24

DR 10/good; **Immune** fire, mind-affecting effects, poison; **Resist** acid 10, cold 10; **SR** 21

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft., fly 60 ft.

Melee binding contract +27/+22/+17/+12 (1d4+9 plus bleed), gore +16 (2d6+1)

Space 5 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft. (10 ft. with binding contract)

Special Attacks binding contract, bleed (1d6), hand of the apprentice (12/day)

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 13th; concentration +20)

Constant—*tongues*

At will—*bestow curse* (DC 20), *detect thoughts* (DC 19), *dimension door*, *erase*, *identify*, *major image* (DC 20), *produce flame*, *sending*

3/day—*arcane eye*, *break enchantment*, *greater teleport* (self plus 50 lbs. of objects only), *hold person* (DC 19), *locate creature*, *mage's private sanctum*, empowered *scorching ray*, *silence* (DC 19), *vision*

1/day—*contact other plane*, *delayed blast fireball* (DC 24), *dismissal* (DC 21), *plane shift* (DC 21), *summon* (level 4, 1d6 bearded devils or 1 bone devil 50%), *symbol of pain* (DC 22)

Wizard Spells Prepared (CL 10th; concentration +19)

5th—*hold monster* (2, DC 24), *nightmare* (DC 24), *telekinesis* (DC 24)

4th—*enervation* (3), *phantasmal killer* (2, DC 23)

3rd—*dispel magic* (3), *displacement*, *slow* (DC 22)

2nd—*darkness* (3), *glitterdust* (DC 21), *invisibility* (2)

1st—*mage armor*, *magic missile* (4), *shield*, *unseen servant* 0 (at will)—*detect magic*, *mage hand*, *message*, *open/close* (DC 19)

School universalist

TACTICS

Before Combat Odexidie casts *mage armor*, *invisibility*, *shield*, and *fly* on himself before combat.

During Combat Odexidie uses flight and transportation powers to avoid being cornered, and battlefield control spells to hinder the PCs' access to him. He prefers to capture foes alive if possible.

Morale Odexidie offers to parley at 100 hit points or fewer, hoping to turn the battle into a productive discussion. If the PCs aren't interested in talking, he teleports away to gather resources and returns, fully healed, in 3d10 minutes with four rust devils (see page 82) and four barbed devils. He teleports away each time he's reduced to 30 or fewer hit points, continuing this tactic until he's slain or the PCs finally give up and agree to talk (or simply flee); he can repeat this tactic up to five times before exhausting his rust devil and barbed devil resources, at which point he abandons his offices to the PCs.

STATISTICS

Str 16, **Dex** 30, **Con** 20, **Int** 28, **Wis** 25, **Cha** 24

Base Atk +18; **CMB** +21; **CMD** 45

Feats Alertness, Arcane Strike, Craft Construct, Craft Magic Arms and Armor, Craft Wondrous Item, Deceitful, Dodge, Empower Spell-Like Ability (*scorching ray*), Forge Ring, Great Fortitude, Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Mobility, Persuasive, Scribe Scroll

Skills Bluff +37, Diplomacy +37, Disguise +9, Fly +16, Intimidate +27, Knowledge (arcana, history, local, nobility, planes, and religion) +35, Linguistics +35, Perception +37, Profession (scribe) +23, Sense Motive +37, Sleight of Hand +23, Spellcraft +35

Languages Aboleth, Abyssal, Ancient Osiriani, Aquan, Auran, Azlanti, Celestial, Common, Draconic, Dwarven, Elven, Giant, Gnome, Halfling, Hallit, Ignan, Infernal, Kelish, Necril, Orc, Orvian, Osiriani, Polyglot, Senzar, Shadowtongue, Shoanti, Skald, Strix, Tengu, Terran, Thassilonian, Tien, Undercommon, Varisian, Vudrani; *tongues*, telepathy 100 ft.

SQ arcane bond (*amulet of magecraft*), impale, infernal contract, infernal investment, metamagic mastery (2/day)

Combat Gear *ring of spell storing* (*mark of justice*);

Other Gear *amulet of magecraft*, *ring of protection* +3, spellbook (containing those spells he has prepared plus 3d4 spells of each level from 1st to 5th of your choosing)

More androgynous than most contract devils, Odexidie has a slight, wiry frame, delicate facial features, and a perfect smile right down to his pointed canines.

Odexidie was directly involved in the creation of the Cheliox Covenant. The complexity of this agreement required the cooperation of no fewer than 23 contract devils. In Odexidie's case, his contract involved the region of Ravounel, with a particular focus on the region's largest mainland city, Kintargo. He was intrigued when Queen Abrogail I approached him with the task of working a few unusual clauses into the contract.

Of course, there was more to it than simply agreeing to build an "escape clause" into the wording of the contract for a human mortal, for Odexidie was nothing if not ambitious. He had already come to see himself as much as a slave as the slave master, bound to the traditions and restrictions of infernal law. Odexidie accepted Abrogail's proposal and did what only seemed natural—he bent the system to his own advantage.

Odexidie excels at his job and sees no reason why he cannot be the paragon of contract devils, yet the typical procedure of promotion through the infernal ranks would have him abandon his core competencies to take on different roles. Despite Odexidie's personal achievements as a wizard, his status as a contract devil has increasingly felt like a restraint. As such, he has tinkered and adjusted contracts in small ways for decades, slowly building his influence with each signature. As each contract is fulfilled, and as each exception plays out, the contract devil's name gains strength. His current project involves granting a significant boon to a man who hopes to build a palace on a distant Material Plane world to draw the attention of all the archdevils of Hell—something Odexidie hopes will win him the prestige he requires to catapult himself to the status of infernal duke.

His dealings with Abrogail I, in securing her escape clause in the Kintargo Contract, were but one out of many times Odexidie has built his reputation among the powerful. Unfortunately for Odexidie, when Abrogail I died without implementing the Kintargo Contract's cunning loopholes, the true cleverness of Odexidie's legal gymnastics went unrealized. Then, when Barzillai Thrune called upon Odexidie to research the contract, he began to hope this newest Thrune would invoke the clauses and reveal to the world the cleverness of the exceptions. News of Barzillai's death distresses the contract devil, but if he can convince the PCs to move on the Kintargo Contract's loopholes (preferably without seeming too eager to see them exposed), it will all have been worth the wait.

CAMPAIGN ROLE

Odexidie's chief contribution to the PC's story is as a source of information, as he explains a complex plot point that allows the players to exploit his infernal contract and thwart House Thrune. As a contract devil, he represents everything the players should not trust, a fact of which he is well aware. In fact, Odexidie cares little about Kintargo's liberty or the freedom of its citizenry—all he desires is to see the loopholes in the contract made public in a way that doesn't feel like self-aggrandizement; in this way, word of his abilities will grow. The devil has every reason to want the PCs to succeed, because the scandal of Cheliox losing control of Ravounel works in his favor.



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SOLMESTRIA

This fierce winged humanoid carries the burden of the fate of her tribe upon her shoulders. She is beset by both powerful supernatural forces and the fear of humanity. She shepherds her people the only way she has ever known—with the sword.

SOLMESTRIA

CR 14
XP 38,400

Strix slayer 15 (*Pathfinder Campaign Setting: The Inner Sea World Guide* 313, *Pathfinder RPG Advanced Class Guide* 53)
 CN Medium humanoid (strix)

Init +4; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Perception +18

DEFENSE

AC 26, touch 16, flat-footed 21 (+6 armor, +1 deflection, +4 Dex, +1 dodge, +3 natural, +1 shield)

hp 177 (15d10+90)

Fort +13, **Ref** +13, **Will** +5; +2 vs. illusion spells or effects

Defensive Abilities evasion

OFFENSE

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

Melee +1 *human-bane short sword* +19/+14/+9 (1d6+3/17-20), +1 *monstrous-humanoid-bane horacalcum short sword* +20/+15 (1d6+2/17-20)

Special Attacks hatred, quarry, slayer's advance 1/day, sneak attack +5d6, studied target +4 (4 targets, swift action)

TACTICS

Before Combat Solmestria drinks a *potion of barkskin* +3 before combat.

During Combat Solmestria uses studied target at the start of a fight to gain an advantage over the most dangerous-looking foe. On the first round of combat, she attacks a flat-footed foe, then in subsequent rounds relies on flanking or feinting to gain sneak attacks. Her preferred targets are humans or monstrous humanoids, and depending on the nature of her foe, she alternates which of her two bane swords functions as her primary attack. If she manages to blind a foe with a critical hit, she focuses her attacks on that target exclusively so she can take full advantage of her sneak attacks. Once reduced to fewer than 100 hit points, she uses Combat Expertise to enhance her Armor Class, but doesn't otherwise alter her tactics in battle.

Morale Solmestria fights to the death to protect her allies or village. That said, if she is the last strix standing and she is reduced to 30 hit points or fewer, she prefers instead to flee the battle to return to her people rather than risk death in a fight that could leave her kin unprotected from the dangers they face.

STATISTICS

Str 14, **Dex** 18, **Con** 18, **Int** 13, **Wis** 10, **Cha** 6

Base Atk +15; **CMB** +17; **CMD** 33

Feats Blinding Critical, Combat Expertise, Critical Focus, Dodge, Greater Feint, Improved Critical (short sword), Improved Feint, Improved Two-Weapon Fighting, Toughness, Two-Weapon Defense, Two-Weapon Fighting, Weapon Finesse, Weapon Focus (short sword)

Skills Acrobatics +22, Bluff +16, Fly +17, Knowledge (history) +11, Knowledge (local) +14, Perception +18 (+20 in dim light or darkness), Stealth +22 (+24 in dim light or darkness), Survival +18

Languages Common, Strix

SQ combat style (two-weapon combat), nocturnal, slayer talents (combat trick, evasion, finesse rogue, hunter's surprise, ranger combat style, ranger combat style, weapon training), stalker, suspicious, swift tracker, track +7

Combat Gear *potion of barkskin* +3 (2); **Other Gear** +3 *studded leather*, +1 *human-bane short sword*, +1 *monstrous-humanoid-bane horacalcum short sword*, *belt of physical might* +2 (Dex, Con), *ring of protection* +1, 280 gp

Solmestria has long borne the weight of great responsibility for her tribe. Although circumstances have granted her little opportunity to cultivate wisdom and leadership skills suited for times of peace, she has learned to act quickly and decisively when faced with threats to her people. Despite this, she keenly regrets every misstep she has been forced to make in her life. As a sensitive soul in a time when sensitivity is an ill-afforded luxury, Solmestria hopes to someday live free from conflict in a future where she and her kind are not hunted and hated—and where she can give up the hunt and relinquish her own hatred as well.

For many years, Solmestria has served as the *rokoa*, or leader, of the Kitkasiticka strix tribe, which has long dwelled in secrecy in Ravounel Forest. She does not consider herself to be the *rokoa* the Kitkasiticka deserve, but rather the *rokoa* they need. She is well aware that she's a poor storyteller and a mediocre teacher, and knows she has failed to educate her people in the nature of the world beyond the forest's edge, yet she makes up for this lack, she hopes, with her capacity in battle. While she

has trained her people well, and individually they tend to be more accomplished and dangerous than the strix of Cheliah's Hellcoast, the Kitkasitickas consider her not only their leader but also their alpha hunter. None of her people suspect that Solmestria privately dreams of a day when her style of leadership is no longer required.

While the Kitkasitickas harbor the typical strix hatred of humanity, the tribe's primary antagonists over the past 200 years have been the Grundlescorn sisters, a coven of storm hags who eat children (particularly strix children). Solmestria lost one of her clutch mates, her beloved sister, to the predations of the three storm hags, an event that has done much to define her and shape her role within the tribe. She vowed she would never lose another hatchling to the coven, and if she could not kill the Grundlescorns, she would instead hurt them as often and in as many ways as she could. Over time, Solmestria has led raids on Grundlescorn resources, worked to foster the forest's fell reputation to prevent potential hag victims from settling too close to the woodlands' edge, and even sought out and murdered all of the Grundlescorn changelings she could track down. Each time, when the Grundlescorn sisters responded with outrage, it was simple for the strix to scatter in a dozen directions and leave the hags with no obvious foes to retaliate against. In time, Solmestria's actions forced the Grundlescorns to cede territory in Ravounel to the Kitkasitickas and leave the tribe in peace; this triumph led to Solmestria's rise to the role of rokoa among the Kitkasiticka tribe.

Solmestria's support of Rarnnir, the tribe's most outgoing ranger, is perhaps the most telling display of her longing for a more peaceful future for her people. Solmestria hopes the younger woman will someday become the nurturing presence and serene advisor she feels the Kitkasitickas need, and wishes only to survive long enough to see the final defeat of the Grundlescorn coven and the establishment of a trustworthy alliance with the local *kotaara*, or humans (specifically those of Chelish descent). Once these securities are in place, Solmestria plans to abdicate—an unusual move, as rokoa normally serve until death—to let her people focus on a peaceful future.

CAMPAIGN ROLE

Gaining Solmestria's trust is a significant goal for the PCs. An alliance with the strix not only is a key part of ensuring the Kintargo Contract is properly supported, but is also highly symbolic. Cheliah's partnership with the Ciricskree of Devil's Perch won the fledgling nation its independence from Taldor, and the symbolism of a new alliance between the strix and Kintargo won't be lost on Chelish citizens.

Solmestria's role can be expanded if the PCs wish to explore the details of the alliance. The strix are free for the first time in 2 centuries to expand their territory, but the power vacuum left by the hags' departure may embolden other elements. With much of the mystery of the rulers of the woodland revealed, local villages may even seek to harvest the trees of the forest, in which case Solmestria negotiates lumber rights, the establishment of a strix trading post in nearby villages, and guidelines on how to best enjoy the benefits of interaction with Kintargo without the risk of culture shock or the loss of her community's values—she wants to limit cultural contamination between her people and humanity.

Solmestria personally can play a role in future negotiations with House Thruene, as her presence underscores Kintargo's strong position. At your discretion, if Solmestria's present during the next adventure's negotiations with Cheliah, she grants the PCs a +2 bonus on all Bluff, Diplomacy, and Intimidate checks to secure negotiations in Kintargo's favor, as if the strix slayer had performed the aid another action to assist them.



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INFERNAL CONTRACTS

I understand you're apprehensive. You've heard the stories—someone like you, someone like me, and a stack of pages that turns out to be a bear trap in disguise. I won't tell you those stories are all lies, but no one writes an opera about a deal gone right. Partnerships like this are never as complicated as what you've heard from poets and anxious priests. You want what you want, I want what I want, and just so everything's tidy, we write it all out. What could be more aboveboard than that?

"But you're worried, I know. So here's the contract. Read it over. Be clear, be certain, and when you're ready, make your mark.

"Take all the time you need. I'm happy to wait."

—Honest Avallolantri, phistophilus

In an attempt to change the course of fate, desperate souls sometimes seek forbidden lore or audiences with the gods. Some try to tread in the footsteps of heroes to attain such wonders, while others devote themselves to pushing the boundaries of magic. No matter their methods, most of these supplicants fail.

Frustration and disillusion aren't enough to shatter every ambition, though. When miracles prove too distant to reach, pragmatic mortals seek lesser wonders and more mercenary paths to greatness. Those who search widely and prove their earnestness find entities more than willing to fulfill any mortal dream—and all it costs is the seeker's immortal soul.

Infernal contracts are an expression of a timeless truth: Mortals desire more. Many mortals dream of worldly wealth and otherworldly power, but in the vast planar scheme, their existences are brief and their bargaining power limited. The devils of Hell offer a way around such limitations. Banking on mortals' incomplete understanding of how the multiverse works and the true value of their intangible souls, devils offer every mortal dream for what appears to be no price at all. To seal the bargains and prove their honesty, they create officious infernal contracts—elaborate written promises no less binding than the chains of Hell.

Of Hell's contract makers, phistophiluses—also called “contract devils”—are best known for being the finest authors of infernal bargains. The rulers of Hell—Asmodeus, the archdevils, and their demigod ilk—are also storied dealmakers. But infernal contracts are not the purview of contract writers alone. The forces of Hell stand as a largely unified threat against mortal life, and most specimens among the legions of devilkind can requisition tools from a vast, treacherous arsenal. Thus, any mortal encounter with nearly any devil has the potential to end in an offer: What would you give for greatness?

NEGOTIATING AN INFERNAL CONTRACT

Not every devil is interested in entering into a contract. Most devils focus their energies on fulfilling orders from diabolical superiors, and others simply prefer not to waste the time negotiating with mortals. If a remarkable mortal presents herself, though, a devil might be convinced to enter into a bargain.

At their most basic levels, infernal contracts are a simple trade. The devil provides whatever the mortal requests (within the devil's power), and in exchange receives the mortal's immortal soul, to be delivered to the devil at the moment of the mortal's death.

Some devils, like pit fiends, can grant wishes, effectively giving a mortal almost anything she desires. In the case of such powerful devils, the terms of a contract should be agreed upon between a player and the GM.

Less potent devils don't have the power to grant wishes, but they can certainly still create more specific sorts of infernal contracts, such as the ones detailed at the end of this article. In all of these cases, the price is the same—the mortal signee's soul, which is damned to Hell upon her death.

At the GM's discretion, a devil might accept some payment other than the signee's soul. In any situation, what the devil gains should be significant and unique, such as a one-of-a-kind object, or even an artifact. Alternatively, it might be an act committed by the mortal that's certain to damn her soul, such as murdering 1,000 innocents or destroying a good or chaotic artifact.

Devils generally don't enter into infernal contracts with evil creatures, as such creatures' souls are already bound for evil-aligned planes. Also, regardless of a mortal's intentions or potentially positive results, entering into an infernal contract is always a lawful and evil act.

CREATING AN INFERNAL CONTRACT

Once terms have been agreed to, a devil has to create the infernal contract. Contract devils have the easiest time of this, making use of their infernal contract ability to instantly create such a document. Devils of demigod-level power can likewise instantly call tailor-made infernal contracts into being as though they also had the infernal contract ability, though the effects they can create prove more potent and variable. Other devils can also create infernal contracts, but might have to employ less immediate techniques.

Diabolical Intermediary: Barring any extraordinary circumstances, most devils with the *greater teleport* ability know a place they can go to have an infernal contract created. This might be a portal back to Hell, a contract devil lurking on the same mortal world, or a more unconventional source. In any case, the devil can use this method to have an infernal contract created for it. However, doing so takes time. The Creation Time entry listed in each contract's description on pages 66–67 notes how long it takes for most common devils to have an infernal contract of that kind created. This represents a combination of the devil's travel time, influence in negotiating with other devils, the detail put into the contract's creation, and the time it takes to return. At the end of this period—unless the mortal has done something extraordinary to hide himself—the devil returns with a contract.

Contract Training: Although most devils cannot instantly create an infernal contract, there are those that see the value of such an ability and develop the talent over ages of study. This exceptional training, deep within the Fallen Fastness of Dis, the sunken libraries of Stygia, or the other blasphemous vaults of Hell, manifests as the Infernal Legist feat.

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INFERNAL LEGIST

You can instantly conjure an infernal contract into being.

Prerequisite: Devil subtype.

Benefits: As a full-round action, you can produce an infernal contract. To receive the contract's benefit, a mortal must sign its name of its own free will. Upon doing so, that mortal's soul is sworn to Hell. As long as the infernal contract remains in effect, the victim cannot be restored to life after death save by a *miracle* or a *wish*. If a mortal is restored to life, you immediately sense it and gain the benefits of a *discern location* spell targeting the resurrected creature.

RESEARCHING AN INFERNAL CONTRACT

An infernal contract is a baffling linguistic labyrinth, rife with eons-old legalese, otherworldly citations, and near-endless clauses and counter-clauses. One might consist of a single scroll covered in fine handwriting, while another might be volumes of printed text bound in sable.

Skimming an infernal contract and getting the gist of it takes only a matter of moments. Reading one in its entirety, though, can take hours, if not days. All infernal contracts have a number of knowledge points (abbreviated as "kp") representing the sum of the contract's information. To research an infernal contract, a character must succeed at a Linguistics check or a specialized skill check as indicated by the contract in question. The DC of this Research check varies, but if the researcher uses the more specialized check to perform this research, she gains a +2 circumstance bonus for using precisely the correct skill for interpreting the contract, as opposed to the more general use of Linguistics. Attempting a Research check requires an uninterrupted 8-hour period of research—characters cannot take 10 or 20 on this check. Each additional 8-hour period of research on the same contract grants a cumulative +1 bonus on Research checks. Up to two characters can use the aid another action to assist a researcher.

Succeeding at a Research check reduces the contract's knowledge points, similar to dealing damage to a creature's hit points. As the knowledge points decrease, the contract reveals its secrets. The amount of kp reduced on a successful Research check depends on the nature of the contract's primary researcher. A character with the ability to attempt any Knowledge check untrained (such as a bard, loremaster, or skald) reduces a contract's kp by $1d12 +$ the character's Intelligence modifier. Other scholastic characters (alchemists, arcanists, investigators, wizards, and so forth, at the GM's discretion) reduce the contract's knowledge points by $1d8 +$ the character's Intelligence modifier. All other characters reduce the contract's knowledge points by $1d4 +$ the character's Intelligence modifier. Rolling a natural 20 on a Research check acts like a critical threat. If the researcher confirms the critical hit by immediately succeeding at a second Research check with all the same modifiers, the resulting knowledge point reduction is doubled. Rolling a natural 1 on a Research check results in an automatic failure, and the collection's knowledge points increase by $1d8$.

Because of the purposefully obtuse nature of infernal contracts, some researchers reach a dead end in their understanding of the document and are unable to further decrease a contract's knowledge points. Failing two consecutive Research checks means the researcher has completely misunderstood the contract's terms. In this case, the contract's knowledge points return to



maximum and the researcher can't attempt to research that particular contract again until he gains a level.

Infernal contracts hold only the overt terms of the agreement and, potentially, oblique provisos. Unless a GM stipulates otherwise, no knowledge other than that specified is gained through researching a contract. Not every infernal contract has hidden language—some are completely forthright. Those that do contain cunningly disguised traps, though, can have their secrets revealed by reducing the contract's kp to its hidden condition threshold. Note that it is possible for a contract to have multiple hidden condition thresholds—the ones detailed below have only one each. If such an unfavorable term is called out to a devil, it will usually acquiesce to changing the contract—though doing so means creating the contract all over again, and the new contract is by no means assured to be free of insidious new provisos.

Once a contract's kp is reduced to 0, the researcher discovers a flaw that could allow for an early termination of the contract. A mortal might exploit such a loophole to terminate the contract, and in so doing lose the contract's benefit but regain her soul. The specifics of this loophole might not be simple to engineer, but they hold out hope of an escape. Not all infernal contracts contain such flaws, although the four detailed on pages 66–67 do.

ESCAPING AN INFERNAL CONTRACT

The easiest way to avoid entering into an unfavorable infernal contract is simply not to sign one. If that isn't an option, thoroughly researching the contract and being aware of dangerous provisos and potential loopholes can mean the difference between life and damnation.

When an infernal contract is signed, two copies manifest: one for the mortal signee and one for the devil. The mortal is free to do whatever he pleases with his copy, though destroying it is rarely directly helpful. Devils tend to do one of two things with their copies. Many keep the documents close at hand, securing them in vaults or in the care of guardians of their choosing; most, however, send their contracts back to Hell for safekeeping, typically to the Fallen Fastness in Dis, a massive archive rivaling Heaven's Great Library. (In fact, some say that the Fallen Fastness was torn away from that lofty structure during the heavenly rebellion eons ago.) In this infernal library, contracts are protected by countless diabolical scholars, the sanity-shattering complexity of the library's organization, and its planar inaccessibility. For most mortals, retrieving a contract from Hell is unlikely in the highest extreme. Yet even once an infernal contract is signed and secured, there are still routes by which it might be changed—or escaped.

Transferring a Contract: A devil might be convinced to adjust the terms of an infernal contract to apply to a different mortal. Just as in the case of the original

signee, the new mortal must enter into the contract freely, accepting the benefits but also the damnation. Occasionally, a damned mortal can convince a second mortal to take his place in an infernal deal, or a particularly self-sacrificing mortal might decide to take on a loved one's contract. In either case, the devil must deem the new signee an equal or more valuable partner. Only the devil that created the original document (or had it created) can adjust the terms of an infernal contract, which must be done in the presence of the former signee, the new signee, and one copy of the original contract. Once the new signee commits her signature to the contract, with the devil as witness, the former signee's name is erased and both copies of the contract immediately change. The effects of the adjusted contract is left to the parties involved, but most commonly, the former signee loses all benefits and conditions of the contract, while the new signee gains them.

Destroying a Contract: If both copies of an infernal contract are destroyed, the contract ends. The mortal and devil lose all benefits of the contract, and the mortal's soul is released to follow whatever natural course it might upon death. This requires obtaining both copies of the contract, which isn't easy; a devil guards its contracts and isn't likely to let a mortal go back on a contract without a fight. Recovering the devil's copy of a contract might require the mortal to harrow the depths of Hell itself.

If the mortal signee has already died and her soul is already in Hell, destroying the contract does not transport the soul to its proper afterlife. The best the petitioner can hope for is to be liberated from her tortures, and her escape is made even more challenging by the fact that her soul is now free game for all of Hell's various deadly denizens. Moreover, the weight of having made a deal with a devil stays with a soul for the rest of its existence. Even after escaping a contract (or Hell itself, in the previous case), a mortal might still be forsaken by his deity and find himself condemned to Hell or any of the other evil-aligned planes. Actual salvation might require much more than the mere destruction of the infernal contract.

SAMPLE INFERNAL CONTRACTS

Though the denizens of Hell share many goals, their schemes are far from uniform. The infernal contracts they create vary widely in cost, effect, terms, and methods of escape. The following are contracts common to some of Hell's best-known inhabitants. Most reflect the power, influence, and predilections of the devil offering the contract. However, GMs should feel free to use these examples as guidelines for creating their own custom infernal contracts. Complexity, Research checks, and kp are further detailed under Researching an Infernal Contract on page 64. Additional infernal contracts appear in this volume's adventure and in the entry for the rust devil on page 62.

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READING AN INFERNAL CONTRACT STAT BLOCK

The sample infernal contract stat blocks detailed below contain the following sections.

Contract Name: This is the name of the type of contract, potentially used by diabolic scholars and infernal barristers.

CR: This entry lists the CR of the infernal contract. It is usually equal to the CR of the devil that most commonly creates it (as listed in the Devil entry), but in the case of unique contracts created by demigods such as archdevils, infernal dukes, and whore queens, the infernal contract's CR can vary (but is rarely over CR 20).

XP: This entry lists the experience points gained for reducing the contract to 0 kp.

Devil: This entry lists the type of devil that commonly creates the contract in question.

Creation Time: This entry lists how long it takes for a devil to create a contract and return to a mortal signee (assuming it doesn't have the infernal contract special ability or the Infernal Legist feat).

Benefit: This is the benefit the contract grants the signee.

Payment: This lists an alternative payment the devil might accept in return for the contract's benefit in lieu of a soul. Not all devils are open to alternative payments.

Description: This entry is a brief description of the style of the contract's text.

Complexity: An infernal contract's complexity is equal to $10 + (\text{the infernal contract's CR} \times 2)$. The number listed in this entry is the DC of the Linguistics check or other specialized skill checks required to reduce the contract's kp.

Specialized Skills: This entry lists any skills other than Linguistics that can be used to research the contract. Using one of these specialized skills grants the researcher a +2 circumstance bonus on the check.

kp: This entry lists the contract's maximum number of knowledge points. This is typically equal to the contract's CR \times 3.

Hidden Condition: This entry lists a hidden condition that the devil has slipped into the contract. If the signee reduces the contract's kp to the value listed in parentheses in this entry, the hidden condition is revealed.

Termination Clause: This entry lists a flaw in the contract that could allow for an early termination of the contract. If the signee successfully exploits this loophole, she loses the benefit of the contract but regains her soul.

Unique Features: Some powerful devils add specific characteristics to their contracts, such as special magical protections. Such features are listed in this entry.



PACT OF BLOOD-TAKING

CR 5
XP 1,500
Devil bearded devil (barbazu)

Creation Time 2d6 months

Benefit Attacks made with melee weapons by the contracted mortal deal persistent wounds that cause 1 point of bleed damage. Bleeding caused by these infernal wounds can be stopped with a successful Heal check, and anyone attempting to magically heal a creature with an infernal wound must attempt a caster level check. Success indicates the healing works normally and stops all bleed effects on the victim.

The DC of each of these checks is equal to 10 + the contracted mortal's Strength modifier.

Payment The signee can no longer regain hit points through natural healing.

RESEARCH

Description Infernal contracts created by barbazu are typically inelegant and rife with references to tactical maneuvers, ancient battles, and bloodletting.

Complexity 20

Specialized Skills Knowledge (history), Knowledge (planes), Profession (soldier)

kp 15

Hidden Condition (6 kp) The barbazu becomes the owner of any weapon the contracted mortal finds. Once per year, the barbazu can appear and take the contracted mortal's best weapon. The mortal must comply as though affected by *dominate monster* (no save; this effect bypasses normal immunities to mind-controlling effects).

Termination Clause (0 kp) The contract seems to assure that the barbazu will not kill the contracted mortal, but vague phrasing opens the door for a broader interpretation. If the contracted mortal is killed by any barbazu or by bleed damage, the contract is terminated.

SHADOW COIN BARGAIN

CR 11
XP 12,800
Devil barbed devil (hamatula)

Creation Time 1d6 months

Benefit The contracted mortal gains the ability to speak with shadows (as per the spell *stone tell*, but with shadows) once per day. Additionally, he gains the see in darkness ability common to devilkind (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 311).

Payment Once per week, the contracted mortal must kill a sentient creature with a piercing weapon and leave a platinum coin in the victim's mouth. If the mortal neglects to do this, his soul is damned to Hell upon his death.

RESEARCH

Description Infernal contracts created by hamatulas typically contain references to mathematics, accounting principles, and slow deaths.

Complexity 32

Specialized Skills Appraise, Knowledge (planes), Profession (clerk)

kp 33

Hidden Condition (12 kp) Once per month, the hamatula can appear before the contracted mortal and collect a debt in gold equal to 100 gp × the mortal's Hit Dice. If the devil does not collect, the debt carries over to the next month, and the next month, and so on—likely without the mortal's knowledge. The hamatula can erase the debt by taking one or more of the mortal's appendages, digits, or similar bodily features, resulting in 2d6 points of ability drain to an ability score of the devil's choice.

Termination Clause (0 kp) The contract is not for a mortal soul, but calls literally for "a priceless item with the contracted mortal's name and blood." If the mortal finds a priceless item, bleeds over it (taking an amount of damage equal to 1/2 his maximum hit points), gives it his name, and then destroys it in a fire, the contract ends.

VOW OF HEARTRIME**CR 13**

XP 25,600

Devil ice devil (gelugon)

Creation Time 1d8 days

Benefit The contracted mortal stops showing the appearance of age and gains immunity to cold damage. Additionally, she can survive indefinitely on 1 gallon of water per day, so long as it is frozen—this replaces her need to eat and drink.

Payment As a sacrifice of warmth, the area within 5 feet of the contracted mortal is always 10 degrees colder than the surrounding area. The mortal's body is unpleasantly cold to the touch. Any liquid in the mortal's possession, no matter how well insulated, freezes in 1 minute. This includes potions and other liquid gear; consuming a frozen potion takes 1 minute of uninterrupted work.

RESEARCH

Description Infernal contracts created by a gelugon are exceedingly complex, referencing cunning extraplanar generals, obscure predators, and natural violence.

Complexity 36

Specialized Skills Knowledge (nature), Knowledge (nobility), Knowledge (planes)

kp 39

Hidden Condition (25 kp) One year after the contract is signed, the ice devil can collect the contracted mortal's heart. The mortal survives this painful extraction, but from then on is healed by negative energy and harmed by positive energy, as if he were an undead creature. The ice devil keeps the heart safe (some say within its own chest). Not having a heart neither aids nor hinders the mortal, but

if the infernal contract is terminated while the mortal's heart is missing, the mortal instantly dies.

Termination Clause (0 kp) A beautiful but obtuse clause likens the contracted mortal's existence to living, melting snow. The mortal can take advantage of this by arranging for the creation of a simulacrum. During the casting of the *simulacrum* spell, the contracted mortal must wound himself and bleed over the simulacrum until he falls unconscious. The mortal takes 1d4 points of Constitution drain and falls unconscious for 2d6 hours, during which time the simulacrum must be destroyed with fire. However, the simulacrum refuses to obey its creator and attempts to escape. If the simulacrum is destroyed before the contracted mortal awakes, the contract is considered to be fulfilled.

UNIQUE FEATURES

This contract can be destroyed only by sacred fire, such as that created by the spell *flame strike* from a good caster.

CURSE OF THE EVER-SOUL**CR 20**

XP 307,200

Devil pit fiend

Creation Time 1 hour

Benefit The contracted mortal gains 1,000 years of life, can speak and understand any language, and permanently gains the effects of *speak with animals*.

Payment The signee must deliver 100 sentient mortal lives, sacrificed in rituals to Asmodeus or a demigod residing in Hell. These souls need not be paid before the contract is signed, but must be paid within 1 year of the signing; otherwise, the payment becomes the signee's mortal soul.

RESEARCH

Description Infernal contracts created by pit fiends are among the most elaborate in existence, referencing deities, souls, and half-comprehensible cosmic truths.

Complexity 50

Specialized Skills Knowledge (planes), Knowledge (religion)

kp 60

Hidden Condition (20 kp) Once per year, the pit fiend can instantly transport the signing mortal to its side across any distance, even across planar boundaries, as if conjuring the mortal via a *gate* spell. The pit fiend can command the mortal to perform one service for it, which the mortal cannot deny and must attempt to complete to the best of her abilities (regardless of any immunities). After 24 hours or upon the completion of the task, the mortal returns to wherever she was teleported from.

Termination Clause (0 kp) The contract is exacting in defining the signee's nature and homeworld. If the mortal were to place her soul into the body of another humanoid not native to her world, the terms of the contract would remain effective over her body, not her soul. Any soul within the mortal's original body is damned upon that body's death. The mortal could potentially reclaim her body after a soul within it is taken in this manner.

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Now we know why the Hellknights didn't follow us into Devil's Perch. We were surrounded by these horrible, winged creatures within an hour of entering the range. They killed some of the Bellflower agents at the front of the group before we even knew what was going on. One of them tried to defuse the situation, to take a diplomatic tack, but the language barrier made it difficult. The moment she said the word "slaves" in Infernal, the creatures set upon us like a pack of flying wolves. By the time they were done, the nine agents who'd helped us escape captivity were dead. The creatures marched us blindfolded the rest of the way through Devil's Perch to the coast where your ship was waiting. None of us had the courage to try to explain what really happened.

— From the journal of Bellflower Network agent Varnos Thirr

Hidden in their aeries high in the treacherous tors of Cheliox's Devil's Perch region, strix have long presented an enigmatic danger for humans. Tales of vicious, territorial strix savagely killing travelers who wander into their domain are common fare told around campfires and tavern hearths. However, the truth regarding strix, and the reasons behind their insular and challenging nature, is more complex. Even the name strix is a misnomer, for strix refer to themselves as the itarii.

Strix have lived in the Devil's Perch region since at least the end of the Age of Darkness, but the history of their people is shrouded in mystery by the upheaval of that bleak time. Scholars and explorers alike have attempted to understand these winged strangers since Aspex the Even-Tongued first encountered them during the Even-Tongued Conquest. Even now, centuries removed from that unique moment of cooperation between human and strix, little is known about this secretive people.

GENESIS

Somewhere beyond a veil of superstition and myth lies the story of strix's origin far across the Inner Sea: a tale of subjugation and revolution, exile and hardship. This truth is unknown to the strix of the Inner Sea region, lost to thousands of years of darkness, ignorance, and strife among their kind. Wherever they came from, whatever truth is hidden in the stories passed down among their people, the strix of Devil's Perch may never know. The fragmentary nature of strix history stems from their tradition of oral storytelling and paucity of accurate written record-keeping, especially in their people's ancient past. The further back strix history goes, the more vague and incomplete the record becomes, as metaphors and poetic fables fill the stories. Worse yet for scholars is the fact that each clan of strix tells slight variations of its origin story, with differing timelines. Some variations imply that strix left their ancestral home before the Age of Darkness, while others hold that the coming of the Age of Darkness brought about their exile. Still others suggests a gradual migration over thousands of years, beginning just prior to the Age of Darkness and ending before its close.

The most common telling of strix's origin is spun as one of jealousy and exile. Called *Korrsat Akra* in their tongue, or "The Scattered Nest," the story outlines a history of strix as a powerful and prideful race of hunters living in an ideal land called Sharat Ce-Ar, the Sky Garden. There they flourished and cohabited with many other races as equals, sharing all that they had in abundance. One such race, known to strix only as the *shokir*, or "betrayers," used the strix's trust and generosity against them. The *shokir* are described as jealous creatures who envied strix's strength and beauty, and who possessed strange and terrible powers that allowed them to conjure a violent,

magical storm that destroyed the sun and tore the strix from Sharat Ce-Ar. The storm purportedly deposited the strix in an inhospitable and remote wasteland, and the *shokir* cursed the strix to walk this wasteland until the sun ceased to rise in the sky.

Strix claim that while in these wilds, they lost their beauty and grace, becoming twisted by the dark spaces they inhabited until they came to act as little more than beasts. The legend states that when darkness receded from the skies and the sun shone again, they had wandered so far that they came to lofty and forbidding peaks. Atop these mountains, the strix settled and found themselves returning to normalcy, their minds no longer clouded with savagery. Strix believe that their curse was lifted with the return of the sun, though the effect the harsh wilderness had on their forms would forever remain.

While strix have since developed written language, it is highly uncommon among their people. Furthermore, taboos against writing down their race's history—which they keep secret from outsiders—prevent it from being recorded by the few who are capable of writing it down. Curiously, paintings found in sea caves near Corentyn in Cheliox appear to illustrate a version of the story told in the *Korrsat Akra* and match the styles of ancient paintings in high mountain caves in the southern reaches of the Mindspin Mountains between Nidal and Molthune. While there are no known strix settlements in this range, scholars suggest that small bands of ancient strix may have temporarily spread through these regions long ago. They might also have migrated there from Devil's Perch and been met with hostility and violence that wiped out any existing traces of their culture. Further evidence contradicting the *Korrsat Akra* comes from images on scrolls of a strange leather found in the library of Iadara in Kyonin, depicting black-and-gray figures with immense wings and mysterious masks taking part in society. These ancient documents, dating back to the time of Earthfall, have led to speculation of a relationship with winged humanoids closely resembling strix among the people of Azlant and the elves of Adarshavir. Some claim that the figures represented in these scrolls are not strix at all, but are instead depictions of the *syrinx*, fabled masters of the strix who are said to live in towering aviary-cities across the sea and to be responsible for making strix what they are today.

Outside historical perspective on strix is limited to the ancient cultures that may have dealt with the winged folk. Records from the Jistka Imperium retrieved from the ruins of Rachikan indicate that the Jistkans were aware of the presence of a winged humanoid race in Devil's Perch, but after several attempts to make contact failed, the efforts were abandoned. It was these records that informed Aspex the Even-Tongued in his attempts to contact and negotiate with the strix during the Even-

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Tongued Conquest of 4081 AR when Cheliox battled Taldor for independence. Historical records fail to indicate the terms of Aspek's arrangement with the strix were, only relating that Aspek was able to convince them to join the war against Taldor. Aspek then honored their request to be left alone following the conclusion of their limited aid. Honoring this request was made easy by the fact that the rough terrain and the difficulty of traversing the rugged land in great numbers meant there was no push for humans to settle in Devil's Perch.

In the centuries since Aspek's contact with the strix, few Chelaxians have had close dealings with the residents of Devil's Perch. Relations soured considerably with the western expansion of Cheliox in unflinching defiance of Aspek's original agreement of noninterference with the strix. Settlements close to Devil's Perch, such as Pezzack, have been attacked time and again when tensions between the strix and locals reach a boiling point. These hostilities further both the stereotype among humans that strix are violent and unpredictable creatures and the stereotype among strix that all outsiders are untrustworthy and dangerous, allowing continued resentment to flourish. (For a more detailed look at interactions between strix and humans, see the Pathfinder Tales novel *Nightglass* by Liane Merciel.)

ECOLOGY

While strix outwardly appear comparable to winged elves in physiology, this similarity belies the fact that strix's inner workings are far removed from the biology of most humanoids. Strix share more in common with birds—specifically owls—than they do with most humanoid races. A strix's eyes are not spherical, but rather more like the elongated ocular tubes found in most breeds of owls. This shape is a part of why strix have such keen eyesight, but also leaves them unable to move their eyes, resulting in a stare that is fixed in their sockets. This requires strix to move their heads in order to change their field of view, making them prone to sudden and erratic head motions that are unsettling to people unaccustomed to strix's presence.

Strix's eyes seem to be a solid red or deep yellow on casual observation; however, this appearance is created by a nictitating membrane over strix's eyes—a third eyelid that moves horizontally across the eyeball to close. This milky white membrane protects the eyes from drying out while in flight, and cleans their surfaces of dust and debris. It also assists in strix's ability to see in low-light conditions, something essential for their nocturnal life cycle. This eyelid is visible briefly when a strix blinks. To casual observers, a strix's eyes closely resemble those of an elf, with enlarged irises that fill nearly the whole socket and no visible sclera.

A strix's diet consists primarily of whatever meat can be hunted from the surrounding environment, supplemented

with collected berries and nuts when in season. Some strix even eat the flesh of humanoids, but this rarity occurs primarily in desperate times or among more sinister clans as part of vile rites.

Childbearing is an important part of strix culture. Dangerous living conditions and low birthrates keep strix populations low, so every birth is met with a celebration. Strix parents are ferociously protective of their newborns, and entire clans rally around successful births and help ensure that the young are given every opportunity to survive and succeed. Mothers take over the role as caregivers, though more often than not whole clans come together to take part in raising the young.

Though they don't recognize any official rites of marriage, strix often choose one mate for life, and find great difficulty in pairing again if separated by death. A clan's spiritual leader, or *rokoa*, is forbidden from taking a mate because of centuries-old customs whose origins are long forgotten. However, the *rokoa* is polyamorous and participates in unions with multiple strix males. While such events rarely produce offspring because of the advanced age of most *rokoa*, those that do only ever produce female strix who are raised by their entire clan—this is seen as part of the clan's duty to its *rokoa*. These strix often mature to become powerful *rokoa* in their own right.

SOCIETY

While strix's Korrsat Akra has questionable historical value, its importance to the development of strix society is indisputable. The tale is used as justification for the insular and xenophobic nature of strix society and the close-knit, clannish nature of their social structure. Strix have a firm belief that the only people they can trust are themselves; a history of miscommunication, fear, and outright betrayal has helped cement this notion. Hatred toward humans for their centuries-long advance into Devil's Perch, strix have come to call the Chelish—and by extension all humans—*kotaara*, a particularly distasteful epithet. Strix view all humans through the lens of their own society, believing that humanity is as close-knit as strix culture, and that one human's misdeeds are representative of normal human behavior.

Roughly a dozen clans of strix live in the Devil's Perch region, each with its own culture and social taboos, yet strix were not always so divided. As doubt and suspicion became deeply ingrained in their culture, so too did the smallest of slights between different clans come to be perceived as part of a more grievous and impending betrayal. These misunderstandings have resulted in generations of cold relations between clans, and are often the impetus of divergent clans splitting off to achieve independence and escape perceived threats. Deeply seated cynicism has created a complex system of social cues and behaviors that clans utilize when

interacting with one another in order to ensure they are received as being honest and sincere. The strix language has many different forms of the word “honest” but only a single word for “deceit.”

In spite of this complicated social web, strix are quick to rally together when facing a threat from outside their culture. Strix have a phrase that roughly translates to “the blood of outsiders falls faster than the blood of kin”; it reflects an important social contract among strix that all conflicts between strix must be set aside when their kind is confronted by an external threat or other injustice. To those on the receiving end of a strix warband or hunting party, this monolithic response supports the misconception that strix are more of a united people than they are in truth.

The hierarchy of strix culture is centered on each clan’s rokoa, the matriarchal spiritual leader and story-keeper of an entire clan. Rokoas are chosen from among strix who are able to form a bond with powerful patron spirits and commune with them through animals, typically via shamanism and witchcraft. A rokoa is trained from a young age by the clan’s current rokoa with the intention of replacing her at her death. She learns her clan’s oral history to the exclusion of all other points of view, understanding that only her clan’s perspective is “true.” Each clan often has two or three rokoas in training at any one time, and the eldest rokoa trainee is almost always the one chosen to replace the predecessor. It is a rokoa’s job to appoint healers, midwives, and other positions of importance to a clan from among the most trusted in the group. These appointments always replace any extant members of the clan in these positions, and frequently occur when a rokoa dies and her appointed trainee assumes her role. Unlike in other societies, strix do not typically perceive being removed from one of these prestigious positions during the changing of rokoas as a slight. Rather, it is viewed as an honor, a reward for diligently performing one’s duty to the clan.

The rokoa serves as the ultimate arbiter of justice within strix society. Though most interpersonal conflicts are settled without the intercession of the clan’s spiritual leader, some offenses merit such scrutiny. Two crimes in particular warrant the

harshest of punishments from a rokoa. In the extremely rare instance of a strix murdering another of his kind, he is labeled a *paashrat* or “less than dead.” Such criminals are cursed by their rokoa, their wings are amputated, and they’re hobbled and left for dead in the lowlands of Devil’s Perch. In some clans, dealing with outsiders or divulging secrets of strix society, such as the details of the Korrsat Akra, are also unforgivable acts. Betrayal of this nature results in the offending strix being labeled a *navaatra*, or “forsaken.” Navaatras are branded or scarred on their faces, and exiled from Devil’s Perch. They are never spoken of by their names in any clans after their exile, as if they had never existed. Some clans have taken to the practice of clipping the wings of navaatras, making it more difficult for them to fly and further distinguishing their appearances. Navaatras who return to strix territory are killed on sight.

Most strix don’t expend much effort on worshiping particular gods, and instead view religion through the same lens of distrust and suspicion through which they view society. They see themselves as a cursed race, and believe that the storm that carried them from their homeland to deposit them where they now live also carried them from the world of the gods. Now they rely on the strength and power of their ancestors, retelling their stories in order to make the clans strong and wise. They believe that only through understanding their own circumstances and respecting their ancestors’ lives will they find freedom from this ancient curse. A clan’s rokoa is the closest thing a strix clan has to a religious leader, and members accept that the rokoa may channel or otherwise have access to the stories and memories of strix who came before.

Perhaps as a result of their lack of religion, strix view death with a sense of finality at odds with their intellectual knowledge of the afterlife and the cycle of souls. The death of a strix is viewed with great sadness and remembrance. Strix funerary practices involve



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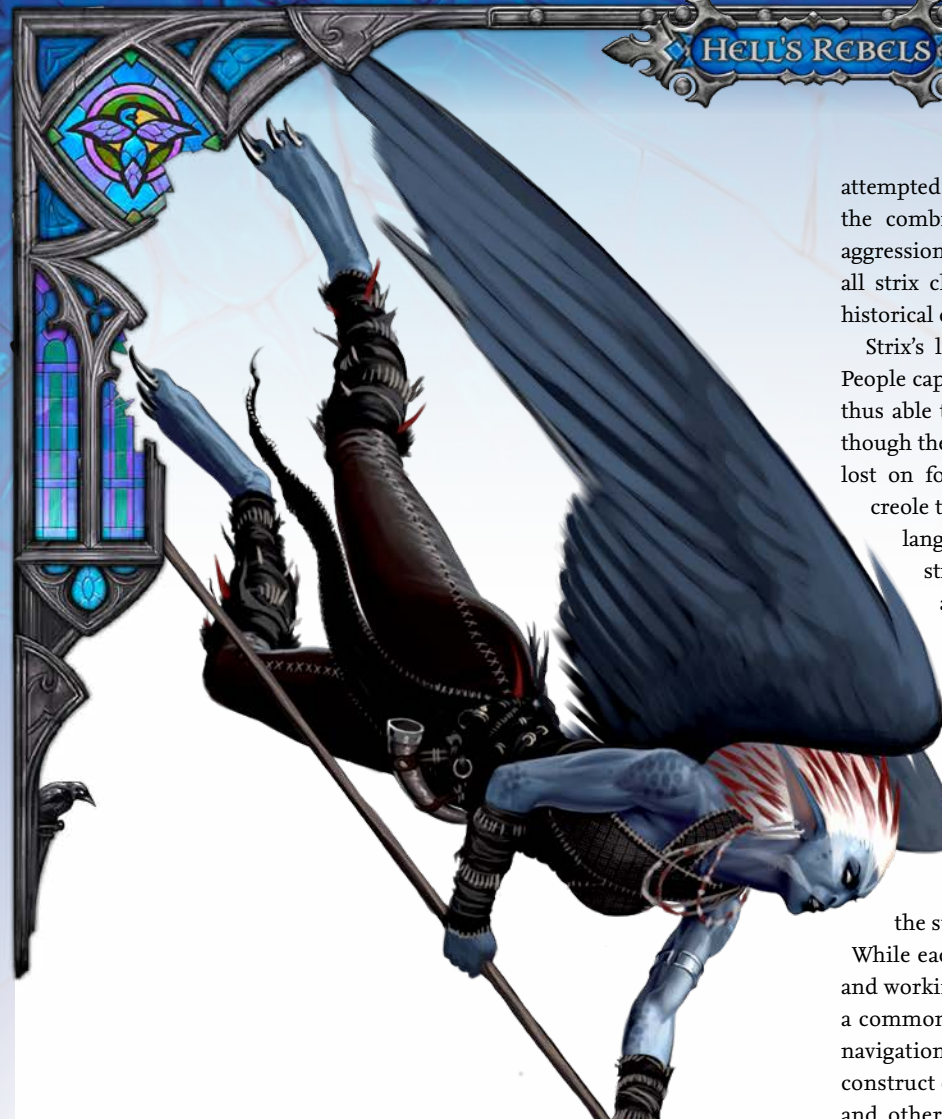
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the burial of the dead in rich soil so that their remains can give back to the land, which will in turn give back to strix. The bones of dead strix are retrieved after nature has cleaned them and handed down to the surviving family members. These bones are fashioned into weapons, talismans, and fetishes. Few natural materials are both as strong and as light as a strix's bones. Mourning periods for strix can last weeks and are observed by all members of the deceased's clan, and often neighboring clans as well—death, like an outside threat, is an event that can unite the normally fractious strix clans. Inversely, strix treat the bodies of *kotaara* with contempt, leaving them to rot where they fall.

While strix acknowledge that the spirits of some of their kind linger in the world after death as undead, they see undead as dedicated members of their respective clans who refused to succumb to death, rather than aberrations of the natural cycle. While no contemporary examples are known to exist, legends persist among the strix that tell of an ancient clan called the *Katesh*, “Those Who Remember,” whose members transformed themselves into vampires. Strix believe the *Katesh*

attempted to claim dominance among the clans, but the combined power of several *rokoa* resisted their aggression and drove the *Katesh* from Devil's Perch. Not all strix clans acknowledge this tale, however, and no historical evidence exists to support the myth.

Strix's language is a creole of Infernal and Azlanti. People capable of speaking either Infernal or Azlanti are thus able to engage in basic communication with strix, though the nuances of this complex language are largely lost on foreign speakers. The historical roots of this creole tongue are a mystery. There is no record of the language's evolution over the millennia, but the strix claim it changes rapidly, as they frequently add new terminology and honorifics concocted among multiple clans, suggesting that the contemporary strix language spoken in the Devil's Perch area and the tongue they spoke before their exodus to Avistan are unlikely to be mutually intelligible.

LAIRS

Most strix settlements are constructed vertically, built both inside and outside the stone spires common in the Devil's Perch area. While each clan has its own aesthetic for carving rock and working wood and stone, most of these aeries share a common architectural theme that relies on flight for navigation from structure to structure. Some clans construct external nest-hives from sinew, leather, vines, and other salvaged materials, while clans with access to softer stone, metal tools, or specialized magic carve out dwellings inside natural caves. Strix typically sleep indoors during daytime hours in individual roosts. They carve these roosts into preexisting stone or make them out of shaped wood, then pad them with leather, hide, and animal fur. A strix roost is a depression analogous in shape to that of a hollow in a tree. Strix sleep in a fetal position with their wings folded around themselves and their faces hidden. When endangered or threatened with constant attack, strix disperse their roosts to prevent the slaughter of multiple sleeping strix. While strix are nocturnal, every clan keeps dayguards to watch over sleepers.

Social spaces for strix are typically found atop high rock towers or mountaintops in remote areas difficult to reach on foot. These inaccessible places are adorned with statuary, woodcarvings, scrimshaw, and other art dating back to the clan's founding. In caves near the top of these rocky spires, *rokoa* tell the stories of their clans and artisans adorn the smoothed walls with cave paintings, adding to or adjusting faded, ancient images left by their ancestors. The open spaces atop the rocky pillars are often used for concerts in which strix musicians play haunting notes on their *ashikans*, wind instruments carved from horn or shaped wood. Drums and other

jingling percussion instruments accompany these performances, and the songs can be heard for miles. Because of such sites' inaccessibility, such distant notes are most non-strix's only exposure to strix's appreciation for art and history.

STRIX ON GOLARION

The most famous strix settlement in the Inner Sea region is Ciricskree, located in Devil's Perch in western Cheliax. While it is common knowledge that strix inhabit many regions within Devil's Perch, the exact number of strix and clans has never been recorded; it is estimated that only a thousand or so of their kind exist on Avistan's shores. Stories of hidden strix settlements along Cheliax's western coast beyond Devil's Perch are favored yarns of sailors and soldiers alike, though such strix settlements remain elusive.

For generations, rumors have claimed that some strix live beyond the borders of Cheliax within the remote Napsune Mountains in Rahadoum. A sighting tends to crop up once every generation, leading to a frenzied rush by monster hunters and scholars alike to track down these elusive creatures. No search for strix in Rahadoum has ever turned up substantial evidence to support their existence, and many believe these sightings are of different creatures altogether. If strix do live in the warm and rocky mountains, they have done an exceptional job of hiding their presence, and are either unknown to the strix of Cheliax or purposefully forgotten outcasts.

If strix's ancient stories are true, large numbers of strix can be found across the Arcadian Ocean on the continent of Arcadia. Some of these strix may still be thralls of the enigmatic syrinx.

STRIX RULES INDEX

A number of options are available to strix characters. Strix first appeared in the bestiary of *Pathfinder Adventure Path #25: The Bastards of Erebus*, and their statistics are reprinted on page 313 of *Pathfinder Campaign Setting: The Inner Sea World Guide*.

STRIX FEATS

The following feats are found on page 53 of *Pathfinder Campaign Setting: Inner Sea Monster Codex*: Buffeting Wings (Combat), Cloak of Feathers, Fling (Combat), Graceful Flier, Powerful Wings (Combat), and Snatch and Drop (Combat)

The Stretched Wings feat is found on page 201 of *Pathfinder RPG Advanced Race Guide*.

ALTERNATE RACIAL TRAITS

The following alternate racial traits are found on page 200 of the *Advanced Race Guide*: dayguard, frightening, nimble, tough, and wing-clipped.

RACIAL ARCHETYPE

The airborne ambusher archetype is found on page 201 of the *Advanced Race Guide*.

STRIX EQUIPMENT

Strix employ snag nets to capture prey. This item is found in the *Advanced Race Guide* on page 201.

STRIX MAGIC ITEM

The *stonemist cloak* on page 201 of the *Advanced Race Guide* is used by strix to remain hidden.

STRIX SPELL

The *strong wings* spell on page 201 of the *Advanced Race Guide* is particularly useful for strix characters.

STRIX RACE TRAIT

The aerial harrier race trait for strix is found on page 199 of *Pathfinder Campaign Setting: Inner Sea Races*.

STRIX RACIAL TRAIT

The cautious brawler racial trait is found on page 216 of *Inner Sea Races*.

STRIX FAVORED CLASS OPTIONS

The following favored class options are available for strix characters. Additional favored class options for strix characters with levels in barbarian, fighter, monk, and ranger can be found on page 200 of *Pathfinder RPG Advanced Race Guide*.

Bloodrager: Increase the bloodrager's total number of bloodrage rounds per day by 1.

Brawler: Add 1/4 to the brawler's effective class level to determine her unarmed strike damage.

Druid: Add a +1/2 bonus to Knowledge (nature) checks related to weather and flying animals.

Hunter: Add 1 hit point to the hunter's animal companion. If the hunter replaces her animal companion, the new animal companion gains these bonus hit points.

Oracle: Add one spell known from the oracle spell list. This spell must be at least 1 level below the highest spell level the oracle can cast.

Shaman: Add 1/2 to the shaman's effective class level for the purpose of determining her spirit animal's natural armor adjustment, Intelligence, and special abilities.

Slayer: Increase the studied target bonus on Perception and Survival checks by 1/4. When the slayer gains the stalker class feature, the slayer also gains this increase to the studied target bonus on Stealth checks.

Witch: Add one spell from the witch spell list to the witch's familiar. This spell must be at least 1 level below the highest spell level the witch can cast. If the witch ever replaces this familiar, the new familiar knows these bonus spells.

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THE MONSTER WITHIN

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My mask protected me. The blood, the fiend hounds' burning fur, the carnage that surrounded me—all were muted by rose oil and lemon. The cloths stuffed into the beak of my mask kept me from the worst of it. Somehow, they made it less real.

The largest of the fiend hounds bore down upon us. Liset's rapier crackled with energy. She sidestepped the hound's first swipe, but it turned too quickly, belying its size, and caught her shoulder in its powerful jaws. Lifting its head and Liset with it, the devil dog shook her violently. Her arms flapped like a doll's, but she held on to her weapon. She responded by thrusting her rapier into its cheek.

The dog released her with a whimper, and she tumbled onto the temple's steps, leaving a bloody smear behind her.

From the corner of my eye, I spied Drayven tussling with a half-dozen smaller hounds. He was faster than they were, the daggers in his hands blurring as he struck their shoulders and necks with shallow blows and slid away before their jaws closed upon him. He seemed to fade in and out, disappearing between his opponents.

But I could not pay him too much attention.

The pack's leader lunged at Liset. She rolled to her feet at the last second, leaving the beast to snag only her tunic. It yanked on her, and she stumbled.

I was running out of spells, and the fiend hound took no notice of me. It seemed to sense that I was ill prepared for a fight. I was no warrior, and I was no longer the healer I had been, either.

Perhaps it was the sense of helplessness that washed over me, or the fear that I might lose the last person who remembered me as I was. Liset still believed I was Maharai, the great healer who had saved countless lives. Not one who murdered a caretaker in her rage, tortured a merchant to get what she wanted, and allowed her husband to die because she'd fallen so far. I needed her to see me as who I had once been, and that need made me reckless.

I grabbed the devil dog's tail. The words of power were new to me, but they came to my tongue as though I had said them all my life.

Wounds opened across the dog's skin. The blow Liset had dealt became a gaping hole in its cheek. Blood flowed fast and hot over my hand.

The fiend hound whirled on me, and Liset was able to recover her balance. It lashed out at me, its claws tearing into my side and sending me sprawling. But it was enough.

My apprentice drove the tip of her rapier deep into the beast's side. I could almost imagine it sliding through the

rib cage, piercing the heart before the dog even realized what was happening. With a great sigh, the fiend hound collapsed before the temple's iron-and-oak doors.

The gashes along the left half of my body burned. I pressed my hand against the largest wound, but it did little to stanch the bleeding.

"Maharai?" Liset crouched over me, her own shoulder a mess of torn skin and puncture marks.

I shook my head. "Help Drayven."

She frowned at me, but tucked her bad arm against her side and ran toward the man.

With their alpha dead, the remaining pack stood little chance. I watched as Drayven danced around his enemies, steel flashing and ruby ring catching the fire of the setting sun. The parchment bearing the seal of House Thrune peeked from under his breastplate, its edges soaked with red. He was vicious and eager in his attacks, while Liset was ever patient and precise in hers.

When the final hound turned to flee, Drayven cut it down with a toss of his dagger. He turned toward Liset, who held her rapier en garde, and he grinned.

"Need to be faster," he said, pointing at her shoulder with one of his blades. "That doesn't look good."

Liset scowled and said nothing. She marched back to me, helping me remove my healer's satchel and rummaging for supplies.

Together we bound my wound, then hers, and all the while she was silent. She did not ask me why I wasn't calling on my magic to heal us, or how I had injured the alpha so badly. I feared she already knew the answers to her unspoken questions.

"I need to rest," I said. "Tomorrow I can—"

She waved me off with her good hand and secured the sling around her neck. "Tomorrow this will all be over, and you can go home. To Khem. To your old life."

I forced a smile, knowing she was wrong. Though I would return to Khem with a cure, I could never have my life back. The last hope of that had died with Razizo.

"If you're done bleeding, ladies," Drayven said, "we have a temple to raid."

I glanced at the darkness behind the temple's doors. The *Poleiheira* waited inside for me. And only the gods knew what else.

When I first began my search for the suppressed folio that I hoped could heal Khem, it was with mixed emotions. I regretted leaving behind my family, my young son who needed me by his side almost as much as he needed me to find his cure. But there was also a sense of wonder.

Most of my life had been spent confined to the inside of Nethys' temple, wandering the labyrinthine library and devouring every book I could. If I found one I couldn't read, I devoted myself to learning a new language, until I was fluent in more dead tongues than living ones.

I joined the Pathfinder Society, thinking it the best way to discover where the remnants of the *Poleiheira* had been scattered, and it didn't take long for me to realize I couldn't do that alone. I wasn't fit for the life an adventurer. I was soft, my eyes bright with ignorance, my hands too clean. I chose Liset to accompany me, a young woman of our temple who aspired to knighthood—hardly more than a girl, and already showing a willingness to do whatever was necessary to serve Nethys. At the time, I hoped she would be as loyal to me and my son.

I remember the moment we left the temple, how heavily my pack weighed on my back, how sore my feet became after only a few miles of walking. The road stretched before us, endless and beautiful.

Now I saw only the end to that journey, buried in the darkness of another temple.

It was of Jistkan construction, of that I had no doubt. The stone blocks were too perfectly carved to be made by human hands. Thaumaturgy preserved the wood of the fallen doors. And just inside, the rusted mechanism once used to open them was an artificer's marvel. None but the Jistkan engineers and their golems could have built this place.

My hands trembled as I hefted a chunk of the enchanted wood and cast a spell of light on its end. Pain lanced through my side with each step, but I pushed my way through the temple's entrance.

Drayven took the lead several paces in front of me and Liset. He seemed not to mind the dark, and my makeshift torch cast his wiry frame into a long, menacing shadow.

We found the alcove where the fiend hounds had made their lair. Rotting carcasses were piled in a heap that stood opposite some ratty blankets matted with fur. The stench seeped past the barrier of my mask, and we didn't linger.

The entry hall split. We glanced between the passageways as if divine inspiration might strike us, but the gods were as silent as the temple around us.

"What does the map say?" Liset asked.

I shrugged, not bothering to remove it from my satchel. I wanted to forget the map and the merchant I'd taken it from as quickly as possible.

"It was a map of the Anferita, not the temple," I said.

"We should split up," Drayven said. "Liset, take the right. Lady Maharai and I will go left."

My apprentice barked a laugh. "I don't think so. Maharai and I can go right. You'll be fine on your own."

Drayven tilted his head, a devious smile tugging at his lips. "You're injured. You cannot protect her, little knight."

"I only need one hand to keep her safe from you."



Most of my life have I searched for the Yemalan Codex, as the Rahadoumi call the suppressed folios of the Poleiheira. I know it holds the key.

"Is that so?" Drayven's fingers had drifted to his daggers, and the gleam in his eye told me he wouldn't hesitate to remove whatever stood in his way, friend or foe.

"Enough," I said, stepping between the two of them. "We'll stay together."

"She's slowing us down," Drayven said to me. "How much time does your son have left if we choose the wrong path? Does he have a week for us to explore this entire temple? A day?"

I furrowed my brow, knowing he was right. Every minute that passed without a cure might be too long for my son. If Khem died before I returned, everything I had sacrificed would be for naught.

"We've been doing this a long time before you came around," Liset said.

"And what little progress you made..."

"At least we still knew what we were fighting for. Now look at her."

I glanced down at myself. My robes were stained with dirt, dried blood, and ash. The hem was charred beyond mending. My hand ached from the fire I'd created to burn Razizo's body, and the bandages I'd wound around my side were steadily turning red. My head swam. I closed my eyes to stop the world from spinning uncontrollably around me.

"Enough!"

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I wasn't sure if I was yelling at my companions or all of Golarion, but my tone brooked no argument and Liset and Drayven both quieted.

"We go this way. All of us." I headed down the right-hand passageway without waiting for them.

If I was wrong, Khem would pay for my mistake. But I felt it—a subtle, steady tug on my heart. With each beat, the *Poleiheira* pulled on me. Perhaps my god was speaking to me, or perhaps the blood loss and exhaustion were taking their toll. I knew only that the closer I came to finding the cure for my son, the more sure my footsteps grew and the less everything else seemed to matter.

We passed dozens of rooms. Most had been torn apart by the fiend hounds, but several were left alone to the ravages of time. What ancient mysteries rested under the rubble, waiting to be uncovered? I would never know, for there was only one secret for which I cared.

I led our way deeper into the temple, past prayer rooms and sleeping quarters, a kitchen and dining hall that had nearly dissolved to dust. Our boots kicked up debris, and we lit a real torch to burn away the cobwebs. A cloud of soot hung in the air as we disturbed places that no person had trod in millennia. At one time, that

I suspected the door was not meant to keep someone out of the temple, but to keep something in.

thought would have awed me, but now this temple was just another corpse in my wake.

My pulse quickened, and I had to limp to keep my feet moving in time to the rapid thrum of my heart. At the end of the hall I glimpsed the outline of a pair of doors, wide enough to march through several men standing abreast, and far taller than any human would require. The Jistkans were known to have engineered war machines and constructs beyond the abilities of modern artificers. Their craft had been lost to antiquity, but stories said some of their creations still roamed the world, forever in service to their long-dead masters.

Iron bars crossed the doors, locked in a strange, circular contraption that looked a bit like a ship's steering wheel, though it likely weighed several hundred pounds. No human could hope to turn such a lock.

"No," I whispered and waved my light around the doors. They bore no carvings, no instructions to decipher, no riddle to solve.

There was only stone, solid and silent as a grave.

"Help me."

I half hung from the wheel-lock, pulling with every ounce of my strength. My wounds flared in protest, and my side grew warm with fresh blood. But I couldn't stop, couldn't relent to the thought that I had failed. That everything I had suffered through, all that I had sacrificed, would be stopped by a godsforsaken door.

"Maharai, I wouldn't—" Liset's voice died as lightning crackled down the iron bar, through the lock, into me.

Pain seared me, burning from the inside out. My hands fused to the metal, unable to release their grip as my muscles convulsed. Agony overwhelmed my mind, and I must have lost consciousness.

The next instant I lay on the ground, looking up at Drayven, who stood over me with my wooden light-stick in his hand, and Liset, who kept asking after me. My shoulder ached with a new pain, and I wondered if I had broken something in my fall.

"Maharai, can you hear me?" Liset removed my mask and pressed her good hand to my cheek.

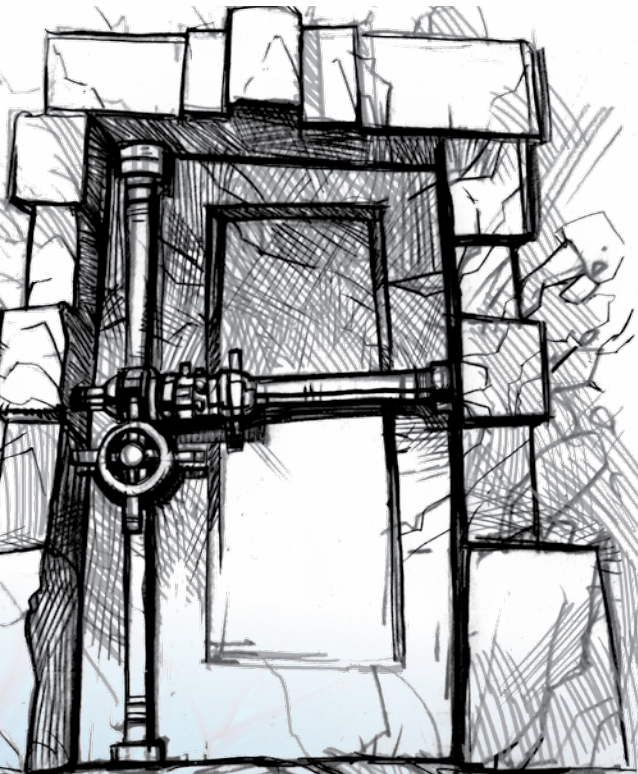
I blinked at her and said I was fine, but my words were slurred and incoherent.

Liset glared at Drayven. "Her arm will be useless now. You hit her too hard."

Drayven shrugged. "She's alive, isn't she? Better a broken arm than a cooked cleric."

"To hell with you," she said.

I had never heard Drayven laugh with such ferocity as he did in that moment. It came from his belly and shook the whole of him, startling in the quiet of the temple. Liset and I both stared at him until he finished, and I swear I saw a sheen in his eyes. Once he caught his breath, he turned his back on us and continued down the hall, past the doors.



"Where are you going?" Liset asked.

"I imagine that we need something to open that booby-trapped lock, and this is a Jistkan temple."

"You're going to find, what, a key? A battering ram? Even you're not strong enough to knock down those doors."

Drayven cast a smile over his shoulder. "No, little knight, I'm going to find another way in."

"What about us?"

"Wait," he said. "Try not to die." Then he disappeared into the dark.

Liset's face hovered above me, the beads in her hair catching what little light we had. I tried to push myself up, but she stilled me.

"Rest," she said.

"I can dispel the magic on the door," I said. Though my words remained garbled, my apprentice understood my intentions.

"Save what you have left for whatever awaits us on the other side."

She pulled a rolled blanket from her pack and tucked it under my head. Everything hurt. My shoulder, the claw marks along my side, my hands where they'd stuck to the lock. Only a few days ago I would have wiped my injuries away with a simple spell. My healing gifts had always been ready for me to call upon when needed.

I've never felt so useless as I did on the floor of that temple, sure that the folio I sought was just beyond my reach.

Liset leaned her back against the wall. Her eyes scanned the hallway in either direction, but I knew it was too dark for her to see a potential threat before it was on top of us. She seemed to sense it too, squinting until lines bracketed her eyes and a frown marred her mouth.

She had aged so much since she'd joined me on this journey. It showed mostly in her eyes, a weariness that only failure can cause. We had found many parts of the *Poleiheira*, recovered much for our temple, but nothing that would save Khem.

Sometimes I wondered why she stayed with me. I liked to think it was out of love—for my son, perhaps for me.

"You should leave," I said clearly.

Her frown deepened until creases formed between her brows.

"Take my satchel," I said. "There's a healing draught there and enough rations to get you back to Khari. You've lost a lot of blood."

"What about you?"

"I'll be fine in the morning." I managed a weak smile. "Just need to sleep."

"Then I think I'll stay. You can tend to me after you've rested."

"Liset, I need you—"

"Yes," she said abruptly, her expression hardening. "You need me to return you to your son. With a cure. With

a mother who isn't completely corrupted by whomever or whatever that man is."

"The emissaries of our god come in all forms," I said. "The *Poleiheira* is knowledge, and power. It's no surprise the All-Seeing Nethys deemed it fit to send someone strong enough to take it, no matter how unpalatable the man may be to you. We will find it, by whatever means necessary."

She scowled at me. "Once this is over, we'll be far away from Drayven. You'll find yourself again."

"Liset," I said, reaching for her hand. She clasped mine at the wrist to avoid my burned palms. "I will not leave here as the person you remember, if I leave at all."

Her mouth opened as though she might argue with me, but a loud clicking echoed through the otherwise silent space. I lifted my eyes to the door. The wheel-lock spun slowly, the iron bar sliding from its latch. Liset helped me to my feet, my arm braced across her shoulders even though she flinched from the weight of me on her wound.

The massive doors moved of their own accord, opening inward to reveal a slim shadow inside the room. Drayven pulled at a lever in the floor. Even for him, moving the ancient device was a struggle. It was rusted, and the handle broken. His muscles corded as he pulled near the base of the lever, and his pale hands turned a faint shade of red. Though he did not sweat, I noted—not now, after a battle, nor from hours traveling under the sun. During our time together, I had not seen him eat, drink, or sleep either, and I wondered which of his magical trinkets kept him from performing these basic, human necessities.

Once the lever locked into place, he turned to us with a smile.

"Ladies. Nice of you to join me."

The room was enormous. Several columns had collapsed, and taken much of the ceiling with them. The night sky shone overhead, dotted with silver stars. Cottonwoods and vines encroached on the temple. Their leaves crunched on the floor; their branches snaked over the stone walls. A pile of rubble nearly as tall as the walls covered half the room, and cottony seeds coated the stones in a layer of fluff. I smelled dust, the heady richness of the Anferita Wood, and over all of it, my own blood drenching my side.

Broken tools and overturned stone tables were scattered about the room. A workshop then, where the Jistkan artificers crafted their wonders. Battered statues of long-dead royalty watched us as we circled the rubble.

There, hidden behind the pile, a cabinet had fallen, sending its texts sprawling across the ground. Mold and time had turned most of them to shreds, but I spied a few scroll cases that seemed as though they had weathered the years through the same magic that enchanted the wooden doors.

"Take me closer," I told Liset.

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"Is that the *Poleiheira*?" Drayven left the lever behind and moved toward us.

I glanced at him and witnessed the exact moment when he froze. Mid-stride, a stone depressed under his foot and a faint shimmer enveloped him. He simply stopped, one leg extended and face locked in a half-grin. He nearly looked comical.

"Don't move," I said.

"I don't think he's going anywhere." Liset's tone was pleased.

"I have to help him."

"Or," she said, "we could leave him, take the cure, and be done."

"Would you have me be responsible for another death?"

She sighed and nodded. "This one, I could suffer through atonement for."

"He can still help us get home," I said, and let my final spell fall from my lips.

I would like to say that I freed Drayven easily from his stasis, that we claimed the *Poleiheira* and walked out into the starlight. But I could not break the spell holding him.

I could, however, shatter the glamor that had cloaked him since the day we'd met.

The visage of a Chelish noble slid off him like water. The scar across his nose melted, revealing nothing but bone. He grew several feet in height, and skeletal wings arched from his back. A tail snaked behind him, poison gleaming from its tip. He still wore his breastplate, the ruby ring and amulet, and the daggers strapped to his bones, which seemed particularly vicious for the lack of flesh behind them.

"Bone devil," Liset whispered. "I knew it."

I cleared my throat, blinking at the creature who towered before us, suspended like some extinct beast. How had he deceived me so simply? Had I wanted to see a human in Drayven, where there was only a monster? Had I sought the same in myself?

Still, he had helped us. Saved us from the Thin Wisps and defended us from the fiend hounds. In the end, what did it matter what he was, or that he had hidden his true form? Was it not more important that he had brought me closer to my son's cure?

"Let's go. He might free himself soon." My apprentice began to turn us away from our former savior, but I wrenched myself from her.

"The servants of Nethys come in many forms," I repeated my earlier words, staring at Drayven. "He said he was sent. And what better servant in Cheliox than a devil in disguise?"

"Even now you defend him? Maharai, are you mad?"

"Perhaps I am," I whispered as the earth began to shake.

The pile of stone rumbled. Blocks tumbled to the ground, thundering as they struck. They shattered, sending shards flying. The workroom became an avalanche of noise. Dust from the breaking stones filled the air, and the scent of burning oil drifted from the rubble. Smoke rose from the pile, floating above the chaos, as though something huge and mechanical was rising from an overlong slumber. Whatever trap Drayven had sprung, he had also loosed something terrible upon us.

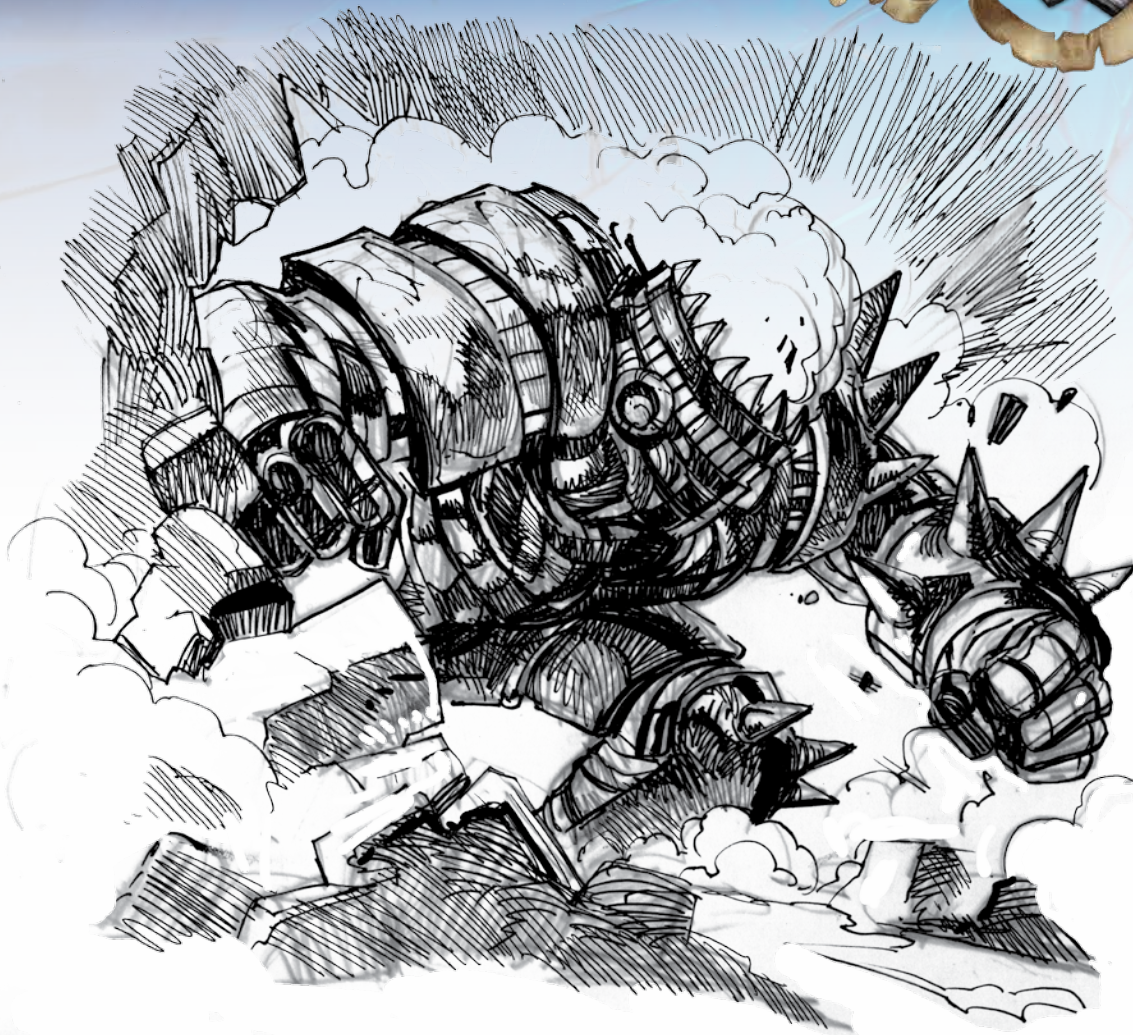
"Get the *Poleiheira*!" I yelled at Liset. "The cases—grab the scroll cases and run!"

For all of her doubts, my apprentice did not argue. She bolted to the corner of the room, heedless of anything else that might lie in wait. I only wished that I could aid her, tell her which might hold the *Poleiheira*, but I could barely walk.

I limped closer to Drayven. He seemed to track my movements, though perhaps that was my imagination.



As my magic broke his glamor, Drayven stood frozen before us in his true, hideous form. I wondered if I was any less a monster. And even worse... if I even cared.



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My tireless researches revealed much about the impressive constructs the ancient Jistkans created in their temple-foundries. But no dusty tome ever prepared me for what broke through that wall.

I took one of his daggers and positioned myself in front of him. There was no use in running. I had lost too much blood—my body was as battered as my spirit. All I could hope to do was distract whatever was emerging from the rubble long enough for Drayven to recover.

My life rested in the claws of a devil.

But my son would be saved. Liset would gather the scrolls and escape. She would find another translator for the ancient text, and she would cure Khem. She had never failed me.

“Maharai!” Her voice carried above the din, and I saw the top of her head bobbing frantically on the other side of the room.

Then the stone wall behind us exploded.

I fell as stone blocks rained around us, landing on my wounded side. My vision blackened, and I longed to lose myself in the darkness. If I could only rest, everything would be better in the morning. But the bed I lay in was hard and lumpy. It jostled me about, shaking me from my much-needed slumber.

I opened my eyes to find myself in Drayven’s arms, his bones a cage around me.

“Not yet, Lady Maharai,” he said. “I’m not done with you yet.”

We ascended from the temple, through the open ceiling and into the night beyond. Below us, a golem crawled from its stony slumber. An unholy fire burned from its crown, and the moonlight caught the dark shimmer of adamantite. It roared at us, then ran headlong into a stone wall in pursuit. Like glass, the stone shattered under the force of its charge.

I saw no sign of Liset, and I prayed it would not catch her and the scrolls.

“We’ll find her,” Drayven said as though he could read my mind.

We were alike, Drayven and I, each hiding our monstrous nature behind a mask. Though I could never again wear the guise of a healer, and he would never again look human to me. Perhaps it was better that way, knowing who we really were.

I closed my eyes and fell asleep in the devil’s embrace.



HELL'S REBELS



BESTIARY

According to the texts found in Dargarsti's manor house, the portal to Dis was somewhere in the ruins of the old fortress. We searched until nightfall, always cautious, but never seeing a single thing that we'd call a threat. Even so, Talbret jumped every time one of those giant ravens flew over and cast its shadow across us. Shortly after the sun had fully dropped below the horizon, we heard a sound like someone carrying a bag of swords. Emerging from the ruins was this goat-faced devil clad in iron. Rust dropped from its body with each step, and in an instant it unfurled a pair of rusty wings that looked like they were made of daggers. With barely a grunt, the fiend flicked its wings and sent tarnished blades flying in our direction.

—Marliss Nalathane, explorer

This volume of the Hell's Rebels Adventure Path challenges the heroes to finally secure Kintargo and free the city once and for all from the clutches of House Thrune. The following bestiary presents a strange new protean, a shapechanging fey associated with the wind, a sinister undead strix, a swarm of stained glass insects, and a new devil from Dis.

DANGERS IN THE FOREST

In Part 3 of this volume's adventure, the PCs must gather support from within Ravounel in order to secure Kintargo's freedom. This task brings the PCs into Ravounel Forest, where they face additional dangers beyond the ones presented in the adventure. The random encounter tables presented here feature dangers the PCs can encounter while exploring Ravounel Forest. During the course of the adventure, the PCs have a 30% chance of a random encounter every hour they spend in the forest, but they should have no more than three random encounters per day.

Since this adventure spans a range of levels, some random encounters might be too simple or too difficult for the PCs, depending on where they are in the course of the adventure. If the result rolled is outside the Challenge Rating range appropriate for the PCs, roll again on the table or choose a different encounter.

In addition, you can use the random encounter tables presented on page 83 of *Pathfinder Adventure Path* #99 to present additional threats, but you might need to increase the number of enemies encountered to provide a suitable threat for the PCs.

Ankou Assassin (CR 14): This ankou (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 4 10) has been stalking Ravounel Forest for ages. He typically remains in the First World and relies on spies in the forest to alert him to any interesting goings on that take place. The ankou has kept out of the drawn-out conflict between the storm hags and the strix, delighted by the prolonged suffering of both groups. Once the evil fey creature learns that mortal adventurers are now exploring the forest, he slips through to the Material Plane and begins hunting them. When the ankou encounters the PCs, he uses his shadow doubles ability to vex them before launching his killing blow.

Contract Keepers (CR 15): A group of 1d4 devilbound sorcerers (*Bestiary* 4 56), on the trail of the PCs since they left Kintargo, finally track them down as they enter Ravounel Forest. The evil sorcerers approach the PCs using *disguise self* to appear as either strix or country folk in order to catch the PCs off guard. The devilbound sorcerers enter combat fortified by protective spells and use their *summon monster* spells to overwhelm the PCs. If possible, the sorcerers summon creatures immune or resistant to acid or poison and then cast *acid fog* or *cloudkill* to trap the PCs in a hostile environment while the monsters continue to attack in melee.

RAVOUNEL FOREST ENCOUNTERS			
d%	Result	Avg CR.	Source
1-4	1d4 arumvoraxes	11	<i>Bestiary</i> 2 35
5-9	1d6 bone devils	12	<i>Bestiary</i> 74
10-15	Erinyes Hunters	12	See below
16-20	1 rusalka	12	<i>Bestiary</i> 3 232
21-26	1 rust devil	12	See page 82
27-30	1d6 tick swarms	12	<i>Bestiary</i> 2 265
31-35	1 vouivre	12	<i>Bestiary</i> 4 270
36-39	Witchfire Ambush	12	See below
40-44	1 alraune	13	<i>Bestiary</i> 3 13
45-48	1d8 baykoks	13	<i>Bestiary</i> 3 35
49-53	1 vipervine	13	<i>Bestiary</i> 2 279
54-56	Ankou Assassin	14	See below
57-60	1 bodythief	14	<i>Bestiary</i> 4 20
61-63	1d6 dorvae	14	<i>Bestiary</i> 4 62
64-67	1d4 zephyrs	14	See page 90
68-72	Contract Keepers	15	See below
73-78	1d4 ice devils	15	<i>Bestiary</i> 77
79-84	1 popobala	15	<i>Bestiary</i> 3 221
85-89	1 ypotryll	15	<i>Bestiary</i> 4 285
90-92	1 horned devil	16	<i>Bestiary</i> 76
93-96	1 zomok	16	<i>Bestiary</i> 4 287
97-100	1 tunche	17	<i>Bestiary</i> 4 265

Erinyes Hunters (CR 12): Four erinyes (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 75) soar above Ravounel in search of the PCs. The PCs can encounter the devils anywhere outside of Kintargo as they travel throughout the region. From a distance, the PCs might mistake the erinyes for strix, giving the devils an advantage if the PCs have already established relations with the strix of Ravounel Forest. The erinyes prefer to fight from the air, raining down fiery arrows from a safe distance. If the PCs show that they can deal large amounts of damage via ranged attacks or spells, the erinyes instead land and engage in melee combat, or use their ropes to snag the most effective PC, pull her into the air, and then drop her from a great height.

Witchfire Ambush (CR 12): In the depths of the forest lives an undead creature that was once aligned with the hags who reside there. This witchfire (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 2 284), who was a terrible storm hag in life, keeps company with six will-o'-wisps (*Bestiary* 277) and delights in harassing and threatening anyone who comes too near her domain. When she first encounters the PCs, the witchfire remains invisible and uses her sound mimicry to make the PCs think that a wounded animal is in the nearby bushes, hopefully luring them into an advantageous position before she launches her attack. One combat begins, she calls for her allied will-o'-wisps, who ruthlessly shock the PCs.

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HELL'S REBELS

DEVIL, RUST

This creature has curling ram's horns, metallic flesh that bears coiling ribbons of rust, and wings covered with rusty metallic feathers, each resembling a weathered dagger.

RUST DEVIL (FERRUGON)

CR 12



XP 19,200

LE Medium outsider (devil, evil, extraplanar, lawful)

Init +5; Senses darkvision 60 ft., detect good, see in darkness; Perception +20

DEFENSE

AC 27, touch 15, flat-footed 22 (+5 Dex, +12 natural)

hp 162 (13d10+91); regeneration 5 (good weapons, good spells, rust)

Fort +15, Ref +13, Will +10

DR 10/good; Immune fire, poison; Resist acid 10, cold 10; SR 23

Weaknesses metallic

OFFENSE

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

Melee 2 slams +19 (1d8+6),
2 wings +19 (2d6+6/17-20
plus bleed and disease)

Ranged 4 iron feathers +18 (1d6+6/19-20 plus disease)

Special Attacks bleed (1d4), disease, iron feathers, slashing wings, vainglorious whispers

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 12th; concentration +17)

Constant—detect good

At will—detect thoughts (DC 17), greater teleport (self plus 50 lbs. of objects only), heat metal (DC 17), make whole, shatter (DC 17), shrink item (DC 18)

3/day—fabricate, major creation (iron objects only), rusting grasp, suggestion (DC 18), wall of iron

1/day—flesh to iron (DC 21), summon (level 4, 1 barbed devil 50%), sympathetic vibration

STATISTICS

Str 23, Dex 20, Con 24, Int 18, Wis 19,

Cha 21

Base Atk +13; CMB +19 (+23 sunder);

CMD 34 (36 vs. sunder)

Feats Combat Reflexes, Greater Sunder, Improved Critical (wing), Improved Sunder, Infernal Legist (see page 64), Iron Will,

Power Attack

Skills Bluff +21, Disable Device +21, Fly +25, Intimidate +21, Knowledge (engineering) +20, Knowledge (history) +17, Knowledge (planes) +20, Perception +20, Profession (architect) +20, Sense Motive +20

Languages Celestial, Draconic, Infernal, Terran; telepathy 100 ft.

SQ slashing wings

ECOLOGY

Environment any (Hell)

Organization solitary, pair, or company (3-7)

Treasure standard

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Disease (Ex) Scarlet Tetanus: Iron feather or wing—injury; save Fort DC 23; onset immediate; frequency 1/day; effect 1d4 Dex damage and 1 Con drain. Each time a victim takes Dexterity damage from scarlet tetanus, there is a 50% chance its jaw muscles and joints stiffen, preventing speech and the use of spells with verbal components for 24 hours; cure 2 consecutive saves. The save DC is Constitution-based.

Flesh to Iron (Sp) This spell-like ability functions as *flesh to stone*, save that it transforms the victim into iron, not stone. A victim turned to iron cannot be restored by *stone to flesh*, but *break enchantment*, *polymorph any object*, and similar spells can restore such a victim.

Iron Feathers (Ex) With a flick of its wings, a rust devil can hurl a volley of four razor-sharp iron feathers at up to four targets as a standard action (make an attack roll for each feather). All targets must be within 30 feet of each other. This attack has a range increment of 40 feet, and threatens a critical hit on a result of 19-20. The rust devil's Strength modifier applies to the damage dealt by the feathers, as if the feathers were thrown weapons.

The rust devil's feathers replenish instantly, allowing it to use this attack at will.

Metallic (Ex) A rust devil's iron flesh makes it susceptible to rust attacks, such as those by a rust monster or a *rusting grasp* spell.

Slashing Wings (Ex) A rust devil's wing attacks are primary attacks (except when it wields a manufactured weapon), and threaten a critical hit on a 19–20; most rust devils enhance this range to 17–20 with the Improved Critical feat.

Vainglorious Whispers (Su) As a swift action, a rust devil can plant seeds of delusional pride in an adjacent target's mind by whispering to it. The target can resist the influence of these whispers with a successful DC 21 Will saving throw. On a failed save, the victim becomes overly confident in its abilities while in fact becoming less accomplished overall. The victim gains a +4 morale bonus on saving throws against fear effects but takes a –4 penalty on all attack rolls, weapon damage rolls, caster level checks, and skill checks. The victim cannot use the withdraw action, fight defensively, cast spells defensively, take the total defense action, or use healing magic or effects on itself. It can still accept healing from other sources, but must attempt saving throws to resist the effect if allowed. This is a mind-affecting, sonic, language-dependent effect, and the save DC is Charisma-based.

A rust devil lives to sow the seeds of complacency, pride, and callous cynicism in the hearts of mortals. Also known as ferrugons, rust devils rarely attack first except when rising to defend buildings or other objects they have taken it upon themselves to protect. Rather than resorting to bloodshed, a rust devil instead seeks to bolster a mortal's pride and to convince him to undertake works of art, construction, or craft that are likely well beyond the mortal's skill. Nothing pleases a rust devil more than to see a mortal attempt something grand, fail spectacularly, and fall into a morass of depression, self-loathing, and jealousy for the rest of his life.

In combat, a rust devil uses walls of iron to shape the battlefield to its advantage, and prefers to remain adjacent to foes so it can make full attacks on them and whisper in their ears. Against foes who wield weapons, rust devils almost always use Greater Sunder to damage weapons and foes alike. If faced with foes of particularly striking appearances (often those with a Charisma score of 15 or higher), a rust devil is likely to use its flesh to iron spell-like ability, then cast *shrink item* on the resulting statue to keep it as a decoration for its lair.

A rust devil stands only 5 feet tall but weighs 900 pounds, because of its supernaturally dense metallic flesh.

ECOLOGY

Rust devils are forged from the souls of the damned who caused pain and suffering through the application of their arts or crafts during their mortal lives. Such petitioners

are often dipped repeatedly in vats of molten iron, building up layer after layer of new "flesh" that is then chiseled and forged anew by diabolic artisans.

HABITAT AND SOCIETY

Rust devils are most commonly found in Dis, where they see themselves as guardians and caretakers of the city's iron buildings. Indeed, ferrugons often refer to themselves as the Gardeners of Iron, and view their role more as tenders and cultivators rather than actual architects.

BLOODBOND INSIGHTS

Rust devils are particularly fond of forging infernal contracts that encourage mortals to attempt hubristic and difficult feats of art or architecture. For every mortal who accepts such a contract and crafts a masterpiece, dozens fail to achieve success and spiral into self-loathing and jealousy, priming their immortal souls for damnation in hellfire. For more on infernal contracts, see page 62.

BLOODBOND INSIGHT CR 12 XP 19,200

Devil rust devil (ferrugon)

Creation Time 1d4 weeks

Benefit The contracted mortal gains a +4 profane bonus on Craft and Profession checks, and gains the ability to use *major creation* once per day as a spell-like ability. When the contracted mortal crafts any magic or technological item, the cost of creating the item is reduced by 5%.

Payment The contracted mortal must allow the rust devil to harvest a single rib from his torso; the method of extraction is particularly invasive and painful, resulting in 2 points of Constitution drain. If the mortal ever allows this Constitution drain to be healed, his soul is damned to Hell upon his death.

RESEARCH

Description Infernal contracts created by rust devils incorporate complex diagrams and sketches as examples to either help explain or obfuscate the contract's contents.

Complexity 34

Specialized Skills Craft (any), Knowledge (engineering), Profession (any that produces physical goods)

kp 36

Hidden Condition (18 kp) Once per month, the rust devil can use *enter image*^{APG} on any object created by the contracted mortal that depicts a visage of any type. While this effect is active, the rust devil can use its spell-like abilities through the image on any target within range and sight.

Termination Clause (0 kp) If the mortal harvests a replacement rib from a donor of the same race as himself and then allows this rib to be used as an additional material component during the casting of a *regenerate* spell cast by the creature from whom the rib was harvested, the contract is terminated.

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PROTEAN, HEGESSIK

This creature's serpentine head sports a brilliant crest of shimmering, metallic plumage that runs down its spine, transitioning into a line of sparkling, glowing gemstones studded into its scaled flesh.

HEGESSIK

CR 15

XP 51,200

CN Large outsider (chaotic, extraplanar, protean, shapechanger)

Init +10; **Senses** blindsense 60 ft., darkvision 60 ft., detect law; Perception +32

Aura maddening whispers (20 ft., DC 25)

DEFENSE

AC 30, touch 15, flat-footed 24 (+6 Dex, +15 natural, -1 size)

hp 199 (19d10+95); fast healing 10

Fort +16, **Ref** +14, **Will** +17

Defensive Abilities amorphous anatomy, freedom of movement; **DR** 10/lawful; **Immune** acid, polymorph;

Resist electricity 10, sonic 10; **SR** 26

OFFENSE

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

Melee bite +28 (1d8+9/19-20 plus warpwave), 2 claws +27 (1d6+9), tail slap +25 (1d8+4 plus grab)

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

Special Attacks constrict (1d8+12), leaching gaze, maddening whispers, telekinetic reach, warpwave

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 15th; concentration +21)

Constant—*detect law*

At will—*confusion* (DC 20), *displacement*, *greater dispel magic*, *greater teleport* (self plus 50 lbs. of objects only), *mirror image*, *slow* (DC 19)

3/day—*baleful polymorph* (DC 21), *chaos hammer* (DC 20)

1/day—*planeshift* (DC 23), *polymorph any object* (DC 24)

STATISTICS

Str 28, **Dex** 23, **Con** 21, **Int** 18, **Wis** 22, **Cha** 23

Base Atk +19; **CMB** +29; **CMD** 45 (can't be tripped)

Feats Ability Focus (warpwave), Alertness, Combat Reflexes, Critical Focus, Improved Critical (bite), Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes, Multiattack, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (bite)

Skills Acrobatics +25, Bluff +28, Diplomacy +28, Fly +26, Knowledge (arcana) +26, Knowledge (planes) +26, Perception +32, Sense Motive +32, Spellcraft +26, Swim +36

Languages Abyssal, Protean; telepathy 100 ft.

SQ change shape (*greater polymorph*)

ECOLOGY

Environment any (Maelstrom)

Organization solitary or cloister (2-6)

Treasure standard

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Leaching Gaze (Su) When opened, a hegessik's third eye produces a powerful gaze attack with a 30-foot range. A creature affected by this attack takes 1d3 points of

Wisdom damage unless it succeeds at a DC 25 Will save. Proteans are immune to this effect. The save DC is Charisma-based.

Maddening Whispers (Su) A mind-bending susurrus of voices and false perceptions infuses reality in close proximity to a hegessik protean. Any creature within the range of the protean's aura must succeed at a DC 25 Will save or be confused for 1 round. A creature with a chaotic component to its alignment gains a +4 bonus on this save, and creatures with the chaotic subtype are immune. This is a mind-affecting effect, and the save DC is Charisma-based.

Telekinetic Reach (Su) Every 1d4 rounds, a hegessik protean can take a full-round action in order to make all of its natural attacks as a flurry of telekinetic force with a range of 60 feet. Attacks made in this manner at a distance of up to 30 feet take a -5 penalty on attack rolls, and a -10 penalty when made at a distance of 30 to 60 feet. A hegessik protean must have line of effect to a target in order to use this ability. A hegessik can't use its grab or warpwave ability with attacks made using this ability.

Warpwave (Su) A creature struck by a hegessik's bite must succeed at a DC 24 Fortitude save or be affected by a warpwave (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 2* 213). The save DC is Constitution-based.

If the keketar proteans are the Maelstrom's priest-kings, the reclusive hegessiks are its wandering clergy, the Cerulean Void's itinerant spiritual elders and voices in the wilderness. Detached from the ever-shifting pseudo-structure of the keketar cabals, hegessiks serve as intermediaries between them, agents of the protean lords, and—along with the keketers—representatives dealing with those gods who dwell within the Maelstrom.

As fluid in form as any other proteans, other than its serpentine profile, a hegessik protean is marked by a number of unique features. Most obvious is its quartet of arms—two large and powerful, and two shaped for fine manipulation or ceremonial gestures. A crest of brilliant plumage tops the hegessik's head and runs down its spine, transitioning from elaborate feathers to glittering gemstones at the mid-back and continuing down the entire length of the body to the tip of the tail. The particular colors and types of stones change at the hegessik's whimsy and reflect its mood.

A hegessik also possesses an omnipresent third-eye in the middle of its forehead, shedding a puissant glow even when lidded. A uniquely personal symbol is visible within the depths of the pupil that radiates a sanity-bending gaze when revealed. This symbol functions as a name, and any attempts to summon a hegessik invariably requires knowledge of the individual creature's unique symbol. This icon is visible only when the hegessik's third eye is open, exposing any non-protean to the effects of its gaze. Any spellcaster aware of a hegessik's

symbol should also be exceedingly wary of encountering that particular protean again, lest it take offense that this knowledge is available.

ECOLOGY

Keketar proteans describe being chosen by the Maelstrom itself and transfigured into members of their racial caste, and so too do hegessiks. Though the proteans' legends and history rarely follow a rational progression of cause and effect, scholars suspect that hegessiks originate as transfigured and exalted imenteshes, called by the Speakers of the Depths to serve not as emissaries to those beyond the Maelstrom's tides, but as emissaries between the keketar cabals that innumerable divide the protean host.

When asked about their origins by those few brave enough to seek them out and engage them in conversation, hegessiks make a sound somewhere between a chuckle and a hiss, and proceed to weave a tale for the questioning mortal. Each story is unique and devoid of concern for internal continuity or historical accuracy. These explanations provide a meandering parable of bizarre, obscure metaphors from which information must be inferred rather than directly explained.

With their own unique origins shrouded in mystery, hegessiks play a key role in the transition of mortal souls to proteans, including a cloister of albino-eyed hegessiks with oddly obscured symbols called the Bleached Shepherds. This group gathers that fraction of souls judged fit for the Maelstrom. Most of these souls are led by imenteshes through portals reaching into the Maelstrom's depths, but some remain behind. These rare souls seek out the Bleached Shepherds with the implicit or explicit desire to embrace the freedom of the Maelstrom. There in the Boneyard, with the assent of the hegessik cloister, they transform into one or another variety of lesser proteans themselves.

The Bleached Shepherds serve Ssila'meshnik, the Colorless Lord, and are appointed by that unique protean as servitors until such time as they desire to leave for other vistas. Those who leave the cloister regain the original color of their third eyes, their symbols become clearly visible again, and in time, new hegessiks come to serve as fellow shepherds and arbiters of chaotic souls.

HABITAT AND SOCIETY

Befitting their role as wandering clergy among proteans, hegessiks move between keketar choruses, mediating between them, and temporarily harmonizing the mutually exclusive philosophies espoused by each chorus. One legend tells of Galisem, the Whisper of Malleable Dissonance, the hegessik responsible for the collaboration of the

Chorus of Razored Discord and the Chorus of Malignant Symmetry in the earliest days of the cosmos. Myriad versions of the tale exist, some of which have hegessiks not initiating the madness of the two corrupt choruses, but seeking to stop them, or after the fact, redeem them.

In their wandering, hegessiks gravitate toward proteans desiring to advance beyond their current nature and into other castes. Embracing them, hegessiks bathe them in the light of their third eyes, and then with teeth and claws tear into their flesh. Rather than rending them into a mess of blood and scales, they help them slough off their old form and nature like serpents shedding their skin.

Hegessiks rarely wander beyond the depths of the Maelstrom itself, but when they do, the results are not often beneficial for those who encounter them. Their presence in the Maelstrom's borderlands portends a truly massive protean incursion beyond the shallows and into the more stable planes.



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BESTIARY



SCYTHE GLASS SWARM

The razor-sharp wings of a thousand stained glass insects jingle with a resonant melody.

SCYTHE GLASS SWARM

CR 9



N Diminutive construct (swarm)

Init +7; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Perception +0

DEFENSE

AC 25, touch 21, flat-footed 18 (+7 Dex, +4 natural, +4 size)

hp 110 (20d10)

Fort +6, **Ref** +13, **Will** +6

Defensive Abilities swarm traits; **Immune** acid, construct traits, weapon damage

Weaknesses vulnerable to sonic

OFFENSE

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

Melee swarm (4d6 plus 2d6 bleed)

Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 0 ft.

Special Attacks distraction (DC 20), resonant flight, serrated wings

STATISTICS

Str 1, **Dex** 25, **Con** —, **Int** —, **Wis** 10, **Cha** 1

Base Atk +20; **CMB** —; **CMD** —

Skills Fly +21

SQ freeze

ECOLOGY

Environment any urban

Organization solitary, pair, or gallery (3–12)

Treasure none

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Freeze (Ex) A scythe glass swarm can assemble itself into a large, stained-glass window. A scythe glass swarm that uses freeze can take 20 on Stealth checks to hide in plain sight as a window.

Resonant Flight (Su) The wings of a scythe glass swarm produces a resonant sound, creating a hypnotic effect to all who hear it. Every creature within 60 feet of a scythe glass swarm must succeed at a DC 15 Will save or become fascinated for 2d4 rounds. While the target is fascinated, the scythe glass swarm can approach the target without breaking the effect, but an attack from the scythe glass swarm immediately ends the effect. Creatures that successfully save against this effect can't be affected by the same scythe glass swarm's resonant flight ability for 24 hours. This is a sonic, mind-affecting compulsion effect. The save DC is Charisma-based. The save DC is Charisma-based.

Serrated Wings (Ex) A scythe glass swarm's serrated wings leave severe, bleeding cuts on its victims. Its swarm attack deals an additional 2d6 points of bleed damage.

Many would-be thieves have found themselves spellbound by the sound of a beautiful, stained glass window breaking apart and taking flight. This is followed

by their screams of terror as thousands of tiny wings cut them to shreds. Scythe glass swarms are used to safeguard shrines and inner sanctums from unwanted attention while also providing beautiful facades when the creatures are inactive. Different religions and sects add their own twists on the constructs to express some aspect of their gods or masters. A scythe glass swarm remains within the confines of the area it is guarding, but even if intruders manage to escape, the blood from pouring from their wounds can be used to track down the interlopers.

Scythe glass swarms consist of thousands of winged glass insects. An individual insect is 9 inches in height and weighs under a pound.

ECOLOGY

The windows that scythe glass swarms form vary greatly depending on their creators and locations, be they simple chapels of Calistria with single stained-glass windows or looming, gothic cathedrals dedicated to Asmodeus and featuring huge rose windows that consist of multiple scythe glass swarms. Carefully crafted combinations of shapes and colors make the windows works of art in their own right, though the amount of careful labor required to craft the thousands of delicate glass insects is staggering. Major faiths have the resources to employ teams of glass workers to speed up the creation process, whereas smaller shrines to minor deities and secret chapels to more nefarious powers have to make do with the dedication of a few devotees who toil at the task over an extended period.

The patterns that the stained-glass windows display reflect their surroundings, representing symbols of faith and scenes sacred to the religion in question. Some scythe glass swarms are created to be able to form a number of different scenes according to the commands of their masters, instead of depicting the same scene all the time. In some churches, these transformations are displayed on ceremonial occasions so the faithful can marvel at the shifting forms of these beautiful and deadly pieces of art.

The appearance of the figures in a scythe glass swarm reflects the ideals of their creator's faith, such as wasps for the Calistrian faithful, iridescent butterflies for the devotees of Desna, or tiny flitting devils for the clergy Asmodeus. Though certain details of the glass insects' structures vary greatly from creator to creator, a guiding principle in their design is to use flat segments that can unfold and combine into a flat window surface. The insects are quite fragile during their creation, making the art of crafting them all the more difficult, but once they're completed, the magical processes involved grant them unnatural resilience against harm.

HABITAT AND SOCIETY

Scythe glass swarms and their variants can be found across Golarion, but they are most prevalent in

Cheliox, which is famous for the glass products it exports across the seas. The rise of House Thrune elevated the demand for scythe glass swarms, for their beautiful but merciless nature appeals to the infernal rulers of Cheliox.

Scythe glass swarms are crafted to blend in with their locations as natural elements of the architecture. Similarly their surroundings are often modified to take advantage of their abilities. For example, a sanctum of a vampiric cult might have gutters in the floor to funnel the blood shed by this construct into a receptacle used during gory rites.

Scythe glass swarms function according to the directions set by its creator. They have different modes of operation, such as guarding an area against intruders versus ignoring anyone moving within that same area, that can be activated with certain command words.

Some scythe glass swarms are housed within permanent fixtures such as window frames, while others are contained in portable structures that can be moved to new areas as needed.

Most creators craft control rings or sets of control rings to allow select groups of people to work safely in the area or issue commands to the swarm. Creators who fear that such keyed items might be stolen instead create scythe glass swarms that respond only to their commands. Upon its creator's eventual demise, such a construct remains behind, following the last order it was given.

CONSTRUCTION

A scythe glass swarm is built from 2,500 pounds of glass, which is infused with exotic materials that costs 1,000 gp in total during the melting process.

SCYTHE GLASS SWARM

CL 13th; **Price** 61,500 gp

CONSTRUCTION

Requirements Craft Construct, *geas/quest*, *hypnotism*, *limited wish*, creator must be caster level 13th; **Skill** Craft (glass) DC 20; **Cost** 31,250 gp

VARIANT SCYTHE GLASS SWARMS

While their creators are often tight-lipped about the details of the construction process for these beautiful

and deadly construct swarms, secrets have a way of getting out. As other creators have worked to construct these creatures, each puts her own spin on the original form to customize it to her specific application. Because of this, a multitude of custom scythe glass swarms are possible. What follows are just a few variants that various faithful crafters have invented.

Hellfire Glass Swarm: Devotees of Asmodeus suffuse hellfire glass swarms with infernal energy, replacing acid immunity with fire immunity. Hellfire glass swarms have the following ability instead of serrated wings.

Hellfire Blood (Su): When a hellfire glass swarm injures a creature, the spilled blood covers the space under that creature and erupts into unholy flame for 1d4 rounds. Any creature that enters the area of the fire, or that starts its turn in the area, takes 4d6 points of damage. Half of this damage is fire damage, while the other half is from unholy energy that deals no damage to creatures with an evil alignment.

Shade Glass Swarm: Shadowcallers of Zon-Kuthon infuse shade glass swarms with materials from the Shadow Plane, replacing their acid immunity with cold immunity. Shade glass swarms have the following ability instead of serrated wings.

Shadow Fragments (Su): The wounds inflicted by a shade glass swarm are embedded with shadow fragments, which are infused with negative energy that disrupts healing. A creature injured by a shade glass swarm is resistant to magical healing for 1d6 rounds (Will DC 20 negates). Any spells or effects that heal hit point damage are reduced by 10 points (minimum 0). The save DC is Constitution-based.

Spell Glass Swarm: Followers of Nethys enchant spell glass swarms with wild magical energy, replacing their acid immunity with electricity immunity. Spell glass swarms have the following ability instead of serrated wings.

Spell Backfire (Su): Spell glass swarms react violently when they are caught within a spell's area of effect, creating an additional area of effect immediately around the caster of that spell. The caster and anyone adjacent are subjected to the spell that triggered this ability.

Venom Glass Swarm: Priestesses of Calistria don't hide the images of swarming insects in their gorgeous windows, and they equip their venom glass swarms with stings that deliver a potent poison. Venom glass swarms have the following ability instead of serrated wings.

Poison (Su): Swarm—injury; *save* Fort DC 20; *frequency* 1/round for 6 rounds; *effect* 1d6 Str damage; *cure* 2 consecutive saves.



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BESTIARY



WRAITHWING

This desiccated strix has glowing, green eyes and long, jagged claws. A pair of burning, ghostly wings sprouts from its hunched back.

WRAITHWING**CR 4**

NE Medium undead

Init +7; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +11**DEFENSE****AC** 17, touch 13, flat-footed 14 (+3 Dex, +4 natural)**hp** 39 (6d8+12)**Fort** +4, **Ref** +5, **Will** +7**Defensive Abilities** channel resistance +2, cursed land, rejuvenation; **Immune** undead traits; **Resist** cold 5, fire 5**Weaknesses** sunlight powerlessness**OFFENSE****Speed** 40 ft., climb 20 ft.**Melee** 2 claws +7 (1d4+3), 2 wraithfire wings +5 (1d4 cold plus staggered)**Special Attacks** unholy blast, wraithfire wings**Spell-Like Abilities** (CL 6th; concentration +8)At will—*feather fall***STATISTICS****Str** 16, **Dex** 17, **Con** —, **Int** 13, **Wis** 14, **Cha** 15**Base Atk** +4; **CMB** +7; **CMD** 20**Feats** Combat Reflexes, Improved Initiative, Multiattack**Skills** Climb +20, Intimidate +11, Perception +11, Stealth +12, Survival +8**Languages** Strix**SQ** hatred**ECOLOGY****Environment** temperate mountains**Organization** solitary, pair, or warband (3-12)**Treasure** standard**SPECIAL ABILITIES**

Cursed Land (Su) The area within a 3-mile radius from where a wraithwing was animated becomes cursed. Wraithwings can't leave this area on their own, and those that pass beyond its invisible borders take 1d4 points of damage for each hour they remain outside the cursed area.

Hatred (Ex) A strix's natural hatred toward humans is intensified when a wraithwing is created. A wraithwing receives a +2 bonus on attack rolls against humanoid creatures of the human subtype.

Rejuvenation (Su) The undead existence of a wraithwing is bound to a cursed area of land that reanimates it after its destruction. If the wraithwing is destroyed and its body remains within the cursed area, it reanimates the following night. A wraithwing can be permanently destroyed if its body is brought beyond this area or if its body is anointed with a vial of holy water and left in the sun for 8 hours.

Unholy Blast (Su) Once every 1d4 rounds, a wraithwing can beat its wings to send out blasts of unholy energy.

Creatures in a 30-foot cone take 5d4 points of negative energy damage. A successful DC 15 Will save halves this damage. The save DC is Charisma-based.

Wraithfire Wings (Su) A wraithwing's ghostly wings burn with a freezing green flame. A creature hit by one of these wings takes 1d4 points of cold damage. In addition, the creature is staggered for 1 round if it fails a DC 15 Fortitude save. The save DC is Charisma-based.

Wraithwings are strix that were captured and killed by their Chelish enemies, and then rose again fueled by their lingering hatred. A terrible curse has brought them back from the dead to drive away invaders from their tribal land known as the Devil's Perch. Wraithwings roam the night, hunting down any non-strix within the cursed land, innocent and guilty alike.

The Chelish forces that seek to occupy Devil's Perch have taken to making examples of any strix rebels they capture. After being interrogated, the captives are strung up on poles. While the strix hang there bleeding to death, their wings are broken to prevent any escape. Often, the soldiers who captured the strix warband lie in wait for anyone foolish enough to come to their rescue. This indignity kindles a burning anger within the strix that clings to their very souls. Once they have died, the bodies of the strix are dumped unceremoniously in remote locations as bait to lure strix hoping to retrieve their fallen comrades into an ambush. Dead strix tortured in this way can rise as wraithwings, but these foul creatures can be purposefully created as well.

The mercilessly tightening grip of the Chelish Empire and the ever-rising number of dead friends and family push some strix spellcasters (typically oracles, shamans, and some witches) to turn to dark powers that whisper in the dead of night. Instead of giving a proper burial to the reclaimed bodies, the spellcaster takes them up a rugged crag and into a cavern where she prepares them for an unholy ritual. The spellcaster removes the broken wings from the bodies, and she places the bodies around a totem made of earth, wood, and bone. She then sews the wings into the totem and splashes them with blood drawn from her enemies. Upon the ritual's completion, the strix rise as wraithwings the following night. In addition to this ritual, a spellcaster of at least 11th level can create a wraithwing from the body of a dead strix using *create undead*.

Wraithwings stand just over 6 feet tall, but their rotting bodies are lighter than those of living strix, weighing barely over 100 pounds.

ECOLOGY

Wraithwings resemble their living strix counterparts in most ways, except for their wings. In place of their missing appendages, ghostly wings burn with a green fire. Additionally, a wraithwing's form is more bestial

than a strix's, possessing long, sharp claws that can tear a victim in half. The seething rage that wraithwings feel toward their oppressors manifests in their narrow, glowing eyes. Lacking the ability to fly, wraithwings run on all fours to chase down their prey. They often hunt by ambushing their victims, climbing the rocky spires of Devil's Perch and leaping down to shred their enemies with their strong claws. Their changed physiques allow these creatures to deftly traverse even the steepest of cliffs. Wraithwings retain many of their old memories, but their overwhelming rage keeps their minds mostly clouded and focused on killing.

Under the cover of night, wraithwings hunt within the areas affected by the rituals that raised them. Left to their own devices, they work their way outward from where they were created, first picking off people inhabiting lone farms and those who dare traverse the wilds after dark. Wraithwings prefer to stalk their prey, using their extensive knowledge of the area in order to drive targets into natural dead ends. During the day, wraithwings return to a hidden cave to draw strange symbols on the walls with the blood they have spilled during the previous night.

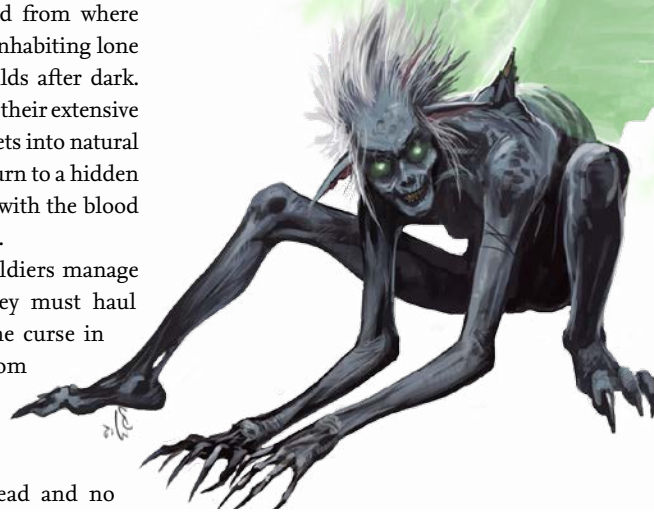
On the rare occasions when Chelish soldiers manage to slay a wraithwing, few know that they must haul the battered body beyond the reach of the curse in order to prevent the fallen wraithwing from rejuvenating the following night. Most slain wraithwings thus rise again to continue their depredations.

Even though these creatures are undead and no longer require food, wraithwings are consumed with a hunger for bones, specifically the bones of humans. As a result of their reanimation, this everlasting rage and hunger drive wraithwings to constantly hunt. When wraithwings track down and kill a human, they savagely strip the flesh from the body with their elongated claws. When only a skeleton remains, they crack the bones open in their mouths and suck out the marrow, leaving their victim's remains scattered in a bloody mess.

HABITAT AND SOCIETY

Wraithwings exist exclusively within or near the province of Devil's Perch in Cheliah. Wraithwings aren't mindless, but their thoughts are consumed with taking revenge on the invaders who have settled within strix territory, leaving little interest for socializing. Someone close to a dead strix might be able to momentarily cut through the fog of rage that twists its mind, allowing the former friend to learn what has brought his comrade back in such a dreadful form. If a strix persists in trying to prevent a wraithwing from hunting, it eventually considers the interfering strix a traitor and attack him as well.

Wraithwings are often created from a strix warband that was captured during battle. The strix that was in charge of the warband when they were alive often



holds onto this status even in undeath and continues to command the other wraithwings as they hunt the wilds of Devil's Perch. If a group of wraithwings is torn between different ways to go about a hunt, the leader among them bends the others to its will. Alternatively, the spellcaster that initially raised them can exert some influence over the wraithwings with verbal commands if she still retains control.

Good and neutral strix avoid these undead creatures, and consider them the worst of all undead. Many strix don't admit to their existence, claiming that wraithwings are simply spooky stories told by strix parents to keep their children in line. Some strix go so far as to organize warbands to hunt down wraithwings that hunt near where they live, fearing these vicious creatures will climb up the rocky spires in which they live and slaughter them. These fearful strix communities cover the lower reaches of their roosts with downward pointing spikes to deter any creatures from climbing them. They sometimes incorporate nets or other traps to capture these creatures so that they can properly dispose of the bodies without the wraithwings rejuvenating. Thankfully for these strix communities, wraithwings are nocturnal as well, and they suffer worse in the sunlight than living strix.

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BESTIARY



ZEPHYR

This blue-furred horse with a cloudlike mane and tail has gray, humanlike eyes that show obvious intelligence.

ZEPHYR

CR 12

XP 19,200

CN Large fey (air, shapechanger)

Init +9; **Senses** low-light vision, wind senses; **Perception** +24

DEFENSE

AC 27, touch 19, flat-footed 17 (+9 Dex, +1 dodge, +8 natural, -1 size)

hp 168 (16d6+112)

Fort +11, **Ref** +19, **Will** +15

DR 10/cold iron; **Immune** electricity; **Resist** cold 10, sonic 10

OFFENSE

Speed 60 ft., fly 200 ft. (perfect)

Melee bite +16 (1d8+7 plus 2d6 sonic), 2 hooves +16 (1d8+7 plus 2d6 sonic)

Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft.

Special Attacks breath weapon (90-ft. cone, 6d6 sonic plus wind blast, Reflex DC 24 for half, usable every 1d4 rounds), pounce, powerful hooves, thundering blows, trample (1d8+10 plus 2d6 sonic, DC 25)

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 16th; concentration +21)

 Constant—*cloak of winds*^{APG} (DC 18)

 At will—*fog cloud*, *gust of wind* (DC 17), *invisibility* (self only), *whispering wind*

 3/day—*control weather*, *plant growth*, *sleet storm*

 1/day—*chain lightning* (DC 21)

STATISTICS

Str 25, **Dex** 28, **Con** 23, **Int** 14, **Wis** 20, **Cha** 21

Base Atk +8; **CMB** +16; **CMD** 36 (40 vs. trip)

Feats Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Flyby Attack, Mobility, Run, Toughness, Weapon Finesse, Wind Stance

Skills Acrobatics +28, Fly +34, Knowledge (geography) +21, Knowledge (nature) +21, Perception +24, Sense Motive +24, Stealth +24, Survival +21

Languages Auran, Common, Sylvan

SQ change shape (Large humanoid; *alter self*), wind resistance

ECOLOGY

Environment any

Organization solitary, pair, or herd (3-8)

Treasure standard

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Breath Weapon (Su) A zephyr's breath weapon is a thunderous blast of wind. Creatures in the area of the breath weapon take 6d6 points of electricity damage and are affected as by a windstorm (*Pathfinder RPG Core Rulebook* 439). Creatures that successfully save against this effect take half damage and avoid the effects of the wind. The save DC is Charisma-based.

Change Shape (Su) A zephyr can shift between its equine shape and that of a unique Large, winged humanoid as a standard action. When a zephyr is in humanoid form, its land speed becomes 40 feet, and its fly speed remains

unchanged. Its hoof and bite attacks are replaced with two slam attacks that deal 1d8+7 points of damage plus 2d6 points of sonic damage, and its reach increases to 10 feet. It can use all of its other abilities in this form. A zephyr doesn't revert to any particular form when killed (both shapes are considered its true form). A *true seeing* spell reveals both forms simultaneously.

Powerful Hooves (Ex) A zephyr's hooves are primary attacks.

Thundering Blows (Su) A zephyr's natural weapons (including its trample attack), as well as any bludgeoning weapons it wields, deal an additional 2d6 points of electricity damage.

Wind Resistance (Ex) A zephyr is treated as if it were two size categories larger for the purposes of determining the effects high winds have upon it.

Wind Senses (Su) A zephyr's vision is not obstructed by fog, mist, weather conditions, or wind-blown particles. This includes magical effects as well as natural effects.

Zephyrs are nature spirits tied to the weather. Some more social zephyrs enjoy cavorting with athletic mortals, but their wanderlust means that their good graces last at most a matter of months before they vanish for at least as long, seeking new horizons and racing storms. Zephyrs are seen by some as minor divinities of weather or as servants of Gozreh or the Eldest.

When attacked or provoked into aggression by a perceived offense, a zephyr uses its breath weapon to scatter foes and then takes advantage of its mobility to trample or pounce on whichever enemy seems most isolated or physically imposing. A zephyr uses its spell-like abilities to prevent foes from regrouping. True to its proud fey nature, a zephyr rarely admits defeat without planning to turn the weather against an adversary at a later time as part of a vengeful ambush.

A zephyr in its equine form is the size of a large horse and weighs over 1,000 pounds. A zephyr in its humanoid form usually stands just over 8 feet tall and weighs around 400 pounds, possessing an athletic build with feathered wings spanning 15 feet.

ECOLOGY

Zephyrs are spirits of the sky and storm who sometimes slip through from the First World in places where long-lasting weather patterns scour the land. These fey reproduce sexually, but require a strong thunderstorm or another extremely high-energy system for successful conception. Zephyrs are known to have brief dalliances with mortals, a fact that has made them possible ancestors of humanoid sorcerers and bloodragers with the fey or stormborn bloodlines. Amorous zephyrs usually test potential paramours with challenges of physical skill and endurance such as races or wrestling matches. Because they draw nourishment from the places where warm and cool air mix, zephyrs travel

seasonally, always dashing after these roiling weather systems. These fey can live for thousands of years, wasting away only when they are imprisoned for decades or when the climate around them has shifted to become unrecognizable or stagnant.

HABITAT AND SOCIETY

Zephyrs roam across the world to anywhere they can see the sky, but these free-spirited fey favor windswept plains, deserts, lonely mountain peaks, and stormy coastlines. These creatures have been spotted all along the Inner Sea's shores, and they appear to be plentiful near the Eye of Abendego. High stone ruins near vital trade routes or sensitive farmlands feature reliefs and sculptures depicting both bounty and misery brought by a zephyr's tempestuous idea of fun. Many settlements throughout Chelax and other longstanding civilizations once left offerings to zephyrs in places such as these a few times a year in order to reduce the risk of troublesome storms. Such offerings might include hyacinths or other eye-catching flowers, fragrant fruits, charred meat, jewels, and works of art celebrating the beauty and strength of horses, humans, and storms. Though not a common event in current times, these donations are still arranged by sailors, farmers, travelers, and worshipers of Gozreh or the Eldest.

While some zephyrs do serve the deities of weather, nature, and storms, other zephyrs regard such deities simply as powerful spiritual peers. Those zephyrs worshiped in their own right by mortals usually turn an eye on their faithful at most once or twice a year, whether out of pleasure or offense. A source of deep insult to a fickle zephyr might easily seem innocuous to mortals and could include damaging flowers that the zephyr favors, erecting tall structures (especially windmills), or any magical manipulation of the air or weather.

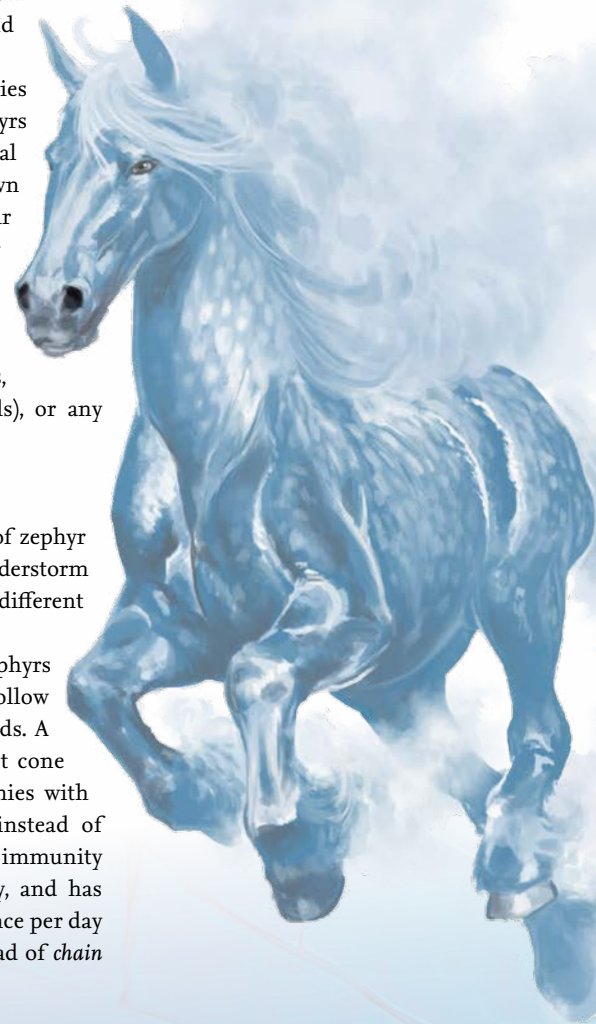
OTHER ZEPHYRS

In addition to the relatively common breed of zephyr presented above, sometimes called a thunderstorm zephyr, there exist others with slightly different abilities and behaviors.

Blizzard Zephyr (CR 12): Blizzard zephyrs dwell in cold climes, although they often follow their namesake storms south on wintry winds. A blizzard zephyr's breath weapon is a 90-foot cone that deals cold damage as it blasts its enemies with snow and ice that knock enemies prone instead of blowing them back. A blizzard zephyr has immunity to cold rather than immunity to electricity, and has electricity resistance 10. It can use *polar ray* once per day and *diminish plants* three times per day instead of *chain lightning* and *plant growth*.

Sirocco Zephyr (CR 12): Sirocco zephyrs come into the world in places such as northern Garund and the Cinderlands of Varisia that are rife with hot, dry winds; sandstorms; and volcanic eruptions. A sirocco zephyr's breath weapon is a 90-foot cone that deals slashing damage and blinds enemies for 1d4 rounds instead of blowing them back. A sirocco zephyr has immunity to fire rather than immunity to electricity, and has electricity resistance 10. It can use *diminish plants* three times per day and *sirocco*^{APG} (DC 21) once per day instead of *chain lightning* and *plant growth*.

Whirlwind Zephyr (CR 13): Whirlwind zephyrs are the rarest of their kind, born from magical storms and tornadoes found almost exclusively on temperate plains or on hurricane-wracked coasts such as those around the Eye of Abendego. These zephyrs have the advanced creature simple template. A whirlwind zephyr also gains the whirlwind universal monster ability (1/day, 10–60 feet high, 2d6+7 damage plus 2d6 sonic, DC 25) and can use *ice storm* once per day instead of *fog cloud* and *plant growth*.



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HELL'S REBELS

NEXT MONTH

BREAKING THE BONES OF HELL

By Amber E. Scott

With the recovery of the Kintargo Contract and numerous alliances in place, the Silver City and its surrounding region of Ravounel are now protected from invasion by Cheliah. However, Barzillai Thrune lives on in the depths of Hell, and his plans have only been slowed. Strange manifestations of ghostly spirits and infernal hauntings spread throughout Kintargo, and before long, the truth cannot be ignored—the inquisitor's death has only made him more powerful, and the secret to stopping him forever lies hidden in the roots of Hell itself! Can Kintargo's heroes brave the depths of the Pit to ensure the city is finally and forever safe from Barzillai Thrune?

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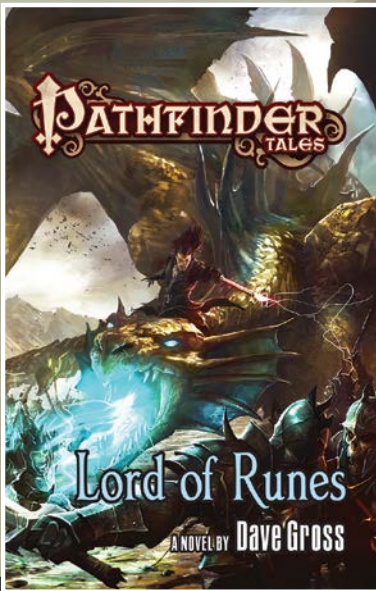
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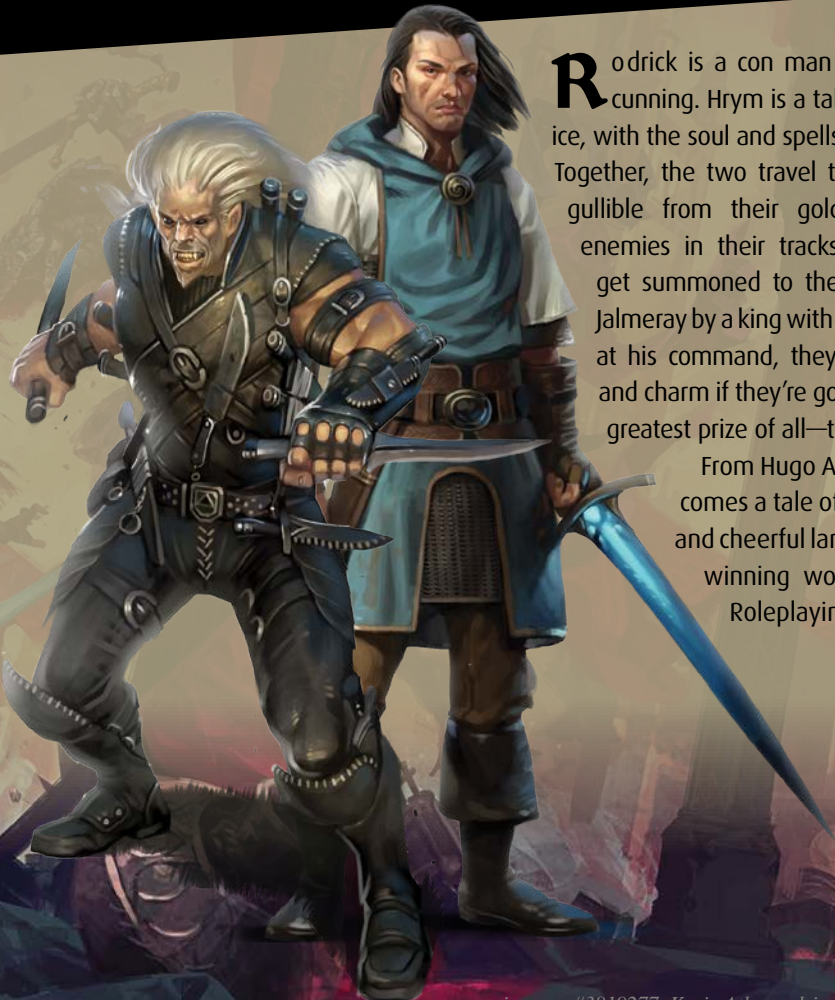
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AVAILABLE NOW



JENNA AELDERVENK

Matron of the Aeldervenk Family (N female human aristocrat 5)

Jenna Aeldervenk's greatest disappointment in life is her growing fear that she won't live to see her family elevated to the status of one of Kintargo's great noble houses. She blames much of this on her family's long-running feud with the now nearly defunct Mayharts, but refuses to acknowledge her role in perpetuating the hostility. A bitter woman, always quick to drop insults about the Mayharts or any she suspects have allied with that family, Jenna desperately attempts to buy respectability if her plots come to light by giving a magical heirloom to the PCs, hoping that this last-minute show of generosity might salvage her family's reputation.

MAERCIN KELIMBER

Beloved but Doomed Shopkeep (LG male human expert 3)

Dozens of general stores and supply shops can be found throughout Kintargo, but Kelimber's Dry Goods and Supplies has the honor of being one of the city's oldest establishments. Maercin Kelimber is well liked among Redroof's residents, and also by many adventuring parties for his willingness to stock common supplies and minor magic items at affordable prices. He would be low on anyone's list of "most likely to meet a tragic end," but destiny has other ideas. His grisly death at Mangvhune's talons likely sends the city into a growing panic, and is intended to make the Silver Ravens consider the possibility that it was their association with the man that ensured his fate.



ALANDER MANGVHUNE

Deceased Scholar and Serial Killer (CE male human expert 4/rogue 7/assassin 2)

Professor Alander Mangvhune was Alabaster Academy's most popular teacher at the university's height—a man whose lectures on anatomy never failed to draw crowds and whose wit never failed to draw laughter and admiration. He was also the cause of the academy's fall, for when Kintargo learned he was also the notorious Temple Hill Slasher, the school's reputation suffered a terrible blow from which it has yet to recover more than 100 years later. Yet before he was caught, Mangvhune bathed in the energies of the *soul anchor* deep below Kintargo. When he was executed, the people of Kintargo unknowingly created an even deadlier monster—a demon who periodically haunts the Silver City to this day.

XERELILAH

Priestess of Desna (CG female old human cleric of Desna 8)

Spry and alert, Xerelilah retains a love of life in her advanced years that helps her maintain a somewhat youthful appearance and personality. She spent the first half of her life as a nomad along the western coast of Avistan, but decided to settle down in rural Ravounel 20 years ago. She still travels today, but limits her wanderings to the North Plains, where she offers healing and advice free to the hardworking residents of the region's small towns. She also keeps a sharp eye out for any influence or intrusion from nearby Nidal, and is always ready to organize retaliation against this shadowy neighbor, but to date has yet to find anything of note beyond her suspicions of sinister activity in the Terapasillion.





DEVIL IN THE DETAILS

The Silver Ravens have defeated Paracount Barzillai Thrune and liberated Kintargo, but unless steps are taken to protect what they've won, it's only a matter of time before Cheliah's rulers respond with open war—one that could likely destroy the Silver City. The key to the city's last defense may lie hidden in a sprawling scroll recovered from the wicked inquisitor: the Kintargo Contract. Within this contract's clauses and stipulations lurks a cunning loophole that gives the heroes an opportunity to use Cheliah's own love of law against it, not only securing the city, but also freeing the surrounding region from the infernal machinations of House Thrune and the Church of Asmodeus. Yet as the heroes scramble to parse the contract and Kintargo reels from its recent upheavals, an old menace from the city's past strikes. Before Kintargo can be truly safe, the Silver Ravens must save the city from a monster of its own making!

This volume of Pathfinder Adventure Path continues the Hell's Rebels Adventure Path and includes:

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